

As the apostles proclaim the resurrection of Jesus,
the message, the good news continues to spread.
And others besides Jews are coming to faith, coming to believe.

One thing that all potential believers eventually have to face:
how does Eucharist fit into God's plan of salvation?
Those who received instruction and were baptized...
eventually they would have been invited to do more than believe, per se.
They would have been invited by the Christian community
to participate in the Lord's Supper, invited to participate in the celebration of the Eucharist.
Eventually they would have heard Jesus' words from the Gospel this morning:
"Unless you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood,
you do not have life within you."

It's one thing to say that the words, the teachings of Jesus Christ bring eternal life.
It's another thing to say "the Eucharist we share, the bread that is broken,
and the cup that is poured out is the very flesh and blood of the Risen Lord.
Take and eat of this sacrament and you will live forever!"
Some of the talk of Jesus with regards to eating his body and blood was so scandalous to people
that they left his company because it was too much for them to accept...
to eat the flesh and blood of the Lord was beyond reason.
And even today this is a major dividing point
between Catholics and other Christian denominations.

Jesus found a way to remain with us after his resurrection and ascension into heaven:
he gave us the Eucharist.
He gave us this sacred feast, calls us to partake of his flesh and blood
so that we can fulfill the scriptural instruction
to eat the manna that has come down from heaven and brings eternal life.

The question of how ordinary bread and wine
are transformed into the flesh and blood of Christ is not irrelevant.
But it's not scientific either. It's theological.
It falls in the same category as the question "how does the resurrection take place?"
Jesus' resurrected body (his glorified body) was similar in ways to his earthly body,
his wounds could be touched and he could eat food.
But his resurrected body was also very different in ways. (He wasn't recognized at first by his disciples.)

The power that raises Jesus from the dead is the same power that brings about transubstantiation.
Both are directed toward our salvation.
It is all part of the mystery of our faith.
We can only stand in awe of God's saving power as we partake of the Eucharist.
It's the same awe we experience as we stand before the resurrection.

Today's prayer: "O Lord, You inspire us to believe what is beyond our understanding so that the praises
of Your Son Jesus Christ might be sung in all places and at all times. Help us to partake of Your sacred
mysteries for through them you give life to our souls. Amen!"