

A Place at the Table

1. Why is sharing a meal a universal symbol of belonging throughout the world?
2. Why is a sense of belonging a fundamental human need?
3. What behavior is asked of us when we share a meal with friends or family?
4. What happens if someone present at a meal ignores others at the table or becomes angry?
5. What behavior is required of us when we eat with strangers or with people we do not know well?



6. Read the following statement:

A shared meal establishes an expression of friendship in which those gathered need not be anything other than who they are. Unless someone present does something to violate the environment of acceptance that sharing food and friendship normally establishes, the meal has the power to be a gracious experience among friends that is worthy of the name “communion.”

Does this statement ring true? Why or why not?

7. Read the following statement:

In the celebration of the Eucharist, a meal which is spontaneous among friends becomes in faith a universal experience. We bring ourselves to a meal in which the power of a most personal human action can work upon us, not only with those who are familiar to us, but frequently with people we consider to be different or strangers. Our faith leads us to call them “my sister” or “my brother” but, in fact, we may not always treat them as such or even desire to. Yet, if we are open to the Eucharistic meal shared together and allow its power to unfold upon us, we must be transformed, gradually, eventually.

What type of transformation is this statement referring to? Does this statement ring true? Why or why not?

8. What did Jesus do or say during his Last Passover meal with his friends to designate it as a perpetual memorial of his presence among us?



9. Actually eating the Body and Blood of Christ is the most important moment of the Eucharistic celebration. Why?
10. For whom is the Eucharist intended? How does our participation in the Eucharist affect our treatment of those who are strangers or who are different from us?

