

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE EUCHARIST FOR CATHOLICS

Sources of Wisdom and Authority

- ✓ The Last Supper
- ✓ "The source and summit of the Christian life"



Eucharist: Means 'thanksgiving'. The name Catholics use to describe the rite where the bread and wine become the body and blood of Jesus and is received by the people. Also the name for the Real Presence of Jesus in the Sacrament of Holy Communion.



For Catholics, the most regularly celebrated sacrament is the Eucharist or the Mass. The Mass or Eucharist is the liturgical service where Catholics gather to remember the Last Supper, when Jesus took bread and wine and asked his disciples to remember him when they did the same. Sunday, the day of the Resurrection, is the most holy day. To attend Mass on Sunday and certain holy days is obligatory for all Catholics who are capable of doing so. Mass is celebrated every day except Good Friday and Easter Saturday.



The eucharist is said to be '*the source and summit of the Christian life*', because being unified with God is the most important thing to Catholics. It is at the heart of their spiritual life and they become closer to God because they receive Jesus' body and blood in communion.

Catholics believe that the bread and wine are transformed into Jesus' body and blood. The technical word for this is 'transubstantiation'.

Mass re-enacts the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, so it is the highest form of prayer that a believer can make

By receiving the blood and wine in communion, Christ's body and blood spiritually sustain the believer. In the Eucharistic prayer, said by the priest to give thanks to God, the central part is the 'prayer of consecration', when the priest repeats Jesus' words at the Last Supper:

"This is my body... This is my blood..."

The eucharist makes individual Catholics part of the body of Christ (the Church)

Catholics believe that Christ is present in the Mass

- In the consecrated bread and wine, which are Jesus' body and blood
- In the readings (especially those from the Gospels)
- In the believers gathered together because Jesus said, 'Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them'.
- In the person of the priest (Catholics believe that Christ works through the priest to transform the bread and wine into his body and blood).



Knowledge Check



1. Define the key concept *eucharist*
2. What is the most regularly celebrated sacrament for Catholics?
3. What is the most holy day of the week for Christians?
4. On which two days in the year is mass *not* celebrated?
5. In what ways is Christ present in the Mass?
6. The eucharist is said to be "*the source and summit of the Christian life*". What does this mean?
7. Define the key term *transubstantiation*
8. What is the highest form of prayer that a believer can make?

Choose a Task



1. Create a detailed mind-map (try to make this visual)
2. Create a multiple-choice quiz (aim for at least 10 questions)
3. Create a poster/leaflet

CHALLENGE!

Turn over the mat and try to complete your task without looking at the information. Then refer back to the task mat to see what you have missed/could have included.

Exam Question



c) Explain the importance of the Eucharist for Catholic Christians [8]

Sacraments Summary

- A sacrament is 'an outward sign of inward grace, ordained by God, by which grace is given to the soul'. There are seven sacraments.
- The sacramental nature of reality means that God can speak to us through the world.
- The Eucharist/Mass is at the heart of Catholic worship. It re-enacts the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross and unites Catholics into the body of Christ.