

THIS IS MY BODY

Chapter Three Answers

The answers below are also available at: <https://www.stmparadise.net/adult-faith-formation-1>

The Real Presence

1. **What did St. Thomas Aquinas say about the real presence?** p. 70 The power of Christ is operative in the other sacraments, but Christ himself is present in the sacrament of the altar.
2. **What did Jesus say in the sixth chapter of St. John that is so important?** p. 71 Do not work for food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life (Jn 6:26-27)
3. **How does the “Heavenly Bread” possess the power to produce eternal life?** p. 72 Jesus says, “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever.”
4. **Why were the Jews so shocked by Jesus’ words, “the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh?”** pp. 72-73 Jews were prohibited from eating flesh and blood (Noah). See also Leviticus: “You must not eat any fat or any blood”; Deuteronomy: “You shall not eat the life with the meat.”
5. **What did Jesus say that showed that he was serious about others eating his flesh?** p.74 “Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.” (Jn 6:53)
6. **How did St. Paul confirm Jesus’ words?** p. 76 The cup of blood that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we eat, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? (1 Cor 10:16)
7. **How did Jesus’ disciples react to this teaching?** p. 76 “...many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him.” (Jn 6:66)

The witness of the Church Fathers and the argument with Berengarius

8. **What did the Church Fathers say about the real presence?**
 - **Ignatius of Antioch**, p.78: I desire to drink of God, namely his blood, which is incorruptible love and eternal life.
 - **Justin Martyr**, p.78: The food which is blessed by the prayer of his word is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh.
 - **Irenaeus**, p.79: Irenaeus refutes the Gnostics’ contempt for matter.
 - **Origen**, 79-80: Origen urged “caution and veneration lest any small part fall from it.”
 - **Cyril of Jerusalem**, p.80: Since Christ has himself affirmed and said, “This is my Blood”, who shall ever hesitate, saying, that is not his Blood?
 - **St. Ambrose**, p. 81: “This body which we make is that which was born of the Virgin.”
 - **St. John Chrysostom**, p.81: He insisted on the necessity of Divine Power in the words of consecration.
 - **St. Augustine**, p. 82: “That which you see on the Lord’s table is bread and wine. But when a word is added, that bread and wine become the body and blood of the Word.”
9. **How did Berengarius object to the Real Presence?** p. 83 He claimed that there is an essential difference between the body of Jesus, born of the Virgin now reigning in heaven and the “body” that appears sacramentally on the altar.

10. **What did the Church say about Berengarius' objection?** p. 86 There is something more in the Eucharist than in the other sacraments... Something qualitatively different is at play in the Eucharist, a presence at a substantially different level of intensity.

11. **What does the term *transubstantiation* mean?** pp. 87-88 The substances of bread and wine change into the substances of the body and blood of Christ while the appearances (accidents) of bread and wine remain the same.

The Eucharistic Theory of Thomas Aquinas

12. **In what way is the Eucharist a sacrament?** p. 91 All sacraments are designed to place the spiritual life within human beings, and the spiritual life is symbolically conformed to bodily life. Thus, just as food and drink are required for the sustenance of biological life, so the Eucharist is necessary for the sustenance of the life of grace. [A Sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace: Baltimore Catechism]

13. **How is the Eucharist more than just a sign?** p. 92 The Eucharist contains *ipsum passum* (the one himself who suffered) and not simply a sign or indication of him.

14. **How can the body of Christ be simultaneously in many places?** pp. 93-94 In heaven, Christ is an embodied person of a particular height, weight, color ("proper species"). In the sacrament of the Eucharist, Christ is present in a "sacramental species", his bodily presence according to a species appropriate to the sacrament.

15. **How can bread be changed into the body of Christ?** p. 95 The substances of bread and wine change into the substances of the body and blood of Christ while the appearances (accidents) of bread and wine remain the same.

16. **How can this be stated in terms of reality and appearance?** pp. 96-97 When we see the tiny lights of the stars, it certainly seems that we are seeing something that is substantially there, but we know that this is false. We are actually looking into the distant past. The light from those stars has reached us now even though the stars are no longer in the place we have perceived them. We see and taste bread and wine even though bread and wine have been transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ.

17. **What are the side effects of the Eucharist?** p. 98 The side effects are grace, a share in the divine life. The Eucharist repairs and delights the soul; it restores that which is drained away from us spiritually through ordinary day-to-day sins.

18. **Why shouldn't it be received by someone in the state of mortal sin?** p. 99 Mortal sin effectively kills the divine life in the one who commits it. Just as it would be foolish to give food to a dead person, it is foolish to give the Eucharist to someone who is dead to the divine life through mortal sin.

Some Contemporary Approaches to the Real Presence

19. **How do the terms *transignification* and *transfinalization* fail to explain the Eucharist?** p. 101 Transignification (bread and wine come to signify in the community the body and blood of Jesus) and Transfinalization (the Eucharistic elements point to Christ and the eschatological fulfillment of the Church) are slightly revised versions of the discredited Berengarian explanation. If it were only a matter of the community "deeming" the bread and wine to be something else, then the community would come to control the Eucharist rather than vice versa.

20. **How can the power of the divine word provide another explanation?** pp. 101-106 God said. “Let there be light” and there was light. “The word of God is the salutary word which brings with it what it affirms.” (Karl Rahner) When Jesus took bread and wine saying, “Take, eat; this is my body...and this is my blood of the covenant”, as the incarnate Word of God, his words had the power to create, to effect reality at the deepest possible level.

21. **What are Rober Sokolowski’s reflections on the Eucharist?** pp. 107-108 He argues that there are three ways to think about the relationship between spirit and matter: (1) Darwinian: matter is really all that there is and what we call spirit is simply a secondary effect. This makes no sense because it does not explain spirit; (2) Aristotelian: spirit and matter exist more or less side by side and interact with one another in complex ways. It presents a new and unprecedented way for the spiritual and material to relate to one another; (3) Creationist (or biblical): the properly spiritual – mind and will – preceded matter and can determine matter according to its purposes. The Real Presence of God in the Eucharist is dependent, finally, on the power of the Creator God.

“Here We Have No Lasting City”

22. **What happens when we receive the Eucharist (the Real Presence)?** pp. 109-110 The whole of one’s life (body, psyche, emotions, spirit) become ordered to the eternal dimension, to the realm of God. One’s energies and interests, one’s purposes and plans, are lifted out of a purely temporal context and given an entirely new spiritual meaning (valence). Wealth, power, honor, success, titles, degrees, even friendships and family connections are all relativized as the new high adventure of life with God opens up. The Eucharist, through the power and presence of God, will change the one who consumes it. Whoever says, “Amen” and receives the Body and Blood of Christ better be prepared to live in close fellowship with God and the Body of Christ and to follow Jesus and His Way to eternal life.