

1. Read — Read the verses slowly and prayerfully several times. Write down any words or phrases that seem to stand out:

2. Meditate — Now begin to reflect on the verses and ask God what it means and how he wants to speak to you through the passage. **God what are you saying to me through this?**

3. Pray — Respond from your heart to what God has been saying to you. **What do you want me to know?** Write down your prayer to him or record whatever he says to you.

4. Contemplate — Be quiet before the Lord enjoying His presence.

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**How is God calling you to act in response to what he has shown you?**

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# Quick Connect

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## **Gospel Reading – Luke 9:11-17 – Daily Roman Missal**

Jesus spoke to the crowds about the kingdom of God, and he healed those who needed to be cured. As the day was drawing to a close, the Twelve approached him and said, "Dismiss the crowd so that they can go to the surrounding villages and farms and find lodging and provisions; for we are in a deserted place here." He said to them, "Give them some food yourselves." They replied, "Five loaves and two fish are all we have, unless we ourselves go and buy food for all these people." Now the men there numbered about five thousand. Then he said to his disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of about fifty." They did so and made them all sit down. Then taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing over them, broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. They all ate and were satisfied. And when the leftover fragments were picked up, they filled twelve wicker baskets.

## **Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings – Corpus Christi**

*From a work by Saint Thomas Aquinas, priest*

Since it was the will of God's only-begotten Son that men should share in his divinity, he assumed our nature in order that by becoming man he might make man gods. Moreover, when he took our flesh he dedicated the whole of its substance to our salvation. He offered his body to God the Father on the altar of the cross as a sacrifice for our reconciliation. He shed his blood for our ransom and purification, so that we might be redeemed from our wretched state of bondage and cleansed from all sin. But to ensure that the memory of so great a gift would abide with us for ever, he left his body as food and his blood as drink for the faithful to consume in the form of bread and wine. O precious and wonderful banquet that brings us salvation and contains all sweetness! Could anything be of more intrinsic value? Under the old law it was the flesh of calves and goats that was offered, but here Christ himself, the true God, is set before us as our food. What could be more wonderful than this? No other sacrament has greater healing power; through it sins are purged away, virtues are increased, and the soul is enriched with an abundance of every spiritual gift. It is offered in the Church for the living and the dead, so that what was instituted for the salvation of all may be for the benefit of all. Yet, in the end, no one can fully express the sweetness of this sacrament, in which spiritual delight

is tasted at its very source, and in which we renew the memory of that surpassing love for us which Christ revealed in his passion. It was to impress the vastness of this love more firmly upon the hearts of the faithful that our Lord instituted this sacrament at the Last Supper. As he was on the point of leaving the world to go to the Father, after celebrating the Passover with his disciples, he left it as a perpetual memorial of his passion. It was the fulfillment of ancient figures and the greatest of all his miracles, while for those who were to experience sorrow of his departure, it was destined to be a unique and abiding consolation.

### **Banquet or Dumpster?** - *“for the life of the world”*

In the Spiritual Reading, Saint Thomas Aquinas writes of the Blessed Sacrament, “O precious and wonderful banquet that brings us salvation and contains all sweetness! Could anything be of more intrinsic value?” We value romance, glory, honor, faithfulness, love, joy, virtue, etc. These are the things that movies and songs are made of, and we are drawn to them because of their value. The Blessed Sacrament is the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus and has more value than anything thing on earth. It is in the Eucharist that Jesus gives the gift of Himself, where He shares His divinity with us. “...happy are those who are called to his supper...”[1] This is the banquet in which man can “taste and see that the Lord is good.”[2] We are called to the supper and then we taste and see, we experience the love of God. Once we taste and see, we change, nothing else satisfies, so we rid our self of all that leaves us empty and draw close to the one who gives us a “...fatness of spirit to them that eat him.”[3] For the Christian this is the process of conversion, turning from evil and embracing good. “Rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, insincerity, envy, and all slander; like newborn infants, long for pure spiritual milk so that through it you may grow in salvation, for you have tasted that the Lord is good. Come to him, a living stone, rejected by human being but chosen and precious in the sight of God...”[4] The question is not whether man is hungry, but how he will feed his hunger. “We hunger for the banquet and settle for the dumpster.”[5]

**What does it mean to have life? What do we want out of life?** Some say romance, glory, honor, faithfulness, love, joy. We can strive for each of these during our life. We may obtain them, but how long do we maintain them. We may have one, but not another. Jesus says tells us, “I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly.”[6] Jesus wants us to have romance, glory, honor, faithfulness, love and joy and have them to the full. We can only find all and maintain all, in Him. “Out of the darkness of my life, so much frustrated, I put before you the one great thing to love on earth: the Blessed Sacrament... There you will find romance, glory, honour, fidelity, and the true way of all your loves on earth, and more than that: Death. By the divine paradox, that which ends life, and demands the surrender of all, and yet by the taste -or foretaste- of which alone can what you seek in your earthly relationships (love, faithfulness, joy) be maintained, or take on that complexion

of reality, of eternal endurance, which every man's heart desires.”[7] **Where the banquet and what is offered there?** The banquet is the Eucharist, which is the source and summit of the Faith[8]. This source and summit is only offered at the Mass. Divinity is offered. “By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity”[9] This divinity is the greatest of gifts and since “grace does not destroy nature, but perfects it”[10], the Eucharist is the perfection of all natural gifts such as romance, glory, honor, faithfulness, love, joy, virtue. We are called to this banquet, “Blessed are those who have been called to the wedding feast [banquet] of the Lamb.”[11]

**Why is the Eucharist the summit, why is it the source?** “The Eucharist is the ‘summit’ of Christian initiation and all apostolic activity, because the Sacrament presupposes membership in the communion of the Church. At the same time, it is the ‘source,’ because the Sacrament is nourishment for her life and mission.”[12] Any good that we seek in the natural order, finds its perfection in the summit of the Eucharist.

**Where is the dumpster and what is offered there?** “The dumpster” are the very things that St. Peter says that we will leave behind once “long for pure spiritual milk.” They are malice, deceit, insincerity, envy and slander. In the dumpster is found the perversion of all that is good. Instead of romance we feed on lust; instead glory, shame; instead of honor, disgrace; instead of faithfulness, infidelity; instead of love, hate; instead of joy, despair; instead of virtue, vice or sin. The dumpster and the perversions, that are found within are offered by the world.

### **“The End” Notes**

[1] Order of the Mass

[2] Psalm 34:9

[3] Abbot Guernager, O.S.B., *The Liturgical Year*; Vol. 10; page 184

[4] 1 Peter 2:1-4

[5] Christopher West (*Theology of the Body*)

[6] John 10:10

[7] J.R.R. Tolkien Source: <http://vocatium.blogspot.com>

[8] Catechism of the Catholic Church; Section 1324

[9] Order of Mass; *Liturgy of the Eucharist*; Preparation of the altar and the gifts

[10] Saint Thomas Aquinas

[11] Revelation 19:9

[12] [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/synod/documents/rc\\_synod\\_doc\\_20040528\\_lineamenta-xi-assembly\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_20040528_lineamenta-xi-assembly_en.html)