

# The Living Word

**The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, Year B**

**6 June 2021**

## **First Reading Ex 24:3-8**

*This is the blood of the Covenant that the Lord has made with you.*

Moses went and told the people all the commands of the Lord and all the ordinances. In answer, all the people said with one voice, 'We will observe all the commands that the Lord has decreed.' Moses put all the commands of the Lord into writing, and early next morning he built an altar at the foot of the mountain, with twelve standing-stones for the twelve tribes of Israel. Then he directed certain young Israelites to offer holocausts and to immolate bullocks to the Lord as communion sacrifices. Half of the blood Moses took up and put into basins, the other half he cast on the altar. And taking the Book of the Covenant he read it to the listening people, and they said, 'We will observe all that the Lord has decreed; we will obey.' Then Moses took the blood and cast it towards the people. 'This' he said 'is the blood of the Covenant that the Lord has made with you, containing all these rules.'

## **Responsorial Psalm**

**Ps 115:12-13. 15-18. R. v.13**

*(R.) I will take the cup of salvation,  
and call on the name of the Lord.  
or*

*(R.) Alleluia!*

1. How can I repay the Lord  
for his goodness to me?  
The cup of salvation I will raise;  
I will call on the Lord's name. (R.)
2. O precious in the eyes of the Lord  
is the death of his faithful.  
Your servant, Lord, your servant am I;  
you have loosened my bonds. (R.)

3. A thanksgiving sacrifice I make:  
I will call on the Lord's name.  
My vows to the Lord I will fulfil  
before all his people. (R.)

## **Second Reading Heb 9:11-15**

*The blood of Christ will purify our inner selves.*

Now Christ has come, as the high priest of all the blessings which were to come. He has passed through the greater, the more perfect tent, which is better than one made by men's hands because it is not of this created order; and he has entered the sanctuary once and for all, taking with him not the blood of goats and bull calves, but his own blood, having won an eternal redemption for us. The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer are sprinkled on those who have incurred defilement and they restore the holiness of their outward lives; how much more effectively the blood of Christ, who offered himself as the perfect sacrifice to God through the eternal Spirit, can purify our inner self from dead actions so that we do our service to the living God.

He brings a new covenant, as the mediator, only so that the people who were called to an eternal inheritance may actually receive what was promised: his death took place to cancel the sins that infringed the earlier covenant.

## **Gospel Acclamation Jn 6:51-52**

*Alleluia, alleluia!*

*I am the living bread from heaven, says  
the Lord;*

*whoever eats this bread will live for ever.*

*Alleluia!*



## Reflection by Dianne Bergant CSA

The readings, which reflect some aspect of the feast, feature three prominent themes: the importance of blood in the ratification of the covenant; the atoning actions of Christ; the attitude of thanksgiving.

Most people today would probably be repelled by the ritual use of blood. Yet birth blood is not subject to the same revulsion, nor is blood transfusion frowned upon. Blood is recognised as a life force, and blood relationships are cherished. In a sense this ritual makes us blood sisters and brothers of God and of each other. It seals our fate and it entitles us to the family inheritance.

This feast celebrates the incomparable love of Christ. He offered himself for the expiation of our sins; he spread a banquet table for us at which we are able to eat the bread of companionship and share the blood of the new covenant.

How shall we make a return to the Lord for all the good that we have received? The only appropriate response to God's graciousness is thanksgiving (*eucharistia*). We have been chosen; we have been delivered; we have a witness in heaven; and now we have been given the bread of eternal life and the blood of salvation. What return can we give? A life of gratitude lived in the presence of God; a life of union with all those who eat the same bread and drink from the same cup; a life of faithful expectation, waiting for the coming of the reign of God in all its fullness.

## Gospel Mk 14:12-16, 22-26

*This is my body. This is my blood.*

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb was sacrificed, his disciples said to Jesus, 'Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the passover?' So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the city and you will meet a man carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him, and say to the owner of the house which he enters, "The Master says: Where is my dining room in which I can eat the passover with my disciples?" He will show you a large upper room furnished with couches, all prepared. Make the preparations for us there.' The disciples set out and went to the city and found everything as he had told them, and prepared the Passover.

And as they were eating he took some bread, and when he had said the blessing he broke it and gave it to them. 'Take it,' he said 'this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and when he had returned thanks he gave it to them, and all drank from it, and he said to them, 'This is my blood, the blood of the covenant, which is to be poured out for many. I tell you solemnly, I shall not drink any more wine until the day I drink the new wine in the kingdom of God.'

After psalms had been sung they left for the Mount of Olives.

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