

June 23, 2019

The Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ

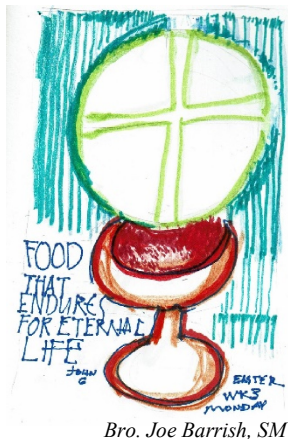
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We are a Eucharistic People! We celebrate this Sunday the “Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ,” gathering as one people around the table of the Lord. From the beginning of the Christian community the sharing of the Eucharist, the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, has been central to our identity as Christians. The readings invite us to contemplate more deeply this mysterious encounter of God-with-us.

In readings from Genesis and Psalm 110, we meet the priest of the God Most High, the king of Salem, Melchizedek. Foreshadowing Christ, who is King, prophet, and priest, Melchizedek blesses Abram and affirms the covenant God has initiated, to which Abram responds by giving him “a tenth of everything.” The Psalm sings of the ultimate triumph of the king who stands with the Lord, foreshadowing the ultimate triumph of the love and unity over hatred, indifference and discord. In the Eucharist we participate in our God’s unity that is Love, calling us to one family in the Lord.

St. Paul, in this chapter 11 of 1 Corinthians, is commenting on and correcting the abuses that have crept into the community at Corinth. Specifically, he criticizes their practice of community meals that held onto to the common practice of recognizing the social status of members, separating the approved from the unrecognized, where some ate and were satisfied, while others were left hungry. He condemns this practice and reminds them in our reading of the true meaning of the Eucharistic meal, given to him by the Lord, which he then handed on to the Corinthian church. In this oldest recording of the institution of the Eucharist, the bread and the wine remember to us Christ’s self-giving for our salvation and call us to reconcile our differences, witnessing to his death and resurrection, as we wait for Christ’s return.



Bro. Joe Barrish, SM

In the liturgy of the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, the beautiful Sequence before the Gospel, *Lauda Sion Salvatorem*, attributed to St. Thomas Aquinas, accomplishes a careful theological exposition of the Eucharist in lyrical song. Reason’s grappling with mystery finds comfort in song and rhyme, eternal truth in this moment of time; joy bursts forth in this sharing of bread and wine, body and blood Divine.

Alleluia trumpets life forever, and the Gospel proclaims the miracle of the feeding of the 5000. They have followed him, listening to his teaching. The most important teaching of the day is that he will not send them home hungry, will not abandon them to their own individual resources. Instead he gathers them in smaller groups, blesses what he has and tells the disciples to share it out. In this grace-filled sharing, each person shares whatever they have brought with them when they set out that morning to listen to the Teacher. Miracles are mysterious in that what needs to happen, happens! Hunger is real, and yet it can be met if we

share what we have brought, what we have been given. In this great meal, there is abundance.
There is love!