



ST AUGUSTINE

ON THE EUCHARIST

We become what we receive" (*Sermon 272*)

"What you see on God's altar: the bread is Christ's body, the cup is Christ's blood. Faith can grasp the fundamentals quickly, succinctly, yet it hungers for a fuller account of the matter.

So how can bread be his body? And what about the cup? How can it be his blood?" My friends, these realities are called sacraments because in them one thing is seen, while another is grasped.

Listen to the Apostle Paul speaking to the faithful: "You are the body of Christ, member for member." If you, therefore, are Christ's body and members, it is your own mystery that is placed on the Lord's table! It is your own mystery that you are receiving! You are saying "Amen" to what you are: your response is a personal signature, affirming your faith. When you hear "The body of Christ", you reply "Amen." Be a member of Christ's body, then, so that your "Amen" may ring true!

Listen, again, to what Paul says about this sacrament: "The bread is one, and we, though many, are one body." Understand and rejoice: unity, truth, faithfulness, love. "One bread," he says. What is this one bread? Is it not the "one body," formed from many? Remember: bread doesn't come from a single grain, but from many."