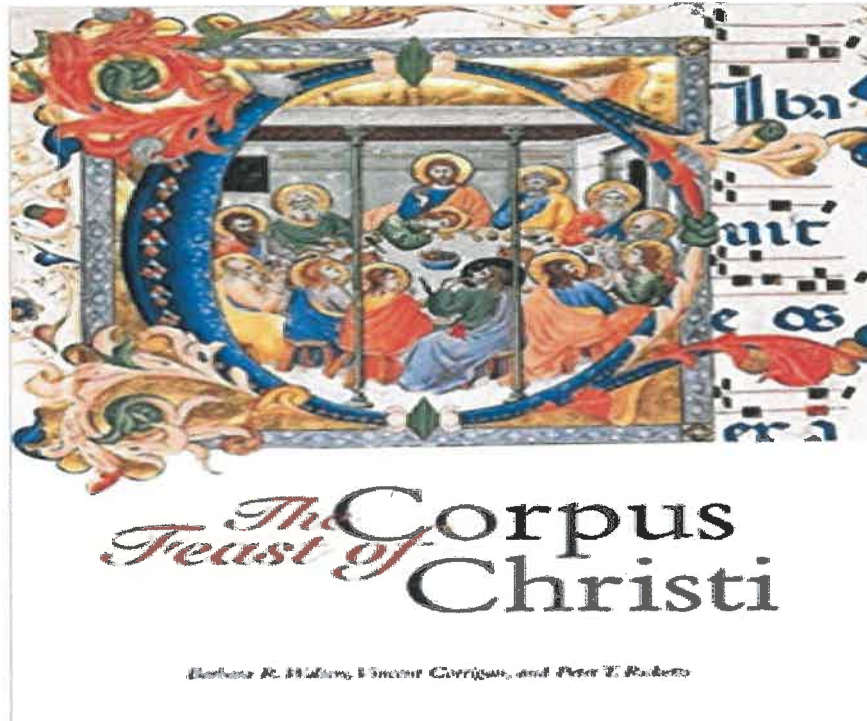


PASTOR'S MEANDERINGS

22 – 23 JUNE 2019

SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST  
(CORPUS CHRISTI)



**SUNDAY REFLECTION**

The words 'Do this in remembrance of Me,' are a haunting melody on the feast of the Body and Blood of Christ. For Paul to remember is not to recall in a static way what occurred on Good Friday. Rather, to remember is to bring to mind the self-giving of Jesus as it culminated in His death. In turn, we authentically remember Jesus whenever we put aside our focus on self to concentrate on the needs of others. To remember authentically is always a challenging enterprise.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, at the 2012 Eucharistic Congress held in Dublin described the communion that happens at the Eucharist as a 'real fusion of existences' between us and Christ, so that there is almost a passing over of Christ into our life and our lives into Christ. The bread of the Eucharist is distinguished from other types of food, which, if taken into our bodies, are digested and broken down. But with the Eucharist we ourselves are changed. St Augustine reminds us that the Eucharist makes the Church. At the Eucharist, he tells us, we are saying 'Amen' not only to the real presence of Christ's Body and Blood, but also to ourselves as

members of the Body of Christ. In sharing the Eucharist we are challenged to become what we are: the Church, by loving the other members of the Body in self-giving love.

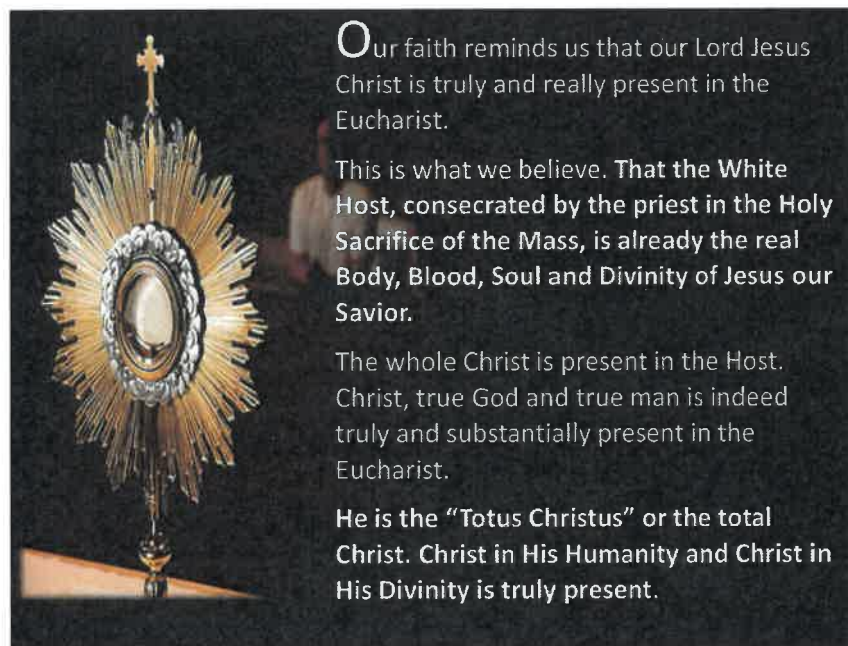
## READINGS THIRTEENTH SUNDAY

30 JUN '19

**1 Kgs. 19:16, 19-21:** The Prophet Elijah calls his first disciple Elisha when he is at work in the fields.

**Gal. 5:1, 13-18:** Paul reminds us that Christ has set us free from slavery to sin and we must not submit again to its bondage. The baptized are called to freedom which is exercised in the loving service of others.

**Lk. 9:51-62:** Jesus spells out the demands of discipleship for three people who would like to follow Him. Following Him is a matter of total, unreserved commitment and participation in His prophetic work.



## SOLEMNITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI (BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST) HISTORY AND LITURGY

The bull of Urban IV had no immediate effect because he died soon after its publication, and the succeeding popes did not urge the matter. Finally, however, Pope Clement V, in 1314, renewed the decrees in a bull of his own, and then the feast spread quickly throughout the Latin Church. Later it was also accepted by some parts of the Oriental Church (Syrians, Armenians, Copts, and Melchites). The churches of the Greeks, Ukrainians, and Russians (of the Greek Catholic Rite) do not celebrate this feast.

Corpus Christi is a holyday of obligation. In the United States, however, the faithful are exempt from the obligation by a special dispensation of the Holy See.

This Sunday in North America marks the Feast of corpus Christi, also referred to as the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. It is a feast dedicated solely to the mystery of the Eucharist, and as such, does not honor one specific even in Jesus' life as do Feast such as Christmas, the Presentation in the Temple, Easter, and the Ascension do.

What is the origins of this feast? On Maundy Thursday, the day on which the Church commemorates the institution of the Holy Eucharist, it is impossible to honor the Blessed Sacrament with appropriate solemn and joyful rites. Such a festival is precluded by the sad and sorrowful memories of the day — the betrayal of Judas, Christ's agony and arrest, Peter's denial — and by the fact that other prescribed ceremonies are already occupying the time of clergy and faithful on Holy Thursday.

This Feast of Corpus Christi was not celebrated throughout the entire Catholic Church until the year 1264. But the history goes even deeper than that.

In 1208, St. Juliana of Liege, a Belgian nun who was the Prioress of Mont Cornillon, who first suggested and advocated a special feast in honor of the Blessed Sacrament to be celebrated on a day other than Maundy Thursday. From her sixteenth year she had often in her prayers beheld a strange sight: it was as if the full moon appeared to her in brilliant light, while a part of its disc remained black and lightless. Finally, in one of these visions Christ showed her the meaning of this picture. The moon represented the ecclesiastical year; the black spot indicated the lack of a festival in honor of the Blessed Sacrament. She was to announce to the authorities of the Church that God wished such a feast to be established. She experienced these visions for 20 years, but kept them a secret. She finally told a priest about the visions, who in turn told the local bishop about them. As her message became publicly known, she had to suffer scorn and ridicule for some years. But the bishop of her diocese (Liège) and some of his canons eventually lent a willing ear to her appeals. A diocesan synod in 1246 decided in her favor and prescribed such a feast for the churches of the diocese of Liège for the first time.

Was it mere coincidence that one of the men who had supported her efforts in Belgium later became pope? He was Jacques Pantaléon, Archdeacon of Liège. Upon his election to the papal office he assumed the name of Urban IV (1261-1265). On September 8, 1264, six years after Juliana's death, he issued a Papal bull, *Transiturus de hoc mundo*, in which the feast of Corpus Christi, a festival in honor of the Holy Eucharist which the saintly nun had proclaimed to be will by God, was made a feast throughout the Catholic Church. It was to be celebrated with great solemnity on the Thursday after Pentecost week, and indulgences were granted to all who would receive Holy Communion or attend special devotions in addition to hearing Mass.

Urban IV commissioned the great Dominican scholar Saint Thomas Aquinas to compose the texts of Mass and Divine Office for the new feast. The splendor, depth, and devotion of the prayers and hymns that Saint Thomas wrote have enriched the liturgy with one of its most beautiful rituals. They are still in use today, admired and appreciated by people of all faiths. This came after Pope Urban IV had investigated claims of a Eucharistic Miracle in Bolsena Italy, in 1263, in which it was reported that a Consecrated Host began to bleed. Whether or not this miracle had anything to do with the Pope's decision to institute the feast remains unknown, but it leads to the following point.

Jesus, in giving us the Eucharist, makes several different statements about the Eucharist being His Body and Blood. Perhaps the most well known of these passages comes from the Gospel of St. John, (6:32-59). This passage is often referred to as the Bread of Life discourse, in which Jesus proclaims “I am the Bread of Life. You who come to Me shall not hunger, and you who believe in Me shall not thirst.” This passage is one of the most beautiful passages pertaining to the Eucharist, because in it, Jesus lays out for us exactly what we must do to have life in Him. If you look at verses 48-58 of this chapter:

“I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the desert, but they died; this is the bread that comes down from heaven so that one may eat it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is My flesh for the life of the world.” The Jews quarreled among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us (h is) flesh to eat?” Jesus said to them, “Amen, amen, I say to you unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats M y flesh and drinks M y blood has eternal life, and I will raise Him on the last day. For M y flesh is true food, and M y blood is true drink. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood remains in Me and I in him. Just as the living Father sent Me and I have life because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on Me will have life because of Me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Unlike your ancestors who ate and still died, whoever eats this bread will live forever.”

There is a lot to digest in this passage. First off, there is the double sacrifice of Jesus giving His flesh both in the Eucharist, and on the Cross at Calvary. We also see in this passage that Jesus refers to His body as “true food” and His blood as “true drink.” This is not to indicate that these should be our only forms of nourishment, but rather that the Body and Blood of Christ Jesus are to be our spiritual food and drink for “Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood remains in Me, and I in him.” And the life that we will have is life eternal. So, the Eucharist is not nourishment for our bodies, but rather for our souls.

But of course, in order for the Eucharist to have any meaning, we must believe that Jesus Christ is truly present in the bread and wine we offer at Mass, and that the mere bread and wine, by the miracle of Transubstantiation, cease to be bread and wine, and become the Body and Blood, soul and Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Of course many have doubted this revelation, but throughout history, Jesus has given us many signs of His true presence in the Eucharist. There are many reported, and verified Eucharistic Miracles that have occurred throughout the history of the Catholic Church. Many of them have to do with Blood appearing on a host such as the one referred to above that took place in Balseno Italy in 1263, or hosts being preserved after a fire has occurred. To highlight another reported Eucharistic Miracle; this took place in Lanciano, Italy, in the 8<sup>th</sup> Century. A priest who was having doubts about Jesus’ real presence in the Eucharist was celebrating Mass, and after he had spoken the words of the Consecration, the host was changed into live flesh retaining the exact same dimensions as the host, and the wine was changed into blood, which coagulated in the chalice, forming five globules, irregular in shape and size. (the number is significant, because that is the number of wounds that Christ endured while He was on the cross: two in His hands, two in His feet, and the one to His side. The Flesh and Blood can still be observed today, and have not deteriorated or decayed, despite the fact that they have not been preserved by any means.

In the 1970’s and 80’s, an extensive analysis was done on the relics from the Lanciano miracle. The results: the Flesh is real Flesh. The Blood is real Blood.

The Flesh and the Blood belong to the human species.

The Flesh consists of the muscular tissue of the human heart.

In the Flesh is seen present in section: the myocardium, the endocardium, the vagus nerve and also the left ventricle of the heart for the large thickness of the myocardium.

The Flesh is a “heart” complete in its essential structure.

The Flesh and the Blood have the same blood type: AB (Blood-type identical to that which Prof. Baima Bollone uncovered in the Shroud of Turin).

In the Blood there were found proteins in the same normal proportions (percentage wise) as are found in the sero-proteic make-up of fresh normal blood.

In the Blood there were also found these minerals: chlorides, phosphorus, magnesium, potassium, sodium and calcium.

The preservation of the Flesh and of the Blood, which were left in their natural state for twelve centuries and exposed to the action of atmospheric and biological agents remains an extraordinary phenomenon.

Science cannot explain what we hold as true: That Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, is alive, and is truly present in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar. He gives us His Body and Blood, so that we may come to know Eternal Life through Him. And so, on the Feast of Corpus Christi, let us pray that the faithful around the world may seek to come to a deeper understanding of this great mystery of the Eucharist, and may come to exhibit a greater sense of reverence, awe, and wonder as they receive this most Holy and Blessed Sacrament. And may the Most Holy Body and Blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, bring Eternal Life to all who receive it faithfully Amen

**If we really love the good God, we will find it a joy and happiness to spend some time near Him, to adore Him, and keep company with so good a friend. He is there in the tabernacle. What is He doing, this good Jesus, in the sacrament of His love? He is loving us.**

**–St. John Vianney**

Eucharistic Virtue



## THE ALTAR AND ACCOMPANYING ITEMS

### TABERNACLE

The tabernacle is the place of the church that holds the ciborium containing the Eucharist.

This makes the tabernacle the heart and the cornerstone of each church; it is the reference of those who come to pray and worship the body of Christ even outside of celebrations.

The term comes from the Latin *tabernaculum*, a diminutive of *taberna*. Its meaning is therefore 'abode', the house of God by men. This justifies the centrality that has been given to the shrine over the centuries.

It not only wanted to invoke the presence of God, but to also show how he was near, under the eyes of the faithful, alongside their daily lives. The Altar tabernacle stems from the early Christian tradition of guarding the blessed bread in their homes, to be able to worship at all times, to make it a constant presence in everyday life.

In the past, it was located at the very center of the presbytery, above the altar, or at least in a central location where the faithful could always see it. In more recent times, it seems to have lost this prominent position: it is often located on a bollard a little out of sight, or even outside of the presbytery, in a chapel or side altar.

Nevertheless, you should not be fooled about the true value contained within the tabernacle for the faithful on a symbolic level. Although distancing the tabernacle from the altar may seem on the one hand a weakening of the symbolic expression of the Mystery of the Sacrifice, in fact enables the faithful to find, in the most intimate and private contemplation of the tabernacle, a deeper and more collected inner journey.

The choice of the tabernacle's location from the table thus does not affect its value. It remains a subject of major importance to the adoration of the faithful and in every church the symbol of the presence of God and the renewal of his sacrifice of love.



## **ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT**

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is not something new in the practice of the Church nor is it an antiquated practice that is making a last gasp resurgence of traditionalism. It is a centuries-old practice rooted in an essential teaching of Catholic Christianity: Jesus Christ is truly and completely present in the Eucharist. Like many practices of our faith, however, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament developed gradually.

In the earliest years of Christianity, consecrated bread would be brought home from the celebration of the Eucharist to be given to those not able to be present at the liturgy because of illness. It was also to be consumed by the faithful during the week to keep them connected to the Eucharist and the community they celebrated with.

In about the fourth century monasteries began to reserve the Eucharist, and by the 11th century, reservation—still mainly for the sick and dying—was a regular feature of churches. While reverence was certainly given to Christ present in the sacrament, it was not yet customary to pray before the reserved sacrament.

In the 11th century the French monk Berengar of Tours began to teach that the bread and wine in the celebration of the Eucharist could not change physically into the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Pope Gregory VII demanded a retraction from Berengar saying that the body and blood of Christ were truly present in the Eucharist. This resulted in a refining of the church's teaching on the real presence. In response, Eucharistic devotion burst forth throughout Europe: processions, visits to the Blessed Sacrament, and other prayers focused on the reserved sacrament became part of Catholic life.

Around the same time, elevations of the bread and the wine were added to the Eucharistic prayer at Mass. For some, the moment of seeing the consecrated host overshadowed the rest of the liturgy. Times of extended exposition of the Blessed Sacrament outside the Mass grew out of this action, and eventually a blessing with the exposed Eucharist, or benediction, developed.

The feast of Corpus Christi developed in the 13th and 14th centuries. Processions became traditional on this day, and other devotions, including adoration, gained popularity. Eucharistic Congresses, held since the late 19th century (most recently in Canada in 2008), continue to promote this devotion.

Since the Second Vatican Council, a great deal of attention has focused on the reform of the liturgy and a deepening of Eucharistic theology and piety, but the practice of adoration remained in many places. Like the practice of the earliest Christians, adoration can keep us connected to the community's celebration of the Eucharist.

## **SAINT OF THE WEEK      JOHN SOUTHWORTH    1592-1654      28 JUNE**

One of the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales. He was born in Lancashire and became a priest in 1619 in Douai. Sent to England that same year, he was arrested but released through the intercession of Queen Henrietta Maria. He joined St. Henry Morse, subsequently working diligently during the plague of 1636. Arrested again, he was martyred by being hanged, drawn,

and quartered at Tyburn. His relics are in Westminster Cathedral in London, discovered there in 1927. Pope Paul VI canonized him in 1970.

## PRAYERS

### Corpus Christi Prayer

*Lord Jesus Christ,  
we worship you living among us  
in the sacrament of your body and blood.  
May we offer to our Father in heaven  
a solemn pledge of undivided love.  
May we offer to our brothers and sisters  
a life poured out in loving service of that kingdom  
where you live with the Father and the Holy Spirit  
one God for ever and ever. Amen*

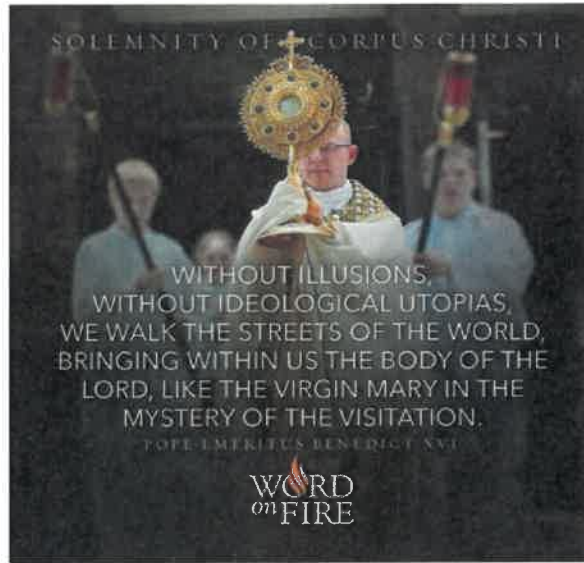
### Anima Christi

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.  
Body of Christ, save me.  
Blood of Christ, inebriate me,  
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.  
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.  
O good Jesus, hear me.  
Within Thy wounds hide me.  
Suffer me not to be separated from Thee.  
From the malicious enemy defend me.  
In the hour of my death call me and bid me come unto Thee.  
That with Thy saints I may praise thee forever and ever. Amen.





SOLEMNITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI







WITHOUT ILLUSIONS,  
WITHOUT IDEOLOGICAL UTOPIAS,  
WE WALK THE STREETS OF THE WORLD,  
BRINGING WITHIN US THE BODY OF THE  
LORD, LIKE THE VIRGIN MARY IN THE  
MYSTERY OF THE VISITATION.

POPE EMERITUS BENEDETTO XVI

WORD  
on FIRE

# HOLY COMMUNION

	
WHAT ATHEISTS SEE	WHAT PROTESTANTS SEE
	
WHAT CATHOLICS SEE	WHAT IT REALLY IS

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