

# All Saints communion

by [Scott Cairns](#) in the [October 19, 2004](#) issue

—All Saints Episcopal Church,  
Virginia Beach, April 1996

Having accepted from one palsied priest the cool,  
the lucent wafer, having dipped it duly in the cup,  
I pressed that sweet enormity fast against my tongue,  
where on its sudden dissolution, I received a taste  
of whose I was. I rose again and found my place.

As I knelt and tried to pray, I heard a little differently  
the words the priest intoned as he continued offering  
what passed for bread among high Protestants. His words:  
*the body of Christ*, repeated as he set that emblem  
into each pair of outstretched hands. My eyes were shut,

so each communicant returning down the aisle became  
something of a shadow illustration of the words. In that  
fraught moment, they became as well absorbed into the vast  
array of witnesses, whose cloud invisibly attended  
our sacramental blurring of the edge that keeps us separate.