

SOME QUOTES FROM OUR TRADITION CONCERNING JESUS' PRESENCE IN THE EUCHARIST

Read over the following quotes and see if they raise any questions or help deepen your understanding of what it is that we do at Eucharist and how the “real” body of Christ in the communion we receive is intimately connected to the “real” body of Christ we are as Church.

Pope John Paul II, 2003 Encyclical on the Eucharist:

“To contemplate the face of Christ...involves being able to recognize him wherever he manifests himself, in his many forms of presence, but above all in the living sacrament of his body and blood.”

St. Ambrose (late 4th C.):

“Be convinced that this is not what nature has formed, but what the blessing has consecrated. The power of the blessing prevails over that of nature, because by the blessing nature itself is changed. . . . Could not Christ's word, which can make from nothing what did not exist, change existing things into what they were not before? It is no less a feat to give things their original nature than to change their nature.”

St. John Chrysostom (late 4th C.):

“What is this bread? The Body of Christ. What becomes of those who participate in this bread? The Body of Christ.”

St. Augustine to the newly baptized (early 5th C.):

It is your own mystery that is placed on the altar. You reply ‘Amen’ to that which you are, and by replying you consent. For you hear ‘The Body of Christ’ and you reply ‘Amen’...Be what you see, and receive what you are.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1983, (#1374):

The mode of Christ's presence under the Eucharistic species is unique. It raises the Eucharist above all the sacraments as "the perfection of the spiritual life and the end to which all the sacraments tend." In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist "the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, *the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained.*" "This presence is called ‘real’—by which is not intended to exclude the other types of presence as if they could not be ‘real’ too, but because it is presence in the fullest sense: that is to say, it is a *substantial* presence by which Christ, God and man, makes himself wholly and entirely present."