

Transubstantiation

'The more Eucharist we receive,
the more we will become like Jesus.'

- FR. DR. JOBY PULIKKAN » BANGALORE, INDIA

Dear friends,

Let me share with you a very personal experience. I got ordained as a priest on December 30, 2008. Soon after my first Mass, a lady approached me and said that she saw a pulsating piece of flesh on the paten during the prayer of consecration. It was a humbling experience to realise that there happens a literal transubstantiation when the Eucharist becomes Christ's body and blood.

What is transubstantiation?

According to the teaching of the Catholic Church, it is 'the change of the whole substance of bread into the substance of the Body of Christ and of the whole substance of wine into the substance of the Blood of Christ. This change is brought about in the Eucharistic prayer through the efficacy of the Word of Christ and by the action of the Holy Spirit. However, the outward characteristics of bread and wine, remain unaltered.' The manner in which change occurs is a mystery. No science can explain it. Nevertheless, there are evidences that change occurs.

Scientists have proven existence of human tissue in many Eucharistic miracles. The scientific investigation of a Eucharistic miracle in Poland recently confirmed that it came from human tissue 'most similar to heart muscle ... under the strain of agony'. In Buenos Aires, Argentina, another Eucharistic miracle was reported. A consecrated host was found on the ground and when placed in a glass of water to dissolve, it turned into blood and flesh. After three years, a Bolivian neurophysiologist, Dr. Castanon, was entrusted to study the sample scientifically. He took it to the San Francisco Forensic Institute without revealing the origin of the sample. It was found that the sample constituted heart muscle and the blood was human with human DNA and of the rare AB+ type, the same as found on the Shroud of Turin where Jesus was buried. When the same sample was further examined by another cardiologist, he was amazed to see it pulsating like a living, beating heart.

When Dr. Castanon first came across the miracle in 1999, he was an atheist and today he is a Catholic. Although flesh and blood are not always visible as in the cases of Eucharistic miracles, the presence of the Body of Christ is certain through the eyes of faith. Beyond science and reason are the ways of the Lord. Let us seek his grace so that we accept in faith the transubstantiation that takes place every day during the Eucharistic celebration we attend ◦

