

The Sacrament of the Eucharist, also known as Holy Communion, is the "source and summit" of Christian life in the Catholic Church, where the bread and wine truly become the Body and Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ. Instituted at the Last Supper, it serves as a sacrifice of praise, a memorial of Christ's death and resurrection, and a Paschal banquet.

Key Aspects of the Eucharist

- **Real Presence (Transubstantiation)**: Through the priest's consecration and the Holy Spirit, the substance of bread and wine changes into the Body and Blood of Christ, while the appearances remain.
- **Sacrifice and Memorial**: It is a re-presentation of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross, allowing believers to share in his saving death and resurrection.
- **Holy Communion**: Receiving the Eucharist unites believers with Christ, deepening their union with him and the Church.
- **Sign of Unity**: It is a bond of charity, strengthening the communal bond of the Church.

Celebration of the Eucharist

The Eucharist is celebrated during the Mass, which consists of the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. It is considered the culmination of Christian initiation, alongside Baptism and Confirmation.

Terminologies and Meanings

- **Eucharist**: From the Greek *eucharistia*, meaning "thanksgiving".
- **Holy Communion**: Emphasizes union with Christ.
- **The Lord's Supper**: Connects to the Last Supper.

The Eucharist acts as a spiritual food that nourishes believers and is a pledge of future glory.