# “Participation in the Sacrifice of Calvary”

It must have been wonderful to have lived with Jesus when He was on earth. What a great privilege it must have been for the Apostles to have known our Lord personally and intimately. Naturally, probably all of us wish we could have lived during Jesus’ time, and some of us might think we would be completely devoted to Him.

On the contrary, many people who lived with Jesus either did not recognize Him or failed to respond to His message. They were so blinded by their expectation of who the Messiah should be that they did not recognize Him in the flesh. And today many Christians who are Monday morning quarterbacks (meaning His message is not just unfolding to us it had already happened), still find it hard to respond to His message. We know that in the end, He was crucified, died, rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. But some Christians still do not believe in His teachings passed on to His Apostles who passed them on to His Church.

Yes, it may be that we ourselves sometimes do not recognize Jesus or fail to respond to Him. We do not have to wish that we could have lived during the time of our Lord. The truth is He remains among us right now. He is present in the world in the people with whom will live. He is all around us most especially in the Holy Eucharist.

The words **“remain in”** or **abide in,”** reveals a friendship that implies union and faith with another person. When you and I become real friends to another person, we lose some autonomy or freedom. In a way, we die to self and our self-centeredness. We listen to our friends and try to please them. We think of each other and remain connected even when we are physically separated. For us and Jesus, our being connected is centered on the Eucharist.

Jesus in today’s Gospel is asking us to be in union with Him by remaining His friend. Jesus in the Gospel told the Jews of His time and is telling us now that there are some things that are not obvious even after He tells us about them. Jesus tells us if we die to self or empty ourselves and allow ourselves to be guided by His word, we will be enlightened by Him.

Without His word which is the light of the world, our vision will be limited to what we can figure out on our own and we will become self-centered, and run off the road of eternal life like a car that is out of alignment. His living word especially on the bread of life discourse is the shield of our faith.

However, if we allow Him to possess us, with His light, we will see further into eternity. It is wisdom that He is offering us. A shortcut to this wisdom He offers us is the Eucharist. The Eucharist is the way of life through which we allow ourselves to be constantly nourished with Jesus’ body and precious blood and if we receive Him worthily, He will transform us beyond our wildest dreams. That is why He said **“Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him.”** He even went further by comparing this union or new life between Him and whoever receives Him worthily with the fully Human Nature He received from His Father.

Because of His magnificent teachings on the bread of life, let us as a church and a community of faith from this day forward see ourselves as the living stones He is using to build His kingdom. Let us trust in Him that what He says in this bread of life discourse is literally the truth.

Jesus must be the salt of our lives so that none of us may become corrupt. He must be the center of our lives. Our worship of the Father in the Mass must be focused on Him and Him alone. We must die to what this depraved and twisted generation is telling us is right.

As Catholics, when we receive the Eucharist, do we every time reflect and ponder in our hearts on what we just received? Do we internalize what it means to receive His body and blood as Jesus told us in chapter 6 of John’s Gospel? Do we receive Him with reverence due the Almighty God?