

Eucharistic Miracles

Year of the Eucharist and St. Joseph 2021

I. What is a Eucharistic Miracle?

In every Mass the transubstantiation of the species of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ takes place when the priest calls down the Holy Spirit at the epiclesis, which can be considered to be a miracle. The sacrament is a sign that makes present the reality. In the Eucharist, the appearance (or accidental properties) of bread and wine remain while the substance is that of the body and blood of the Lord, so that Jesus Christ is really present in the Eucharist. However, what we call a Eucharistic Miracle is something else. In these rare occasions the bread and wine visibly transform into human flesh and blood. This is a miracle that points to the fact of the Lord's invisible presence in the Eucharist in every Mass and in the tabernacles of Churches throughout the world.

II. Lanciano, Italy, circa 750 AD

A monk of the monastery of St. Longinus, who had begun to experience doubts about the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, was celebrating Mass. As he recited the institution narrative, repeating the words of Christ, "This is my body. This is my blood," the Eucharist was transformed into a ring of human flesh and five drops of blood formed in the chalice (corresponding to the five wounds of Christ). The Archbishop ordered an investigation to take place, the testimony to be recorded, and the flesh and blood to be preserved in a reliquary for future ages.

Several investigations of the flesh and blood have happened over the centuries, in 1574, 1713, 1970, and 1981. The 1970 and 1981 investigations were done by Dr. Odoardo Linoli and Dr. Ruggero Bertelli. They found that the flesh had come from the heart wall, specifically from the left ventricle of the myocardium, and no trace of preservatives was found, yet the samples were not deteriorated. The blood was human blood, type AB, and had the same protein makeup of normal, fresh human blood.

1. Catholic Education Resource Center, "The Miracle of Lanciano," by Fr. William Saunders

III. Betania, Venezuela, December 8, 1991

While celebrating Mass, the priest celebrant broke the celebrant's Host into 4 pieces, consuming one himself and reserving the others. Later, one of the pieces was discovered to have a red spot, which turned out to be blood. This was reported to Bishop Los Teques who ordered an investigation with independent tests. The results confirmed that the substance was human blood, type AB, taken from a living heart, and it did not match the blood type of the priest who celebrated the Mass.

IV. Buenos Aires, Argentina, August 15, 1996

In the parish Church of Santa Maria, Fr. Alejandro Pezet found a discarded Host on the ground after Mass. Doing what any priest would do, following the normal procedure, he placed the Host into a bowl of water and put it in the tabernacle to dissolve. This can take a while, so he checked on it after a week, and discovered a red substance on the Host. This was reported to the local bishop, Archbishop Jorge Bergoglio (who is now Pope Francis), who ordered tests to be done on a sample of the Host. Professor Ricardo Castanon Gomez, Dr. John Walker, forensic pathologist Dr. Robert Lawrence, and Professor Edoardo Linoli participated in the initial tests.

Later, on March 2, 2004, a sample was sent to professor Frederick Zugibe of the University of Colombia, who was an expert in forensic medicine of the heart, but he was not told the source of the sample or the

reason for the investigation. He identified the sample as human blood, type AB, from the left ventricle of the myocardium. He also found that the blood was taken from a living heart due to the presence of intact white blood cells, and that the heart it was taken from had indications of trauma to the chest and lack of oxygen.

V. Tixla, Mexico, October 2006

In St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church, a religious sister distributing Communion during Mass found that one of the Hosts had begun to bleed and transform. Once again, a study was begun and tests were done. The tests showed that the blood was actually coming from the transformed Host, and so could not have simply been placed on to it by someone. The blood was found to be type AB human blood. Most of the blood is coagulated, but more studies done in February 2010 found that there was still fresh blood.

VI. Sokolka, Poland, October 12, 2008

Similar to what happened in Buenos Aires, a consecrated Host fell to the ground during Communion at a Sunday Mass and was placed in water in the tabernacle to dissolve. A week later, the sacristan, Sr. Julia Dubowska, found that the Host had a red discoloration on it. She reported it to the pastor, and he reported it to the Bishop. The Host was left in the tabernacle, but taken out of the water and placed on a corporal for the next three years in secret. Eventually, the Archbishop ordered tests to be performed. Professors Maria Elzbieta Sobaniec-Lotowska and Stanislaw Sulkowski, of the Medical University of Bialystok, were asked to test it independently and without knowing where it came from. They found that it was human heart tissue from the myocardium. The Host was not completely transformed, but the heart tissue was connected to the Host at the molecular level.

VII. Legnica, Poland, Christmas Day 2013

At St. Jack Parish, Msgr. Zbigniew Kiernikowski picked up a consecrated Host that had fallen on the floor during the distribution of Communion. He placed it in water and locked it in the tabernacle to dissolve. Two weeks later He discovered a red spot on the Host. A commission was formed to perform a study in 2014. They found that the sample was striated heart tissue from a human heart. The tissue showed evidence of being taken “in the agony of death.”

2. Our Sunday Visitor, “Do you doubt the Real Presence? Learn about these Eucharistic miracles,” by Michael O’Neill

3. Ascension Press, “The Amazing Science of Recent Eucharistic Miracles: A Message from Heaven?,” by Jeannette Williams

VIII. Conclusions

1. The miraculous tissue comes from a human heart, tortured and oxygen deprived, as during the Crucifixion.
2. The blood from each of these miracles is of the type AB, which is the Universal Recipient, meaning it can receive blood donations from anyone.
3. In many of these miracles there is coagulated blood on the surface and fresh, liquid blood underneath, indicating an open wound.
4. What does this teach us about the Eucharist?

***Next: Dies Domini: Pope St. John Paul II’s Teaching on Sunday Mass
on November 18 at 6:30 PM***