

READING I *Genesis 14:18–20*

In those days, Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought out bread and wine, and being a priest of God Most High, he blessed Abram with these words: / "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, / the creator of heaven and earth; / and blessed be God Most High, / who delivered your foes into your hand." / Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 110:1, 2, 3, 4 (4b)

R. You are a priest for ever, in the line
of Melchizedek.

The LORD said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand
till I make your enemies your footstool." R.

The scepter of your power the LORD will stretch
forth from Zion:

"Rule in the midst of your enemies." R.

"Yours is princely power in the day of your birth,
in holy splendor;

before the daystar, like the dew,

I have begotten you." R.

The LORD has sworn, and he will not repent:

"You are a priest forever, according to the
order of Melchizedek." R.

READING II *1 Corinthians 11:23–26*

Brothers and sisters: I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread, and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.

GOSPEL *Luke 9:11b–17*

Jesus spoke to the crowds about the kingdom of God, and he healed those who needed to be cured. As the day was drawing to a close, the Twelve approached him and said, "Dismiss the crowd so that they can go to the surrounding villages and farms and find lodging and provisions; for we are in a deserted place here." He said to them, "Give them some food yourselves." They replied, "Five loaves and two fish are all we have, unless we ourselves go and buy food for all these people." Now the men there numbered about five thousand. Then he said to his disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of about fifty." They did so and made them all sit down. Then taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing over them, broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. They all ate and were satisfied. And when the leftover fragments were picked up, they filled twelve wicker baskets.

Practice of Faith

The Gospel reading today uses the same language as the Gospel accounts of the Last Supper. Before feeding the crowds, Jesus takes bread, looks up to heaven, blesses the bread, breaks it, and then gives it to the disciples. ♦ When we receive Christ's Body and Blood in the Eucharist, as St. Augustine said, we become what we receive. In silence, reflect on what it means to you to be joined to Christ so intimately that you become his Body in the world. There is no better expression of Christian life than the presence of the baptized at the Eucharistic liturgy, two manifestations of Christ's Body in an exchange of gift, sacrifice, and mission. ♦ Read St. Teresa of Ávila's reflection "Christ Has No Body Now but Yours." Meditate and pray about your role as Christ's hands, eyes, and feet. ♦ Each day this week, find one action by which you may serve as Christ's body in the world.

Download more questions and activities for families, Christian initiation groups, and other adult groups at <https://www.ltp.org/ahw>.

Scripture Insights

The first reading is a foretaste of the Eucharist. King Melchizedek of Salem serves bread and wine to Abram and blesses him in the name of the God Most High.

Melchizedek appears again in the psalm. The LORD (Yahweh) addresses the Lord Jesus ("my Lord"); the Father addresses the Son (Psalm 110:1). The LORD anoints the Son as "a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek" (Psalm 110:4). The Letter to the Hebrews explores the meaning of Jesus' priesthood, which is modeled not on the Levitical priests who offer yearly sacrifices in the temple, but after Melchizedek, who offers bread and wine and blesses the one through whom God will bless all the nations.

The reading from First Corinthians recounts the first Supper of the Lord. Paul repeats the words the Lord Jesus spoke to his disciples, who then spoke the words to Paul and others so that we still say the same words today when we celebrate the Eucharist. Jesus takes the bread and wine of the Passover meal that he is eating with his disciples, and he presents them as his Body (broken on the cross) and his Blood (poured out on the cross for the forgiveness of sins).

The readings conclude not with a Eucharist but with a simple meal for a hungry crowd. Seeing that the sun is setting, the twelve disciples tell Jesus to send the crowd away so they can find food. Jesus knows they have the sustenance that the crowd needs, so he sits them down in groups. He performs the same actions as at the Lord's Supper, but this time with bread and fish: he blesses the food, breaks the bread, and gives it to them. Everyone eats until they are full; nobody goes home hungry. Jesus offers both bread and Bread, food for hungry bodies and souls.

- ♦ Why is it significant that there are twelve leftover baskets of food (Luke 9:17)?
- ♦ What does it mean that Jesus is a priest in the order of Melchizedek?
- ♦ How can the Church fulfill Jesus' mission to feed the physically and spiritually hungry?