

Corpus Christi by Martha Kuennen Elsbernd

(written in 1987)

An important annual event, which I looked forward to, was our celebration of Corpus Christi. Girls all dressed in white, and they were privileged to spread flowers for our Eucharistic King. We wore wreaths on our heads. All the people prayed the rosary as a long procession wined its way around the whole large school playground. At three permanent small chapels spaced on the way, the congregation stopped for Benediction at each. It was really a festive community celebration of our faith in the real presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. The young men were in a group, the young ladies in another group, and the children, too, had their special place in the long procession. Married couples did not go as a group but went either with the men's group or the women's group. Each segment of the procession had its own special banner. Four men carried a beautiful canopy under the center of which Father walked carrying the Lord in a golden monstrance. Preceding Father was a long procession of altar boys dressed in black cassocks and white surplices. The last ones were dressed in red cassocks and were swinging censers of incense in adoration of our Lord. I loved to carry my basket of flowers and scatter the petals to show Jesus my love and to make a beautiful path for him. Whatever flowers were in season were used. Sometimes it was the petals of peonies and sometimes it was some other seasonal flower. One of my memories is of watching Father Andrew Rubly, our pastor for 40 years, ascend the elevated pulpit each time he gave a sermon. One side of the pulpit fit against the wall and on each of the other sides were statues of the evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The pulpit extended somewhat into the nave of our church to enable us to hear better since in those days loudspeakers or microphones were unheard of.

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