Corpus Christi C 2025

In earlier times we would “go to church to get something.” Today, the Eucharist is not simply something we receive. The Eucharist is something we do, an action. We believe that the bread and wine become for us the real Body and Blood of the Lord. When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup we receive into our hearts the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus. The action is what we do together. We gather, we listen, we bless, we eat, and we go forth. How eucharistic our OFS theme—listening, discerning, and going forth— our physical and spiritual presence among people. Inscribed in stone on our diocesan cathedral, *“Ecce Tabernaculum Dei Cum Hominibus—Behold God’s Presence Among People.”* Only in the context of this action the true significance of the Body and Blood of Christ is clear.

The great Saint of Assisi is most remembered for his radical embrace of evangelical poverty and his love of the Creator who gifts us with the beauty of creation. Francis held that the whole world is a sacrament, a sacred gift. The sacramental character of the world reminds us of the Incarnation continued among us in the seven sacraments, especially the Eucharist. But it is Francis’ fiery love of Jesus in the Eucharist that comes to us most strongly in his writings, and his concern that the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass be offered properly.

For Francis, the Eucharist is the primary way in which he sees Christ’s continuing Incarnation in the world, the complete self-emptying of Christ. In the first of his Admonitions about the Eucharist, Francis stresses that the sacrament is a symbol of the poverty and humility of Christ. He writes, *“Behold, each day He humbles Himself as when He came from the royal throne into the Virgin’s womb; each day He Himself comes down to us, appearing humbly; each day He comes down from the bosom of the Father upon the altar in the hands of the priest. As He revealed Himself to the holy apostles in true flesh, so He reveals Himself to us now in sacred bread”* (1, 16-19).

The truths that flow from the action of the Eucharist that affect our lives is our dignity and our obligation as daughters and sons of God, as sisters and brothers of Jesus. It is in the Eucharistic Prayer that the community asks for the gift of Christ’s presence. The Father’s willingness to honor our prayer reveals our dignity as His own children.

We share the dignity as a community. Everyone around the altar is a holy person. Together, we form a royal priesthood, a holy people, united and consecrated for service. The action of blessing reveals this dignity.

The action of going forth reveals our obligation. Having received the Word and Sacrament we bring that life of Christ to the world. Refreshed and nourished within, we are recommitted to action for the building up of the Kingdom, more patient, less critical of our neighbor, more committed to serve, less fearful in our struggles, especially with evil.

Mother, St Teresa said about Jesus, *“He uses us to be His love and compassion in the world in spite of our weaknesses and frailties.”* Compassion and reverence for life allows us to lead by example of the Father’s merciful and loving heart.

Showing all possible reverence and honor to the Most Holy Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Francis writes A Letter to the Entire Order: *“O wonderful loftiness and stupendous dignity! O sublime humility! O humble sublimity! The Lord of the universe, God and the Son of God, so humbles Himself that for our salvation He hides Himself under an ordinary piece of bread! Brothers, look at the humility of God, and pour out your hearts before Him! Humble yourselves that you may be exalted by Him! Hold back nothing of yourselves for yourselves, that He who gives Himself totally to you may receive you totally.”*

