**“Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ”**

Today, we celebrate the solemnity of the body and blood of Christ or Corpus Christi. What do we think we are receiving when we receive the Eucharist? Do we come to receive just because we see others doing so? Or do we truly believe we are receiving the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ? Do we reflect on these gifts and give thanks to God for loving us so much as to give us this precious and amazing banquet to eat!

In AD 100, Saint Justin Martyr one of the early Church fathers said of the Eucharist: ***“No one may share the Eucharist with us unless he believes that what we teach is true, unless he is washed in the regenerating waters of baptism for the remission of his sins, and unless he lives in accordance with the principles given us by Christ.***

***We do not consume the Eucharistic bread and wine as if it were ordinary food and drink, for we have been taught that as Jesus Christ our Savior became a man of flesh and blood by the power of the Word of God, so also the food that our flesh and blood assimilates for its nourishment becomes the flesh and blood of the incarnate Jesus by the power of His own words contained in the prayer of thanksgiving.”***

As we heard, Saint Justin said, just as the words of God brought about the incarnation, so does the words of God brings about the Eucharist. He said we should not receive the Eucharist unworthily just as Saint Paul said in 1 Corinthians 11:27-29 some verses after our today’s second reading. St Paul said, if we receive the Eucharist unworthily, we bring judgment upon ourselves and will have to answer for the body and blood of Christ shed for us.

In our Mass today and at every valid Mass, it is by the power of the Holy Spirit and through the words of Christ repeated by the priest that the bread and wine we present becomes the true flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. God in His infinite love has come to us so that the rich and the poor can come together to dine at His table in the feast of the Eucharist.

In Scripture, Jesus said He is the bread of life and anyone who eats His bread will live forever and that the bread that He would give, is His flesh for the life of the world. Clearly, anyone who shares worthily in the Eucharist shares in the life of Christ. He also said He is the true vine. As we know, without the vine, there is no wine. In a similar way, without the Eucharist, we have no life in us.

As He changed water into wine by His words, He also changes wine into His blood with His words. According to Scripture, we are no longer to look at the consecrated bread and wine as earthly substance but as heavenly, because Christ has passed through them and changed them into His body and blood.

My sisters and brothers, let us give thanks to God for giving us this perpetual gift of Himself so we can live in Him and He can live in us. When we receive this awesome gift of the Eucharist worthily, not only are we receiving heavenly food at Mass, but we are also participating in the representing once and for all, His passion, death, and resurrection which is very pleasing to His Father. Let us thank God through Him always for His unfathomable mercy and infinite love for us for He laid down His life for you and me.

In our Gospel reading, we heard about how Christ fed a multitude of people. After, 12 baskets full of leftover were collected. That is how generous our God is. The feeding prefigured the miracle of the Eucharist. The sequence of the miracles goes the same way.

Jesus gave thanks, broke the bread, and gave it to His disciples just as He did at the last supper. 12 baskets full leftover were collected so that nothing of the earthly food goes to waist. How much more should the heavenly food we receive in the Eucharist not go to waste!

That is one of the reasons you would notice during Mass, how a priest would clean the ciborium and the paten to make sure the tiniest piece of the Eucharist (which is fully Christ) is not left unconsumed! That is why a ritual is performed to pick up the precious body and blood when there is an accident. And that is why transferring of the precious blood from one chalice to another is forbidden by the Church so there would be no accidents.

As we come to receive the Eucharist, let us adore and thank Jesus for the gifts of His body and blood.