

CORPUS CHRISTI (Year A)  
6-7-2026 Homily

I. Introduction

The first millennial to be canonized a saint was the Italian teenager Carlo Acutis, who died of leukemia at the age of fifteen in 2006, just twenty years ago. At the age of six he made his First Communion, and from then on was a daily communicant. Even though his family was well-off, Carlo lived an ascetic or very simple lifestyle, and whenever he received a gift—whether a bicycle, clothes, or a new pair of shoes—he gave it away to the poor in his city of Milan, and later many of the recipients of his charity attended his funeral Mass. Carlo was in terrible pain during the eleven days between his diagnosis of leukemia and his death, but he didn't complain, and last September, less than twenty years after his death—a very short time by the Church's standards—he was canonized a saint by Pope Leo XIV. Today he is considered the patron saint of the internet, and is also referred to as “God's influencer.”

Saint Carlo Acutis had a great devotion to the Eucharist. After his death, his mother discovered that he kept a diary on his computer—not with entries on things you might expect from a teenage boy, but with theological reflections, especially on the Real Presence of Jesus in Holy Communion. He is perhaps best known for the website he created on Eucharistic Miracles: amazing stories about the Eucharistic Host that occurred over the last 1500 years, including some in our own day. In front of me is a photograph of one of these miracles which occurred on November 15, 2013. A Catholic priest in India was saying Mass when, after the moment of consecration, he noticed on the large Host an image beginning to form: the black and white outline of a shining face with a beard—the image of Jesus Christ Himself. You can't see it from a distance, but if you look closely at it—which you're welcome to do after Mass—you will clearly see the face of Jesus. This is only one of many scientifically-inexplicable miracles that have occurred in the Church's history involving consecrated Hosts, a heavenly validation of the unchanging Catholic teaching that Jesus Himself truly is present in the Eucharist. Therefore, we must never receive this Gift unworthily, or take it for granted; rather, we must approach the altar in the Communion line with gratitude, wonder, and faith.

II. Development

When the Israelites journeyed through the desert after being freed from slavery in Egypt, they eventually ran out of food—so God miraculously provided manna for them, a sort of flaky substance appearing on the ground each morning that could be pounded into flour and baked into bread. In today's 1st Reading Moses reminds the people how God provided for them in this manner; however, this bread from Heaven was merely a forerunner of what the Lord intended to do once He established a new and perfect covenant through His Son. Jesus explains in the Gospel that He is the true Bread from Heaven, and He tells the people, “Unlike your ancestors who ate [the manna] and still died, whoever eats this Bread will live forever.” If we worthily receive Holy Communion, we grow in divine grace and are increasingly made ready for eternal life—for as Our Lord says, “the Bread that I will give is My flesh for the life of the world.” Moreover, as St. Paul tells us in the 2nd Reading, through the Eucharist we, though many, become one body, for the Body and Blood of Christ, humbly received in Holy Communion, unite us in a holy, mysterious, but very real and life-giving way.

### III. Conclusion

Back in April our second grade students from school and the Faith Formation program made their First Communions, and I asked the boys and girls from school to share what this experience was like for them. Margaret wrote, “My First Holy Communion was fantastic. I felt a little scared at first, but when I received It, I felt wonderful. When I went into the pew [after receiving], I felt Jesus [and] felt more holy inside.” One of two second graders named Alex, Alex P., said, “At the start I felt nervous . . . at the end I felt really happy. Overall, it was a really good day.” According to Lucy, “My First Communion was amazing! First, I felt nervous to walk down the aisle. Next, I felt happy because I just [received] God.” Sawyer wrote, “My First Communion was good! I felt holy; it felt so, so, so good!” Myra stated, “My First Communion was amazing ! I felt happy to have Jesus. . . .” Jacob noted that as he heard everyone singing the Communion hymn *One Bread, One Body*, “I felt very holy.” According to Adelina, “My First Communion was the best . . . I felt so happy and full of joy.” Alex B. said, “First, I felt very excited! Next, I felt proud of myself. I went home so happily. I never felt happier! I will never forget this beautiful moment!”

Simon stated, “I felt holier . . . when I received the Body of Jesus; I felt like Jesus was in my heart.” Chloe wrote, “My First Communion was fun! . . . It feels like I have the Body of Jesus in me.” Victoria was also caught up in the moment; she said, “I couldn’t believe that I made my First Communion; that second I felt like I was in Heaven.” According to Abigail, “My First Communion was great! I felt like I got so much closer to Jesus!” Connor wrote, “I felt happy! I couldn’t wait until [my] second Communion.” Vivian stated, “I felt [I was] in Heaven. I couldn’t believe I did it. I also felt like I was an angel.” The first of two girls in the class with the same name, Claire S., wrote, “I couldn’t stop smiling! I felt [so] light I could fly up to the sky.” The other Claire added, “I felt like my heart was glowing. I also felt like I was holier; I felt Jesus [was] talking to me.” Lastly, Aspyn admitted, “I felt I had no sin; it was amazing. I loved it so much I almost cried.”

In some ways, these simple, wonderful testimonies speak to us more clearly than all the learned and profound dissertations and articles written on the Eucharist over the centuries by saints and scholars and theologians, and remind us of the truth of the Church’s teaching about this Sacrament just as effectively as the many Eucharistic miracles that have occurred throughout history. As one of the Psalms says to God, “Your majesty is chanted by the mouths of children” (8:2, *Jerusalem Bible*). Like our boys and girls, we must open our hearts as fully as we can to the glorious mystery and blessing of new life Jesus shares with us each time we worthily receive Him. I will end with a quote from St. Carlo Acutis: “And so we have before us a miracle which leaves us in awe and which leaves us truly surprised. It is the miracle of redemption, it is the miracle of Jesus’ life with us, Who in recapitulating all of humanity in Himself, made Himself truly, really Redeemer, Savior, and Sanctifier of each and every one of us.”

May God give us the grace to live out the truth His children have shared with us.