

# THE MASS UNFOLDED

COMMUNION, THE BODY OF CHRIST & LIVING THE MASS

**This fifth talk in our Lenten series invited us to reflect more deeply on the meaning of Communion within the Mass. It is the culmination of the Eucharistic celebration: everything that precedes it prepares us for this moment of receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, and of becoming the Body of Christ together.**

The Mass unfolds as a journey. We gather, acknowledge our need for forgiveness, and give glory to God. We are first nourished at the *"table of the Word,"* where Scripture feeds us and draws us into a deeper relationship with God. Together we profess our faith. Then we move to the *"table of the Eucharist,"* where Christ gives himself to us in bread and wine, recalling his total gift of love on the Cross.

At Communion we are faced with a personal and communal question: how do we respond to such a gift? Everything we have is given to us by God; therefore, our response can only be to receive with openness and to offer ourselves in return. Communion is love received and love given.

The rite itself emphasises that we are not isolated individuals but one body. We pray together the Our Father, receive Christ's peace, and share that peace with one another. What follows is profoundly simple yet deeply mysterious: we eat and drink. In this familiar human act, Christ gives us his very self.

Before receiving, we pray the *"Lamb of God,"* recognising Jesus as the one who takes away the sins of the world and asking for his mercy and peace. The invitation *"Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb"* reminds us that we are invited to a joyful and eternal communion with Christ. We respond with humility and faith: *"Lord, I am not worthy... but only say the word and my soul shall be healed."*

As we come forward and say *"Amen"* to *"The Body of Christ,"* we make a personal act of faith. We welcome Christ into our lives, and at the same time we are drawn into his life. As St Augustine teaches, *"Become what you receive: the Body of Christ."* Communion is not only about Christ coming to us; it is about our being transformed in him.

Through images such as the vine and branches or the shepherd and his flock, Jesus shows us that we are called into unity with him and with one another. This unity is not confined to the church building. Strengthened by the Eucharist, we are sent out into the world to live what we have received — in service, kindness, forgiveness, and love.

The Eucharist can be compared to a beating heart. We gather, bringing all that we are, and receive Christ's life. Then we are sent out again, renewed and strengthened, to be his presence in our daily lives. We come, and we are sent. This mystery is ultimately beyond full understanding, yet it is rooted in love. In Communion we encounter a love that continues to deepen, inviting us again and again into greater faith, unity, and transformation.



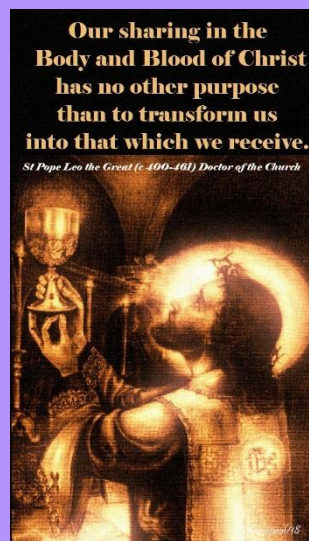
Watch a recording of the talks by scanning this QR code.



*"The Eucharist, for me, is a gift."* Sr Sigrun



*'Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.'*



**The final talk will continue to focus on parts of the Mass itself. Join us in the Conference Centre this Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March where we will be exploring the 'Closing Rites, Mission & Ministry'.  
7pm - 8.30pm  
Speaker:  
Canon Victor Darlington**