

JUNE 6, 2021  
Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ  
Mark 14: 12-16, 22-26

“TAKE MY BODY, DRINK MY BLOOD.”

“Brennan Manning, an American Franciscan priest, tells this story of his mother, a lady in her mid-seventies in Brooklyn. Mrs. Manning's day centred on her daily Eucharist. Because she began her voluntary shift at a drug detoxification centre each morning at 7.30 a.m., the only mass she could reach was at 5.30 a.m. Across the road from her, lived a very successful lawyer, mid-thirties, married with two children. The man had no religion and was particularly critical of daily church-goers. Driving home from a late party at 5 am one January morning, the roads glassy with ice, he said to his wife: "I bet that old hag won't be out this morning," referring to Mrs. Manning. But to his shock, there she was on hands and knees negotiating the hill up to the church. He went home, tried to sleep, but could not. Around 9 am he rose, went to the local presbytery and asked to see a priest. "Padre," he said, "I am not one of yours. I have no religion. But could you tell me what do you have there that can make an old woman crawl on hands and knees on an icy morning?" Thus began his conversion along with his wife and family. Mrs. Manning was one of those people who never studied deep religious books, never knew the big theological words, but she knew what it is to meet Jesus in Holy Communion. Jesus Christ is the bread of life. What more could we want?"<sup>1</sup>

As we celebrate today the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, wherein we commemorate in every Eucharist, the greatest gift Christ gave to us, His own Body and Blood for us to partake and be in communion with Him. When we receive Him, we are ‘privilege’ to make Jesus our own. Along with His teaching, the Paschal Mystery which is His life, death and resurrection, the Eucharist is the most real and visible presence

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<sup>1</sup> [www.stories4homilies.co](http://www.stories4homilies.co)

of Jesus to us and the very centre of our Christian living. According to Pope Francis: “The Eucharist is the synthesis of Jesus entire existence, which was a single act of love for the Father and for His brothers and sisters. There too in the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves, Jesus took the bread in His hands, offered the prayer of blessing to the Father, broke the bread and gave it to the disciples; and likewise with the cup of wine. But at that moment, on the eve of his passion, he sought to leave in that gesture of the new and eternal covenant, a perpetual memorial of His paschal death and resurrection. The feast of Corpus Christi each year invites us to renew the amazement and joy for this wonderful gift of the Lord, who is the Eucharist. Let us welcome Him with gratitude, not in a passive habitual way. We must not get used to the Eucharist and go to communion by habit. No! Whenever we approach the altar to receive the Eucharist, we must truly renew our "amen" to the body of Christ. When the priest says "the body of Christ", we say "amen": but it's an "amen" from the heart, convinced. It is Jesus who comes to me, it is Jesus who saves me, it is Jesus who comes to give me the strength to live. It is Jesus, Jesus alive. But we must not get used to it: let it be for us like our first holy communion every time we receive.”<sup>2</sup>

My brothers and sisters, like Mrs. Manning in my introductory story let us take His Body and drink His Blood and long for Jesus in the Eucharist. Let us always receive His Body and Blood and for those who cannot receive Him because of many conditions and reasons, let us receive Him spiritually. Let Jesus in the Eucharist be the center of our lives and may we live and share Him to others. A lot of people in some parts of the world are not as lucky as we are. They can not attend the mass, receive the Eucharist or deprive of this greatest gift because of persecutions, danger of death and no priest is present. For us, we can go to mass every Sunday or everyday in person or in live stream, but sometimes we are lazy, have no time, or even not the priority – a challenge and invitation to have a

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.popefrancishomilies.com/corpus-christi>

full and active participation in the Mass. I like families attending mass together, parents and grandparents together with their children and grandchildren. For our young people, don't stop going to mass, don't stop being with Jesus in the Eucharist. I'm always happy seeing young men and women attending mass. Parents, don't stop bringing your children in the church, let us fill the church with your children, young men and women, praising God and receiving Jesus in the Eucharist.

I read this story of a "courageous Chinese Archbishop Dominic Tang, who was imprisoned for twenty-one years for nothing more than his loyalty to Christ and Christ's one, true Church. After five years of solitary confinement in a windowless, damp cell, he was told by his jailers that he could leave it for a few hours to do whatever he wanted. Five years of solitary confinement and he had a couple of hours to do what he wanted! What would it be? A hot shower? A change of clothes? Certainly, a long walk outside? A chance to call or write to family? What would it be, the jailer asked him. "I would like to say Mass," replied Archbishop Tang."<sup>3</sup>

In the last part of the mass, the priest will say: 'Go forth the mass is ended' we are all invited to be the living witnesses of Christ to all the whole world. Let us be the feet, hands, eyes, mouth and nose of Jesus to our brothers and sisters, so that they may see in us a loving, faithful disciples of Christ. "So our celebration of the Eucharist, of the Body and Blood of Christ, is not simply a commemoration of what happened to the 'historical' Jesus 2,000 years ago. It is – in a spirit of remembrance and thanksgiving – a celebration of what makes us what we are today. We today live, as Paul told the Philippians, sharing in the sufferings of Christ, becoming like him in his death and experiencing the power of his resurrection. The Eucharist is the celebration of a living Body, of which we are a part. It is up to us, with the help of Jesus, whether – to use the other image of Jesus – we are

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<sup>3</sup> [www.stories4homilies.co](http://www.stories4homilies.co)

living branches on the parent Vine or whether we are dying branches that need to be cut off and thrown away as unfruitful.”<sup>4</sup> Let us ask the Lord in this Eucharist that we may be a fruitful branches, sharing Him to others and living in the covenant of togetherness until the end of age.

Let this be our prayer: “Lord Jesus Christ, thank you for giving Yourself to us and may Your Body and Blood nourish, strengthen and sustain us to be closer to You always. May we share You to our brothers and sisters by loving, nurturing, supporting and caring them. May we long for You always and receive You wholeheartedly and humbly. Amen.”

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<sup>4</sup> [livingspace.sacredspace.ie](http://livingspace.sacredspace.ie)