

“... in sacramental communion I become one with the Lord, like all the other communicants. As Saint Paul says, “Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread” (*1 Cor 10:17*).

Union with Christ is also union  
with all those to whom he gives himself.  
I cannot possess Christ just for myself; I can belong to him  
only in union with all those who have become, or who will  
become, his own.  
Communion draws me out of myself towards him, and thus  
also towards unity with all Christians.  
We become “one body”,  
completely joined in a single existence.  
Love of God and love of neighbour are now truly united: God  
incarnate draws us all to himself. ...

... Faith, worship and *ethos* are interwoven as a single reality  
which takes shape in our encounter with God's *agape*.  
Here the usual contraposition between worship and ethics  
simply falls apart.  
“Worship” itself, Eucharistic communion, includes the reality  
both of being loved and of loving others in turn.  
A Eucharist which does not pass over into the concrete practice  
of love is intrinsically fragmented.”

**From chapter 14 of Pope Benedict's encyclical letter  
'DEUS CARITAS EST'**



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## ***The Body of Christ***

*This reflection is taken from a homily of St Augustine, from around 400 AD entitled 'To the Newly Baptised concerning the Eucharist'. New (adult) Christians went through an elaborate preparation, but it was only when they had been baptised that they were initiated into the mystery of the Eucharist.*

What you see is the bread and the chalice -  
this is what your eyes tell you.

But what your faith needs to be informed of -  
the bread is the body of Christ, the chalice is his blood.  
This is why these things are called sacraments,  
because in them one thing is seen, but another is understood.

If you wish to understand the body of Christ,  
listen to what the apostle says to the believers,

***'You are the body of Christ and his members.'***

If, therefore, you are the body of Christ and his members,

it is your own mystery that has been placed on the table of the Lord. It is your own mystery that you receive.

To this which you are you respond 'Amen' and in responding, you accept it.

What you hear is 'the Body of Christ' and to this you respond 'Amen'. So, be a member of Christ's body, that your Amen may be true.

Let us listen to the apostle, who says in the same place,  
'there is one bread, so we who are many are one body.'  
'One bread' - what is this one bread?  
'We who are many are one body.'

Remember that bread is not made from one grain but from many.

When you were being exorcised, it was as if you had been ground down.

When you were baptised it is as if you were moistened.  
When you accepted the fire of the Holy Spirit,  
it is as if you had been baked.

*Be what you see and accept what you are.*

This the apostle said of the bread; yet it tells us too the meaning of the chalice.

For remember how wine is made.

Many grapes hang from the vine, but all the juice flows into one.

And that is what Jesus Christ means to us.

He wants us to belong in him, to pour into him as one.

It is the mystery of our peace and unity  
which he consecrates on his table.

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Christ has no body now on earth but yours;  
he has no hands on earth but yours;  
he has no feet on earth but yours.  
It is your eyes through which  
his compassion is to look out upon the world.  
It is your feet with which  
he is to go about doing good.  
It is your hands with which  
he is to bless people now.  
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

*(attributed to Teresa of Avila)*