

Readings: *Proverbs 9:1-6*
Psalms 33
Ephesians 5:15-20
John 6:51-58

St Paul says in our second reading that *'this may be a wicked age but your lives should redeem it'*. There is certainly no doubting that just as in St Paul's day we definitely live in a wicked age. There is violence and greed everywhere we turn. What we may be less sure of, though, is our ability to redeem the world by the way we lead our lives – as if our feeble efforts could actually change anything.

At one level of course we would be right. There is only one person who can destroy evil, neutralise violence and bring healing to our world, and that is God Himself. It is God Himself who enters our world in Christ and takes upon Himself all the evil that this wicked age tries to throw at Him. Every sin, every evil is nailed to the cross and taken away by God. The Lord is all compassion and mercy.

The Eucharist, the Mass, the Lord's Supper is where this transaction is made real over and over again. And in this sacrament we become part of the equation. *'My flesh is real food'*, says the Lord, *'my blood is real drink! He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him.'* By sharing in the Eucharist we, too, suffer and die on the Cross, we, too, experience the power of the Resurrection and discover that our true home is in Heaven. By sharing in the Eucharist we play our part in redeeming this wicked age. Because our sharing in the Eucharist is real and concrete so, too, is our sharing in the work of redemption.

Our lives do redeem this wicked age but not through superhuman, moralistic effort on our part but through our sharing in Christ, our prayer being 'filled with the Spirit', through our participation in the Eucharist and by our receiving the body and blood of Christ with love and devotion. As the writer of the Book of Proverbs invites us *'Come and eat my bread, drink the wine I have prepared'*, and as the psalmist puts it – *'Taste and see that the Lord is good'*.

Fr Michael