Unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood...

Reflecting on what the Eucharist actually, really is

Pictured: Tissue samples from the Miracle at Lanciano, Italy are still on display hundreds of years later

The Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ
June 14, 2020

A few weeks ago, I wrote about how God, in His infinite wisdom, knew how important it was to provide us humans with tangible, physical things to help us see and experience His love - like the waters of Baptism, the bread and wine of the Mass, the words of forgiveness spoken aloud in Reconciliation.

God's also got some pretty great editing skills, too - and that's what we're celebrating this Sunday on the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ.

Jesus tells us that unless we eat his flesh and drink his blood, we shall not have life within us. If you stop and think about it, that sounds absolutely terrifying. In fact, Jesus lost a lot of followers that day because of what he said. The disciples weren't sure what was up either, until the Last Supper when Jesus explained that the bread he blessed and broke, and the cup he poured and shared were his body and blood. That probably seemed much more palatable. (It does to me, anyway.)

This Sunday, as we are able again to receive the Body and Blood of Christ in Communion, we should be grateful for God's editing skills - that we don't consume physical flesh and blood, but that instead, their substance is transferred to the bread and wine. Once the words of consecration are said, the "bread" and "wine" have actually turned into the body and blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ (a process called transubstantiation) - which we consume so as to have life as Jesus promises.

It's not a symbol. It's not a representation. It's not a metaphor.
It's Jesus' flesh and blood.

One of my favorite days in Confirmation classes is when we talk about the Eucharist, because we usually also talk about the Eucharistic miracles. Pictured above is the miracle at Lanciano, where a priest praying for more faith in the true presence of Christ in the Eucharist celebrated a Mass at which the host turned into what was later analyzed and found to be heart tissue, and the wine turned into globules of blood. (To this day they haven't decayed and can still be seen in Italy.) Other Eucharistic Miracles have been found as well - even modern ones are under current investigation.

So this Sunday I give thanks to God for the sacrifice of the Eucharist, Christ's body broken and shared for us, and the cup of his blood poured out for us - and I give thanks, too, that this literal truth is given to us under the appearance of bread and wine. Truly, the Lord is good.

Megan Arteaga
Youth Minister

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**Weekend Worship Opportunities**

**June 14, 2020**

8:30am | Mass in the Parking Lot; also Livestreamed (available all day)

10:30am | Mass in the Parking Lot

Download and print the Worship Aid here

Join us this Sunday in the Parking Lot at 8:30am or 10:30am for Mass! We are blessed to be able to celebrate Masses publicly with you again. **If you are unable to physically join us, we will continue to livestream the 8:30am Mass** for you to participate from home.

Click on the image to open or print this Sunday's worship aid for your convenience.

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**We're able to receive Holy Communion this Sunday!**

Thanks be to God, Father George and Deacon Rey are able to distribute Holy Communion at the Masses this Sunday. **Here's what you need to know:**

- If you are prepared to receive the Blessed Sacrament in Holy Communion, please follow the direction of the Parking Attendants who will invite you out of your car for the Communion Procession
- If you are not receiving Communion, please remain in your car
- You must wear a mask once you exit the car for the Communion Procession
- Spots will be marked on the ground to stand on for social distancing
There will also be a place for your offering, should you have one - bring your envelope, check, or cash and drop it in the baskets should you choose to make a contribution to the Sunday collection.

Thank you for your patience and support!

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**Income Report: March-May**

We are grateful to those of you who have continued to support our parish during these trying times. We are greatly appreciative of any help you can provide so we can continue to provide the services you request and need.

Here is a summary plate collection report for the last few months:

*March 2020: $47,746.76*  
*April 2020: $37,181.40*  
*May 2020: $50,812.90*

We will be able to give you further information and context for our financial situation in the coming weeks as other developments unfold.

*To make a donation to Santa Maria, [please click here]*

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**What's that on the roof?**

Or rather - what's missing? You may recall that this summer, we'll be installing solar panels on the roof of the school building.

This coming week, roofers are scheduled to come take the tiles off of the western side of the roof to facilitate installation of the solar panels.

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**We're doing another Drive-Thru Food Collection!**

Your gifts of food at our first Drive-Thru Food Collection were greatly appreciated by St. Cornelius and St. Peter Martyr! As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, the need for food is still great - so this next collection will benefit St. Cornelius in Richmond and Friendly Manor in Oakland!

Simply fill a grocery bag with nonperishable food items, put it in your trunk, and bring it to our church-level parking lot:

*Wednesday, June 17*
Suggested groceries (please, no glass containers):
- Canned protein (e.g., tuna, chicken, spam, chili, beans)
- Canned tomato sauce
- Rice/pasta/beans
- Cans of soup
- Cooking oil (preferably 48 oz)
- Canned vegetables/fruit
- Cereal
- Flour
- Peanut butter
- Snacks (e.g., protein bars, nuts)

All volunteers from Social Justice will be wearing masks and gloves. Donors will be instructed to stay in their cars for a contactless transfer.

Can't make it June 17? Email Janet or Gail to deliver earlier to one of their homes!
Aren't ready to head out to the grocery store yet? Contact Janet or Gail to have someone shop for you - we have volunteer shoppers ready to help you out!

There are only 8 masks left!
Gail Gabriel, co-chair of our Social Justice Committee, started off with 40 masks and has only 8 left! At $10 each, they go to a great cause - all proceeds support our parish Social Justice initiatives. Email Gail to snag one of the remaining 8, pictured at right!

How can I keep supporting Santa Maria?
Thank you so much for thinking about us and continuing to support our parish during these trying times! We are greatly appreciative of any help you can provide.

You may drop your collection in the offertory baskets at Parking Lot Masses, mail a check to the Parish Office (40 Santa Maria Way, Orinda CA 94563), or make a one-time donation using Faith Direct, our eGiving service, to make your offering.

If you would like, you can also sign up for recurring giving through Faith Direct to continue to give to the Sunday plate even though you can't come to the church to drop it in the basket as usual. Again, we thank you for your planning and your generosity!
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Support Santa Maria

Prayer Intentions
For the Sick:
Liduvina Acosta, Sonny Acosta, Mary Beth Alban, Joan Artmann, Shoaib Aryan, Kristy Blackey-Taylor, Kathie Brady, Cara Bradbury, Maria Carmen, Fred Chavaria, Jan Coe, Grace Parent DeBoot, Rich Delany, Lorna Elliott, Anne Emery, Nora Enriquez, Emidio Fonseca, Liam Foley, Patricia Fox, Bridget Gallagher, Noreen Gillham, Doris Hale, Florentino Ibabao, Brian Kelly, Mason Kelly, Aileen Kelly, Michael Kelly, Jim Kennedy, Jerry Kirk, Lawrence Knapp, Carol Koupus, Judy Lazarus, Jim Marchetti, Rose Mary McPhee, Robert Nick, Arsi Orihuela, Deacon Jim Pearce, Kathleen Pelz, Ann Powell, Mark Ricci, Ben Richey, Patrick Sheehy, Jean Wells, Faye Young

Would you like to add yourself or someone else to the prayer list? Please contact Mirna in the Parish Office at 925-254-2426 or at mirnawong@smparish.org.

Mass Intentions
All Mass Intentions during Shelter in Place orders are either postponed or celebrated privately. Mirna is contacting all those who requested the currently scheduled intentions.

To request a Mass Intention, please contact Mirna in the Parish Office.

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