



## Mass Parts 41/52: *Fraction Rite*

At the same time as the congregation is singing the Lamb of God, the priest breaks apart the Hosts and divides and organizes the vessels for Communion distribution. This part of the Mass, called the “Fraction Rite,” begins with the breaking in half of the main Host. Though no bone was broken on Christ’s Body on the Cross, we now break apart His sacramental Body to show His death for all of us to share in.

Part of this Fraction Rite includes breaking off a tiny piece of the main Host and dropping it into the Precious Blood in the main chalice. While doing this, the priest says:

*May this mingling of the Body and Blood  
of our Lord Jesus Christ  
bring eternal life to us who receive it.*

Bringing the elements together again, the Body with the Blood, reminds us symbolically and physically that, though they appear under two separate species, the wholeness of our Savior Jesus is present. The Blood is present sacramentally in the Body, and the Body is present sacramentally in the Blood.

This practice finds its earliest example in the Early Church in Rome, where a piece of the Host from the Pope’s Mass was taken by deacons to the surrounding parishes and used in their Masses. This practice pointed to the unity of the Church and the unity of the one Body of Christ. There really is only one sacrifice of Christ’s Body and Blood; this is the eternal wedding banquet in heaven. There is one sacrifice, one chalice, one loaf, one bread, one body. It is through our participation in the Mass and our reception of the one Body and Blood of Christ that we participate in the one eternal sacrifice.

-Fr. Kopp

Next Week: Priest Preparation Prayers