

## **March 28, 2021**

“The blood of Christ is His Sacrifice applied to us. It enters the souls of the redeemed.” (Pope St. John XXIII) Our redemption is in the Precious Blood of Our Lord. It is the same Precious Blood which He gave to us in the Holy Eucharist during the Last Supper on the night before He was crucified. It is the same Precious Blood which He poured out on the Cross. It is the same Precious Blood which we receive each time that we receive Holy Communion. It is the price of our salvation.

Reflection: “Your Blood was shed, O Christ, by the fire of love.” (St. Catherine of Sienna) Do we take five minutes to reflect with thanksgiving and gratitude after each reception of Holy Communion?

## **March 21, 2021**

“The stone the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone.” Mark 12:10  
Christ was repeatedly rejected throughout His ministry. During Holy Week we see the depths to which Our Lord was scorned and betrayed. Knowing what lay before Him, we see Jesus actually sweating blood during His Agony in the Garden. (This is a medically verified condition, which can occur when someone is under great stress and duress.)

Reflection: With only about 30% of Catholics believing in the true Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist, we continue to see Christ’s rejection today. With fewer Catholics attending Holy Mass, this betrayal of the gift of our salvation is even more powerfully poignant. The Holy Mass is after all the Sacrifice of Christ on Calvary. Here on our altar, this sacrifice is offered again to the Heavenly Father in an un-bloody manner. By frequent and reverent reception of the Holy Eucharist and by acknowledging Jesus’ true Presence in the Blessed Sacrament, we have the opportunity to console Our Lord for these rejections.

## **March 14, 2021**

Imitate the saints! This is an invitation to each of us. It was emphasized in the teaching of Vatican II. We are each called to become a saint. Father Lukas Etlin explains in his booklet, “The Holy Eucharist Our All”, that we accomplish this by nourishing a great devotion to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. By placing all of our cares, hopes and fears before Our Lord, we grow in our love for Him and for each other.

Reflection: Our social relationships need personal interactions in order to grow and blossom. If we do not spend time with a loved one or friend and if we neglect them, our relationship withers and fades. It is the same with our relationship with God. When was the last time you spent quiet time after reception of Holy Communion to actually talk with Our Lord? When was the last time you took moments out of your busy day to talk with Him in prayer?

## **March 7, 2021**

Just looking with love and devotion upon the Blessed Sacrament during the Consecration or during Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at a Holy Hour will increase our glory in Heaven. This sweet and loving insight was shared by Our Lord with St. Gertrude, who transcribed it in her manuscript, “The Revelations of St. Gertrude.” The tremendous power of God’s Presence in the Holy Eucharist is beyond our comprehension: for just to look with love upon the Consecrated Host can add to our heavenly glory for all eternity.

Reflection: Why not consider expanding your love for Jesus this Lent by participating in our parish Holy Hour each Monday from 9:30-10:30? St. Pius X granted an indulgence\* to anyone who devoutly gazed at the Sacred Host and prayed, “My Lord and my God”. (\*An indulgence is a remittance of punishment due to sin.)

## **February 28, 2021**

What a tremendous privilege it is to be able to receive the Holy Eucharist! St. Maximilian Kolbe, the martyr of Auschwitz, wrote, "If angels could be jealous of men, they would be so for one reason: Holy Communion." No other Faith is as blessed as we are as Catholic Christians. In the Holy Mass God places before us a banquet of infinite graces and of ineffable love.

Reflection: Although we can never comprehend the depths of this Eucharistic gift, can we strive with each reception of Holy Communion to grow in thanksgiving and appreciation of it? Here is a powerful insight from St. Peter Julian Eymard. "Give up all earthly goods for the sake of one Holy Communion."

## **February 21, 2021**

During the apparitions of Our Lady in Fatima, the Blessed Mother requested that we pray the daily rosary. She also showed the three children disturbing future world events, but promised "that in the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph." What will be the Triumph of Mary's Immaculate Heart? It will be the reign of Jesus' Sacred Eucharistic Heart. As always, Our Lady will lead us and draw us to her Divine Son, Jesus, who is substantially present in the Holy Eucharist.

Reflection: Pope Leo XII wrote, "Our own belief is that the renovation of the world will be brought about only by the Holy Eucharist." Increasing our devotion, love and adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament will contribute to this coming Reign of Jesus Eucharistic.

## **February 14, 2021**

Since the Holy Eucharist is the continuation of the Incarnation of Jesus among us, it is also the promise of Jesus fulfilled. Before His ascension into Heaven, Our Lord said these parting words to his disciples, "I will be with you always until the end of time." (Matthew 28:20) In the Blessed Sacrament, Our Lord fulfills this promise to us. He remains with us in every tabernacle in every Catholic Church throughout the world. He is always available to us at all times and in every one of our needs.

Reflection: We should be very mindful of the fact that without the priesthood, there is no Mass. And without the Mass, there is no Blessed Sacrament. Therefore: no priest...no Holy Eucharist! Our Lady, Queen and Mother of the clergy, pray for our priests and bless us with many vocations. We are indebted to our priests for their lives of selfless sacrifice, which provide for us the surest means of sanctity: the Eucharist.

## **February 7, 2021**

St. Augustine states that "Jesus took His flesh from the flesh of Mary." Without Our Blessed Mother's "yes" to the invitation to become the Mother of Jesus, the Holy Eucharist would not be possible. When she consented, the Holy Spirit overshadowed her and the Infant Jesus was conceived in her womb. The Baby Jesus is therefore "flesh of her flesh". Because of this, we are now able to touch the Divinity of Christ through Our Lady in the Incarnation of Our Lord.

Reflection: The Holy Eucharist is the continuation of the Incarnation among us. We owe Our Lady a great debt of gratitude. Devotion to Our Lady should be an integral part of our prayer life. She is our Mother in the order of grace and will always assist us to receive Our Lord reverently and with grateful praise and thanksgiving. St. Louis Marie de Montfort taught that the surest way to Heaven is to Jesus through Mary.

## **January 31, 2021**

"To grow, you must adore." These are the words of St. Teresa of Calcutta. One of the things which we owe God is "LATRIA". This Latin word means that we owe God worship and praise. We need to adore Him. God

does not need our adoration, worship or praise. However, we need to worship, adore and praise God. When we do this, we grow. The Holy Spirit is able to fill us with a greater abundance of God's love, grace and peace. We become more open to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit and to bring God's love to the world.

Reflection: What greater gift could Jesus give us than to remain with us in the Blessed Sacrament? He remains with us in profound humility under the visible form of the little, white consecrated Host. He totally gives Himself to us in the Blessed Sacrament to become our corporal and spiritual nourishment.

Bishop Robert Barron posed an interesting question recently. He asked, "If you have been away from reception of Holy Communion due to Covid-19, do you notice a difference in yourself?"

## **January 24, 2021**

Each reception of Holy Communion is different. The amount of grace we receive is dependent upon our attitude. St. Thomas Aquinas wrote, "In a false person, the Sacrament does not produce any affect." Here the saint is stressing a simple fact: When we receive Holy Communion, we must desire union with Christ. Our hearts must be in it. We must ardently long to be one with the Lord.

Reflection: The time after our reception of Holy Communion is "one on one" time with Our Lord. It is a time of worship. It is a time of thanksgiving. It is a time of petition. It is a time of God's love for the soul and the soul's love for God.

## **January 17, 2021**

Holiness is being united to Jesus. "When we receive the Eucharist, the holiness of God is in us." So says Father Cantalamessa, preacher to several modern Popes. Father Cantalamessa stresses that this holiness is a pure gift. He also explains that with this gift comes a duty. That duty is to preserve and increase holiness in our daily lives.

Reflection: There is a wonderful and simple prayer practice to achieve the goal of perseverance in holiness. The practice is to "Stay in the Presence." By striving to always be aware that you are in God's presence, you will reflect His light of grace. You will become a clear pane of glass pouring out the Light of Christ to the world.

## **January 10, 2021**

Have you ever considered how the Holy Eucharist brings us as close to God as possible here on earth? An insightful answer can be found in the words of St. Jean Vianney, the patron saint of parish priests. St. Jean wrote, "Upon receiving Holy Communion, the adorable Blood of Jesus really flows in our veins and His Flesh is really blended with ours." Such a profound depth of intimacy is hard to fathom, yet we know that nothing is impossible with God. The depth of Christ's love for us is beyond our comprehension. How long for us to be totally united with Himself in the Eucharist.

Reflection: How important is nurturing your relationship with Christ? His is our preeminent relationship, since this relationship will last into eternity. You are never closer to Christ on earth than in the few minutes after receiving Him in the Blessed Sacrament. We need to make good use of those precious moments.

## **January 3, 2021**

To receive Holy Communion worthily one should be in the state of grace. This means that you have no serious (mortal or deadly) sin that first needs to be confessed in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Mortal sin breaks the bond of grace that a soul has with God. For a sin to do this it must meet three criteria. The sin must be serious in nature. One must know that it is

serious. One must in free will consent to it anyway. St Paul wrote, "Whoever eats the bread and drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord." (1 Corinthians 11:27-29)

Reflection: The Sacrament of Reconciliation is the Sacrament of Peace. It is given to us by Christ in Divine Mercy to forgive us all of our transgressions and to re-establish our relationship with God. If you seek peace of mind; a clear conscience and joy in forgiveness; why not partake of this great Sacrament frequently? You will receive great consolation in absolution. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available at St. Ann's on Saturdays after the 4pm Mass or by appointment.

## **December 27, 2020**

St. Augustine wrote, "You have made us for Yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You."

Where then can we find God, for whom we were made and whom we seek? As Catholics we need not look any further than the tabernacle found in every Catholic Church. There Jesus welcomes us. He awaits us with a Heart filled with love and hands filled with graces and blessings. St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta often said, "The best time that we shall spend on earth is the time that we spend with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament."

Reflection: If your heart and soul are hungry; if you are in need of healing; if you are tired, worn and weary; if you seek peace, comfort, love and joy, Jesus says to us, "Come to Me all you labor and are heavily burdened and I will refresh you." (Matthew 11:28) Why not stop into Church, as you drive by, and spend some time in quiet prayer in front of Jesus in the tabernacle? Jesus is waiting for you with open arms of love.

## **December 20, 2020**

As Catholics we welcome with joy the Incarnation of the Infant Jesus on Christmas Day. Because Jesus took on our human nature in the womb of the Blessed Mother, He was able to leave us His Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity in the Holy Eucharist. As a result, the Church teaches us that at every Mass, we experience "The foretaste and the promise of the Pascal feast of Heaven."

If you would like to see a cinematic reveal of what actually happens during Mass ( i.e. the transcendent reality) of what some of the saints and mystics experienced during Mass, please take a couple of minutes to view "The Veil Removed" on YouTube. May this brief film inspire you to a greater love and appreciation of the gift of the Holy Mass. Christmas blessings and joy to you and your loved ones!

## **December 13, 2020**

The first millennial Blessed was added to the calendar of saints in October. Carlos Acutis was a young teen with a passionate love of the Holy Eucharist. He was a computer buff and enjoyed playing video games. He cataloged all of the Eucharistic Miracles and Marian Apparitions on the World Wide Web. He was an avid devotee of daily Mass and Holy Communion. He converted his parents, who were lapsed Catholics, as well as his young friends by bringing them along with him to daily Mass. Blessed Carlos said, "The Eucharist is my highway to heaven." He also said, "The more often we receive the Eucharist, the more we will become like Jesus, so that on this earth we will have a foretaste of heaven."

Reflection: Consider what a wonderful example Blessed Carlos is for our youth, as well as for all of us. Carlos also said, "When we stand before Jesus in the Eucharist, we become saints." This young lover of Jesus Eucharistic died of acute leukemia at age 15. Can we begin to emulate his wisdom regarding the importance of the Blessed Sacrament in our lives?

## **December 6, 2020**

Did you ever think about the great HUMILITY of Jesus, as he remains with us in every tabernacle in every Catholic Church throughout the world? For love of us, the God who created the universe in power, majesty and awe deigns to first become man in the Incarnation: taking flesh of the Virgin Mary through the power of the Holy Spirit. Then in further humility, Jesus deigns to dwell with us in the form of the fragile, white Consecrated Host?

Our Lord understands that we need spiritual nourishment in this journey through life. Knowing our own great weakness, we should approach the Holy Eucharist with all of our personal needs. Although Our Lord knows our needs before we ask Him, He wants us to open our hearts to Him and ask. St. John Vianney, the patron saint of parish priests, wrote "I think we should receive all that we ask of Our Lord, if we approach Him with a living Faith and a pure heart."

Reflection: After receiving Holy Communion, spend those precious moments entering into the mystery of Eucharistic Love, which is the intimate relationship of your soul with Jesus. "Come to Me, all you that labor and are burdened and I will refresh you." (Matthew 11:28)

## **November 29, 2020**

The Holy Eucharist is the central pillar of the Catholic Faith. St. John Paul II wrote, "The Eucharistic Sacrifice is a single sacrifice that embraces everything. It is the greatest treasure of the Church: an inexpressible gift." We should always be aware of WHOM we are receiving when we approach Holy Communion. We should not be passive, but have an ardent and true desire for union with Jesus. The greater our desire for intimacy with Our Lord, the greater the graces that we shall be open to receive. Recall that Our Lord gives us His all in this Sacrament of His Divine Love.

Reflection: When Jesus appeared to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque and revealed to her His Sacred Heart, he said, "Behold the Heart which has so loved humankind and which is so little loved in return." Our prayer time after the reception of Holy Communion is precious, intimate, one on one time with Our Lord. We should cherish those minutes.

## **November 22, 2020**

When we eat our food, we assimilate the food and it becomes a part of us. When we worthily receive Jesus in Holy Communion, He assimilates us into Himself.

We become what we consume. We therefore become more Christ-like; more filled with the Holy Spirit. We share in the Divine Life of the Blessed Trinity through sanctifying grace. The Spiritual Life given to us in Baptism is sustained. We grow in our capacity for holiness. Venial sins are forgiven.

Reflection: "O Precious and wonderful banquet, that brings us salvation and contains all sweetness! ...here Christ himself, the true God, is set before us as our food. No other sacrament has greater healing power; through it sins are purged away, virtues are increased, and the soul is enriched with an abundance of every spiritual gift." Saint Thomas Aquinas (Opusculum 57, Feast of Corpus Christi) How can we ever thank Our Lord enough for this gift? How can we ever forego these graces offered to us at every Mass?

## **November 15, 2020**

The Holy Eucharist is NOT a symbol. Jesus is ALIVE in the Eucharist. We know this because what Jesus says IS. He is the WORD made flesh. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1) Whatever Jesus says happens. "Lazarus, come forth." And the dead man came forth from his tomb. (John 11:44-45) "Little girl, arise." And the little girl awoke. (Luke 9:55-56) At the Last Supper Jesus said, "This is my body, which will be given for you, do this in memory of me." And "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which shall be shed for you: (Luke 22:21) There was therefore a change in substance from bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Our Lord.

Reflection: The Second Vatican Council states that, "God makes things by His words." We read in the Book of Genesis how God creates by saying the words, "Let there be..." And it happens. (Genesis 1) Faith enters into accepting the word of God. Faith enters into accepting the true Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. But for those who need scientific proof, Google "The Eucharistic Miracle of Lanciano". God wishes to reveal the Miracle of the Eucharist to doubters. He wishes all to come to Him and be saved. He loves each of us, as if we were his only child.

## **November 8, 2020**

By the words of the priest, "This is my Body." "This is My Blood.", there is a change in the substance of the bread and wine. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the bread and wine become the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus. (The Council of Trent) Therefore, we receive NOT a symbol, but the LIVING Presence of Jesus. We know this because of Jesus' words in the Gospel of John 6:6, "I Myself am the living bread come down from Heaven." The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that, "The Eucharist is the LIVING heart of the Church."

Reflection: Jesus told St. Faustina, the saint of Divine Mercy, that after receiving Him in Holy Communion "People treat Me like a dead object." (The Diary of Saint Faustina) After receiving Holy Communion, do we treat Our Lord as a dead object or are we aware that the LIVING God is intimately present to us and within us? The Holy Eucharist is NOT a thing. It is the LIVING Person of Jesus the Christ.

## **November 1, 2020**

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## **October 25, 2020**

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