Actually you don’t need to go overseas to attend mass in another language. We can get a Mandarin mass in St Ignatius Church and a Tamil mass in Fatima Church nearby. We can also get a Bahasa mass when we go to an Orang Asli settlement or in East Malaysia. I have attended a quadric-lingual mass in one of our small towns. They read the three readings in Mandarin, Tamil and Bahasa and the homily was in English, translated for each community by their respective catechist. It makes me proud to be a Catholic.

You see: ask the children what does Catholic mean? It means universal. It means that people who are in all countries in the world speaking different languages, practicing different customs but bound by the same faith. The Malaysian Church is probably more Catholic than most.

Explain that we are sometimes called the Body of Christ because St Paul taught us that we are all like different parts of the same body with Jesus as the head.

So, when we say ‘Amen’ to the Eucharistic Minister’s ‘Body of Christ’, we are not just agreeing (remember, ‘Amen’ means ‘to agree’) that the piece of bread has now become the body of Christ, but also we are all part of the one Body of Christ, we believe in the same God and we belong to the same family. And you know at that point, something special happens. Two persons who have never met become one family, one in the same church, one in the same Body of Christ. And wherever that you take communion in the world, you are at home.

# LSW

children

Year B

##### Twentieth Ordinary Sunday

## Images

Feast for a world-wide family

## Points to note

This week’s reading is the fourth of a series of readings centred around the account of the feeding of the five thousand in Jn. For the five weeks, the readings will be laden with theological themes of: the feeding (Sunday 17); true bread (Sunday 18); the person of Jesus (Sunday 19); Jesus as bread (Sunday 20); and accepting Jesus (Sunday 21).

While it makes sense to present them in such a cycle to adults, it is very difficult for children. I have therefore interpreted it as: preparing the meal (Sunday 17); what we eat (Sunday 18); who we eat with (Sunday 19); the wider church who shares the bread (Sunday 20); and what to do after the meal (Sunday 21).

In all instances, it is important to emphasise the personal and the everyday occurrences that children encounter at meals and parallel them with the meal for their spiritual world.

## Liturgy

### Acclamation

Alleluia! Alleluia!

He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me

and I live in him, says the Lord.

Alleluia!

Gospel

*Explain that Jesus was explaining to the people his miracle of the loaves and the significance of him feeding 5000 men plus the women and children.*

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St John

(Jn 6: 51-58)

Jesus said to the crowd:

“I am the bread of life which has come down from heaven.

Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever;

and the bread that I shall give is my flesh,

for the life of the world.”

Then the Jews started arguing with one another: “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” they said. Jesus replied:

“I tell you most solemnly,

if you do not eat of the flesh of the Son of Man

and drink his blood,

you will not have life in you.

Anyone who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life:

and I shall raise him up on the last day.

For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.

He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me

and I live in him.

Just as I, sent by the living Father,

myself get life from the Father,

so whoever eats me will get life from me.

This is the bread that come down from heaven;

not like the bread our ancestors ate ;

they are dead, but whoever eats this bread will live for ever.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord

# Discussion

Just as the family at home have meals together, the family of God also have a meal together. The mass. *Draw parallels between the family at home and the family of God. There is a dining table (the altar table) with a table-cloth over it (the altar cloth). There is food on the table (the bread and wine) and lots of diners (the congregation).*

Imagine a big party to be held. *Get the children to think in terms of a big party.* Can you think of a place big enough to hold a very, very big party. SFX church? No bigger! Bukit Jalil Stadium? No, bigger! Imagine a party so big that it needed 12,000 Bukit Jalil Stadiums to hold all the people invited. That is what happens every Sunday. Every Sunday, over 4,000 bishops and 400,000 priests celebrate mass for one billion Catholics in 900,000 churches throughout the world.

*Get the children to stretch their imagination and imagine millions of people attending mass at the same time. Imagine that at the same minute that you are taking communion, maybe one million other Catholics are taking it with you. Emphasise that it is one big family meal for a family so big that we need to hold the meal at the same time in different places all over the world.*

*Explain that it is the same mass that is celebrated throughout the world. Jesus promised that he is the bread of life that is given to all people who believes in him. And everyone who believes in him will be coming for mass every Sunday.*

*Explain that the mass is organised so that every church will be using the same readings and will be saying the same prayers the same way. We all use the same mass books drawn up by the bishops in Rome. We all also use the same Missal, which dictates which reading is to be used for every Sunday of the year. Praying from the same mass book and reading from the same Missal is our way of saying we are family. We also learn the same faith from the same Catechism and the same Bible.*

How many of us have been overseas? How many of us have attended mass overseas? How many of us have attended mass overseas in another language? *Explain that there is no difference in the mass here and overseas and whatever language it is.*