

FROM THE DESK OF **Fr. Julius**

Brothers and Sisters in Christ; Grace and Peace!



This Sunday we celebrate **Corpus Christi**, widely regarded as the **Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ**. Our liturgical year has two feast days to celebrate *The Real Presence of our Lord in the Eucharist*: Holy Thursday, and today's Solemnity of The Body and Blood of Christ. Moreover, we celebrate today's feast in the light of the Joy of the Resurrection! This Solemnity harkens back to the 13th century when Saint Juliana, an Augustinian nun and Belgium mystic, became dedicated to the idea of having a feast within the Church, expressly devoted in honor of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

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Our First Reading conveys the offering of bread and wine brought by chizedek, who became the model of the priesthood of Jesus Christ, since his priesthood had no beginning and no end. In the Second Reading, Saint Paul reaffirms the Church's central words of consecration by Jesus at the Last Supper. Our Lord proposed a constant memorial of the great offering of His Body and Blood to His disciples and for us.

In Luke's Gospel, the description of the miraculous feeding of the crowd of five thousand men is understood by some current scholars as a type or prefiguring of Jesus' gift of the Holy Eucharist. The people were as spiritually empty as their stomachs were physically empty. Look how riveted they were to Jesus' preaching, well on into late day. We may infer from the taking, breaking, and giving of the loaves the "taking" of Jesus in the garden, the "breaking" of his body during his passion, and Jesus' "giving" of himself as a sacrifice for the sins of humankind.

In a few short weeks, I will be celebrating my 30 years ministry as a Catholic priest. With strong reminders from today's Liturgy of the Word, a personal conviction has prevailed through the course of my ministry: "Give them some food yourself." Thanks to the *"Feed My Sheep and Good Shepherd"* programs in our parish, we discern that it isn't necessary to be financially prosperous to feed the less privileged. Whatever we share from being guests at His table can become the 'living bread' for others. When our Lord directed the disciples to set the loaves before the crowd, the abundance in those twelve baskets became a foreshadowing of the wealth we can all one day expect when we come into God's Kingdom.

The message of unity and sacrificial love comes out clearly in the doctrine of The Eucharist. At the Consecration, as the mystery of transubstantiation takes place, we all become joined in this Holy Sacrifice allowing for the Holy Spirit to work through and in us. As we become transformed into the image of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the very center and heart of our worship, may we have the faith and grace to receive and continually draw closer to Him. Amen.

O Sacrament Most Holy, Make our Hearts like Yours!