Last week, I attended Liturgy for the first time since the beginning of March. Being cautious for a few reasons keeps me from entering any buildings or enclosed spaces. I could hardly wait to be present and receive Holy Communion at this outdoor celebration at a nearby parish. Sitting in the folding chair I brought with me, wearing a mask, filled with excitement and an unexplainable anxiousness, I began to pray. At the prayers of consecration, I watched closely, listening carefully and could hardly believe I would be able to receive The Eucharist; a practice that was once part of my everyday existence. Yet now, it filled me with unexplainable and uncontrollable emotions.

As I approached the Altar set up in the entrance of the rectory garage, with my field of vision becoming clearer, the rhythm of my heart quickened for there it was—“The Body of Christ, The Bread of Angels, The Divine Presence”—waiting for me, but not possibly more than I waited for the ending of unavailability of “Eucharist” in my life. Opening, then cupping my hand in anticipation of the Sacred Host, prompted tears to gather, then brim over, rolling down my face; one, two, three, then uncontrollably, as though my heart was being squeezed tightly by joy and thanksgiving, resulting with each tear rolling downward. Father placed this sacred meal into my waiting palm, I walked a short distance, removed my mask, consumed what my entire being craved, and proceeded to my chair to rest quietly, peacefully with the “Bread of Life.” My usual prayers after receiving Communion were not to be found; I simply shed one tear after another, after another until I realized each of these tears were my prayer; a prayer of an appreciation without beginning or end, offered in a new language by me. My impassioned prayer of deep gratitude was offered in the form of tears, which brought their own language into the Presence of the One, whom I have overwhelmingly missed all these months.

I have come to know that my reaction to receiving the long-awaited sacrament of the Lord’s Supper after Covid-19’s arrival has been experienced by many. I, for one, have come to learn my tears of gratitude, along with crying with joy following the consummation of the Body of Christ are sacred, intimate and tender forms of communication that speak not of my weakness, but of my life-long devotion, on-going dependence, and uninterrupted love that are undoubtedly clear, welcomed messages, recognized, and honored by Our God on High.

Let Everything That Has Breath Praise God.