

JUNE 14, 2020
Solemnity of the most Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi)
John 6: 51-59

“I GO FOR THE BREAD.”

Fr. Denis Hanly, a Maryknoll Missionary priest told this story: “I had, as you know, a kind of an outspoken mother, who gets into a lot of trouble, when I was a kid, with our pastor, and the pastor held views which my mother held, but her views were different to the pastor’s, so sometimes there were little clashes going on, back and forth. And my father and I used to like to tease my mother about it. So, one time, after she was criticizing the sermon going home in the car, my father says to her, winking at me, bringing me into the conspiracy, he says, ‘Sarah Jane, you complain so much about the homilies in the church, that I really wonder why you go to church at all.’ And, like a shot, she said the famous words which we all know, ‘I go for the bread.’”¹

Today, we are celebrating the Solemnity of the Corpus Christi, the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. “The feast of Corpus Christi was proposed by St. Thomas Aquinas, Doctor of the Church to Pope Urban IV, in order to create a feast focused solely on the Holy Eucharist, emphasizing the joy of the Eucharist being the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ. Having recognized the authenticity of the Eucharistic Miracle of Bolsena on input of Aquinas, in 1264, the pontiff, established the feast of Corpus Christi as a Solemnity and extended it to the whole Roman Catholic Church.”²

In today’s gospel, Jesus said, “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”³ This bread that the Lord is giving us is not only food for our body but for our hearts and souls. This bread gives us everlasting life, life with Him and for Him, a gift of His very self that will last for ever. “At the Last Supper, he says, ‘Take the bread

¹ fatherhanly.com

² en.wikipedia.org

³ John 6: 51 NRSV Catholic Bible Press

and break it,' saying to his disciples, 'Take and eat. This is my body.' It means, in the language that He was speaking, 'This is me. This is my own self which is to be broken for you.' He means his death on the cross. And then He takes the wine. And the wine which He blesses, He offers, and He says these words, 'This is my blood which is poured out for each and every one of you.' He means he lays his life down for us."⁴

My sisters and brothers, these are the words that we always hear when we attend and gather each day, especially on Sundays. He tells us every day in every Eucharistic celebration: 'Do this in remembrance of me.' To receive and eat this bread, His Holy Body, we receive Jesus into our own lives and hearts. "When we receive from the Lord's table, we unite ourselves to Jesus Christ, who makes us sharers in His body and blood and partakers of His divine life. This supernatural food is healing for both body and soul and strength for our journey heavenward. The principal fruit of receiving the Eucharist or Lord's Supper is an intimate union with Christ. As bodily nourishment restores lost strength, so the Eucharist strengthens us in charity and enables us to break with disordered attachments to creatures and to be more firmly rooted in the love of Christ."⁵

So, my sisters and brothers, let us always receive the Lord in the Eucharist for our nourishment and strength and be united with Him all the days of our lives. As we partake His Body and Blood, we are called to share it to others, so that we can be the Eucharistic people – loving and serving others for the sake of Jesus our Lord. As we receive Him, we are now commissioned to share it to others: He gave Himself, so, we also give ourselves to others.

Let this be our prayer: "My Lord and my God, Jesus Christ, You nourish, help and nurture us with Your presence and life-giving word. You are the heavenly food that sustains us today and that produces everlasting life within us. May I always long, thirst and hunger for You and be gratified in You alone. Amen."

⁴ fatherhanly.com

⁵ dailyscripture.servantsoftheword.org