Eucharist as Table Companionship

Teacher background

No sacrament is richer in meaning and symbolism than the Eucharist. Vatican II described it as ‘the source and summit of the Christian life’. Four symbols of Eucharist include; bread and wine, the Word, the presider and the community gathered. By invocation of the Holy Spirit, Jesus who is the Bread of Life, is made present sacramentally. Christians are fed at this table of the Lord. The first fruit of their sacramental nourishment is a closer union with Christ. ‘Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me and I in them.’ (John 6:56) Consequently, through Communion, one is bound more closely in love to all who form the Body of Christ. One is fortified against sin and strengthened to meet the challenges of the Christian life.

The word of God that is proclaimed and broken open during the Mass. ‘The Eucharistic table set for us is the table both of the Word of God and of the Body of the Lord.’ (Vatican II) When the Scriptures are proclaimed in the community, Christ is present as God's Word, nourishing our minds and understanding and deepening our faith.