

# Corpus Christi

## *... Thanksgiving for the Institution of Holy Communion*

- **The Absurdity and Wonder of the Eucharist:**
  - The Eucharist involves simple elements: unleavened bread and wine.
  - Despite its simplicity, it facilitates communion between humans and God.
  - The Eucharist has been celebrated in diverse circumstances throughout history, from grand ceremonies to intimate bedside services.
- **Theological Perspectives on the Eucharist:**
  - Theologians have long debated the nature of the Eucharist.
  - A significant definition from the 1970s Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue: "Christ is truly present in the bread and wine. When that presence is met by faith in the believer, a truly life-giving encounter ensues."
  - This definition combines Catholic emphasis on the real presence of Christ and Protestant emphasis on the believer's faith.
- **The Last Supper and Remembrance:**
  - The term 'remembrance' in the context of the Eucharist means more than recalling past events.
  - The Greek word for 'remembrance' implies making past events alive and operative in the present.
  - The Eucharist brings the experience of the Last Supper into the present reality of believers' lives and churches.
- **Symbolic Actions of the Last Supper:**
  - Besides the giving of bread and wine, the washing of the feet was a significant symbolic action.
  - Foot washing, practised mainly on Maundy Thursday, is crucial to understanding Christ's radical giving.
  - Jesus' commandment: "Love one another as I have loved you; and as I have washed your feet, go out and wash the feet of others."
- **Communion and Service:**
  - Receiving communion is not a private gift but one that strengthens believers for service.
  - Believers, having received communion and had their feet washed, are called to serve and minister to others.

## Questions

1. How do you personally understand the significance of the Eucharist as a means of communion between humans and God? What aspects of the Eucharist challenge or deepen your faith?
2. The sermon mentions various contexts in which the Eucharist has been celebrated, from grand ceremonies to battlefield chaplaincies. How do these diverse settings reflect the universal nature of the Eucharist?
3. Reflect on the definition given by the Anglican and Roman Catholic dialogue: "Christ is truly present in the bread and the wine. When that presence is met by faith in the believer, a truly life-giving encounter ensues." How does this definition reconcile different theological perspectives, and what is your understanding of this life-giving encounter?
4. The Greek word for 'remembrance' implies making past events alive and operative in the present. How does this deeper meaning affect your participation in the Eucharist and your understanding of its significance in your spiritual life?
5. Jesus' act of washing the disciples' feet is described as a vital symbolic action. How can this act of humility and service be incorporated into modern Christian practice beyond just Maundy Thursday?
6. The sermon emphasises that the Eucharist strengthens us for service. How can we, as a community, ensure that the spiritual nourishment we receive from the Eucharist translates into concrete acts of service and love towards others in our daily lives?