

# SAID ED June 18, 2017

## Corpus Christi Sunday

Corpus Christi. These two words are the Latin name for today's liturgical celebration: The Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ. The church instituted the feast in the year 1267 in order to focus our attention on the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Bishop Matano has announced the Year of the Eucharist to begin with today's feast. His hope is that we will take this occasion to renew our understanding and devotion to the Eucharist. The full document of his proclamation is available in the Catholic Courier as well as on the internet at: [www.DOR.org](http://www.DOR.org).

The Eucharist strengthens us in our weakness, heals us in our infirmities, forgives our sins and gives us encouragement and the grace to embrace life fully. The Holy Eucharist is not a reward for being "good" but rather a powerful gift to us for our continued healing. We do well to not take the powerful gift for granted.

As we celebrate this feast we thank the Lord for the great gift of the Eucharist and ask God to help us be ever mindful of its power. St. Paul reminds us often in his writings that we are the Body of Christ, Christ is the head and we are the members. So, as we celebrate this feast of Corpus Christi today, we are also celebrating our relationship to one another in Christ, whose body we become at the time of our baptism. Each time we celebrate the Eucharist, we fulfill Jesus' command to "do this" in memory of him; we eat the Bread of Life and drink the Cup of Salvation. Inasmuch as we are the Body of Christ, today is a celebration of our life together too.

When we are offered the host or cup, we hear the words "The Body of Christ, The Blood of Christ." Our response is "Amen." That little word carries a world of meaning. It is a Hebrew word that means "so be it." It implies assent and commitment. With that little word, we profess our belief that Jesus Christ is present, Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, in the Eucharistic bread and wine. At Jesus' own invitation, we dare to call Him "friend"! And not just any friend; but the Lord of the universe, the second person of the Blessed Trinity! By his own testimony, he sets no limits on friendship. "Greater love than this no one has than they lay down their life for their friends ... and I have called you my friends."

When we take the host or drink from the cup, we enter a moment of intimate union with the one we proclaim, Savior, Lord, and Friend. Our "Amen" however does more than profess our faith in the presence of Christ. We pledge to befriend him in the poor, hungry, the naked, the imprisoned; in our families, neighborhoods, and friends. We commit ourselves to honor and serve him knowing that "whatever you do for the least of my brothers and sisters, you do to me." (Matthew 24)

In the Eucharist, we are poised between intimacy and awe in the presence of the Lord. This is as it should be. God is at once infinitely distant and awesomely close to us. Jesus is the Lord who brings all things into being and sustains us. He is also the carpenter of Nazareth who welcomes us as his friends. We acknowledge this with our "Amen."

Have a great week!

Fr. Ed

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