

Homily Corpus Christi Year B 2021

Jesus came to us from the Father through the working of the Holy Spirit. His life began in Nazareth with Mary's consent. He grew up in an obscure town and lived a very grounded life with his family in a small village, experiencing all the difficulties and challenges of family life, celebrating successes and failures, experiencing goodness and evil, births and deaths. Only after this did he begin his public ministry. Subsequently, whenever Jesus spoke to the people, he spoke from a lived experience that appealed to them. He spoke with compassion, empathy and a loving heart.

When a baby is born, fed and cared for in every way possible, if it does not experience a human touch, it will stop growing and eventually die. This is why Jesus came to live among us, so that we could have physical contact with God. Jesus realised that once he had died and gone to heaven, we would continually need to have physical contact with God and what better way than through the eucharist! In receiving the consecrated host, the body of Christ, we enter into the salvation that Jesus offers us. At the same time, we welcome Jesus fully - body and blood – into our lives. Equally important is that the words the *Body of Christ* also apply to both laity and clergy who together form the Body of Christ. Sharing in the eucharistic meal together we are strengthened both individually and as a community. Receiving the wine, the Blood, understood as life, we receive the life of Christ. We, in turn, pledge our lives to Christ in receiving holy communion. The eucharist is a meal celebrated in remembrance of Jesus as he requested us to do. In the eucharist, remembrance means *making present*. Christ is truly present in the eucharist in the bread and the wine and is also present in the gathered assembly. In the simple hand shake at the sign of peace, we are in effect shaking hands with Jesus who dwells within each one of us. This meal is earthly, grounded in each of our lives while touching the reality and soaring heights of divinity. A loving divinity that desires to be fully part of our lives. In this simple and profound meal, we celebrate the whole of Jesus Christ in his humanity and his divinity, death and resurrection. We are truly blessed, we are divinely fed, we are made one in Christ.

A rabbi and a priest meet up after a year.

The rabbi says, "Wow, you've put on some weight since last time!"

Priest: "Yeah I know, I have a great scheme. I go into a restaurant, eat as much as I can and when the bill comes, I tell them I've already paid it."

Rabbi: "Surely the waiter won't believe you?"

Priest: "Of course he won't. So, I say "How dare you doubt a man of faith?" It usually works and I leave without paying."

Rabbi: "Very nice, I'll have to try that."

The next time the rabbi goes to his favourite kosher restaurant and receives the bill for a 5-course meal, the Rabbi says: "Oh, I already paid this."

Waiter: "Mmm, I'm pretty sure you didn't sir."

Rabbi: "You know I'm a rabbi, how dare you doubt a man of faith? I told you, I already paid."

Waiter: "So sorry sir, you are right, it must be some misunderstanding, you're good to go."

15 minutes goes by and the rabbi is still at the table. 30 minutes... 45 minutes... 1 hour and he is still there!

The waiter walks up to him, "Sir, why are you still here?"

Rabbi: "Well, I'm waiting for the change!"