



Original etching on copper plate, 2022

**EUCCHARISTIC JUSTICE**

In Greek, the word Eucharist means "thanksgiving." We gather around the table to receive that which can only be given from God, God himself— in Bread form so we atone our wholeness, restore our unity and fill the space that addicts and those struggling with substance use call "the God hole"—the existential hunger for the infinite.

I consume Him because I hunger, I'm grateful because He feeds me and I'm hungry every day. Some of us eat at least three physical meals a day and snacks, if our physical bodies need nourishment, don't our spiritual bodies who engage in the daily challenge of maintaining unconditional peace, also need nourishment? Yes, nature is peaceful, and so can be music and the company of a loved one but nothing is as transformative at an intimate level than a loving body within a body in loving union where the physical, emotional, intellectual and all aspects are acknowledged. Lovemaking with physical bodies that can decay is restorative and unifying, so occurs with mystical bodies that are created for the eternal.

Isn't that the greatest act of justice, restoration we could receive, prepare for and be part of? for our souls to be in intimate union with our God regardless of what is decaying around us?

The thing about food though is that I could be eating God himself but if my gut has bad bacteria and my microbiome isn't healthy then I can't absorb nutrients fully. Grace is real but so is unprocessed pain, unresolved traumas, unconscious resentment. If we are to become what or who we eat, then we must do our part in that becoming.

I've struggled with a challenging microbiome for the past 5 yrs. Food absorption and energy management have been a big challenge throughout my life. I've had a metabolic disorder since I was 16. Illness makes one feel broken. Good thing that God is willing to be broken in the person of

Christ and willing to be broken as Eucharistic bread to enter through my flaws to be with me. Sure, there is brokenness all around me in this human, unjust world, but compassion incarnated is God saying "me too" in my pain.

So what's my part in the becoming one with God besides acknowledge my daily hunger, or my identity as a daughter that needs daily feeding from her God?

I used to think confession was for those who broke laws, who misbehaved, until my metabolic disorder played a role in three hospitalizations in the last 5 years. What did I do wrong? what can I ask forgiveness for? were among the endless questions that dysfunctional guilt played. The same could be asked of someone born in extreme poverty, was it their fault?

Illness isn't my choice but brokenness demands inquiry, self examination, and the ongoing exploration of treatments has created a more conscious filter of what or who do I consume. If food is to be a gift to my body, what do I want it to receive? If my plate is to look full of color, what would those foods look like? In spiritual terms if God is my daily bread, is my heart open to receive the graceful reminder that I belong to Him always and that in such belonging sometimes we share part of the weight of the cross? Just like when a bad part of the fruit accidentally makes it in my gut and my body reacts to it, if my heart feels the sourness of resentment or the bitterness of arrogance or anything that separates my wholeness can I compassionately welcome the grace of confession, compassion and let Him wash my feet, my heart, and my whole self too?

Isn't that grace contagious and forever a visceral standpoint from which I too can be Christ like to others?