

Corpus Christi C

A rich man had a dream in which he died and went to heaven. St Peter escorted him down a lovely street where each house was magnificent. The man saw one house that was particularly beautiful. 'That' said Peter 'is the house of one of your workmen'. 'Well,' said the man, smiling, 'if my workman has a building like that, then I'm really looking forward to seeing my own magnificent mansion.' Soon they came to a very small street where the houses were small and mean looking. 'You will live in that hut,' said St Peter, pointing his finger. 'Me, live in that hovel!' roared the man in anger. This is the best we can do for you,' explained St Peter. 'You must understand that we only build your home up here from the material you send up to us'.

And of course the material we send ahead are the acts of love and kindness we have shown while still in the body. But love is always borne of sacrifice and that is why it is connected up with the sacrifice of the Mass. It's not just the priest who offers Mass. Everyone does. Don't I pray later on that 'my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God'. You will notice that Jesus didn't multiply the loaves and fish without human involvement. The disciples had to part with something first before anything could happen. The word 'sacrifice' comes from the Latin words '*sacrum facere*' - 'to make holy'. We can be sure that the holiest people are those who sacrifice themselves, their time, their talents, their possessions in the service of others. It is rather interesting to note that after Jesus had washed the apostles' feet at the Last Supper, he then told them to 'wash each other's feet'.

The elements we use in the Eucharist also suggest sacrifice. Thy making of bread and wine involves the labour and work of human hands. Bread doesn't grow on trees, the same with the wine. Both involve human labour before we get the finished product. The wheat has to be ground before the bread is made. The grapes have to be crushed. Pride in us has to be ground

down and self-centredness has to be crushed out before people can savour the sweet taste of our love, the quality of which depends on us.

Through our reception of Holy Communion we become living icons of Christ to our world so that as we are nourished and then sent forth from the Mass, the love of Christ may be multiplied among us just like the loaves and fishes were in the Gospel today. We are a vital part of the action.