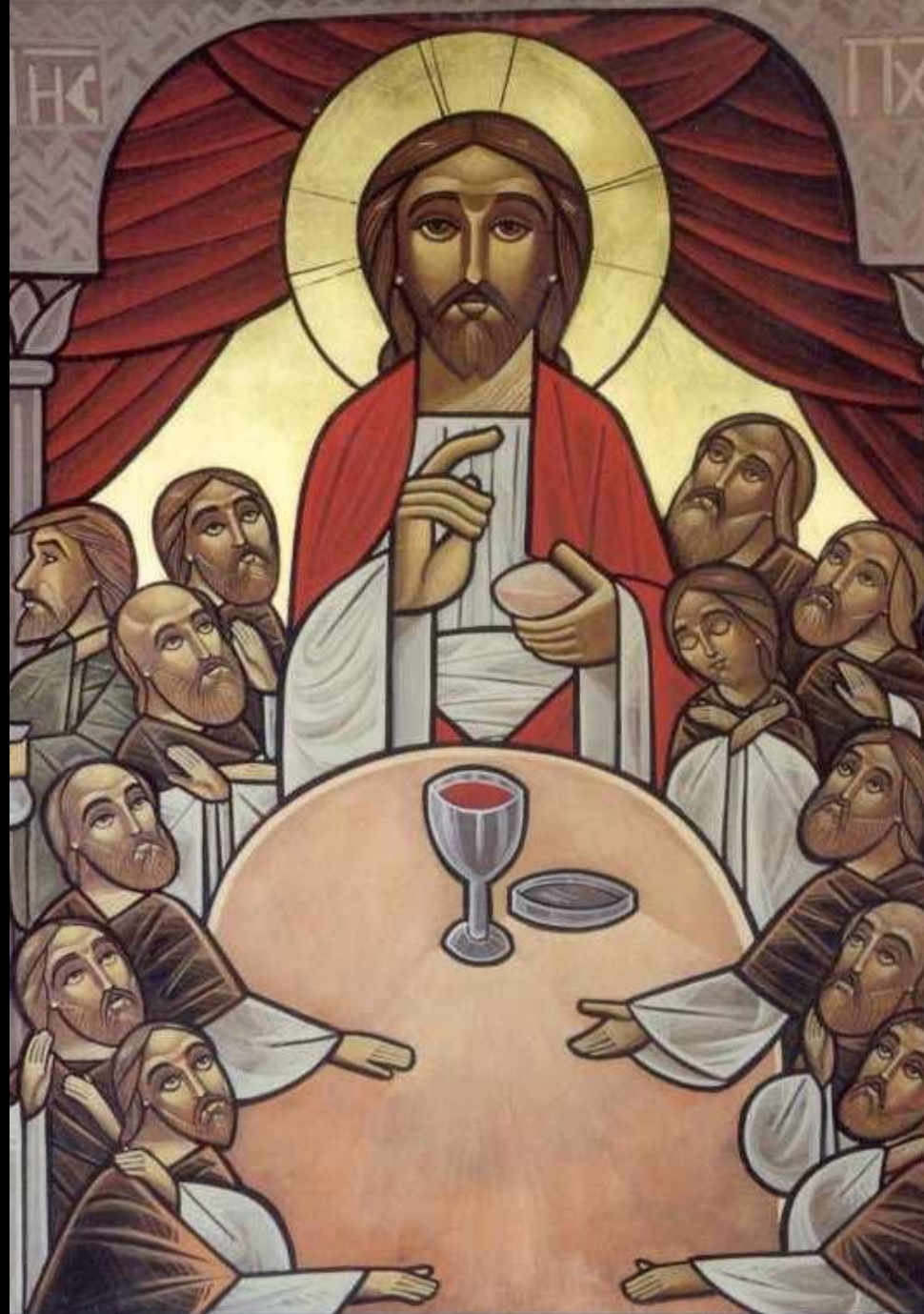


A religious illustration depicting Jesus Christ in the center, surrounded by his disciples. Jesus is shown with a halo, wearing a white robe and a red sash, and is holding a piece of bread. The disciples are also shown with halos and are gathered around a table. On the table, there is a chalice and a plate. The background features a red curtain and a green banner with the word "HOPE" written on it. The overall style is that of a religious painting or tapestry.

"I am the bread of
life." – John 6:35

The Life-Giving Bread

Second Sunday of Pentecost





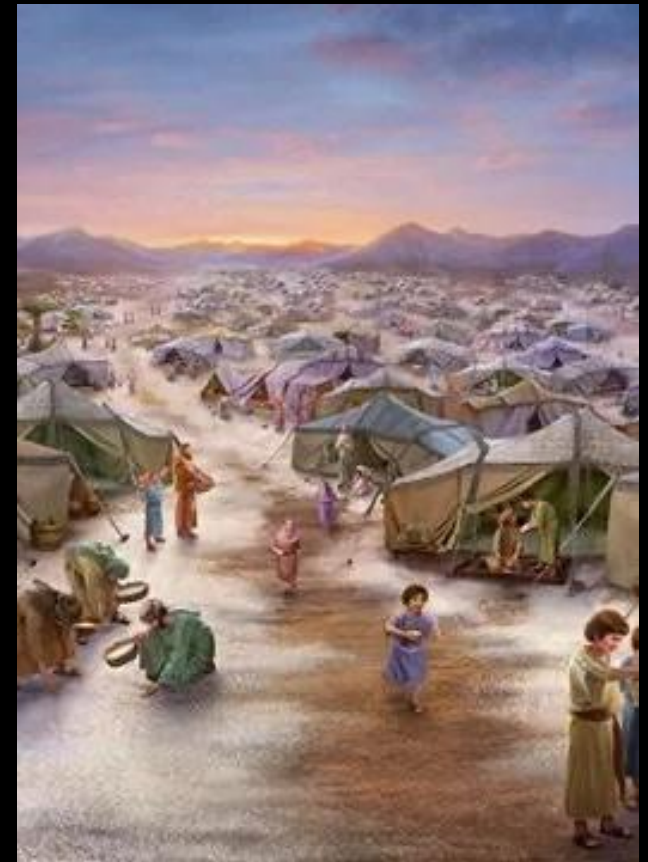
Heavenly Food

- “Give us this day our daily bread.” (Matthew 6:11)
- “daily” = *epiousios* = substance from above = supernatural

Scriptural Foundation

The manna as the shadow; Christ as the substance.

- "Had rained down manna on them to eat, and given them of the bread of heaven. Men ate angels' food; He sent them food to the full." (Psalm 78:24-25)
- "Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die." (John 6:49-50)



Melchizedek as the priestly type.



- The LORD has sworn And will not relent, “You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.” (Ps. 110:4)
- "Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High." (Genesis 14:18)

The Necessity of the Bread of Life

- "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."
(John 6:53-54)
- *"He calls Himself the bread of life because He sustains the life both of body and spirit, and supplies us with what is needful for our existence in well-being, and confirms us unto life eternal."* (St. Cyril of Alexandria)

Was the Lord
speaking
metaphorically?

- "...many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more." (John 6:66)
- Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" (John 6:67)

Sacramental Reality

The Eucharist is His real Presence

- "For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him." (John 6:55-56)
- "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread." (1 Corinthians 10:16-17)

Early Patristic Witness

- *"He has declared the cup, a part of creation, to be His own blood, from which He causes our blood to flow; and the bread, a part of creation, He has established as His own body, from which He gives increase unto our bodies"* (**St. Irenaeus of Lyons** c. 180)
- "They abstain from the Eucharist and from prayer, because they do not confess that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins, and which the Father, in His goodness, raised up again." (**St. Ignatius of Antioch** c. 110)



The Challenges We Face – regarding the Eucharist

- **The Challenge of Familiarity**

- "Each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew." (Isaiah 6:2)

- **The Challenge of Unworthiness**

- "Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." (1 Corinthians 11:27-29)

- *"Approach therefore neither thinking little of these things, nor as fainting under thy sins; for to think little of them is dangerous, and not to come because of fainting is no less so."* (St. John Chrysostom)

- **The Challenge of distraction and the body**

We Must Feed on Him

- Because He is the only food that gives eternal life.
 - "Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him." (John 6:27)
- Because by it we are made one with Him.
 - "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him." (John 6:56)
- Because by it we are made one with one another.
 - "For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread." (1 Corinthians 10:17)

We Must Feed on Him

- Because by it we are given a foretaste of the Kingdom.
 - The Eucharist is a pledge or foretaste of the heavenly banquet.
 - It is real participation but still veiled (in part) – in the kingdom, the reality replaces the part.

The Analogy of the Sample

The Hunger and the Delay



A boy forgets lunch and desires dinner, but is told "not yet."

The Father's Gift

The father sneaks the boy a sample of the dinner currently being prepared.



The Foretaste

An experience that is both the actual future reality and an incomplete preview.

The Reality of the "Yes and No"

Yes: It is the Feast



The sample is the exact food that will be served at the full meal.

No: It is Not the Fullness



While the quality is the same, it is not the complete dinner experience.

Partaking of the Bread of Life

- **Prepare** before you approach.
- **Approach** with trembling and joy.
 - "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him!" (Psalm 34:8)
- **Receive** with thanksgiving
 - "Eucharist" means thanksgiving.
- "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world." (John 6:51)

Summary

- Sacramental Reality
 - The Eucharist is not a symbol of Christ; it is Christ.
 - Early Patristic Witness
- The Challenges We Face The Challenge of Familiarity
 - The Challenge of Unworthiness mishandled.
 - The challenge of distraction and the body
- We Must Feed on Him
 - Because He is the only food that gives eternal life.
 - Because by it we are made one with Him.
 - Because by it we are made one with one another.
 - Because by it we are given a foretaste of the Kingdom.
- Partaking of the Bread of Life
 - Prepare
 - Approach
 - Receive