

In the ancient world, stories were not first written—they were lived, remembered, and spoken. Around campfires, in crowded homes, and within sacred gatherings, truth passed from one heart to another. Before ink touched parchment, the truths of our faith were entrusted to voices—faithful voices who remembered and handed on what they had seen and heard.

So it was in the early Church. Long before the Gospels were written, the stories of Jesus—His teachings, His miracles, His Passion—were preserved through this living tradition. One of the earliest written testimonies we possess is from St. Paul, in today's second reading. Scholars believe it may be the oldest written passage in the entire New Testament. And what does it preserve? The mystery of the Eucharist.

Paul writes, “I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you.” These words echo the heartbeat of tradition—received, treasured, and shared. His language reflects the sacred rhythm of the liturgy already alive in the earliest Christian communities. This account so closely mirrors Luke's Gospel that it suggests a common source, likely a liturgical formula cherished by the first believers. That would

make sense—Paul and Luke traveled together. They prayed together. They celebrated the Eucharist together.

From the very beginning, then, the Eucharist has been at the center of Christian life. And so it remains today. The Catechism proclaims that the Eucharist is “the source and summit of the Christian life” (CCC 1324)—the beginning and the goal. In the Eucharist, the Church receives her greatest treasure: Christ himself, wholly present, wholly given.

“Do this in remembrance of me.”

These words of Jesus are not merely a suggestion or a symbol. They are a command—gentle, but absolute. And in them is the very heart of our worship. For to remember, in the biblical sense, is never just to think back. It is not nostalgia. It is not a mental exercise.

To remember, in the Eucharistic sense, is to make present. In every Mass, through the words of consecration and the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus becomes truly present—Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. And we are drawn, mystically yet truly, into the one sacrifice of Calvary. We do not merely recall the Passion; we are brought into

communion with it. Time folds. Heaven touches earth. The cross stands before us again, and the risen Lord gives himself to us once more.

This mystery—so central to our faith—is not new. The seeds of it were planted long before the Upper Room.

Today, in the first reading, we hear of Melchizedek, the mysterious priest-king who blesses Abram and offers bread and wine. With little explanation and few words, Scripture lifts the veil for just a moment to reveal a figure who prefigures Christ: priest and king, bearer of blessing, who offers the very elements that Jesus will one day transform into his Body and Blood.

The Gospel, too, prepares us for the Eucharist. Jesus feeds the multitude—not with excess, but with what is offered. The disciples bring him five loaves and two fish, barely enough for one small family. But in the hands of Jesus, insufficiency becomes abundance. Hunger becomes satisfaction. Want becomes gift.

This is how God works—not apart from us, but with what we bring to him. He waits for our offering. He asks for our trust.

Too often we ask God to intervene without offering our hearts, our time, our vulnerability. But the miracle begins only when we lay down all that we have, however little it may seem.

If we do not see God moving in our lives, perhaps we must ask:

What am I withholding?

What have I not yet surrendered?

Am I truly placing my whole self—my joys, my wounds, my hopes—on the altar with the bread and wine?

Because it is there, at the altar, that transformation happens. It is there that heaven opens. It is there that Jesus gives himself to us completely, that we might become what we receive.

The living tradition of the Church—the mystery of the Eucharist—has now been placed in our hands, not as a relic to be admired, but as a flame to be kept burning, a gift to be lived and handed on. What we have received at this altar, we are called to carry into the world, so that others, too, might

encounter Jesus Christ and the transforming power of his Eucharistic life.

We may never speak to crowds or write letters that echo through the centuries. But our daily choices, our quiet acts of sacrificial love, will speak with a clarity no words can match. And when the moment comes—when someone hungers for the hope that dwells within us—may we remember the exhortation of St. Peter: “Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope” (1 Peter 3:15).