

Today we celebrate the great *solemnity* of Christ

In His most holy Body and *Blood* –

Also known as *Corpus Christi*.

Every time we celebrate the *Mass*,

We're celebrating the great *outpouring* of God's love for us,

In His self-*sacrifice* of His Body and Blood.

For *me*, this feast has special significance –

Because I would not be a *priest* – let alone *Catholic* –

If it weren't for God's *gift* of Himself to me.

In *fact*, I wouldn't even be fully *alive* without the life of *God*

Being *offered* to me and to *all* the world –

Especially to the *broken* –

Broken by the effects of *sin* –

And to the *brokenhearted* – *yearning* for the *only* thing that makes us *whole* – our loving *God*.

Corpus Christi is a *moveable* feast,

So its date *changes* every year, based on when *Easter* falls.

Easter comes on the *first* Sunday –

After the first *full moon* –

After the first day of *spring*.

So *that's* why – when I was ordained a *deacon* in *May* of 2016 –

It fell on *Corpus Christi*.

And the *next* year – when I was ordained a *priest* –

That was in *June* – and yet, *that* Sunday *also* fell on the feast of *Corpus Christi*.

All of today's readings are readings of both *remembrance* and of *anticipation*.

The *Eucharist* is a *remembrance* of God's *constant* love for us –

And His *tireless* desire to pour His *heart* out for us.

In the days of *Jesus*, the expression *Body and Blood*,

Denoted the whole *self*.

God offering His Body and Blood meant He gives us His *all* –

He holds *nothing* back in His *love* for us –

And His *desire* – His *hunger* for our becoming fully *alive*.

No one can be fully *themselves* – fully *alive* –

If they cannot *open* their hearts to *receive* what God has to offer –

His whole *self* – His Body and Blood.

The High Priest *Melchizedek* in the *first* reading,

Was also the king of *Salem* –

Salem means *peace* –

And it *anticipated* God coming to dwell *among* His chosen people in *Jeru-salem*.

This *peace* – this *Shalom* – is *not* an absence of *conflict* –

But the presence of *God* in every aspect of our *lives* –

The *good*, the *bad*, and the *ugly* –

His real *presence* is the thing that *completes* us –

Makes us *whole* –

And *beautiful* in the eyes of *God*.

St. Paul's *second* reading was written barely 20 *years* after Christ died and rose again.

His letters preceded even the *Gospels*.

And *in* them we see the words of *institution* –

Institution of the *Eucharist* – *not* by Paul, nor the *Apostles* –

But by *Christ Himself* –

We *remember* Him *anticipating*.

Jesus *took* the bread – as *Melchizedek* had for the blessing of God's chosen people –

Jesus gave *thanks* and *broke* the bread –

Anticipating the offering of His own *Body* –

Broken on the altar of His Holy *Cross*.

Broken for *us* – in our *own* brokenness.

To *feed* us *not* just bread –

But nourishment of body and *soul* –

On our life's journey through the wilderness.

Jesus is the new *Passover* –

Delivering us from slavery to sin and death –

Into the very life of God –

A life that is *all* about *love* –

About *giving* Himself so that *we* may truly *live*.

The *Gospel* is *also* an anticipation.

Jesus *meets* the crowd in a deserted place.

And He *pours* Himself into their *emptiness* –

Their *hunger* and *thirst*.

He spends the whole *day* –

Healing them –

And *teaching* them to *hope* in the Kingdom of God – at *work* in His *presence*.

Like the last supper, the feeding of the 5,000 anticipates

Jesus feeding us the very life of *God*, in an *outpouring* of His *perfect sacrifice* of love.

But He *also* shares a *meal* with His new *family* –

The family of the *faithful* –

Those who will become *like* Him after *receiving* Him.

It's very *easy* to *miss* in the Gospel,

But Jesus *commissions* these 5,000 –

Beginning with the *12 Apostles* –

To *become* what they eat –

To *open* themselves to Christ's self-gift –

The gift of Christ *Jesus* –

Who entrusted His *entire self* to us – to *us*!

And so *we* are to live the life of *God* on earth –

To *give* what we have *received* –

To *give* of our body and *blood* – if you *will* –

To give from our hearts – our blood, sweat, and *tears* –

To *others* – so *they* may be brought into the life of God *too*.

In the *Gospel*, Jesus *says* to the 12:

Give them some food yourselves.

Even the great *Apostles* were *afraid*.

After *all* – they were *tired* and *hungry* at the end of a long day in a deserted *place*.

Their *instinct* was to send the crowd *away* to fend for *themselves*.

But Jesus says *no*!

Give them some food *yourselves*.

As ***I*** give you ***My*** Body and Blood –

*My **all** –*

*So **you** are to give to those still **lost** in life's **deserted** spaces –*

*Those who still **hunger** and **thirst** –*

Who – like you and me –

*Are **broken** and **long** for **wholeness**.*

In every Mass, the Apostolic tradition is handed *down*.

We *gather* to become Christ's Body.

We *remember* His completely *selfless* act of love for us –

Giving His *all* – His *Body* and *Blood*.

But this is *not* just a *recall* of some *past event*.

It's our coming *together*, to *present* ourselves to *God's eternal* saving *presence* –

His *real* presence in the Eucharist.

He *never* ceases to *pour* His life into the hearts of those who *open* themselves to His *presence*.

Having *received* this great *gift* –

May *we* – *this* day – and *every* day –

Entrust ourselves to *others* – *Give them some food yourselves* – even if it be but *crumbs*.

Jesus will bring it to *abundance* – *feeding us* His Body and Blood –

Offering *His* life – The *only* thing that *makes* a life – *complete*.