

- On Corpus Christi...
 - I like to share stories of Eucharistic Miracles...
 - to help boost our faith in the Blessed Sacrament...
 - that Jesus really and truly is present...Body...Blood...Soul and Divinity.
- But this year...I want to share the story of a 10 year old girl...
 - because it's a miraculous story of faith.
 - One that helps to remind us that this Sacrament...
 - really is worth fighting for.
 - And in the case of this particular little girl...
 - worth giving her life.
 - But the story starts...with Archbishop Fulton Sheen.
- For his entire 60 years of priesthood...
 - he never failed to make a Holy Hour...every day...
 - before the Blessed Sacrament.
 - And his life...
 - particularly his weekly TV show: *"Life is Worth Living,"*
 - touched some 30 million Americans of all walks of life...
 - even those who had no Faith.
 - A few months before his death...he was asked by a reporter...
 - *"You've inspired millions of people. Who inspired you?"*
 - And his answer took many by surprise.
 - He said: *"...a little girl in China."*
- Li was her name...and she lived in the early 1950's...
 - in Communist China...
 - where the Name of God was outlawed...
 - and people who practiced their faith were imprisoned...tortured or killed...
 - and...sad to say...
 - this story I'm about to tell...
 - could also...easily take place now in China...
 - or in North Korea...
 - or so many other places around the world.
- In Li's school...children diligently recited their prayers.
 - Their teacher was very pleased...
 - because two months earlier...
 - they had just received their First Holy Communion...
 - and they took it very seriously.
 - The children were used to eating rice...morning, noon and evening...
 - so little Li...asked her teacher...why didn't Jesus say:
 - *"Give us this day our daily rice?"*
 - The teacher smiled and explained...
 - that we need rice for our body...
 - but that we need this particular bread...the Bread of Life...
 - as food for our soul.

- In May 1953...when Li made her First Holy Communion...
 - she had asked Jesus in her heart:
 - *“always give me that Daily Bread so my soul can live and be healthy!”*
 - And she did receive Holy Communion every single day...
 - but she was also aware that the Communists would not like this...
 - and that they could stop the Mass at any time.
 - So she asked Jesus to make sure that would never happen.
 - But it did!
- One day men entered the classroom...
 - and screamed at the children...
 - demanding that they hand over any holy objects.
 - The terrified children...
 - gave up their carefully hand-painted pictures of Jesus, Mary and the Saints.
 - And the Inspector...in a fit of anger...
 - pulled the Crucifix off the wall...
 - threw it on the ground...and stomped on it...while screaming:
 - *“The New China will not tolerate these superstitions!”*
- That day...
 - the police made a sweep through the village...
 - and forced everyone into their tiny Church.
 - The Inspector made fun of them...
 - saying they were tricked into believing...
 - that God was really present in the tabernacle.
 - And right in front of them...
 - he grabbed the ciborium...
 - and threw the Sacred Hosts onto the floor.
 - Stunned...they turned their gaze...
 - away from this sacrilegious act...
 - trying to hold back their tears.
 - Little Li froze in horror.
 - Her innocent heart bled for the Sacred Hosts...
 - that were strewn all over the floor.
 - *“Isn’t anyone going to help Jesus?”* she thought.
 - Just then...the inspector yelled at them:
 - *“Get out of here...and if anyone returns to this den of superstition...”*
 - *He’ll have to answer to me!”*
 - But before they left...
 - their pastor...
 - Fr. Luke....
 - was locked in the coal bunker in the church...
 - where a small opening allowed him to see into the sanctuary...
 - where the Sacred Hosts lay on the floor.

- The church quickly emptied.
 - But when the Communists left...
 - they failed to see a little girl...
 - remaining in the Church to pray.
 - It was Li!
 - Along with Li...like there always are...at every Mass...
 - there were angels adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament...
 - and Fr. Luke was given the special grace to see them!
 - He also saw a beautiful...well dressed woman...perhaps Our Blessed Mother
 - approach Li...comfort her...
 - and ask if she would like to go with her.
 - She did...
 - but Li broke into tears...
 - as they left Jesus in that state...all over the floor.
 - Fr. Luke then began to pray...deeply from his heart...
 - prayers of atonement for the sacrileges that were taking place...
 - and he also offered his own suffering...
 - because he was unable to come to Jesus' defense.
 - So he prayed in anguish: *"Stop this sacrilege!"*
- The next day...he noticed Li...sneaking silently into the Church.
 - She slowly made her way into the sanctuary...
 - and Fr. Luke trembled at the sight...
 - knowing she could be killed!
 - But unable to say anything...for fear of attracting attention...
 - he could only watch...and beg the saints to protect her.
 - He watched as she knelt down and adored in silence...
 - just as she had been taught...
 - adoring Jesus like that...for an entire hour...
 - to prepare her heart.
 - And then she bent over...
 - and with her tongue...took up a single Host into her mouth.
 - She remained there on her knees...eyes closed...and full of joy.
 - While Fr. Luke looked on...
 - each second seemed like an eternity.
 - But soon enough..his fear was gone...
 - as little Li...
 - with a gentle spring in her step...
 - left the Church quietly...
 - and more importantly...unnoticed!

- Meanwhile the Communists...continued to purge...the entire village of anything holy.
 - Villagers stayed in their homes...terrified to venture out...
 - but each morning...
 - little Li would slip away...to find her Living Bread in the church.
 - Just like on the first day...
 - she repeated the same routine...
 - of spending one hour in adoration...
 - before taking up a single Host with her tongue...
 - and then quietly leaving the church.
- Fr. Luke...
 - concerned for her safety...
 - couldn't understand why she didn't take more than one.
 - He knew there were 32 Hosts in that ciborium.
 - She wouldn't try to come that many days...would she?
 - But she did!
 - She knew just how precious each of those Hosts were...
 - and she didn't want to miss a single day.
- Fr. Luke was relieved when the last day finally came.
 - At daybreak...Li knelt down...to pray like always...
 - but this time...Fr. Luke had to stifle a cry...
 - because a soldier suddenly appeared at the door...
 - with a gun aimed directly at Li.
 - A single shot rang out...and the child immediately collapsed.
 - But she still managed to crawl over...
 - to where the last remaining Host lay on the ground...
 - and she was able to receive Jesus for the very last time.
 - Li died a true martyr's death.
 - And the fruit from her life...it was immediate!
 - Saddened by what he did...but also moved by her faith...
 - the soldier converted on the spot...saying to Fr. Luke as he freed him:
 - *"If every town had such a little girl...*
 - *no soldier would ever fight for the Communists!"*
 - He made arrangements for Fr. Luke to be driven to the border.
 - The priest escaped death and was now free...
 - and that's why this story...
 - just one of countless Chinese martyrs...
 - could be shared with others...
 - among them...Fulton Sheen...
 - who himself would go on to touch...
 - the lives of millions upon millions of others.
 - And all because...
 - of the love and devotion to the Eucharist...
 - of a little...10 year old girl.

- The same Jesus is before us in the Blessed Sacrament right now...
 - And we get the privilege of receiving Him...
 - coming and praying before Him...
 - perhaps not whenever we like right now...
 - because of COVID-19...
 - but it is certainly much easier for us...
 - than it was for Li...
 - that last month of her life.

- Privilege...that's a word we hear a lot right now.
 - So far we've been privileged in this country...
 - to be spared the hardships...
 - experienced daily...
 - by so many people around the world...
 - when it comes to the practice of our faith.
 - But with so many people turning away from the Lord right now...
 - and with so much more chaos and confusion...
 - that continues to grow...
 - I wonder...how long?
 - How long will we continue to have that privilege?
 - Hopefully for a good long time! Right?!
 - But let's make sure we take advantage of this grace...
 - for as long as we can...
 - and make sure we never take it for granted.
 - Because it truly is a grace worth fighting for...
 - even giving our very lives!