

HOLY  
COMMUNION

Today we  
LEARN ABOUT HOLY COMMUNION  
Also called The Holy  
Eucharist

- “Eucharist” comes from the Greek which translates as “Thanksgiving”



# WHAT IS COMMUNION

And why do we do it??

- Holy Communion is doing what Jesus did the night before he died on the cross.
- He brought his friends together in an upstairs room.



No, not like that....



More like  
this

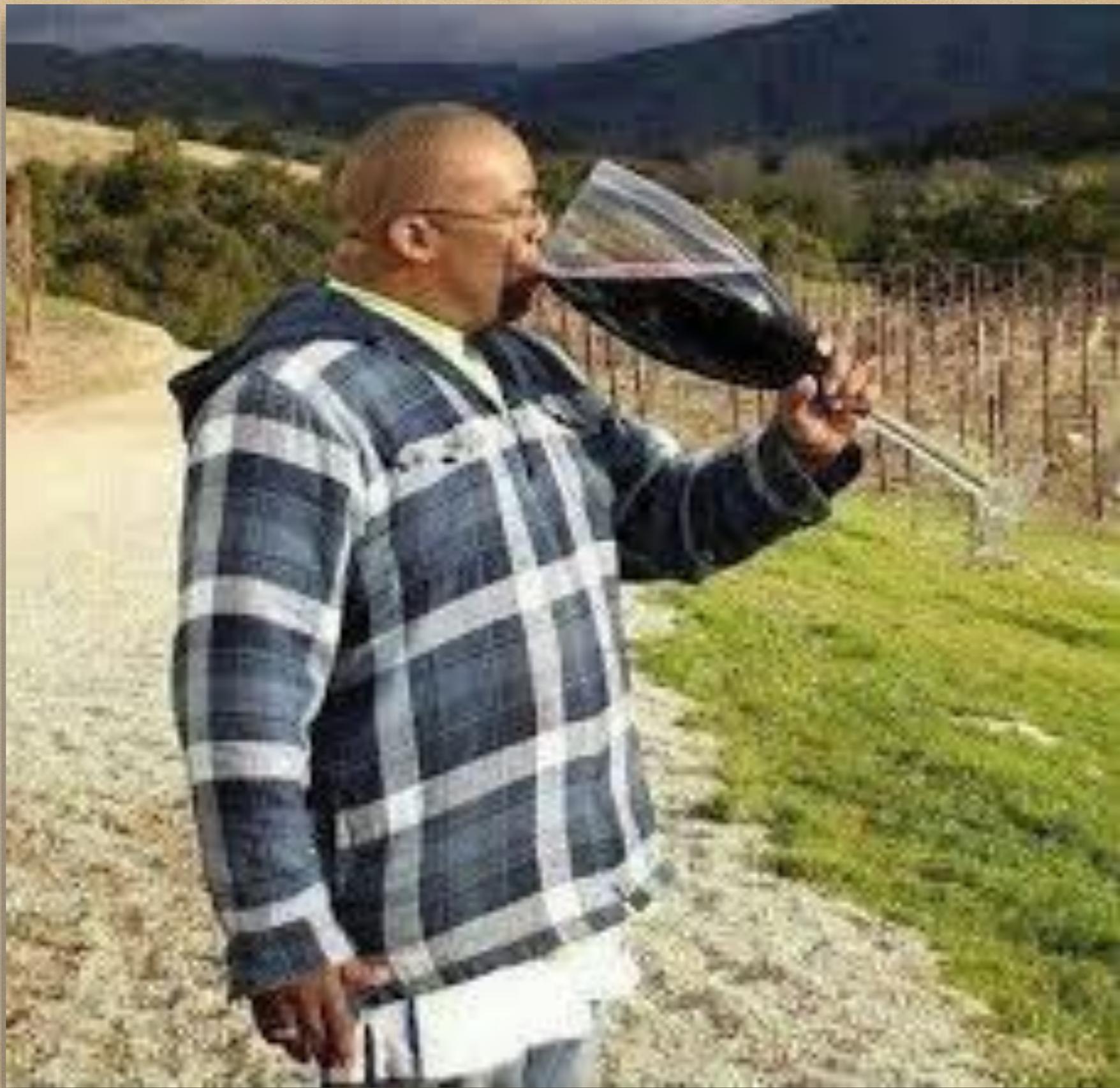
In those days, folks lay on cushions  
on the floor, not chairs around a table

And Jesus took bread



He gave thanks to God and broke it

- Next, he took some wine, and blessed it
- and told them to drink it.



Not Like that!

Maybe more like this!



Let's Stop

for a minute

# Why Bread and Wine?

- What do you think?
- Who had access to bread and wine in those days?

# WHY NOT

- steak?
- lobster?
- pizza?
- chicken adobo?



Because bread and wine were the  
everyday food and drink then

- normal food that normal people enjoyed every  
day

- Jesus says to us that the bread and wine are now his body and blood.....
- When we eat these normal foods, we take Jesus into our bodies.....

# Matthew's Gospel says

- During the meal, Jesus took and blessed the bread, broke it, and gave it to his disciples:
- Take, eat.
- This is my body.
- Taking the cup and thanking God, he gave it to them:
- Drink this, all of you.
- This is my blood,
- God's new covenant poured out for many people
- for the forgiveness of sins.

- For his Jewish friends at the table, they would have remembered that Jesus was reenacting the passover, which is what ????

- YES! The feast celebrating the Hebrew people being freed as slaves from Egypt.
- They ate a meal of unleavened bread (no yeast...because no time to wait!) and a lamb was sacrificed.

- Jesus takes unleavened bread and he becomes the sacrificial lamb...

- As much as Communion has developed its own significance for we Christians, it matters that we remember the roots of this sacrament — it is deeply rooted in the Jewish tradition.

- Roman Catholics, Anglicans and Orthodox all focus on the words "This is my body" "This is my blood."

- Meaning, we believe what happens at Holy Communion is MORE than simply a remembering and MORE than merely a symbolic presence of Jesus.

- We believe that Jesus is actually, really and truly present in Holy Communion.

- We don't pretend to know HOW
- We believe it to be so...

- Our more Protestant friends focus on the words “do this in remembrance of me” and view holy communion as a memorial and a symbol.

- For us Anglicans, Romans and Orthodox, communion is an essential part of our worship and we celebrate it every Sunday.

- Those who are more Protestant celebrate communion only occasionally, perhaps a few times a year depending on the particular tradition.

- But for all Christians, the key is that Jesus brings a new covenant for everyone.

- What is a covenant?

- Where have we heard that word before?

- Abraham is the first
- Do you know how God demonstrated that covenant?
- Listen to the story of the split bulls!

- Which is the amazing thing about covenants.
- Unlike contracts, covenants bind only one side, in this case, God.

# Meaning

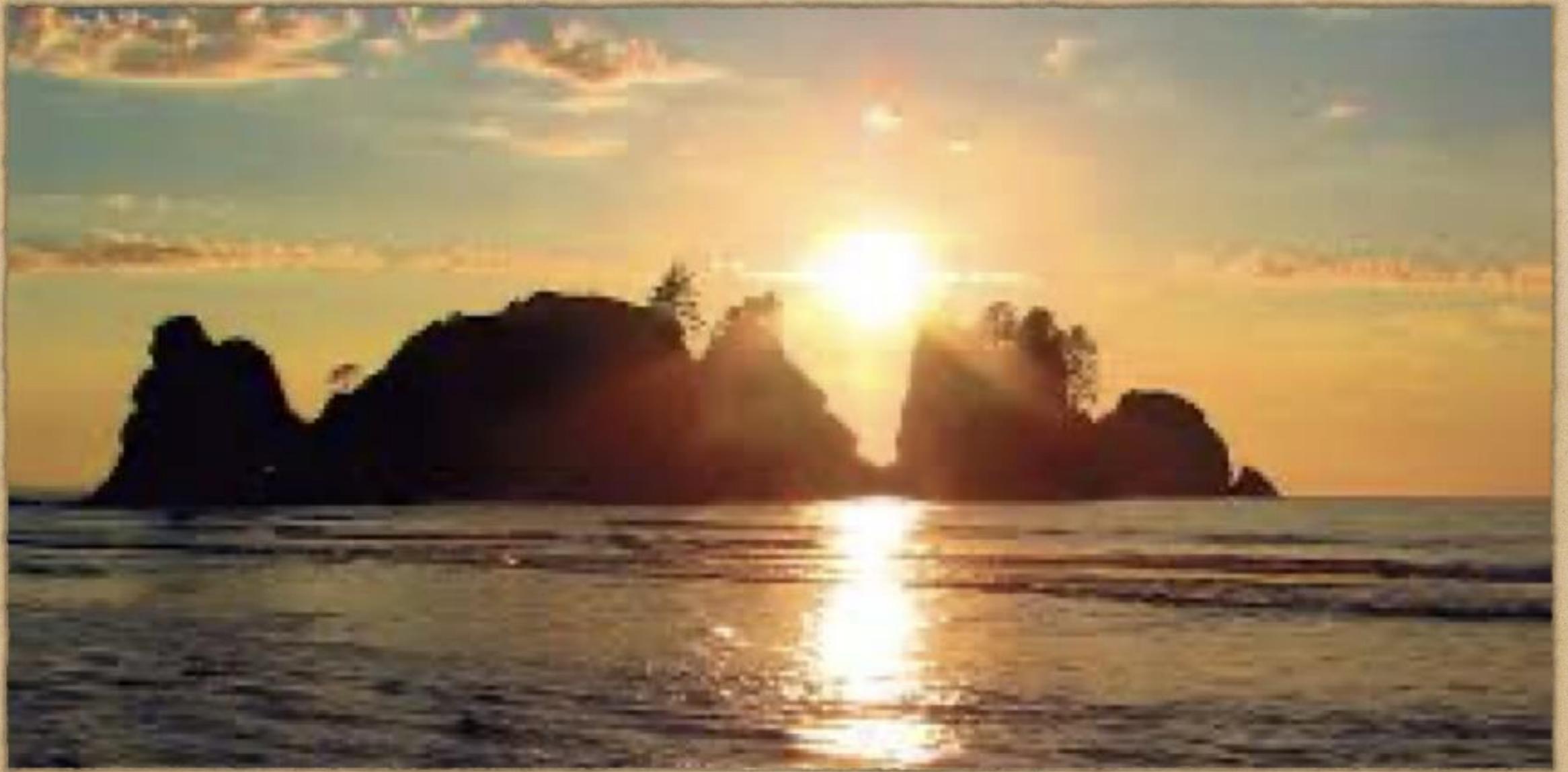
- No matter our shortcomings and failings and sometimes downright refusals to get with the program, God remains faithful...even when we don't.

And the choice of every day bread and everyday wine to become the very presence of God tells us

- That God doesn't live far away from us
- God lives right here with us
- God lives in us and we live in God

- We get to be close to God in the simple, everyday act of eating and drinking.
- It's a reminder that God is closer to us than our breath, nearer than our heartbeat.

- Communion is a physical reminder that God loves you more than you can ever know.



# So from the very beginning

- whenever followers of Jesus get together, they pray, they sing songs, and then they celebrate the Holy Communion: sharing bread and wine that makes us part of God and part of each other.

- In fact, on Easter Sunday, when all his friends thought he was dead forever, two of them were on their way home, to the village of Emmaus.....

- Little did they know that they were about to experience the very first Holy Communion after the death and resurrection of Jesus.

- After Jesus is crucified and raised from the grave, two of his followers are walking on the road to the town of Emmaus. They're sad and are talking about what happened to Jesus. Suddenly, Jesus joins them, walking along with them, but they don't recognize him...



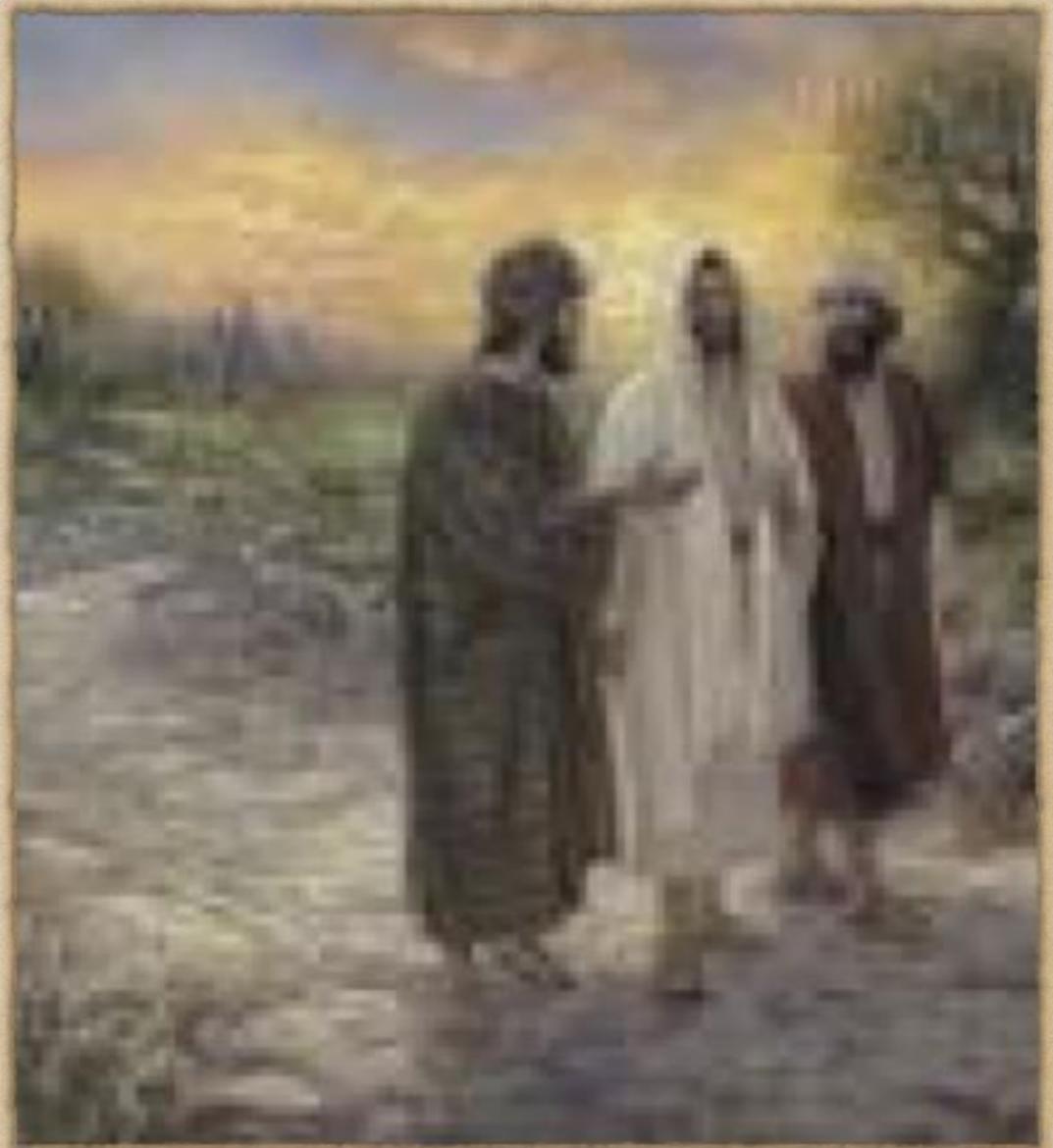
- “What are you talking about?” Jesus asks them.
- One says, “You must be the only person in Jerusalem that doesn't know what's happened the past few days,” telling him about how Jesus was crucified, and buried, that some women went to his tomb, but the tomb is empty. “We've heard he's alive!,” they say, “but we have not seen him.”

- Then Jesus opens their minds, helping them see what the Scriptures say about him.

- When they get to Emmaus they invite Jesus to stay. They sit down to eat, Jesus takes the bread and blesses it, breaks it, and gives it to them — and their eyes are opened —

they see him

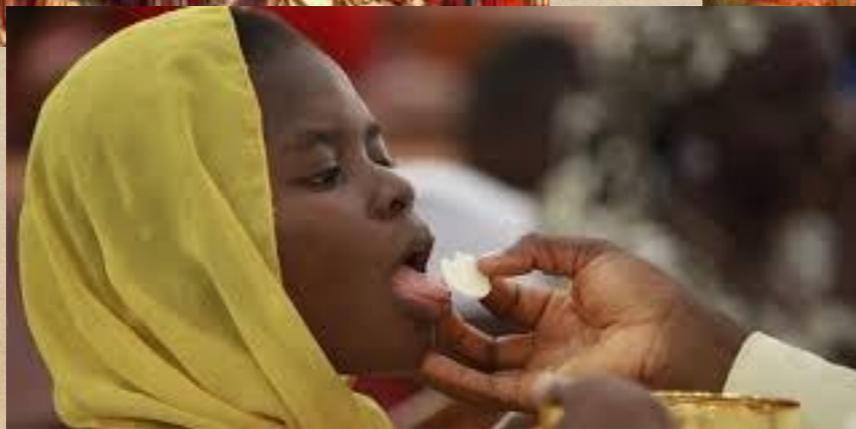
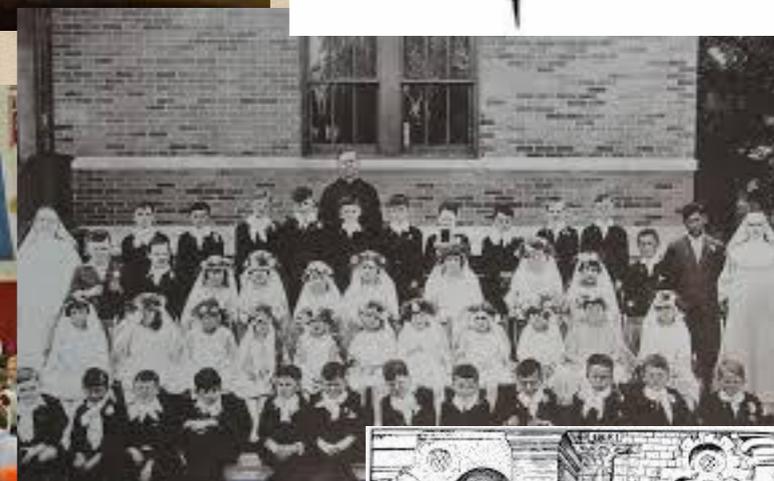
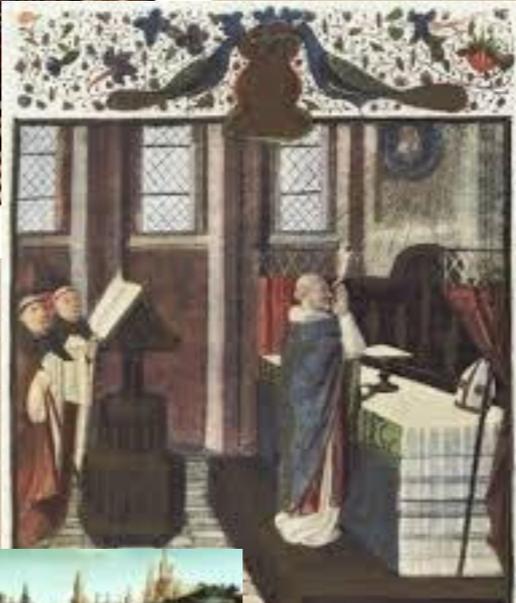
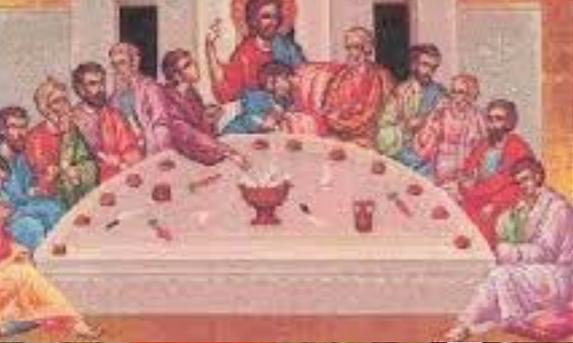
- In the breaking of the bread.....



And then  
he disappears



- Since then, the celebration of Holy Communion has spread throughout the whole world.



- Now that we know what it means, what is the practical part?

When you come to the altar

- kneel down.....or stand.....



A priest or deacon will put the bread

- in your hand.....or on your tongue if you prefer



# When you receive the bread

- The minister will say "The body of Christ, the bread of heaven."
- And you will say.....

- No, not thank you!

- But.....

AMEN!

Meaning: "SO BE IT"

Then the cup will come

- The minister will say.....

The Blood of Christ, the cup of  
salvation

And you will say:  
AMEN!  
(So be it)

- Now, a word about drinking from the cup and intinction.



- What is intinction?



- While most of us take from the cup that way, it's MUCH PREFERRED to take a SIP!!

- The cloth the eucharist minister carries is called a purificator...and that's what it does, it wipes the cup where you drink from, the cup is then turned slightly and the next person drinks.

- While most folks think sipping isn't as sanitary as dipping...think again...

WHY you ask??????

- Well.....ask yourself, would you rather be where someone's lips were.....



- or where someone's fingers were?????





- Our Bishop has sent out a number of letters to the parishes urging us all to return to taking a sip, and keeping our fingers out of the mix.....

- Maybe we can give it a try!!!!!!

- After you receive communion, please make the sign of the cross, acknowledging the great sacrifice and gift Christ gives to us in his new covenant.

And then feel free to say  
Thank You God

For the gift of Holy Communion!



And then, as St  
Augustine famously said:



SAINT  
AUGUSTINE  
OF HIPPO

“Receive who you are.”

And become what you  
receive.”

Please explain what he  
means

• By consuming Christ, Christ becomes one with us, so that we may become Christ in the world...

- Loving
- Forgiving
- Serving others

As we trudge this road of  
happy destiny



The End

And, of course, a new beginning