

HOMILY SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST

I AM THE LIVING BREAD THAT CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN

Brothers and sisters... The echo of those words we heard on the night of Holy Thursday still resounds throughout the Church... **Take and eat, take and drink... Do this in memory of me...**

But today we contemplate them from a different perspective... No longer from the anguish of the Passion that was approaching, **but from the joy of the Risen Lord who remains with us forever...** And that, is exactly what we celebrate today in the Solemnity of Corpus Christi... **Christ didn't leave, Christ stayed...**

The Eucharist, isn't merely a memory... it isn't a beautiful tradition that the Church preserves with affection... it isn't a symbol that helps us think about Jesus...

For us Catholics, the Eucharist is Jesus Christ Himself, **living, real, and truly present...** That is why we remain silent before the Tabernacle... that is why we adore, that is why we kneel... Because we aren't standing before **something sacred...** We're standing before **Someone...** We're standing **before the One** who, after His death and resurrection, **chose to remain with us every day...**

And the most beautiful and profound part of this mystery is that Jesus didn't simply want to stay... He wanted to become our food... **I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever...**

Throughout salvation history, we see God feeding His people. In the desert, He fed them so that they wouldn't perish along the way... But today, Jesus reveals that He Himself is the true food that the Father gives us so that we may have life...

My dear friends, the Eucharist isn't a routine act... it's opening our hearts to Jesus so that **He may live in us, heal us, strengthen us, and transform our lives...** it's becoming a living tabernacle...

And here! we find perhaps the most moving gift of today's Gospel... Jesus never asked or specified who deserved the bread... Throughout the Gospels, we see Him feeding the hungry before asking any other question... And **in the Eucharist, He continues to do the same...**

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Christ offers Himself.

Christ gives Himself.

Christ becomes our food.

Christ comes to meet us.

Not because we're perfect, but because He loves us... God makes Himself food for His children, **the Lord of heaven and earth allows Himself to be received into our hands and into our hearts...**

That is why this solemnity returns every year as an invitation to recover our sense of wonder, because sometimes we become accustomed...

We enter the church distracted...

We walk past the Tabernacle without stopping...

We come forward to receive Communion almost automatically...

And Corpus Christi says to us once again... **Look again, believe again, adore again...** Because the Lord is here!

Today Saint Paul, in the second reading, invites us to take one step further... He says... **Because the loaf of bread is one, we, though many, are one body...** In other words, **we're one!** The Eucharist doesn't end at the altar, the Eucharist continues in the life of the Church...

If we receive the same Christ...

If we eat the same Bread...

If we share in the same Chalice...

Then my dear friends, something should change in the way we live... We cannot receive the Christ who gives Himself for everyone **and continue building walls between one another...** We cannot approach the same altar **and remain**

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indifferent to each other... We cannot say Amen to the Body of Christ in Holy Communion **and then ignore the suffering body of Christ in others...**

Every Communion unites us more deeply to Christ, but it also unites us more deeply to one another... That is why the Eucharist isn't only a gift to be received... **It's also a life to be shared...**

My dear friends... Today we celebrate that Christ stayed, that Christ became our food, and that Christ continues forming one body with all those who receive Him in faith...

May this solemnity help us recover our sense of wonder before His real presence...

And allow what we celebrate at the altar **to be reflected in the way we love, serve, and walk together with one another.**

Fr. Moices Rafael C.