

Solemnity of Corpus Christi

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This year the Solemnity of Corpus Christi will be celebrated on Sunday, June 26. This is often called Corpus Christi Sunday. It is the Feast to honor the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist – that is the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. Pope John XXII confirmed this feast by law and Pope Urban IV extended to the Universal Church. Tradition is that St. Thomas Aquinas is the author of the Office of this Feast although it cannot be confirmed.

St. Thomas did say, “As in the life of the body, after a man is born and becomes strong, he requires food so that his life may be preserved and sustained, so also in the spiritual life, after being fortified, he requires spiritual food, which is Christ’s Body: Unless you shall eat of the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink of His Blood, you shall not have life in you.”

It is more important today, than ever before, that we as Catholics stand firm in our belief of the Real Presence. Each year I ask our Confirmation Candidates, “What do you like about being Catholic?” Almost 50% of them will respond that it is receiving Holy Communion because of Jesus be truly present. These Confirmation Candidates have it absolutely right!

We are called to receive Our Lord in Communion in the state of grace at every Mass. If we are fortunate to have Eucharistic Adoration in our parishes we are called to adore Jesus during Exposition. And if we are blessed to have a Perpetual Adoration Chapel in our area we should try to sign up for a weekly hour of adoration. You don’t have to belong to the parish where the Perpetual Adoration Chapel is located; you just have to be committed to keep Our Lord company for the hour you have promised. We are all busy; if you cannot commit to a weekly hour, just drop by and spend an hour, half an hour and just a few minutes with Our Lord. The graces you receive will be many!

On Corpus Christi Sunday, a procession is encouraged but not required. In many parishes the Priests carry Our Lord in a Monstrance to give public testimony of our belief. Our Lord is usually preceded by recent First Communicants dropping flower petals paving His way. Some parishes will arrange for altars to be visited in front of homes or around the Church so that litanies can be recited or songs can be sung. Many times people drop to their knees as Our Lord passes them during the procession. At the minimum people bow their heads and make the Sign of the Cross.

Every year on Corpus Christi Sunday I celebrate the 12:00 noon Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi in Santa Fe. This is followed by a city-wide Corpus Christi Procession. It is always moving that people take the time to honor our Lord on Corpus Christi Sunday and to sing his praises with songs like *Tantum Ergo* and *O Salutaris Hostia*. You are always welcome

to the city-wide procession in Santa Fe which starts at 3:00 at the Cathedral Basilica. If your parish has a procession, please participate! If it doesn't, maybe YOU can come forward and work with your Pastor to arrange it.