

Living Bread, for the World

Long before I centered on the Eucharist as the focus of worship—the real meal that Catholics celebrate—I understood this breaking of bread as how us saints can make known our brokenness to each other in fellowship. ‘Communion’ involves just that—gathering in community before the Crucified in order to place our wounded lives in His. Somehow, He takes the edge off our edginess and makes us better gifts for the world—a little more humble, clear, and merciful.

The meal we share isn’t an official sacrament but rather the common grace of the ‘one another’ that somehow gives us a share in Jesus’ words (Jn. 6:51): ‘I am the living bread that comes down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.’

When we gathered in Philadelphia last week for a ‘Gender Matters’ conference, I wondered who would break bread with us. I don’t know many Catholics there (it was sponsored by the Diocese) and I’ve little marquee value. Praise God.

How surprised I was to discover a host of hungry, humble saints from that area who came together to ‘eat’ with us that day—to go further along the little way of offering our wounded lives to Jesus and each other so He can season and solidify us—at least enough for us to convert the world rather than be converted by it! My fear turned to faith as I met person after person whom Jesus had connected to us through one person who knew another person who knew another, etc.

This is the miracle of Jesus’ Church composed of His many members—little grains of wheat, each one, crushed in surrender to Jesus and releasing many seeds in the dying that bears much fruit (Jn. 12:24), especially when we gather in order to become ‘living bread’ together.

The miracle of many members—Archbishop Chaput blessed our gathering as he trusted my colleague Marco Casanova who just finished seminary there in Philadelphia. With Chaput’s go-ahead, Marco began to connect with friends in the area who loved Marco and wanted to know what he was up to. I had come often to Philly to be converted by Christopher West and company (their take of St. John Paul II’s work is splendid) so he did his part to direct friends our way, including his parents and sister who are now charter members of our Living Waters family. At West’s Institute, I had met moral theologian and bioethicist Dr. John Haas who I respect more than almost any other, so I was incredulous when he agreed to open our meal with a word on the dignity of gendered humanity that blew everyone away.

Especially lovely was a table full of radiant nuns—aptly called the Sisters of Life—who were directed there by my best friends in New York City, Joe and Anne Nolte, who know all about me and love this work anyway! We were hosted in the parish of Monsignor Hans Brouwers who had started Courage in Philadelphia years earlier; his still vital, fatherly advocacy was healing for all of us. We love Courage and took heart in partaking of their pioneering efforts in Philly. Friends from Baltimore

who love Courage and Encourage joined us too, as did some cool evangelical friends of Abbey from her Penn State days.

Many more to name, no more room. It is enough to say that Jesus is joining His members together to become a fragrant, nutritious loaf of 'living bread.' He is doing it! We need not fear; let us rather behold the Spirit as He unifies saints who together are turning outward to become the 'real meal' for a world that will choke on its own poisons until we become what we eat—the healing body of Christ, broken for the world.

Bless you all. Please join us for our forty-day-fast: 'Becoming Good News' for the lost and the least, beginning October 16th. More on this next week!

You can purchase "Becoming Good News" in book form directly from [Desert Stream](#) or get it for free from [Amazon](#) for your Kindle.

Please take time to watch our new video and become '[Chaste Together](#).'