

# Building the Table of the Lord

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## The Eucharist as the Source and Summit of the Christian Life

- The Eucharist is the spiritual center of Catholic life.
- The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life.
- The Eucharist brings together all important elements of the Catholic faith.
- In the Eucharist Christ's saving actions are made present. Through the words and actions of the priest, Jesus himself is blessing the bread and the wine.

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## The Eucharist as Thanksgiving

- The word *Eucharist* comes from a Greek word meaning "thanksgiving."
- We give God thanks for all that God has given us in Christ Jesus.
- Christ himself joins us and, through the Holy Spirit, gives praise to the Father.
- Christ leads our praise and thanksgiving to the Father.
- Through the Holy Spirit, the saints and angels in Heaven join us in our praise and thanksgiving to God and in our worship of God.

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## The Eucharist as a Memorial Sacrifice

- Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ are made present.
- Jesus shared the Jewish Passover meal with his closest followers and left his disciples a special memorial that continued his presence with them.
- Jesus' disciples understood that, as the original Passover lamb saved the firstborn from physical death, Jesus' sacrifice saves us all from the eternal death that is separation from God.
- In the Eucharistic Prayer, we specifically recall the events surrounding Jesus' death and Resurrection.
- The Eucharist is not a resacrifice of Jesus, but a sacramental ritual that makes his original sacrifice real and present.
- As a sacrifice, the Eucharist is also reparation (an act of making amends) for the sins of the living and the dead.

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## The Eucharist as the Presence of Christ

- We receive Jesus Christ—physically and spiritually—when we receive the consecrated bread and wine: the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.
- In our celebration of the Eucharistic Liturgy, we are united across time and space with the Communion of Saints.
- The Church understands that Jesus wants us to repeat the ritual of the Last Supper, and that when we do so, he will be physically and spiritually present (see 1 Corinthians 11:23–26).
- In the Eucharist Jesus is present in the fullest possible way.
- He is present in the people.
- He is present in the Word.
- He is present in the priest or bishop.
- But he is particularly present in the bread and wine: the Body and Blood of Jesus.

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