

Catholic identity is a Eucharistic way of living

In the Mercy Partners Theological Framework we state that ... *each Catholic community and organisation hands on a eucharistic way of seeing that animates its distinctive mission, activities, and place in the world.*

What does it mean when we say that we are called to live eucharistically?

Living eucharistically is to find the good in all people and circumstances, to be open to what God sends us for care and compassion, to practise gratitude and thankfulness, to welcome others, to care for the most vulnerable and to see Christ in everyone we meet.

As Pope Francis notes:

...the identity and practice of Catholic people and communities is grounded in a personal encounter with God's love made visible in Jesus Christ and poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

A Eucharistic way of living is founded in the belief that each person carries Jesus with them in their daily lives. That we are called to live the presence of the living Christ. As Pope Francis asserts in the Church of Mercy: *Jesus is the everlasting today of God* (10). This means for those who attend Mass, that when we receive communion, we receive Christ not for ourselves alone, but for the good of those we encounter every day.

Catholic identity is underpinned by the understanding that every interaction, every relationship, every opportunity to be with others is 'being Church'; that being Church is not static but active – going out and making a difference. There are many examples of people whose humble work, has indeed made such a profound difference in societies. Look at Nano Nagle, who did not flout her work, who went

about quietly in dark alleys of poverty bringing assistance to one household at a time, to one elderly person at a time, who brought one street child at a time into her schools and gave them the skills to ensure that they could take their place in society. Women like Catherine McAuley, and the men like Francis of Assisi and Edmund Rice who changed that society from within and in a humble way. That's the essence of Catholic social practice: whatever we do, we do it quietly and we do it for the person. We attend to the extras needed for others to live with dignity. This is a Eucharistic way of living.

The Eucharist is an encounter of the heart when we recognise Presence through our own offered presence. In the Eucharist, we move beyond mere words or rational thought and go to that place where we don't talk about the Mystery anymore; we begin to chew on it. Jesus did not say, "Think about this" or "Stare at this" or even "Worship this." Instead he said, "Eat this!"

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<https://cac.org/daily-meditations/real-presence-2022-04-25/>

Reflections: Who are the saints and mystics in our lives? How do our ministries address the crises of our time?

We acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional owners of the lands on which our ministries exist and the Elders both past and present on whose land we walk, work and live. We support the Uluru Statement from the Heart.