

STRENGTH IN FRAGILITY

On this Holy Thursday, the Lord's words and actions touch our hearts. It is Jesus' last meal with his disciples. He takes the bread in his hands, pronounces the blessing, breaks it, and presents it to his disciples, saying, "Take this, this is my body."



Here is what Pope Francis says about "this little piece of bread," the body of the risen Jesus that we receive in the Eucharist:

"And today, once more, we find the greatness of God in a piece of Bread, in a fragility that overflows with love, that overflows with sharing. Fragility is precisely the word I would like to underscore. Jesus becomes fragile like the bread that is broken and crumbled. But his strength lies precisely therein, in his fragility. In the

Eucharist fragility is strength: the strength of the love that becomes small so it can be welcomed and not feared; the strength of the love that is broken and shared so as to nourish and give life; the strength of the love that is split apart so as to join all of us in unity..."

Like bread, Jesus breaks himself. This gesture at the Last Supper already foreshadows the fragility of his being nailed and broken on the cross out of love for us. It is the nature of love to give itself entirely to the other in order to nourish and give life.

The Eucharist commits us, like Jesus, however fragile and vulnerable we may be, to break our existence like good bread to give life to those around us. Only then will we know the true path of love... the true path to happiness! Then we will understand Jesus' words: "Do this in memory of me."

A text by Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort helps us to grasp the fullness of Jesus' love for us in the Eucharist:



"Eternal Wisdom, on the one hand, wished to prove his love for man by dying in his place in order to save him, but on the other hand, he could not bear the thought of leaving him. So he devised a marvellous way of dying and living at the same time, and of abiding with man until the end of time. So, in order fully to satisfy his love, he instituted the sacrament of Holy Eucharist and went to the extent of changing and overturning nature itself. He does not conceal himself under a sparkling diamond or some other precious stone, because he does not want to abide with man in an ostentatious manner. But he hides himself under the appearance of a small piece of bread - man's ordinary nourishment - so that when received he might enter the heart of man and there take his delight there: "Those who love ardently act in this way." Love of Eternal Wisdom, No. 71

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