

# LITURGY BYTES

## Corpus Christi



This weekend the Church celebrates the feast of Corpus Christi or the Body of Christ. As Christians, we are called to share in Christ's life and sacrifice. God becoming human in Christ was the beginning of a life devoted to others. Today we focus exclusively on the Eucharist. We rejoice and celebrate this great gift which is the very center and heart of the Church, the center and heart of our faith, and the center and heart of parish life and the lives of each of us.

The first reading shows hospitality of food and drink, sharing a meal which unites guest and host in bonds like family ties. In the second reading, St. Paul instructs the community at Corinth who are struggling and having internal divisions on the meaning of the Lord's Supper. He connects the Last Supper with the death of Jesus who gave his life for others. The words "do this in remembrance of me" instruct us to imitate Jesus in giving life to and for others. In the Gospel, a very familiar passage instructs the Apostles to help prepare for the meal by assisting Jesus, the host. Notice the familiar Eucharistic formula referenced here. The familiar words—took, blessed, broke, gave—show us the meaning of meals with Jesus.

When we partake of the Eucharist at Communion, we partake of life itself. We unite ourselves to divinity through Jesus' humanity. Transubstantiation is the name we give to the bread and the wine changing. The substance is transformed while maintaining its external appearance of bread and wine. This is an act of faith on the part of Catholics. Remember, St. Paul says, "in the Christian life we go by faith and not by sight." We need to be humble and open to God performing a miracle every day in this Church, the miracle of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is the greatest gift of God's love for each of us.

So, on this feast of Corpus Christi, it is clear we celebrate God's greatest gift to us—himself in Holy Communion, and we also celebrate each other as joined members of the body of Christ. Go forth strengthened to do the work of God!

Have a blessed, healthy, and safe week! ~ *Michele Hall*