



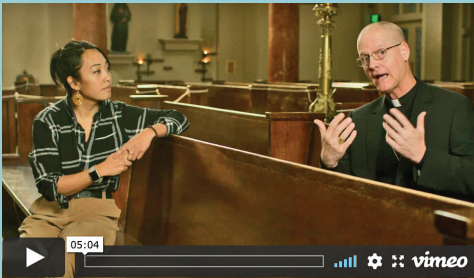
## Teacher's Guide

# REAL PRESENCE VIDEO SERIES WITH ARCHBISHOP ETIENNE

Archbishop Etienne filmed a series of brief videos on the key topics he highlighted in his pastoral letter *The Work of Redemption: Eucharistic Belief and Practice in the Archdiocese of Seattle*, including two videos about how Christ, present in the Eucharist, can truly nourish us.

These videos may be used as the starting point for discussions with high school or middle school students.

To access the videos, please visit the Come and Be Fed page on the Archdiocese of Seattle website: [archseattle.org/be\\_fed](http://archseattle.org/be_fed). The "Real Presence" videos are near the top of the page.



"Real Presence of Christ — Conversation with Diana"

## RESOURCES

*"Praying the Mass: Real Presence" excerpt from Archbishop Etienne's Pastoral Letter The Work of Redemption: Eucharistic Belief and Practice in the Archdiocese of Seattle*

*The Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, Q&A* — an article from the USCCB that provides basic Q&A about the real presence of Jesus in the sacrament of the Eucharist

*Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework* — framework from the USCCB to guide catechetical instruction for young people of high school age

## REAL PRESENCE IN THE EUCHARIST

Watch "The Eucharist: Real Presence" video (2 min), then discuss:

- What resonated with you?
- Did you hear anything new or something said in a different way that revealed something to you?
- Have you struggled with believing that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist or do you know others who do? What are ways that might help you believe that Christ is truly present in the Eucharist?

Watch "Real Presence of Christ – Conversation with Diana" video (5 min) then discuss:

- Did Diana share something that you relate to? If so, what?
- Do you find yourself escaping into social media, other media or virtual environments? What are you searching for or seeking to satisfy?
- Have you been able to receive Christ in the Eucharist recently? What are the struggles or obstacles that keep you from attending Mass in person?
- When you realistically assess how much time you spend on screens, social media or the internet, can you carve out 10 minutes a day to spend time with Jesus in prayer? How might that make a difference in your life?
- Do you have the courage to ask Jesus to transform your life as he transforms the bread and wine into his body and blood?

## WRITING PROMPTS

- Pick two of the questions above and write your response.
- Write about what the Real Presence means to you.

## Excerpt from Archbishop Etienne's *The Work of Redemption: Eucharistic Belief and Practice in the Archdiocese of Seattle*

### PRAYING THE MASS: THE REAL PRESENCE

In the Liturgy of Eucharist, we continue our dialogue with God. The Eucharistic Prayer is spoken by the priest on behalf of the whole community. All of us, as members of the priestly people of God, offer this prayer to the Father together. We bring before God the world and all its activity, by bringing our own lives and offering them along with the bread and the wine for transformation. In the prayer at the preparation of the bread and wine, the priest asks God to receive the “fruit of the earth and work of human hands.” When we bring the work of our hands — our daily love and labor, our family joys and sorrows, our needs as communities and nations — God takes these gifts and transforms them.

The bread and wine we offer to God is given back to us, to be our heavenly food, the very Body and Blood of Christ. The sacrifice of Christ, offered once for all on the cross, is renewed in this mystery, and through our Eucharistic sharing, we participate in that same sacrifice. Christ's presence in this sacrament is not merely a symbolic representation of our unity as a community, or a reminder of his love. In the Eucharist, the dying and rising of Christ become tangible, and Christ is truly present in our midst: body, blood, soul, and divinity. We call this presence the “Real Presence.” When we receive Holy Communion, we truly partake of the Body and Blood of the Lord, offered for our salvation. We are united with Christ, and through our sharing in this mystery, with each other.

It has never been easy to live a Eucharistic life. When Jesus first proclaimed this mystery to his disciples, some were scandalized: “As a result of this, many of his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him” (John 6:66). The time we live in poses special challenges to faith. We live in a culture that has largely forgotten God. Faith is often presented as a dusty relic of a bygone day, and the Church as just one more flawed human institution.<sup>1</sup> These attitudes that pervade our culture can have an impact on our faith life, eroding the sacramental imagination and making it harder for us to recognize Christ's Real Presence in the Eucharist and in the world around us.

But we know that the Eucharist is the Real Presence of Christ in our churches and in our lives, and that this mystery is the fulcrum of history. We need to nurture — or rediscover — our “Eucharistic amazement,” to use the phrase of Pope St. John Paul II.<sup>2</sup> The Eucharist is the cornerstone of all we do: the source from which we draw our identity as a community of believers, the summit to which all our work and service is directed.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament flows naturally from our experience of the Eucharist during Mass. As Abbot

Jeremy Driscoll, OSB, has said, Exposition is like a “freeze frame” of the elevations of the consecrated elements, the Body and Blood of Christ, at Mass. The liturgy moves quite quickly. Time in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament outside of Mass, whether in the tabernacle or during Exposition, allows us to absorb and take in what this mystery is all about. The Mass is God's action in creating, forming, and saving his people. Adoration places us in the presence of the accomplished fact of Christ's saving work on our behalf. The Church envisions that Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament always exists in relationship to the Eucharistic action of the Mass.

Pope Francis has emphasized the importance of time for adoration for the Church's mission: “Without prolonged moments of adoration, of prayerful encounter with the word, of sincere conversation with the Lord, our work easily becomes meaningless; we lose energy as a result of weariness and difficulties, and our fervor dies out. The Church urgently needs the deep breath of prayer.”<sup>3</sup> These moments when we kneel before the Blessed Sacrament, just us and the Lord, are precious and important. But, as Pope Francis goes on, “There is always the risk that some moments of prayer can become an excuse for not offering one's life in mission; a privatized lifestyle can lead Christians to take refuge in some false forms of spirituality.”<sup>4</sup> Our time spent in adoration should always overflow in our lives and actions, drawing us more deeply into communion with Christ and one another. “The saints — consider the example of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta — constantly renewed their capacity for love of neighbor from their encounter with the Eucharistic Lord, and conversely this encounter acquired its realism and depth in their service to others.”<sup>5</sup>

I am struck by an entry in the diary of my venerable predecessor, Bishop A.M.A. Blanchet, the first bishop of this diocese. The diocese was established on May 31, 1850, but Blanchet gives much more attention to a different date in his diary — January 23, 1851. It was on that date that the Eucharist was reserved for the first time at St. James Cathedral, then a simple wood-frame church near Fort Vancouver. Bishop Blanchet wrote: “The Blessed Sacrament is placed in the tabernacle. The church, dedicated to St. James is then, at this moment truly, the House of God, and the Gate of Heaven. We can say now, The Lord has sanctified this house which was built to establish His name here, and His eyes and His heart will always be here.” Bishop Blanchet knew that the Eucharist is Christ's abiding presence in our midst. Christ is still present in our midst in the Eucharist today, and this presence continues to make possible all that we are and all that we do in this local Church.

<sup>1</sup> General Instruction of the Roman Missal, 55.

<sup>2</sup> Pope St. John Paul II, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 262.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, 18.