

## FROM THE DESK OF **Fr. Julius**

Brothers and Sisters in Christ; Grace and peace!



This Sunday we venerate the Sacred Mystery of the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, widely known as the Feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. Our liturgical year has two precious feast days that celebrate The Real Presence of our Lord in the Eucharist: Holy Thursday, and today's Solemnity of The Body and Blood of Christ. This year's readings emphasize the theme of Covenant blood; we recall that the ancient peoples sealed covenants with the blood of ritually sacrificed animals, but Jesus sealed this new and everlasting covenant with his own blood on Calvary, thereby putting an end to animal sacrifice.

In our first reading from Exodus, we see Moses sprinkling the blood of sacrificed animals upon the altar and on the people, affirming the covenant God made with His People. In the second reading St. Paul mentions 'high priest.' In ancient times, the key role of the high priest of the Israelites was to enter the Most Holy Place behind the veil in the Temple and stand before God on behalf of the people and himself, year after year. After our Lord Jesus died on Calvary, He became an eternal redemption, the *offering* made once and for all. Within every Eucharistic sacrifice a validly ordained Catholic priest puts aside his own idiosyncratic and cultural preferences and *puts on* the person of Christ, uttering "this is my body... this is my blood:" thus linking the Eucharistic consecration to the living sacrifice of the Cross and to the Last Supper. (CCC 1212 - 1344). In his inmost being, the priest draws his life and holiness from the Holy Eucharist, the Church's greatest treasure.

I would guide all Catholics to receive the Precious Body and Blood of our Lord with total reverence and humility at every Mass, worshipping God with your whole being, embracing how intimately you are receiving His very body within your own. St. John Chrysostom says: "**What is the Bread actually? The Body of Christ.** What do communicants become? The Body of Christ. Just as the bread comes from many grains, which remain themselves and are not distinguished from one another because they are united, so we are united with Christ." Where numerous grains of wheat are pounded together to create the host, and grapes crushed together into wine, we understand that Our Lord chose these elements to enable the Holy Spirit to transform us into Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Since the 13th century, the time of St. Thomas Aquinas, **Corpus Christi** has been celebrated with a procession to honor the Blessed Sacrament, followed by a Benediction. St. Thomas, commissioned by Pope Urban IV, honored the Holy Eucharist with hymns such as *Panis Angelicus*, *O Salutaris Hostia*, and *Tantum Ergo*. It is our legacy and honor to venerate the Most Blessed Sacrament every Friday here at St. Joseph the Worker beginning with the Holy Mass at 9am through 12.00pm. If you are able, join weekly us to deepen your relationship with God.

Blessed Feast Day!