



# PRAY, PONDER, PREACH AND PRACTICE THE WORD OF GOD

*Facilitated by Racine Dominican Preaching Committee August 2024*

## THIS IS MY BODY

*By S. Carla Mae Streeter*

We've just celebrated a significant Revival in honor of the presence of the risen Jesus in the Eucharist. The reason for this effort is a survey that revealed many Catholics are no longer believing that the consecrated host holds the real presence of the risen Jesus. They learned it when they studied their catechism, but now, as science has taken center stage on TV, how are they to explain it in? What might we say to our families and friends when they ask us about this? How might this month's readings help us with this?

We might begin by saying that the mystery of the incarnation really has three steps...down. First, our wild loving God in the person of the Word, stepped down into the Virgin's womb. The Word fused itself with our DNA...our double helix. If that is not amazing enough, he took a second step...down. The Word in the humanness of Christ Jesus chose to enter the worst level of human suffering, death by execution by your very own kin. But there is a third step. The transformed human that is the risen Jesus took a third step...down. He figured out how to feed us with his own risen life by becoming a 'thing,' bread to be kept in a bread-box we call the tabernacle. Catherine of Siena says it well: "Oh mad lover! It was not enough for you to take on our humanity: you had to die as well! Nor was death enough...I see your mercy pressing you to give us even more when you leave yourself to us as food to strengthen our weakness, so that we forgetful fools should be forever reminded of your goodness." (Dial. 30, p. 72) Yes, three steps...down.

It would be wise too, for us to mention that we are dealing with an alternate physics here. We have no idea what a transformed humanness is like. We just know that this time-space body gets pretty exhausted by the end of the day. Jesus has a transformed human metabolism. Its limits are gone. It has been transformed by love...as ours will be, and he can be anywhere he pleases. In fact, he is the one presence that holds all the tabernacles that hold him. Our faith in the Eucharist holds the promise of our very own future. The Revival prayer by Bishop Andrew Cozzens says it well:

JESUS LIVING IN THE EUCHARIST, COME AND LIVE IN ME.

JESUS HEALING IN THE EUCHARIST, COME AND HEAL ME.

JESUS SACRIFICING YOURSELF IN THE EUCHARIST, COME AND SUFFER IN ME.

JESUS RISING IN THE EUCHARIST COME AND RISE TO NEW LIFE IN ME.

JESUS LOVING IN THE EUCHARIST, COME AND LOVE IN ME.

*Check out how the readings of this month portray the Risen one doing exactly this today...this mad lover...*

THANK YOU TO ASSOCIATE MARE WHEELER FOR THIS MONTH'S REFLECTIONS.

*At first glance, John's "bread" gospels of August might seem to be a foodie's delight. However, Jesus uses the miracle of the loaves and fishes as a starting point to teach about a more profound diet, one that gives us spiritual vitality. So it might be illuminating, on at least one occasion this month, to take a slice of my breakfast bread in my hands, and center myself on the larger gift of life that it could represent.*



### **1st Sunday | August 4 | Gospel of John 6:24-35**

In His "Bread of Life" teaching, Jesus says that "The bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world" (verse 33). How might we understand what life is that Bread of God? Our own Dominican life might offer examples. For instance, we Dominicans treasure study as one of our pillars of our Charism. Which authors, podcasts, speakers, texts, prayers or practices give me life and feed my soul? What is it that makes them so compelling for me right now?

### **2nd Sunday | August 11 | Gospel of John 6:41-51**

Jesus expands on his "Living Bread" message in saying that "Everyone who listens to my Father and learns from Him comes to me" (verse 45). The Creator draws us and teaches us that we might know the Redeemer. How is God the director or teacher of my life?

### **3rd Sunday | August 18 | Gospel of John 6:51-58**

Again, John emphasizes Jesus' words that the flesh and blood of the Son of Man are transformative. "...the one who feeds on me will have life because of me" (verse 57). This miraculous new life is simply the gift of God to us. What aspect of myself desires or needs more life or transformation from that Living Bread?

### **4th Sunday | August 25 | Gospel of John 6:60-69**

After a challenging message from Jesus to his disciples, many of His followers left Him and the twelve. When Jesus asked the Apostles if they too would turn back, Peter replied. "To whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (verse 68). What does it mean me when others turn away from me for whatever reason? To what or whom do I turn when all have gone away?

*May this month be a blessing!*