From the Teachings of Pope Francis on the Holy Eucharist

Memory is essential to our faith experience. Pope Francis offers a beautiful reflection on how the joy of proclaiming the gospel in our hearts and by our lives arises from gratitude, a grateful heart that remembers...

‘Jesus leaves us the Eucharist as the Church’s daily remembrance of, and deeper sharing in, the event of his Passover (cf. Luke 22:19). The joy of evangelizing always arises from grateful remembrance: it is a grace which we constantly need to implore. The apostles never forgot the moment when Jesus touched their hearts: “It was about four o’clock in the afternoon” (John 1:39). Together with Jesus, this remembrance makes present to us “a great cloud of witnesses” (Hebrews 12:1), some of whom, as believers, we recall with great joy: “Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God” (Hebrews 13:7). Some of them were ordinary people who were close to us and introduced us to the life of faith: “I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice” (2 Timothy 1:5). The believer is essentially “one who remembers”.

Pope Francis – the Joy of the Gospel n.13

- We are all called to encounter the saving love of Jesus personally...

‘What kind of love would not feel the need to speak of the beloved, to point him out, to make him known? If we do not feel an intense desire to share this love, we need to pray insistently that he will once more touch our hearts. We need to implore his grace daily, asking him to open our cold hearts and shake up our lukewarm and superficial existence. Standing before him with open hearts, letting him look at us, we see that gaze of love which Nathaniel glimpsed on the day when Jesus said to him: “I saw you under the fig tree” (John 1:48). How good it is to stand before a crucifix, or on our knees before the Blessed Sacrament, and simply to be in his presence!

- The Eucharist is the Sacrament of Communion that builds us into the living Body of Christ – beyond individuals into a community...

‘This evening we too are gathered round the table of the Lord, the table of the Eucharistic sacrifice, in which he once again gives us his Body and makes present the one sacrifice of the Cross. It is in listening to his word, in nourishing ourselves with his Body and his Blood that he moves us on from being a multitude to being a community, from anonymity to communion. The Eucharist is the sacrament of communion that brings us out of individualism so that we may follow him together, living out our faith in him. Therefore we should all ask ourselves before the Lord: how do I live the Eucharist? Do I live it anonymously or as a moment of true communion with the Lord, and also with all the brothers and sisters who share this same banquet? What are our Eucharistic celebrations like?’ Pope Francis. Corpus Christi Homily. 5 May 2013.

- The Multiplication of the loaves and fish – a miracle of sharing. If we do what is possible from our limited resources God can do the miraculous through our actions...
‘Where does the multiplication of the loaves come from? The answer lies in Jesus’ request to the disciples: “You give them...”, “to give”, to share. What do the disciples share? The little they have: five loaves and two fish. However it is those very loaves and fish in the Lord’s hands that feed the entire crowd. And it is the disciples themselves, bewildered as they face the insufficiency of their means, the poverty of what they are able to make available, who get the people to sit down and who — trusting in Jesus’ words — distribute the loaves and fish that satisfy the crowd. And this tells us that in the Church, but also in society, a key word of which we must not be frightened is “solidarity”, that is, the ability to make what we have, our humble capacities, available to God, for only in sharing, in giving, will our life be fruitful.’

Pope Francis Homily Corpus Christi Homily. 30 May 2014.

- ‘If I receive the bread I will become the bread...’ Saint Augustine

‘So let us ask ourselves, in adoring Christ who is really present in the Eucharist:

- Do I let myself be transformed by him?
- Do I let the Lord who gives himself to me, guide me to going out ever more from my little enclosure, in order to give, to share, to love him and others?

Brothers and sisters, following, communion, sharing. Let us pray that participation in the Eucharist may always be an incentive: to follow the Lord every day, to be instruments of communion and to share what we are with him and with our neighbour. Our life will then be truly fruitful.’

Pope Francis. Corpus Christi Homily. 30 May 2013.

- All are welcome at the table of the Lord...

‘The Church is called to be the house of the Father, with doors always wide open. One concrete sign of such openness is that our church doors should always be open, so that if someone, moved by the Spirit, comes there looking for God, he or she will not find a closed door. There are other doors that should not be closed either. Everyone can share in some way in the life of the Church; everyone can be part of the community, nor should the doors of the sacraments be closed for simply any reason. This is especially true of the sacrament which is itself “the door”: baptism. The Eucharist, although it is the fullness of sacramental life, is not a prize for the perfect but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak. These convictions have pastoral consequences that we are called to consider with prudence and boldness. Frequently, we act as arbiters of grace rather than its facilitators. But the Church is not a tollhouse; it is the house of the Father, where there is a place for everyone, with all their problems.’

Pope Francis. The Joy of the Gospel n.47