



FEAST OF THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST YEAR A – June 18, 2017

Today, on the feast of “Corpus Christi”, we are reminded again, about what we believe regarding the consecration of bread and wine during the celebration of Mass. No longer must innocent animals die to atone for the sins of man as required by the old law (Leviticus 17:11). The flesh and blood of sacrificial animals are not real food and drink and do not make atonement for sin with God. The flesh and blood of Jesus does. The love of Jesus does.

It was not the Father’s will that Jesus should die on the cross. It was the will of the Father that Jesus should redeem us with his selfless love and show us how to love each other. We had forgotten how to do that because of selfishness and sin. Jesus lived what he taught by loving us and forgiving us, even as he died on the cross. He asks us to remember him and that’s what we do at Mass. By eating consecrated bread and drinking consecrated wine we become one with our Lord and with each other. It is a community second to none and we all belong.

In Catholic Churches, you will always find a tabernacle where the left over consecrated hosts are reserved, because we believe that after the words of consecration, the bread is changed into the body of Christ and the wine is changed into his blood. We believe that Jesus is really, truly and substantially present under the appearances of bread and wine. We believe the bread is his body and the wine is his blood because he said so.



That sacramental presence of Jesus in our midst is just one of the ways that Jesus is present in our lives. We also believe that Jesus is present in each one of us in another marvelous, mysterious, mystical way. We believe that whatever we do to each other, we do to him. Why do we believe that? Once again, we believe that because he said so.

There is a wonderful story about Abbe Pierre, the apostle of the poor in France. One night he was out on the streets helping as many people as he could. He came across a young family; father, mother and little boy - who were literally starving and freezing in the cold, wet weather. He brought them to his monastery to give them food and shelter. The food was no problem but the monastery was already filled with people who needed a place to stay that night and it seemed there was no room in the “inn”.

Abbe Pierre did something out of the ordinary; the year was 1947. He put the young family in the chapel where it was clean and warm and he put the Blessed Sacrament in the attic where it was cold and dark and damp. In the morning, the abbot chastised him for what he did to the Blessed Sacrament.

Abbe Pierre replied, "Jesus was not freezing in the Blessed Sacrament, but he was freezing in that little boy and his mom and dad. We believe extraordinary things as Catholics. Sometimes, we do not realize what we believe.

It is the feast of Corpus Christi. The words of Jesus are “Spirit and Life” (John 6:63b).

I believe what Jesus said. What do YOU believe?

And he took
bread,
and gave
thanks,
and brake it, and gave unto them saying,
This is
my body which is given for you;
this do
in remembrance of me.
Luke 22:19