



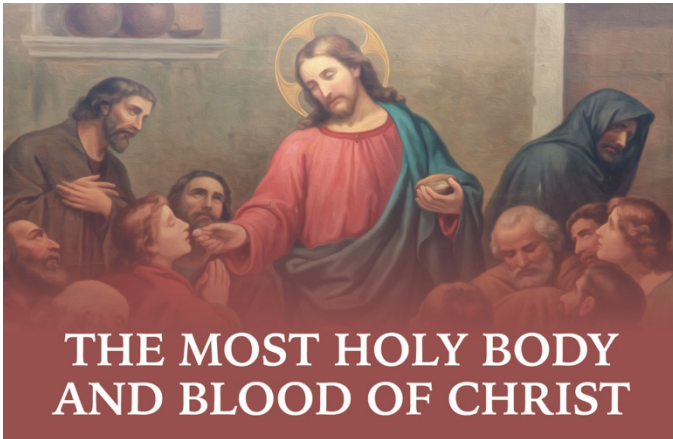
OUR LADY OF MERCY

SUNDERLAND

Parish Newsletter

6 June 2021 | The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (*Corpus Christi*) (B)

Reflecting on the Gospel



As our world faces so much turmoil and change, it is now more important than ever to remember who God is, who we are and where we are going. It is easy to get distracted and lose focus, especially when we are being pulled in so many directions. We can not only lose sight of God but one another. Maintaining our well developed and mature relationships with God and one another is essential to continuing to live, healthy, happy, and focused lives. In a message to young people, Pope Benedict XVI said, “the happiness you are seeking, the happiness you have a right to enjoy has a name and a face: it is Jesus of Nazareth, hidden in the Eucharist.” What is true for those who are younger is even truer for those who are older. Regardless of how the

particulars of life change over time, human beings are still hard-wired to seek the fullness of life and happiness. How we embark on this journey and what we choose along the way will indicate whether we meet success.

There is so much brokenness and pain in our world. Many people are lost, feeling lonely, anxious, marginalized, victimized, isolated, oppressed, and abused. Every time we receive the Body of Christ, we have an opportunity to become what we eat. The power and presence of Christ in the Eucharist becomes present in us and effects change in ourselves and in the lives of those we meet. We are given the grace to become temples of justice and peace, carrying God’s sacred Presence within us wherever we go. Our faith community is ignited with the fire of God’s love and stands out as a beacon of hope in a world that is lost. This is the only way we can discover peace-filled resolutions to violence and create innovative solutions to what is fuelling its need in the first place. True happiness, for the young and old alike, becomes an obtainable goal.

St. John Maria Vianney says it so well. “There is nothing so great as the Eucharist. If God had something more precious, he would have given it to us.” Only the Eucharist has the ability to connect, sustain, strengthen, and properly orient us, not only on the road of this life but the road to life eternal. Knowing this, when life gets challenging, unsettling, and difficult, we can rely on and cling to this gift we have in the Real Presence of Christ. This actual encounter with God celebrates God’s unconditional love for us and grounds us to the truth of who we are in a way nothing else is able to do. Because through the Eucharist we really do become the Body of Christ, we are also bonded together in a most perfect way to one another as that Body. Nourished, united, and strengthened by the Eucharist, let us individually and collectively, bring this wonderful gift to all we meet, especially the poor with whom we have a special connection.

Announcements

Ministry to the Sick

Bernadette, Jean, Maureen, Christopher, Paula, Liz, Peter, Emilia, Jean, Teresa, Cath and Norman, the sick sisters at Oaklea.

Our Faithful Departed

Margaret Ballantyne

40 Hours’

Preparations continue apace for our 40 Hours’ Eucharistic Adoration on 1, 2 and 3 July. At the back of the churches, we have put a timetable as well as sign-up sheets. Can you commit to give one hour to Jesus? If so, please sign your name on the rota so we can make sure we have all the hours covered. If you can take one of the more ‘unsociable’ hours that

would be helpful. Remember, anybody can come to any of the hours without booking. We also need people to commit to volunteer as stewards during the adoration, to help with the cleaning and to volunteer to transport housebound parishioners to the church. Please sign up if you can help.

Visits to the Sick and Housebound

As restrictions begin to ease, our parish activities are slowly restarting. One of the most important is the ministry to the sick and housebound and people in nursing and residential homes. Many parishioners have not been visited or received the sacraments for well over a year. While it may be a few weeks before it is safe to visit people in their homes or residential homes, we would like start forming our 'sick list'. If you know someone who would like to be visited and receive Holy Communion, can you please give theirs and your details to the parish office? As soon as it is safe and allowed, we will begin visits.

Digital Media Evangelisation Team

We're launching a parish Instagram and Twitter account to go with our Facebook and YouTube accounts. You can find them all @SunderlandCatholic. We'll be posting lots of updates on our social media accounts in the build-up to the 40 Hours' Devotion. Make sure you like and follow us.

Also, are you still getting the 'dead tree' version of the newsletter? Paper is so last century! Sign up on our Facebook page and get the newsletter delivered to your inbox every Saturday afternoon. Save the planet and go electronic!

Flock Notes

I'm still on holiday! I'll be back exchanging sunny Cardiff for sunny Sunderland tomorrow. It has been so good to catch up with friends and family, especially after the forced separation of lockdown. I pray that you've also been able to take advantage of the relaxation of the rules to see your loved ones.

Do you remember that slogan from the 1980s: 'you are what you eat'? It was used as part of a healthy-living campaign and the message was simple and effective, as all good messages are. What we put into our bodies has a big influence on the health of our bodies. I wonder, though, if the advertising agency that came up with the slogan was aware of the profound theological significance of the phrase? So, if it's true that we are what we eat – and it is true – then what about us who eat the Body of Christ, what are we? Therein lies the deep truth of today's celebration. *Corpus Christi* is not solely about the Eucharist as a mystery external to us, today's feast throws a light on a deep truth of our own nature. Every time we eat the Body of Christ, we become what we eat: members of the Body of Christ, we are transformed more and more into the image of Jesus Christ. I suppose reflecting upon that truth of our faith leads to only one response: *bon appetit!*

Masses this week

6	MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST	Ex 24, 3-8/Ps 115, 12-13. 15-16. 17-18 [13]/Heb 9, 11-15/Mc 14, 12-16. 22-26 10:30 St Mary's Tony Schofield (RIP) 17:00 St Mary's People of the Parish
7	St Robert of Newminster	2 Cor 1, 1-7/Ps 33, 2-3. 4-5. 6-7. 8-9 [9]/Mt 5, 1-12 12:05 St Mary's In thanksgiving
8	Tuesday St William of York	2 Cor 1, 18-22/Ps 118, 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 135 [135]/Mt 5, 13-16 12:05 St Mary's Pat & Harry Bruce (RIP)
9	Wednesday St Ephrem	2 Cor 3:4-11/Ps 99:5, 6, 7, 8, 9 [cf. 9c]/Mt 5:17-19 12:05 St Mary's Margaret Imrie (RIP)
10	Thursday	2 Cor 3:15—4:1, 3-6/Ps 85:9ab and 10, 11-12, 13-14 [cf. 10b]/Mt 5:20-26 12:05 St Mary's John Dunne (RIP)
11	THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS	Hos 11:1, 3-4, 8c-9/Is 12:2-3, 4, 5-6 [3]/Eph 3:8-12, 14-19/Jn 19:31-37 12:05 St Mary's Dec'd mem. of Murray & Turley Families
12	Immaculate Heart of Mary	2 Cor 5:14-21/Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-12 [8a]/Lk 2:41-51 11:00 St Mary's John Metcalfe (RIP) 18:00 St Cecilia's Vincent & Elizabeth Morris (RIP)
13	ELEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B)	Ez 17:22-24/Ps 92:2-3, 13-14, 15-16 [cf. 2a]/2 Cor 5:6-10/Mk 4:26-34 10:30 St Mary's People of the Parish 17:00 St Mary's Harry Burnikell (RIP)