

Wellspring

Fransalian Center for Spirituality

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June 19, 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Today, we celebrate the feast of “Corpus et Sanguis Christi”, The Body and Blood of Christ. It was a humble nun in Belgium, Saint Juliana (1258) who first suggested and advocated a special feast in honor of the Blessed Sacrament. In a vision, Christ directed her to announce to the authorities of the Church that God wished to establish a feast in honor of the Blessed Sacrament. In 1230 Juliana communicated her secret to a small group of learned theologians.

On September 8, 1264, six years after Juliana's death, Pope Urban IV (1261-1265) established for the whole Church the feast in honor of the Most Holy Eucharist. It was to be celebrated with great solemnity on the Thursday after Pentecost. It is now celebrated on the Sunday after the feast of the Most Holy trinity. The bull of Pope Urban IV had no immediate effect because he died soon after its publication, and the succeeding popes did not urge the matter. Finally, Pope Clement V, in 1314, renewed the decrees in a bull of his own, and then the feast spread quickly throughout the Latin Church. Later it was also accepted by some parts of the Oriental Church.

Today, we celebrate this great feast. Once a year, we dedicate a day to prayerfully reflect on the meaning and the power of the Eucharist that we celebrate every day. The celebration of the Eucharist is at the heart of every Catholic Christian Community. The Eucharist forms and transforms the Church and holds us together as a community of faith, heals our brokenness and empowers us to fulfill the mission of Jesus. In the Eucharist, what we eat is no longer bread and what we drink no longer wine. It is the whole person of Jesus that we take in.

The feast of Corpus Christi calls us to celebrate and meditate on the Eucharist as a sacrifice, as a Sacrament and as the personal and real Presence of Jesus. Our Scripture readings of this feast call us to mediate on the Eucharist as our food and drink. Jesus is presented as the bread of Life and the wine of compassion. The bread with which we are fed does not merely satisfy our physical hungers. The bread God gives also takes the form of the living Word that nourishes the spirit and strengthens our will. It is not on bread alone that man lives but “by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” (Mathew 4:4)

To live by the Word of God means to be still and to listen for His Word, to change, to grow and be transformed by His Word. This means that we must be open to God’s Word and let the

Word become flesh in our life, let it transform our attitudes, our disposition, our values and shape and transform our lives – let the word continue to become incarnate in our lives.

Eucharist is not a ritual being performed by a priest for his people. Eucharist is a sacred meal of communion, of togetherness, of thanksgiving, of sacrifice and of total giving. To eat the flesh and to drink the blood of Jesus is to take in the whole person of Jesus - to take Jesus in and let him transform us. Eucharist is a life-altering, life-redeeming, and life-transforming gift. The Eucharist is not a “mere memorial”, a recalling of events. It is a very profound “Confession”, an affirmation, and a profession of the presence of the crucified, ascended, and risen Lord in communion.

**The Eucharist is the completion, the crowning, and the fulfillment of Christ’s love.
Let Jesus in and let him transform you!**

The “bread and the wine” of the Eucharist transforms us into Christ. We become the Body of Christ in communion with our brothers and sisters. We are not just in communion with those we see present in our Church, but with men and women whom we will never meet, speaking languages we will never understand, as well as with those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith.

All our Christian and missionary activity is taken up into the Eucharist and nourished and strengthened by the Eucharist. The Eucharist is the wellspring of our hope and our courage. We come to the Eucharist to be nourished and strengthened. We go from the Eucharist to fulfill our mission. The Body and Blood of Christ, Corpus Christi, the Eucharist challenges us to become what we have received, that is the body of Christ, and as members of His body to carry him into all aspects of our lives.

The constant mistake that we all make about the Eucharist is that it is a thing rather than a person. With a person, we can develop a relationship which, of its very nature, is dynamic and healing, consoling, and loving. This is more so with the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. The Eucharist is not a thing to be adored and walked away, but a person to love and a person who loves us. Experiencing this creative love should change us and make us anxious to spread that love in our everyday lives. The Eucharist demands that we love one another as the Lord loves us and enter into unbreakable bond of love with others, especially with the less privileged and the marginalized in our community.

Take a few moments this week to be still and to reflect on your own experience of the Eucharist. Has your understanding of the Eucharist deepened over the years? Has the Eucharist become a source of transformation in Christ? Has the Eucharist been a sacrament of forgiveness and healing for you and a channel of communion with others?

God bless you and your family

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ

June 19, 2022

**Dear friends, build your house on rock. Try each day to follow Christ's word.
Listen to him as a true friend with whom you can share your path in life.
With him at your side, you will find courage and hope to face difficulties and problems, and
even to overcome disappointments and setbacks.
(Pope Benedict XVI)**

Collect

O God, who in this wonderful Sacrament
have left us a memorial of your Passion,
grant us, we pray,
so to revere the sacred mysteries of your Body and Blood
that we may always experience in ourselves
the fruits of your redemption.
Who live and reign with God the Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Liturgy of the Word

Prayerfully read the first reading and then read my reflections below and spend a few moments of personal reflection. Do the same with Responsorial Psalm and other readings.

Genesis 14:18-20

Melchizedek shared bread and wine with Abraham and created a bond of lasting, enduring relationship.....an eternal connection. The name "Melchizedek" means "righteousness is my king"- priest and king entered into a bond with Abraham.

Psalm 110

Psalm 110 is a messianic psalm, looking forward to the defeat of evil forces. We have a beautiful, poetic picture of young men leaving their homes to follow their king to fight a war against evil forces. The reference is to the messianic war against evil forces. The messiah will rule over the universe.

**The Lord said to my Lord: “sit at my right hand,
Till I make your enemies your footstool.
The scepter of your power the Lord will stretch forth from Zion:
“Rule in the midst of your enemies”.**

I Corinthians 11:23-26

In this excerpt, we read about the Eucharist continuing to feed the hunger of the growing church. The Eucharist also challenged them to feed each other and be mindful of the hunger of the less fortunate in the community.

Eucharist was not a mere recalling of events of the past. It was a remembrance, a re-living and a proclamation of the death and the presence and the coming of the Lord.

This remembrance continued to create a “connection”, a “communion”, a “fellowship”, an eternal bond with the Lord and with one another. The Eucharist created and sustained the Christian community.

Luke 9:11-17

The disciples of Jesus became concerned about the crowd’s need for food and lodge. They asked Jesus to dismiss the crowd so that they could go and take care of their needs. Jesus asked the disciples to attend to the urgent needs of the people and they told him that they had only five loaves and two fish and that wasn’t enough to feed the crowd. Jesus took the five loaves and the two fish and shared them with the people. The people had their fill and abundance left over.

It is important to recognize the urgent needs of people. It is just as important to do all you can to meet those needs. We may feel that we don’t have enough to meet the needs. Five loaves and two fish, given generously, go a long way in meeting them. Five loaves and two fish come in different forms – may be five minutes of time, may be a few dollars in the pocket, may be a little food.....our little bit becomes abundance in the hands of the Lord.

**Give and give graciously and generously!
May your little bit become great in the hands of the Lord!**

Jesus worked a miracle and fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fish and the left over filled twelve wicker baskets. Chapter six of John’s Gospel tells us that Jesus, who worked a miracle with the little that was available, was concerned about the left over: “gather up the left over...nothing should go to waste” he said.

Rejoice in God's abundance and be grateful. Do not waste God's gifts. Every little bit counts and makes a difference. Redeem all that can be redeemed. Save all that can be saved.

Those who are fed and filled are charged to feed others. Be generous. Share the blessings of the Lord. Be mindful of those in need.

Reflecting on the feast of the Body Blood of Christ...

The Eucharist is not a "mere memorial", a recalling of events. It is a very profound "Confession", an affirmation, a profession of the presence of the crucified, ascended and risen Lord in communion.

The meaning of "remembrance" is bringing to mind past events so that by their effects they become "operative" in the present. It is "re-living" past experience in all its richness, not events in all details, but in the depth of feelings, meaning, and value, in the most profound, transforming details.

We remember to make real again what Christ has done for us. We remember someone who is very much alive - not dead. We remember Jesus Christ in the Sacrament in order to meet, to encounter and to deepen our relationship with Him.

The Eucharist is, therefore, the completion, the crowning, and the fulfillment of Christ's love.

Saint of the day, June 19 - St. Romuald and 12 other saints are remembered this day.

Romuald was born into an aristocratic family around the year 950. He grew up in a luxurious and worldly environment, where he learned little in the way of self-restraint or religious devotion. When Romuald was 20 years old, he watched his father, Sergius, kill a relative in a duel over property. Disgusted by the crime he had witnessed, Romuald went to the Monastery of St. Apollinaris to do 40 days of penance for his father.

These 40 days confirmed Romuald's monastic calling, as they became the foundation for an entire life of penance. But his strict asceticism brought him into conflict with some of the other monks. He left the area near Ravenna and went to Venice, where he became the disciple of the hermit Marinus. Both men went on to encourage the monastic vocation of Peter Urseolus, a Venetian political leader who would later be canonized as a saint. When Peter joined a French Benedictine monastery, Romuald followed him and lived for five years in a nearby hermitage.

In the meantime, Romuald's father Sergius had followed his son's course, repenting of his sins and becoming a monk himself. Romuald returned to Italy to help his father, after learning that

Sergius was struggling in his vocation. Through his son's guidance, Sergius found the strength to persist in religious life.

After guiding his penitent father in the way of salvation, Romuald traveled throughout Italy serving the Church. By 1012 he had helped to establish or reform almost 100 hermitages and monasteries. The most famous of the monasteries Romuald founded was that of the Camaldoli in Tuscany. Here began the Order of the Camaldolese Benedictines, uniting the monastic and eremitical lives. The foundations of the Camaldolese order were not laid until 1012 when a piece of land called the "Camaldoli," located in the Diocese of Arezzo, was granted to Romuald. It became the site of five hermits' quarters, and a full monastery soon after. St. Romuald of Ravenna died in his monastic cell on June 19, 1027. Pope Gregory XIII canonized him in 1582

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