

### # 27      *MADE INTO CHRIST'S BODY*

**I**n the last article, I answered some common questions I have received regarding Holy Communion. We continue this week exploring these questions.

#### **Why should the faithful receive Eucharist from the Mass they are celebrating and not from the tabernacle?**

In the last article, I mentioned that hosts reserved in the tabernacle should rarely be used to communicate the faithful at Mass. The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (85) clearly refers to the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (55) and *On the Worship of Eucharist* (31, 32), which all state that the faithful should receive from hosts consecrated at the Mass they are attending.

The Eucharist we celebrate is an action that takes place in the present moment; it is our communal act of thanksgiving. By celebrating Eucharist – singing together, sharing silence, doing ritual, uniting in prayer, sharing the sacrificial meal – we become one with our Lord Jesus Christ as his people and his body. The liturgy is an event, a banquet of love. Eucharist is not just about each person receiving our Lord in a host. It is also about the real presence of Christ in the people who gather, the word proclaimed, the minister, and especially the sacred species. The liturgy is our public work, our work of praising God in community to build up the Body of Christ, which proclaims the salvation of Christ to all of creation. Every Sunday (or daily Mass) we unite with all creation to sing, “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts.” The Church has made the rule that the faithful should receive from the hosts from the Mass in which they participate to help us live this reality to the fullest.



#### **Our parish sings a song after communion is finished, is that okay?**

Yes. The *GIRM* states that a “psalm, or other canticle of praise or hymn may be sung by the . . . congregation” (88). This song of praise or thanksgiving takes place after receiving Holy Communion to allow for the people – the Church – offer a gesture of profound thanks and praise for the gift of Christ celebrated in this liturgy, especially in Holy Communion. Musicians need to take care when choosing texts for this song to ensure that the text expresses a communal sentiment of praise or thanks. It is not a time for solo singing or meditation songs because by sharing in Eucharist, we have become one body in Christ and a song at this time is the community’s response to God’s awesome gift of love. If there is not a song of praise, the *GIRM* says the people gathered should spend some time in prayer (88). After this silent time or song follows the Prayer After Communion.

We have come to the close of our section on the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Next, time we will look at the concluding rites.