



Saint Benedict the Moor Parish

Personal Parish for Black Catholics in Pittsburgh

"Without a Vision, the People Perish" (Proverbs 29:18)

JUNE 22, 2025

Mass Schedule

Sunday 11:00 am

Livestream:

facebook.com/SBTMPGH/live

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Sundays at 10:30am &
by appointment.

Baptisms, Weddings, and Funerals

by appointment.



Our church is accessible.

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St. Benedict the Moor Parish-PGH



[SBTMPARISHPGH](https://www.instagram.com/SBTMPARISHPGH)



[SBTMparishPGH](https://www.youtube.com/SBTMparishPGH)

Mass Intentions

June 22 11:00 am
Corpus Christi

Fr. Matthew Hawkins
Sarah Buzzard
(Family)

June 29 11:00 am
Ss. Peter and Paul

Fr. Matthew Hawkins
Ira Ritter Sr. +
(Rick & CeCe Zoucha)

Stewardship June 15th

Offertory	Parish Appeal	Building Fund
\$4,401.00	\$295.00	\$70.00
Care for the Poor	Tech	Peter Pence
\$240.00	\$25.00	\$5.00

Weekly Mass Attendance

June 15—143

Prayer Requests

Ann Betters
Antoinette Peters
Blessing Gbolo
Bonita Dsouza
Claudia Harrison
Damitra Penny-Harris
Delores Denton
Duane Ashley
Frances Tarkett
Gail Jackson
Hall Family
Janice Simmons
Jennifer Whitley
Joan Moran
Johari
John Young
Karen McDill
Ken Smith (Pizza)
Marie Alian
Pat Ellis
Peggy Bullard

Protection of God's Children

Report suspected child abuse at the
24-Hour Child Abuse Hotline:

800.932.0313

To report church-related abuse to
the Diocese of Pittsburgh call:

888.808.1235

If a child is in imminent danger call
911

The African American Classical Tradition and Living Eucharistically

Fr. Matthew Hawkins



To live Eucharistically is to live as if life itself is a gift continuously offered and shared, poured out in love, gathered in thanksgiving, and meant to be broken open for the life of the world. The Eucharist is not merely a liturgical act but a pattern of existence—a radical model of communion, sacrifice, remembrance, and renewal. When we read Genesis 14:18–20, Psalm 110, 1 Corinthians 11:23–26, and Luke 9:11b–17 through this lens, we see not only a divine meal but a divine way of being—especially relevant for African American families and communities seeking wholeness amid fragmentation.

Melchizedek, the mysterious priest-king of Salem in Genesis 14, offers bread and wine in blessing, establishing a primordial pattern: the sacred meal as covenant, as gift, as a moment where heaven kisses earth. He stands as a prefigurement of Christ, not bound by genealogy, but by divine appointment. The African American community, so often denied earthly inheritance and historical continuity, may find in Melchizedek a kinship: an affirmation that sacred identity does not depend on societal validation, but on divine vocation. Bread and wine become more than

sustenance; they are symbols of a blessing given freely, despite history's thefts.

Psalm 110, echoed in Hebrews and the liturgy, proclaims a priest “forever, in the line of Melchizedek.” This eternal priesthood finds its fulfillment in Christ, whose offering transcends time and race. To live Eucharistically is to recognize that one's worth is not dictated by systems of oppression but by a divine call to priesthood—a call to intercede, to bless, to break open one's life for others.

In Luke's account of the feeding of the five thousand, we witness Christ taking, blessing, breaking, and giving—a liturgical rhythm that becomes the heartbeat of Eucharistic life. The crowd is vast, hungry, disorganized. The disciples see scarcity; Jesus sees a table waiting to be set. African American communities, often beset by economic and spiritual hunger, are invited into this same vision: where limited loaves, when blessed, become abundant; where fragments are not discarded but gathered with care. There is a deeply Eucharistic ethic here: that in communal sharing, guided by trust in divine providence, all are fed and none are forgotten.

Paul's words in 1 Corinthians remind us that to celebrate the Eucharist is to proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. This death was not sanitized or noble by human standards—it was a lynching on a Roman cross. And yet, in this violent end, Christ transforms suffering into sacrament. African American history, so marked by cruciform suffering—Middle Passage, slavery, segregation, injustice—becomes, in the light of the Eucharist, not erased but transfigured. Suffering is not the final word; communion is. Memory becomes mission.

To live Eucharistically, then, is to embrace four key movements: *taking, blessing, breaking, and giving*. African American families can reclaim the act of taking—not in a possessive sense, but in receiving one another and one's heritage as gift. To bless is to affirm that even the overlooked and undervalued carry divine worth. To break is to engage suffering not with stoicism or cynicism, but with redemptive vulnerability. And to give is to pour one's life out in love, echoing the kenosis of Christ.

Eucharistic living also centers *thanksgiving*—the very meaning of “Eucharist.” In a world that often preaches grievance or grudge, thanksgiving becomes revolutionary. The ability to give thanks amid struggle is not naïve—it is sacred defiance. African American spirituality, rich in song, prayer, and praise, has long modeled this paradox: lament that sings, sorrow that dances, hope that persists.

In sum, the Eucharist is not just what happens on the altar—it is the pattern by which African American communities can reclaim identity, renew communion, and resist despair. It is the ultimate family meal, teaching us that true life is found not in dominance, but in self-giving love. It is the meal that turns trauma into testimony, history into healing, and bread into Body—broken, blessed, and shared.



Fr. Matthew Hawkins



Panis angelicus fit panis hominum – "The bread of angels becomes the bread of men," will be our Eucharistic hymn this Sunday. With the sublime line that begins this hymn, St. Thomas Aquinas distills the mystery of the Eucharist into a phrase that bridges heaven and earth, angelic and human, divine majesty and humble need. The poetic theology of *Panis Angelicus*, written as part of the liturgy for Corpus Christi, is not a flight of abstract mysticism but a concrete echo of the very Scriptures that ground the Church's understanding of the Eucharist. From Melchizedek's offering to Christ's miraculous feeding, from the psalms of David to Paul's solemn tradition, we are invited into a mystery that feeds the soul and reorders the cosmos.

In Genesis 14:18-20, the enigmatic figure of Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of God Most High, offers bread and wine in blessing. This brief encounter is dense with Eucharistic foreshadowing. Melchizedek is not merely a hospitable host; he is a proto-priest, pointing toward Christ, the true High Priest, who will later consecrate bread and wine as His very Body and Blood. Aquinas, deeply rooted in the typology of Scripture, would see in this moment the prelude to the divine generosity expressed in *Panis Angelicus*. The bread offered is not ordinary; it carries within it the seed of a sacrament that will feed not only weary warriors but a weary world.

Psalm 110, invoked in the Eucharistic theology of Hebrews and echoed in Aquinas' own writings, proclaims, "You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek." This eternal priesthood finds its fulfillment in Christ, whose self-offering is not a mere act of liturgical repetition but an ever-present reality. The Eucharist is not reenactment; it is representation. The *Panis Angelicus*, then, is not just heavenly food in poetic terms, but a real participation in the priesthood and kingship of Christ, who stoops to feed his people with his very life.

In Luke 9:11b-17, we encounter Jesus facing a hungry crowd. The disciples see scarcity; Jesus sees opportunity. He takes, blesses, breaks, and gives—actions that prefigure the Last Supper and the perpetual rhythm of the Mass. The Eucharistic pattern is clear: divine abundance hidden in apparent lack, the ordinary elevated by grace. Just as Christ feeds the multitude, so too the *Panis Angelicus* feeds the faithful through time and space, a table set in every land, for every heart. Aquinas understood this well: the miracle is not only in the feeding but in the giving itself, the condescension of divine love.

Paul's account in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 is the earliest written testimony of the Last Supper. It is solemn, simple, and profoundly theological. "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In this moment, memory is transformed into presence, and the act of remembrance becomes a sacramental entering into the mystery. The Eucharist, the Bread of Angels, is not for angels but for men—fragile, fallen, hungry men and women in need of grace. And this is precisely Aquinas' marvel: that the highest becomes the lowest, that the divine feeds the dust-born with the food of immortality.

To sing *Panis Angelicus* is to join in the awe of a universe turned upside-down by love. It is to recognize that the Creator does not disdain creation, but enters into it fully, feeding His children not with metaphor, but with Himself. This Eucharistic humility echoes through every one of the readings: in the blessing of Melchizedek, the eternal priesthood of Psalm 110, the generous multiplication in

Luke, and the sacred tradition of Paul.

Aquinas concludes the hymn with a petition: *Te trina Deitas unaque poscimus, sic nos tu visita, sicut te colimus* – "We beseech Thee, God-head One in Three, that Thou mayst visit us, as we worship Thee." Here, worship and visitation are intertwined. The Eucharist is not merely adored; it is received. Not just an object of devotion but a person who comes to dwell. In African American churches, where suffering has often deepened the thirst for divine presence, the Eucharist is a balm and a protest: a declaration that heaven breaks into history, that dignity is restored not by the world but by God who feeds His people with angelic bread.

Thus, *Panis Angelicus* is no mere relic of Latin chant, but a living testimony: that what angels behold, humanity receives. That which is most high has stooped most low, and in the breaking of the bread, eternity is tasted. In this sacred meal, time meets eternity, flesh meets spirit, and the faithful are lifted into the divine mystery—not by their merit, but by mercy. It is bread for the journey, food for the soul, and love made edible.

This Week: The Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ

"I am the living bread that came down from heaven, says the Lord; whoever eats this bread will live forever (John 6:51)."

First Reading: Genesis 14:18-20

Responsorial Psalm 110:1, 2, 3, 4

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Gospel: Luke 9:11b-17

Next Week: Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles

"You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. (Matthew 16:18)."

First Reading: Acts 12:1-11

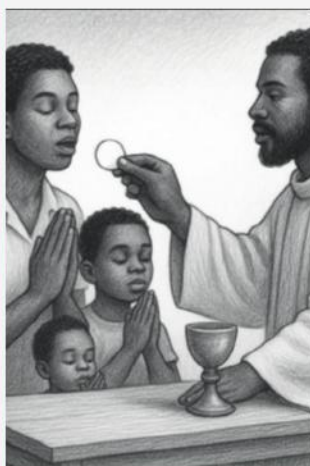
Responsorial Psalm 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9

Second Reading: 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18

Gospel: Matthew 16:13-19

Introduction to Christianity: The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ

Fr. Matthew Hawkins



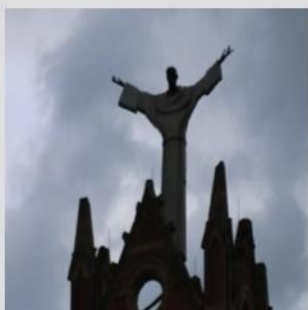
In a fragmented and hyper-digital 21st century, where bodies are often commodified and blood is spilled more on screens than sanctified in reality, the Feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ offers a profound and needed counter-narrative. It reminds us that salvation is not abstract, not virtual, but incarnate—embodied in flesh and blood. The Eucharist stands as both mystery and medicine: mystery, because it reveals the depth of divine condescension—God made edible; medicine, because it heals the modern wounds of isolation, disconnection, and spiritual amnesia.

In a world starving for communion but gorged on content, the Eucharist is not just a religious rite but a reclamation of meaning. It says to each person: you are not data, but a soul worthy of being fed by God Himself. In an age suspicious of authority yet desperate for authenticity, the Body of Christ affirms a love that did not stay distant but broke itself open in solidarity. It calls 21st-century people to Eucharistic living: to be taken, blessed, broken, and given for the life of others.

Ultimately, this feast is about presence—real, substantial, enduring. In a time when presence is fleeting and attention is fractured, the Eucharist is Christ's answer: "I am with you always." Not metaphorically, not nostalgically, but truly. The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ is God's yes to humanity's hunger—for truth, for love, for meaning—and His invitation to become what we receive.

Saint Benedict the Moor Offertory for Online Giving

It is now easier than ever to support our parish through online giving. Please give online and watch our parish grow.



Announcing the Central Deanery: A Collaborative Future for Our Parishes

Bishop Zubik recently announced that there is a growing spirit of collaboration among ten pastors in the City of Pittsburgh. These pastors are exploring exciting possibilities for how to work together, more fully embracing the Church's mission and sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

To nurture this hope, Bishop Zubik is forming the **Central Deanery** within the North Vicariate of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, effective **July 1, 2025**. This new deanery will be comprised of the parishes of Divine Mercy, St. Benedict the Moor, St. Jude, St. Mary Magdalen, Saint Paul Cathedral, St. Pio of Pietrelcina, and the Shrines of Pittsburgh Parishes (Immaculate Heart of Mary, Most Holy Name of Jesus (St. Anthony Chapel), St. Nicholas, St. Patrick/St. Stanislaus). Fr. Gramc has been appointed as the Dean of the Central Deanery to guide this collaboration, while he continues as pastor of St. Pio Parish.

This initiative aims to foster cooperation, facilitate communication, and coordinate shared pastoral activities. This first year will focus on shared envisioning and careful listening to parishioners from all ten parishes. Your input is vital, and listening sessions will be held in each deanery parish this fall. Details will be forthcoming. As we embark upon this journey of greater collaboration, let us together pray that the Holy Spirit will guide the process and strengthen our Church to bring the love of Jesus to all. Please keep our clergy in your prayers.



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