

## ***From the Pastor's Desk***

This week marks what is perhaps the most intimate liturgical celebration of the Church year. Today, we celebrate the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, Christ's gift of himself to the Church, where we receive under the form of bread and wine, the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Christ every time that we gather together to celebrate the Eucharist. If you recall last week, I reflected upon the fact that we are made in the image and likeness of God, who is Trinity, calling us to a greater experience of community and who asks us to tend to all of our relationships with great care. The fact of the matter is that we do not live up to that image always for we are often far from God and others for our relationships are tarnished by sin and brokenness. It is so great that the Lord reaches out to us in intimacy in the Eucharist, Christ's body and blood broken for us, which feeds us and saves us from that brokenness. As the pilgrim Church on earth, we are fed with the bread of life until we might one day stand together, all broken relationships healed, rejoicing at the heavenly banquet that has been prepared for us. At this bountiful meal all will be seated with equal dignity, no vying for position or wanting for any sustenance. All will be satisfied, in every way imaginable. Peace will reign supreme in our hearts in this glorious world to come. The Eucharist, the feast of Christ's Body and blood is a foretaste of this reality. Christ is truly present in the Eucharist, and in receiving the Eucharist with true faith, Christ is present in us and for us. In remembering what Christ once did for his Apostles, the night before he died, we become Christ's Body, the Church, the very sacrament of Christ.

Every week, when we celebrate the Eucharist, you note that after the Lamb of God the presider says: "Behold the Lamb of God...Behold him who takes away the sins of the world....Happy are those called to the Supper of the Lamb." Do you prayerfully consider this command every time that you are invited and privileged to receive the Lord's Body and blood. Do you really mean the words: "Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed?" As Pope Francis noted once, the Eucharist is not a sacrament intended for those who are "well." All of our lives are touched by the ravages of sin and we are indeed "ill" in one spiritual form or another. Do we believe that this is a sacrament that initiates us into the healing presence of God? We are what we consume...at least we should be

becoming what we consume, people who are emboldened to preach the Good News with our very lives by loving our brothers and sisters unreservedly just as Christ loved us through his embrace of the Cross for our salvation! This is what must go through our minds as we come forward in the communion line. Never let the enemy distract your heart or your gaze from the One who has set you free from mortality, sin, and death!

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With the aforementioned thoughts in mind, I ask you one last time to consider joining us for Eucharistic adoration today between the hours of 12 Noon and 2:00 PM. Eucharistic adoration flows naturally from the celebration of the Eucharist. It is a continuation of giving thanks and praise to God who has saved us in Christ. It is also a time when we can be one with the Lord. It can be a time of quiet listening or pouring out our heart before Christ who desperately wants to be one with us. It can be a time of petitioning God for our soul's deepest longings or a time of challenging God, *and yes, I mean challenging*, asking why we must endure the sufferings that befall us in life. You know, God wants you to spend time with him. You have time to spend with family and friends, to watch TV, to enjoy recreational activities, to read, to take short trips and longer vacations, to all sorts of various and sundry things. *You don't have 15 minutes this Sunday to spend before the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament?* To be quite honest, I bet that you could squeeze HIM in (I'm sure there are *some* valid exceptions). When making the decision, I merely ask that you remember what HE did for you. However, I say this VERY seriously, only come if YOU truly WANT to come. The Lord wants you there because *you want to be there voluntarily*. So, think about spending part of your day of festivities (the day of our parish picnic) to commune with Jesus in a special way. You may just enjoy the experience so much that you join us on Wednesday evenings and Friday afternoons!

