

The Solemnity CORPUS CHRISTI: Deut 8:2-3, 14b-16a; 1 Cor 10:16-17; Jn 6:51-58: "The Greatest Love Story Ever Told"

When we look at the Eucharist, we are looking at the greatest love story ever told—not a story of romance, but a story of divine love. It is the story of a God who loves His people so much that He refuses to leave them alone. He chooses to remain with us, to feed us, and to walk with us every day of our lives.

There is a beautiful story about Saint Padre Pio. After spending long hours hearing confessions and celebrating Mass, when everyone else had gone home to rest, he would quietly return to the chapel and sit before the Blessed Sacrament. One day someone asked him, "Father, why do you spend so much time there?"

Padre Pio simply replied, "Because Jesus is there. I look at Him, and He looks at me." That simple answer captures the heart of today's feast. Corpus Christi is not about a thing; it is about a Person. It is not about a symbol but a Presence. It is not merely a ritual but a relationship with Jesus Christ who remains among us.

Today's readings beautifully reveal this mystery. In the first reading, Moses reminds the Israelites of their journey through the desert. God fed them with manna, a bread from heaven that sustained them physically. Yet Moses teaches them an even deeper lesson: "Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." God was not only feeding their hunger; He was forming their hearts and teaching them trust. The manna was a gift, but it was also a preparation for something greater.

In the second reading, Saint Paul tells us what that greater gift is. He says that the cup we bless and the bread we break are a participation in the Body and Blood of Christ. The Eucharist is not ordinary bread. It is communion with Jesus Himself. And because we all share the same bread, we become one body, one family, united in Christ.

Then in today's Gospel, Jesus speaks words that shocked many of His listeners: "*I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever.*" He goes even further: "*Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life.*"

Jesus did not say, "This represents my body." He said, "This is my body." He was revealing a divine reality beyond human understanding. The Eucharist is truly Jesus—Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity.

This raises an important question for each of us: Do I truly believe that Jesus is present in the Eucharist? Do I approach Holy Communion with love and reverence, or has it become routine? Do I recognize the King of Kings hidden beneath the appearance of bread and wine?

Today's feast invites us to respond in three ways: First, recognize His presence. Like Padre Pio, we need to learn to sit quietly with Jesus. Not many words are necessary. Sometimes the greatest prayer is simply being present before Him.

The Eucharist is not something we receive; it is Someone we encounter. Faith begins when we stop seeing only bread and start seeing Christ. When we recognize His presence, our silence becomes prayer, and our hearts begin to listen.

Second, reorder our priorities. A catechism teacher once asked her students, "What is the Eucharist?" Many children gave the correct answers from their textbooks. But one young boy said something unforgettable: *"If that is really Jesus, then we should never be late for Mass, and we should never leave early."* The classroom became silent.

Sometimes children understand profound truths better than adults. If we truly believe that Jesus is present in the Eucharist, then nothing should be more important than meeting Him at Mass. Sunday Mass is not simply an obligation; it is an encounter with the living Christ. It is the most important appointment of our week.

Third, respond with love. There is a story of a king who disguised himself as a beggar and sat outside his own palace. Most people ignored him. Some pushed him aside. Only a few stopped to show kindness. In the Eucharist, Jesus does something even more astonishing. The King of Kings hides Himself under the appearance of bread and wine. He comes humbly and quietly to be near us. The greatest tragedy is not that God is hidden; the greatest tragedy is that He is often ignored.

Let us not allow Jesus to become the forgotten King in our lives. Visit Him in the Blessed Sacrament. Spend time with Him. Receive Him worthily. Speak to Him from your heart. Love always seeks a response.

The God who fed Israel with manna in the desert, the God who died on the Cross for our salvation, is the same God who remains with us today in the Eucharist. He stays. He waits. He gives Himself to us again and again. The only question is: Will we stop, recognize Him, and love Him in return? For the miracle of Corpus Christi is not simply that bread becomes God, but that God becomes so small, so humble, and so accessible, simply to remain close to His people. May our hearts always respond with faith, reverence, and love. Amen