THE EUCHARIST

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| KAI: | Libby! We just passed a Yeti! |
| LIBBY: | That was a yak. |
| KAI: | Not as abominable, just as hairy. |
| LIBBY: | We made it. |
| KAI: | Oh, thank goodness. Made it where? |
| LIBBY: | The Himalayas, Kai. |
| KAI: | Okay. Why? |
| LIBBY: | To reach the highest summit, Mount Kailash, at the source of the Indus River. |
| KAI: | That explains nothing. |
| LIBBY: | We're talking about the Eucharist today. It's where the Christian faith begins and gives meaning to everything Christians do. It's the source and summit of the faith. |
| KAI: | Wait, are you telling me we just hiked 30 miles up 22,000 feet, past yetis- |
| LIBBY: | Yaks. |
| KAI: | ... hairy monsters, either way, in the freezing cold, just so you can make a pun? |
| LIBBY: | Yes ... but not just a pun. This is a physical inhabitation of metaphorical reality. |
| KAI: | I cannot believe you. |
| LIBBY: | That's what a lot of the disciples said. |
| KAI: | I'm going back down. I'll see you back in the studio. |
| LIBBY: | Bye!  CATHOLIC CENTRAL OPENING TITLES |
| LIBBY: | What is that? |
| KAI: | Hot chocolate, Libby. I'm still thawing out. |
| LIBBY: | All right, well, can we just start? |
| KAI: | Look, from here to the end of the episode, every time there's an opportunity for a bad pun, I'm going to make it. |
| LIBBY: | 'K, whatever you need. |
| KAI: | Dough. That's what I knead. Boom. First pun. |
| LIBBY: | Anyway, as we were saying, according to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Eucharist, or holy communion, is the source and summit of the Christian life. |
| KAI: | Yeah, and if that sounds like a pretty big claim, it is. What the Church means is that the Eucharist is where the Faith comes from. It's the source. It's also the summit for Christians, because it's where everything they are, and everything they do in their lives, finds ultimate meaning. |
| LIBBY: | That is big and bears something explanation. |
| KAI: | I will grin and bear that that explanation. Pun two. |
| LIBBY: | In all seriousness, today we will discuss what the Eucharist is, where it comes from, and what it means to us today. |
| KAI: | Okay. That's actually important. I won't sully it with a pun. I'll be a good host. |
| LIBBY: | Let's start with what we mean when we say the source of the Faith. |
| KAI: | For that, we need to understand the Last Supper. |
| LIBBY: | And not just why everyone was sitting on one side of the table. |
| KAI: | It was Passover, and Jesus, knowing he was about to be captured and killed, wanted to share a meal with his closest friends, the Apostles. Do you know where the term Passover came from? |
| ANIMATED JESUS: | Please pass over the bread, John. |
| KAI: | Pun number four. |
| LIBBY: | Passover is a holy feast, important to our Jewish brothers and sisters even today. It observes the time that God delivered the Jewish nation from slavery in Egypt. It's a memorial meal. |
| KAI: | When I hear the word memorial, I think of Memorial Day, where you remember those who went before you, or calling something to mind and actively remembering it. |
| LIBBY: | In Jewish tradition, it is so much more than that. The purpose is not just to have thoughts about it, but to make the reality of a moment in the past into a reality now in the present. |
| KAI: | When they celebrate the Passover, they believe that they're actually participating in the Passover from slavery to freedom. |
| LIBBY: | Even the menu for the Passover is filled with meaning. |
| KAI: | They had a menu for people about to travel: unleavened bread, herbs, and a lamb that was sacrificed. |
| LIBBY: | And the blood of that lamb was spread on the doorposts and lintel, and death passed over every door that was marked. They also had to eat the flesh of the lamb as part of the meal. |
| KAI: | Catholics believe that the food of the new Passover, called the Eucharist, is Jesus, the Lamb of God who died on the cross. His sacrifice saves his followers from slavery, too, the slavery of death and sin that keeps them from being free to live life to the fullest. |
| LIBBY: | At the Passover celebration we call the Last Supper, Jesus adds something new and important to this memorial meal. |
| KAI: | From all the foods on the table, Jesus takes the bread. Bread is an interesting choice. It takes a community to make it. You can't pick bread off of a tree. You need someone to till the soil, someone to plant the seed, someone to harvest it, someone to mill it into flour, someone to bake it, and someone to serve it. Jesus, who has lived and taught and forgiven and healed in community, and will soon die for the sake of the community, takes the bread and says, "Take this and eat. This is my body." |
| LIBBY: | When we say, "Body," we usually mean our physical body. |
| LIBBY: | But if you go back to the word used for body, it's the Greek word soma, which means the totality of a person, who they truly are. Jesus takes the bread, and says, "This is my soma, the totality of who I am. This is me." Then he says, "Take and eat. Do this in memory of me." |
| KAI: | Like we were saying, "Make this real in your time." |
| LIBBY: | Then Jesus takes a cup filled with wine, and he says, "This is my blood." |
| KAI: | To Jews, blood isn't just part of the body's biochemical system. They saw blood as the life-force of a person, their energy. |
| LIBBY: | Jesus is saying, "Take my life-force into you. Take my energy into you," but a lot of people might ask, "When Jesus says, 'This is my body and my blood,' is that just a metaphor?" |
| KAI: | What's a metaphor? For putting cows in. Wait, did we just put up a graphic to explain my pun? |
| LIBBY: | We had to. It was that bad, but, no, it's not a metaphor, everyone. Jesus meant it literally. |
| KAI: | In John's Gospel, he says to his followers, "My flesh is true food and my blood is true drink ... Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you." |
| LIBBY: | Right, and when he said that, people started ... Well, they freaked out. |
| KAI: | They weren't like, "Cool. Cool. Flesh. Nice metaphor, Jesus, like when you said we should poke our eye out if it sins." |
| LIBBY: | They knew he meant this statement differently. They said, "This is a hard saying. Who can accept it?" |
| KAI: | Honestly, it is a hard saying. |
| LIBBY: | But, Catholics know from Scripture, and experience, that it's true. That's why they talk about the real presence of Jesus. |
| KAI: | Because the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Jesus, the Lamb of God, is really and fully present in the Sacrament of Eucharist, or Holy Communion, offered at Mass. |
| LIBBY: | As you may remember from other episodes, the Church describes a Sacrament as the outward visible sign of an invisible grace. The outward visible sign of the Eucharist is the bread and wine. |
| KAI: | And the invisible grace is the real presence of Jesus, who is present in all ways, except His outward, human form. |
| LIBBY: | He's present. He's really there -- to set us free, to fix what's broken, to pour His love on us, and save us from death. |
| KAI: | Not just eternal death, but the small deaths of our lives, our struggles, our disappointments- |
| LIBBY: | And that's why Catholics receiving the Eucharist say, "Amen." |
| KAI: | Amen doesn't just mean, "Yes," or, "I do believe." It means that you believe it and will make it real in your own life. A source of faith, the Eucharist, that will lead you to the summit of faith, a way of being alive that's energized by the life-force of God himself. |
| LIBBY: | No wonder we call it a celebration. |
| KAI: | Exactly. Eucharist, isn't that Greek for thanksgiving? |
|  | To sum up, there was the Passover and then the Last Supper. There was the blood of the lamb, and then the body, blood, soul, and divinity, of Jesus, the Lamb of God. |
| LIBBY: | The sacrament of Eucharist, a sacrifice and memorial meal that leads us from slavery to freedom, that transforms us and brings us home to our real selves, sending us into the world passionate to make a difference. |
|  | All right guys, that's it for us. Thank you for joining us, and we'll see you next time. |
| KAI: | Let's ketchup later. |

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