



June 13, 2020

Dear friends of God,

This weekend we celebrate the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ. In Latin, it is called *Corpus Christi*. This weekend and last week's Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity are high feast days in our Church that follow the 50 day Easter Season. Even though we are in Ordinary Time, these are significant celebrations that remind us of fundamental teachings of our faith. Today's feast recalls our belief that Christ is present soul and divinity in the consecrated bread and wine. We believe that even though it looks and tastes like bread and wine, in its substance it becomes the Body and Blood of the Lord during the Eucharistic Prayer. This is not a symbolic change; Christ is really and truly present in the Eucharist. From the earliest days of the Church, the community recognized the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

We remember in Matthew's Gospel where it says:

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and giving it to his disciples said, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins." (Matthew 26:26-28)

During the Second Vatican Council the bishops of the world described the Eucharist as the "source and the summit" of our Catholic faith. The Eucharist is central to our identity as Catholic Christians. During these troubling times, we have been unable to come together for Mass. We are beginning now to come together slowly and carefully. I have to say that it is good to be worshipping again with our community. Even though I celebrated Mass frequently during the week and every Sunday, it is a gift to once again hear the responses of the assembly even with masks covering our noses and mouths. We are a Eucharistic people.

The early Church knew, and we are still growing in understanding, that the Eucharist is medicine for the soul. The Church has always taught that Jesus is our divine physician. Remember what Jesus said in Mark 2:17 "Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. I did not come to call the righteous but sinners." We are all sinners, and Jesus has come to heal us. During his earthly ministry, Jesus healed with his presence, his touch, and with his love. Following his death and Resurrection, Jesus continues to heal us through his Body and Blood. As Dorothy Day reminded us: "Food for the body is not enough. There must be food for the soul."

Jesus lovingly gives us his Body and Blood. Christ feeds our souls, but our lives of faith do not stop there. We are meant to share Christ's love for the life of the entire world. We are called by the Church to make a

“preferential option for the poor and vulnerable.” That is, we must put the needs of our poorer brothers and sisters above others. Christ is present in the poor. That has been a part of the wisdom of the Church from its earliest days. We can think of the deacon martyr Saint Lawrence who was killed when the Roman Emperor demanded the treasures of the Church and Lawrence showed the Emperor the poor of Rome. Again, let us borrow from the holy inspired wisdom of Dorothy Day who said “Christ, is disguised under every type of humanity that treads on the earth.” The Eucharist is meant to teach us to see with the eyes of love, to see as God sees and to respond as Christ wills us to as people who call themselves the Body of Christ. Dorothy Day knew Christ’s mysterious presence not just in her words but in her very life. Following the celebration of the institution of the Eucharist on Holy Thursday, she shared these beautiful reflections on Christ’s presence in the poor:

The mystery of the poor is this: that they are Jesus, and what you do for them you do for him. It is the only way we have of knowing and believing in our love. The mystery of poverty is that by sharing in it, making ourselves poor in giving to others, we increase our knowledge of and belief in love.

As we celebrate the gift of the Eucharist, as Jesus shares his life fully with us, let us take the time to share our lives and care for those who are struggling in our world and in our community. The challenge of this time in our world is that there are no shortage of people and places needing assistance. You might want to think about offering your time or donations to help organizations such as the Pinconning Area Emergency Food Pantry. God continually gives us the Eucharist to heal us and to give us strength and courage to care for those around us. We thank God for the gift of his Son and his Precious Body and Blood.

Much love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Fr. Ken".