

Pastor's Message

The reading of one of our four Gospels has always been the primary way in which we meet the Christ in his Word. As Catholics we have generally been very aware and reverent of the presence of Christ in the bread and wine that become his body and blood. In fact, on the first Friday of every month at St. Matthew's we place the reserved sacrament, the sacred host, into a monstrance, and people pray in the presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist from 9 am until 4 pm. We conclude our time of adoration with Benediction that focuses our attention on the presence of Christ in the sacrament of his Body.

As Catholics we are less aware of the presence of Christ in his holy Word, the Bible, especially in the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. In order to help us be more aware of and focus on the presence of Christ in his Word at St. Matthew's we cover the book of the Gospels in a gold case and carry it up in the opening procession as we begin our Mass. We place this book of the Gospels on our altar where we shall also place our gifts of bread and wine that will become the body and blood of Jesus Christ for us. In that initial act of our gathering at Mass we are invited to see Jesus Christ present in the altar itself, in the book of the Gospels, and in the gifts of bread and wine we will present on that altar.

That is why after our second reading we all participate in singing the Alleluia response. We know that Christ is present to us in his holy Word and so we sing our alleluias in joyful song in preparation to hear that holy Word, to hear the message of Jesus for this Sunday. That is why the priest holds high the book of the Gospels as we sing and why we bow reverentially as the book is held high before us. Just as we would bow (or genuflect/kneel) when the monstrance with the Eucharist is held before us so we bow before the book of the Gospels as we sing our song of alleluia. God in Christ will speak to us in his Word. We prepare by singing "Alleluia."

Fr. Chris