

# BRINGING HOME THE GOSPEL

June 11, 2023 • Body & Blood of Christ • John 6:51–58

## The Living Bread

*Jesus has just fed thousands of people with a few loaves and fishes. He tells the people waiting for him the next day not to follow him because he was able to provide bread. He tells them not to work for bread that will perish but for the food that will last eternally.*

**T**he Eucharist, the Mass, is a memorial of Christ's great sacrifice celebrated at a meal. How can we help our children understand the great blessings of the Mass unless they are familiar with what a celebratory meal is like?

I remember a joke I heard years ago. "How does a suburban mom from Centerville call her kids for dinner?" Answer: "Everybody in the car!" Its truth resonates in so many of our families. I heard a statistic a few years ago that the average family sits down together for only two meals per week with everyone present.

The statistic is not surprising when we consider what busy and complicated lives we live. Extended work hours, long commutes, and a barrage of activities for children make time a precious commodity. And yet spending time together is one of the factors used to judge a strong, healthy family. Another quality is commitment.

One way of showing our commitment to family is by taking the time to have at least one special family meal a week. Make it a celebration. Remember, it is not the food that makes it special (pizza is fine); it is having everyone sitting around the table together.

Try to make a ritual out of such occasions. Light a candle in the center and hold hands for a bless-

ing. Make sure the cell phones are silenced and the television and social media are turned off. Make it a rule that no one leaves the table until everyone is finished. Allow only positive, affirming conversation: no preaching, no scolding. A good conversation starter might be to ask everyone to share what was the best thing that happened to him or her that day (or week).

Time spent around the dinner table is special. Think about all the time Jesus spent in table fellowship with his disciples. He is no less present at our table. All of family mealtime is sacred, as much a blessing as the prayer it began with.

### FAMILY RESPONSE

What was the best time you ever had together as a family? What made it special?

### PERSONAL RESPONSE

What are your memories from your childhood dinner table? What do you want to remember from last week? What are you looking forward to next week? What are your concerns?