



## **Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ**

[Supersedes 12 Sunday Ordinary Time Year C]

† **Sunday 23rd June 2019**

In England and Wales Cycle of Prayer

For those who suffer persecution, oppression or denial of human rights

Keynote: One People of God in communion with Christ – the New Covenant

### **Book of Genesis 14: 18-20**

Abraham had won a great victory, and the important and yet 'unknown' figure of Melchizedek – the priest king of Salem – comes to pay homage to the victor, to offer him bread and to give thanks: '*Blessed be Abram by God Most High, creator of heaven and earth...*' It is then that Abram gives a tithe (a tenth part offering) to Melchizedek in recognition of Melchizedek's superior position and importance. Here we find the essential elements of the Eucharist, the giving thanks, the sharing of the bread, and the blessing of God. We recall Abraham as 'our father in faith' and approach the altar today with reverence to offer our praise to God. One people of faith, united in communion and assembled to give thanks and praise in the very presence of God.

**Responsorial Psalm 109 (110)** – In praise of Christ – King, Priest and Prophet!

### **First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians 11: 23-26**

The Christians at Corinth celebrated the Eucharist as a great feast, but the well to do, gathered at their own tables with their own food and wine, keeping the poor at the margins of the celebration. Paul reminds the church of Corinth about the real meaning of the institution of the Eucharist by Jesus. '*This is what I received from the Lord, and in turn passed on to you: on that same night that he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread, thanked God for it and broke it, and he said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this as a memorial of me... in the same way he took the cup after supper..."*' Later in his letter, Paul reminds Corinthian Christians that in the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, they come as equals, rich and poor alike. Today, we Christians come together – like-minded people – to proclaim together our faith in the risen Lord and the power of his saving death. The word '*Eucharist*' means to give thanks, to be grateful and so we should! '*Until the Lord comes... every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are proclaiming his death.*' Each of us and our church today also needs to learn the lesson of welcome and equal sharing in the life of the Eucharist.

### **Gospel according to Luke 9: 11-17**

For Luke the feeding of the people marks a turning point in the public ministry of Jesus. In part, this feeding is like the action of a king feeding his troops before a great battle, and many see the event in this Messianic context. The post-resurrection Christian community also saw the feeding of the multitude in a new light, and explained it in terms of the Eucharist. Luke uses the same language when describing Jesus' actions at the Last Supper, and again, on the road to Emmaus when the risen Lord meets the disciples and they recognise Jesus in the 'breaking of bread': '*he took some bread... raised his eyes to heaven, and said the blessing... then he broke... and handed them.*' The Eucharist is the meal for the poor in spirit '*they all ate as much as they wanted, and when the scraps remaining were collected they filled twelve baskets.*' The sign of the feeding is the sign of God's overwhelming generosity, the fulfilment of the promise, and the sign of the unity of God's people. Truly, it is good for us 'to give thanks' to the Lord.