

THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST

ST. NICHOLAS PARISH

From the Pastor's Desk

Today we also celebrate the Solemnity of Corpus Christi: *The Body and Blood of Christ*. The Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ has always been the object of veneration; *especially* at the moment of reception of Holy Communion at mass. We need to continually be reminded of this fact. Just the same, in the early Church, as soon as Christians were able to build places to worship, they tried to provide a special place to reserve the Sacred Species in their place of worship. This served the purpose for those who were not able to come to the Eucharistic Liturgy because of sickness that Holy Communion could be taken to them. In the meantime, a special place for reserving the Blessed Sacrament was prepared. Also, at this time there was not a form for prayerful worship of the Blessed Sacrament outside the Eucharistic Celebration. My guess is that there was a deep awareness of the Eucharistic presence. Without a formal prayer or liturgy there must have been a quiet awe-filled adoration: He is here!

The development and practice of worship of the Eucharistic Presence slowly developed over the centuries. It is interesting to note that there appeared in the early church a desire to pray in front of the Altar of Sacrifice and even before the Blessed Sacrament: the Eucharistic Presence of the Lord. I am reminded of monks and nuns who lived in the cloister or monasteries who had their cells, or even their huts, built around the walls of the church. They would then make a hole in the wall so that they could see the altar from their cell. They would spend hours kneeling, praying, and gazing through this "porthole" in their cell wall at the Altar of Sacrifice. Deep down there was this sense that there was something very important about prayer and meditation facing the altar as well as *being in the presence* of the Lord. To this day we agree.

One of the practices of the Catholic Faithful over the years is to "make a visit" to the Blessed Sacrament in Church. This little saying suggests that one would go to Church, stop in for a few minutes in *prayerful adoration* before the Eucharistic Presence of the Lord in the Tabernacle. The central belief of Catholics is that Our Lord is truly present in the Eucharistic sign of bread and that *Christ is truly the center of our lives*. Our Lord is truly present; therefore, it only makes sense that one would want to pray and meditate in his Sacramental Presence.

It is not often that we are encouraged to spend time in Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. However, it is something that we need to give some thought. There are a couple of images that would be good for our reflection in this matter of Adoration. We have a couple of examples from the Gospels: in the infancy narratives from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Here we have Angels, heavenly hosts in adoration filling the sky with their songs of "Gloria" before the newborn Christ child. We have Shepherds who come and worship at the prompting of the Angels. We also have the Three Kings come and offer their gifts and to worship the Newborn King of the Jews. What did they say? We do not know, but they came and paid homage, they were in *awe* before the baby in the manger. They were in the presence of a great mystery and they worshipped, they were in *awe*. This baby could say nothing to them, but they were filled with his divine blessings as they adored him. Sometimes words are not necessary.

I have said it before, and I continue to think about the times I found myself stopping in churches while traveling. My favorites, of course have been in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. In major cities that have a Cathedral (Marquette,

Michigan) it is usually easy to stop in since most are open during the day. I found a great church in Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan, that is absolutely beautiful. There are many Catholic Shrines and small-town churches that welcome visitors and encourage prayer in their churches. There is always something consoling and inspiring as one stops and prays before the Lord during their travels. It gives a sense of the incredible span of the Catholic Church. This universal church has a powerful center: Jesus Christ. Our Lord's presence in the Eucharist is a constant reminder that "*I am with you always until the end of time.*"

It goes without saying that we have the Lord's Eucharistic Presence in our church. However, the attentiveness and reverence that we show the Eucharistic Presence is not always what it should be. The present layout of our church building does not lend itself to this sense of awareness and reverence. The sad reality is that the tabernacle is located at the heaviest traveled area of the Church: the Silliman Street entrance. It is most difficult to have a sense of awareness and reverence for the Eucharistic Presence of the Lord when the tabernacle is located at the door of the church that gets the most traffic. It is all too easy and inevitable that we get caught up in conversations, visiting with friends and forget that the Blessed Sacrament is only ten feet away. Also, from its present place in the north sanctuary niche, the tabernacle is not easily seen from various parts of the church which contributes to the difficulty for awareness and reverence in general. As it is the Tabernacle is not the visual focal point. We are all guilty of not keeping the proper posture and prayerful etiquette that has long been a characteristic of Catholic Churches. It seems that we keep greater respect and silence in libraries and bookstores than in our churches. Nevertheless, I know it is difficult to keep the noise and distractions to a minimum however; we do need to make an effort to observe a sense of reverence for the Eucharistic Presence as well as for those who are trying to be in prayerful reflection before and after Mass.

Some may say that we should be free to speak to one another while in Church. This may be true, and people should be kind and greet one another. After all we are a community of faith. But we should also be aware that when we are in Church and this suggests a different type of conversation: prayer. It is the "*House of God*" and we should primarily be attentive to the one who dwells in God's House. Thus, the Church building is sacred space. As such the Church building is primarily a place of prayer: a conversation with God first and foremost. It is a specific place of encounter with God and all things holy. The Church building is a place of prayer: communal prayer as well as private prayer. We need to acknowledge this priority.

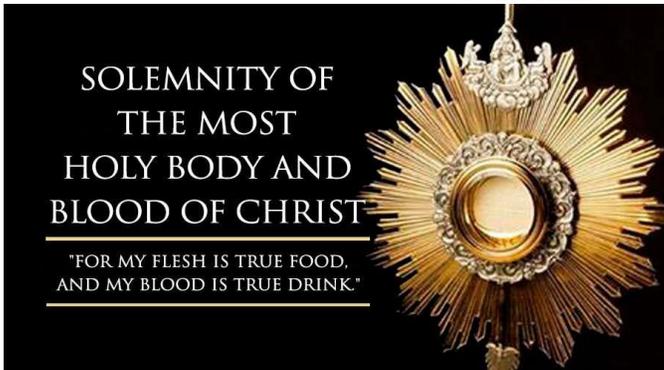
We spend the bulk of our day in secular space. We also tend to act in a manner that is appropriate for those various secular environments; i.e. theaters, stadiums, doctor's office... The secular world has a great deal of influence on our thinking, talking and doing. In the world we tend to be about the business of the world. This only makes sense since this is where we spend the greater amount of our time during the week.

It also makes sense that when we are in a properly designated sacred space we need to tend to the business of the sacred. Realistically we spend less time during our week in sacred space and sacred time. Since we spend more time in the secular world it only makes sense that this manner of being and living easily influences how we conduct ourselves in Church. Because of the little time we spend in the Church building in contrast to the secular world, it takes a greater effort to be particularly focused on this time as being sacred time for prayer.

In the Gospel of St. John Jesus prays for his disciples. He asks God's blessing for them since they are *in* the world and *not of* the world. The Christian is one who is the presence of Christ in the world. The Christian cannot be of the world: worldly. It is particularly important for us to be aware that we leave the world and worldly influences outside the Church building when we come to Church. We gather to be strengthened in our prayer so that the world does not overcome our lives but that we bring Christ into the world. Thus, in essence we need to be consciously attentive to the sacred in prayer. We are nourished at the table of the Word and the Altar of the Sacrament. We cannot be faithful to Christ in this world without His Word and Sacrament.

One basic reality that should surface in our prayer, but which is often overlooked as well is the awareness of the great love God has for all of us. This love is profoundly revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. "God so loved the World that He sent His only Begotten Son". Jesus comes to us from the heart of God and desires for us to follow Him to the heart of God. The Love of God is perfectly made present to us in the Holy Eucharist. This we know but we often overlook or take for granted. In our prayer, in our Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament and our reception of the Eucharist, we renew our focus as we journey with Christ to the loving heart of God. We gather, we pray and travel with Christ to the Kingdom of God.

Have a great week.
Father Ralko



This week we pray Week III of the Liturgy of the hours.

Church Support

June 7, 2020	
OFFERTORY	\$15,095.00
Diocesan Tax	\$(770.00)
Fenwick Subsidy	\$(2,635.00)
Rosecrans subsidy	\$(485.00)
Available for Parish Operations	\$11,206.00
Parish Operating Expenses	\$(7,825.00)
Religious Education Expenses	<u>\$(890.00)</u>
Other Income	<u>\$1,855.00</u>
Weekly surplus	\$4,346.00

May God bless you for supporting your parish!

MAY BOOSTER MANIA WINNERS

\$50- Cheryl Pottmeyer, \$25- Lori Goody, Ron Koverman, Barb Callahan, Bernard Kuhn, Justin Kuhn, Justin Ewart, Pamela Schoeppner, Bernice Sigris, Ron Davis, Doug McDaniel, Mary Ann Nash and Jason Paul

Mass in Extraordinary Form

St. Ann, Dresden, is hosting the Traditional Latin High Mass on the Feast of the Nativity of St John the Baptist, June 24, 2020 at 7 pm. Please plan to attend and give glory to Our Lord Jesus Christ in this "Tridentine" form of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Sacrament of Reconciliation – Confessions are currently by appointment only.

Please do not use the cry room unless absolutely necessary. The room is too small to afford social distancing and should only be used on a very limited basis. Thank you.

With the return to Church, **Baptisms** can now be scheduled. Pre-Jordan classes will be scheduled individually. Please call the office to schedule both Pre-Jordan classes and Baptisms. (740) 453-0597, ext. 14.

During this time when we do not have the **Music Issues** available for use, each Sunday's songs will be posted on the St. Nicholas website for you to download to your phones and sing from your phones during Mass, or even print them off for yourself. These are options to help you participate and praise God in song as fully as possible during these uncertain times.

BISHOP ROSECRANS HIGH SCHOOL/ BISHOP FENWICK SCHOOL SCRIP PROGRAM

Gift cards in our SCRIP program at Bishop Rosecrans High School and Bishop Fenwick Schools can still be purchased. As of now, any special SCRIP orders will be ordered on Monday's. SCRIP is still being sold from inventory. If you would like to purchase SCRIP at any time or need information about our program, please email Julie Wagner or call the school office at (740) 452-7504. A time will be arranged for the gift cards to be picked up.

You don't even have to purchase the physical cards!! Go to shopwithscrip.com and set up an account to purchase ecards that will automatically be downloaded to my wallet in your account where the gift cards can be used from your phone or can be printed for future use. If you have already purchased a physical card from our SCRIP program, you can reload the card as many times online and still earn the percentage towards tuition.

The Reverend Dwayne McNew will observe the Silver Jubilee of his priestly ordination on June 24, 2020. Like so many other significant life milestones because of our current circumstances, the planned celebratory gathering is not possible. A card or message of greeting would be especially welcome to remember him on this special anniversary. Your thoughtful kindness will be sure to be appreciated. Thank you. You may send it to Ss. Simon & Jude Catholic Church, 9350 High Free Pike, West Jefferson, OH 43162.

THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST



The Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ is also known as the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, which translates from Latin to "Body of Christ." This feast originated in France in the mid-thirteenth century and was extended to the whole Church by Pope Urban IV in 1264. This feast is celebrated on the Thursday following the Trinity Sunday or, as in the USA, on the Sunday following that feast.

This feast calls us to focus on two manifestations of the Body of Christ, the Holy Eucharist and the Church. The primary purpose of this feast is to focus our attention on the Eucharist. The opening prayer at Mass calls our attention to Jesus' suffering and death and our worship of Him, especially in the Eucharist.

At every Mass our attention is called to the Eucharist and the Real Presence of Christ in it. The secondary focus of this feast is upon the Body of Christ as it is present in the Church. The Church is called the Body of Christ because of the intimate communion which Jesus shares with his disciples. He expresses this in the gospels by using the metaphor of a body in which He is the head. This image helps keep in focus both the unity and the diversity of the Church.

The Feast of Corpus Christi is commonly used as an opportunity for public Eucharistic processions, which serves as a sign of common faith and adoration. Our worship of Jesus in His Body and Blood calls us to offer to God our Father a pledge of undivided love and an offering of ourselves to the service of others.

Our thoughts and prayers remain with those serving our country currently and with their loved ones at home. We pray for a safe homecoming and that the world may one day be at peace.

PLEASE REMEMBER ST. NICHOLAS PARISH IN YOUR WILL. CALL THE PARISH OFFICE AT 453-0597 FOR MORE DETAILS.

What's Happening in Our Parish

MONDAY, June 15

9:00 a.m., Mass: Florence Schoeppner, Church

TUESDAY, June 16

9:00 a.m., Mass: Marguerite Mangin, Church

WEDNESDAY, June 17

9:00 a.m., Mass: Doris Emmert, Church

THURSDAY, June 18

9:00 a.m., Mass: Pastor's Intention, Church

FRIDAY, June 19, THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS

9:00 a.m., Mass: Paula Fargus, Church

12th Sunday of Ordinary Time

SATURDAY, June 20 The Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary

5:15 p.m., Mass: Joy Larson, anniversary, Church

SUNDAY, June 21

8:15 a.m., Mass: St. Nicholas Parishioners, Church

10:45 a.m., Mass: Camillus Sullivan, Church

Readings for Week of June 15

Mon.	1 Kgs 21:1-16	Mt 5:38-42
Tues.	1 Kgs 21:17-29	Mt 5:43-48
Wed	2 Kgs 2:1, 6-14	Mt 6:1-6, 16-18
Thurs.	Sir 48:1-14	Mt 6:7-15
Fri.	Dt 7:6-11	Mt 11:25-30
Sat.	2 Chr 24:17-25	Lk 2:41-51
Sun	Jer 20:10-13	Mt 10:26-33

ELECTRONIC CONTRIBUTIONS

St. Nicholas Church has a convenient way to make your regular offerings. With our electronic giving program, you can easily set up a recurring giving schedule. It provides a much-needed consistency for our church. If you are currently giving on a weekly basis, you will no longer need to write out 52 checks a year or prepare 52 envelopes. Even when travel, illness or other circumstances prevent you from attending services, our church will continue to receive your contributions on an uninterrupted basis. To become an electronic giver, call or visit the church office for a brief form to fill out.

