

Liturgy of the Word with Children
Corpus Christi, Year A
(Most Holy Body & Blood of Christ)
7 June, 2026
John 6:51-58



Diocese of Westminster

AGENCY FOR EVANGELISATION

Catechist Background

Today's Gospel reading would have been alarming to its first Jewish audience. The consumption of any kind of blood, human or animal, was forbidden to Jews. Eating human flesh would have been a complete abomination. Even the word that we translate as 'to eat' in the original Greek ('trogo') was not usually used to describe human mealtime behaviour; it is much more animalistic, akin to 'feed on' or even 'gnaw.' In John's Gospel, after this passage, we read that many of Jesus' followers left, and this is no surprise. Jesus explicitly linked himself to the provision of manna in the desert with Moses, and claimed that partaking in his body as food will go further than that desert miracle. Also, in the Old Testament books of Proverbs and Sirach, bread is used as a metaphor for heavenly wisdom.

Setting the Scene

For the activity described below, you will need small pieces of paper for the children to draw their faces on, a chalice-like cup or ciborium-like dish, and materials for drawing.

We Say Sorry

Leader: You have given us your life, Lord have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: You are always with us, Christ have mercy.

All: **Christ, have mercy.**

Leader: You share yourself with us in the Eucharist, Lord have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

Gloria

We Pray (1)

God, help us to join in your love so that we can live out the peace of your Kingdom. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel: John 6:51-58

Reflecting on the Gospel Reading with Children

- Ask: Do you know the phrase, 'You are what you eat?' What does that mean?
 - If you wanted to be a runner in the Olympics, what should you eat?
 - If you wanted to walk to the top of Mount Everest, what should you eat?
 - If you want to be a follower of Jesus, what should you eat? (the "food" Jesus gives us)
- Let's think about food in a different way: What special meals do people eat?
 - What do most people have for Christmas dinner?
 - How would people in your family react if someone made lasagne for Christmas instead?
 - What about it there was no cake at a birthday?
 - Special meals help us to remember and to make our memories of other events more real.
 - When people join in the Eucharist, they share in the Church's memory of Jesus' life.
 - At Mass, the bread and wine become Jesus' Body and Blood, and they give those who eat and drink them the things they need in their hearts to live their lives like they should.

- *Ask those old enough to 'understand' but not old enough to receive Holy Communion:* Even if you are not old enough to receive Holy Communion, how can you join in the second part of Mass? (say the responses, pray, listen to the prayers, go forward for a blessing etc.)

Response

- Jesus said that those who eat his body and drink his blood will live in him and he will live in them. The first people who heard this certainly thought it was a strange thing to say!
- Give the children small pieces of paper to draw their faces on and some drawing materials.
- In turn, invite each child to put their 'face' into the chalice/ciborium-like dish to show that they want to join in Jesus' love, whether they are old enough to receive Holy Communion or not.

We Believe

Relate the Creed to what you have shared with the children by asking these questions and inviting them to reply: 'I do.'

- Do you believe in God the Father and Creator of all that exists?
- Do you believe in God the Son, Jesus, who offers us his Body and Blood?
- Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit, who is here in our world today?

We Pray (2)

Again, relate the Prayer of the Faithful to the Gospel reading by saying: 'Lord, you came to give life and so we now pray...'

Leader: We pray for all who believe in you, that they may be united in Love. Lord in your mercy,
All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for kings, queens, prime ministers, presidents and rulers everywhere, that they may make laws that encourage people to lead holy lives. Lord in your mercy,
All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for people who do not have clean water to drink or enough food to eat. Help us to be generous to those in need. Lord in your mercy,
All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for people in our parish who have recently received Holy Communion for the first time and those who are preparing to do so. Help them to grow in faith. Lord in your mercy,
All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: Lord, help us to become united in your love by our joining in the Eucharist. We make our prayers through Christ our Lord.
All: **Amen.**

