

Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ
June 19, 2022
A Reflection of the Pastor

“Consumerism is a restless spirit that is never content with any particular material thing. In consumerism, detachment continually moves us from one product to another, whereas in Christian life, asceticism is a means to a greater attachment to God and to other people. We are consumers in the Eucharist, but in consuming the body of Christ we are transformed into the body of Christ, drawn into the divine life in communion with other people. We consume in the Eucharist, but we are thereby consumed by God.”
William T. Cavanaugh

“When you have received Him, stir up your heart to do Him homage, speak to Him about your spiritual life, gazing upon Him in your soul where He is present for your happiness; welcome Him as warmly as possible, and behave outwardly in such a way, that your actions may give proof to all of His Presence.”— St. Francis de Sales

Today's solemn feast helps us to celebrate the Holy Communion between us and God as well as God's Holy spirit and the person of Jesus the Christ. This celebration reminds us of perhaps the most basic of the blessings in the relationship between us and our God. The most holy Body and Blood of Christ is our primary entrance into the love that God has for us. Our blessing needs to be a blessing for others, as Jesus' life, death and resurrection is our original blessing.

You become what you eat. You become the persons with values and promises you live and nourish you soul with. Our body needs food. Basic for our survival. Our bodies are replacing billions of cells every day — and using the foods we consume as the source of building materials. Our body is essentially one big miraculous 24/7 production site. I recall my mother admonishing me, as a child, to eat more vegetables to keep my body healthy.

You are what you eat. The feasting of Christ in the Eucharist far supersedes our eating of other foods. Pope Benedict writes that “if man eats ordinary bread, in the digestive process this bread becomes part of his body, transformed into a substance of human life. But in Holy Communion, the inverse process is brought about. Christ, the Lord, assimilates us into himself, introducing us into his glorious Body, and thus we all become his Body.

St. Paul says in the second reading: I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread, and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

As always, Jesus is concerned with people and their real needs. They are hungry, so he feeds them. He is gracious in his abundant giving. But he feeds them not only with food; he also feeds them at a much deeper level. He teaches them, he welcomes them and he heals them. He

treats us the same way; when we gather to celebrate the Eucharist, Jesus welcomes us, he speaks to us and through his Body and Blood, we are nourished and we are healed.

The only way we can keep the love of Christ in our hearts is becoming like him - bread of life for others. St. Augustine said, '**become what you receive.**' If we celebrate the Eucharist with each other and receive the Body and Blood of Christ, then we are called to be the Body of Christ, the Church today. In the gospel today, Jesus prepares the meal for the crowd:

Then taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing over them, broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. They all ate and were satisfied.

Pope Francis says in his reflection on the feast:

In the consecrated host, together with a place, Jesus prepares for us a meal, food for our nourishment. In life, we constantly need to be fed: nourished not only with food, but also with plans and affection, hopes and desires. We hunger to be loved. But the most pleasing compliments, the finest gifts and the most advanced technologies are not enough; they never completely satisfy us. **The Eucharist is simple food, like bread, yet it is the only food that satisfies, for there is no greater love. There we encounter Jesus really; we share his life and we feel his love. There you can realize that his death and resurrection are for you.** And when you worship Jesus in the Eucharist, you receive from him the Holy Spirit and you find peace and joy. Dear brothers and sisters, let us choose this food of life! Let us make Mass our priority! Let us rediscover Eucharistic adoration in our communities! Let us implore the grace to hunger for God, with an insatiable desire to receive what he has prepared for us.

Let us open our doors to him and say:

Come, Lord, and visit us.

We welcome you into our hearts,
our families and our city.

We thank you because you have prepared for us
the food of life and a place in your Kingdom.

Make us active in preparing your way
joyous in bringing you, who are the Way, to others,
and thus, to bring fraternity, justice and peace to our streets.

Amen.