



Church of the Holy Family
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Message for the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, (Corpus Christi), Year A, 2020

Dear Parishioners of the Church of the Holy Family

Today, we celebrate the gift of the Sacrament of the Eucharist which is instituted by the Lord on the eve of his Sacrifice for our salvation. That ground-breaking Paschal Event moves so fast in those three days 2000 years ago and is so rich in meaning that the Church designates a separate celebration outside of the Easter Season.

Similarly, there is another celebration connected with the Paschal Event namely the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, celebrated on 14th September every year without fail even when it falls on a Sunday. The cross was an instrument of shame, scandal and execution of those condemned yet Our Lord by being nailed to and subsequent death on it elevated it to be a symbol of Christianity, Christian presence and a sacramental to reinforce and enrich our faith, prayer, good works, other daily activities in the name of the Lord, Holy Mass and other public liturgies.

Back to this Solemnity; previously, it was called Corpus Christi (which in Latin means Body of Christ) but it is still in popular usage due to its rhythmic ease of articulation. The current title reflects an expansion so as to indicate the dual eucharistic species of the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar. The 2nd Reading of this Sunday echoes this reality.

It can be noticed that this Solemnity is placed immediately after the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity which was celebrated a week ago. The Church by juxtaposing these two Solemnities has a pastoral dimension. While the latter tends to lead one to appreciate the loftiness of God, the Almighty Most High Three Person One God, the former assures us of the closeness of God to us, to our situations, to our challenges, our struggles and our difficulties.

Jesus is so close to us that we can see Him in the form of bread and wine, touch Him and put Him inside our body so that we can be reminded that He has saved us from sin and death, His power to protect us from all evil and His presence In our daily battles. Since Jesus is God the Son, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, He is omnipresent, therefore He is still present in our midst and in each one of us. We just got to put ourselves in the presence of God.

No doubt, due to the current Containment Measures to counteract the extremely infectious nature of the COVID-19 virus, public Masses are suspended for the time being. Most if not all of you have this hunger for the Eucharist, please be advised to be patient.

In the history of the Church, there are communities who could not receive Holy Communion for a super extended period of time. One example is the Japanese Catholics. During the Shogunate era, they had no priests for more than 150 years to celebrate Mass for them due to persecutions and thereby they could not have the eucharist. Yet each Catholic community passed down the faith, baptised their descendants, prayed together till the foreign missionaries were allowed to re-enter Japan. Another 2 examples are to be found in Korea and Vietnam.

The 1st Reading and the Gospel text tell us that God knows that we hunger for Him and that God provides and will always provide for all our needs; including medical materials (vaccines included) to fix this virus.

14th June is the feast day of St Joseph the Hymnographer and 15th June is the feast day of St Germaine. 16th June is the feast day of St Aurelian and St Richard of Chichester while 17th June is the feast day of St Ishmael of Persia. 18th June is the feast day of St Alena and St Marina. On 19th June, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and is the feast day of St Philip Minh while on 20th June, the Church celebrates the Memorial of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and is the feast day of St Benignus.

Fr Stanislaus PANG