



OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

June 2021 Newsletter

The Body and Blood of Christ in Service to Others

The Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, historically known by its Latin name, *Corpus Christi*, celebrates the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist - Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. This year recognized on Sunday, June the 6th, this feast originated in France in the mid-thirteenth century and was extended to the whole Church by Pope Urban IV in 1264. *Corpus Christi* highlights two manifestations of the Body of Christ: the Holy Eucharist, and the Church. During every Mass, our attention is directed towards the *Eucharist*, the Real Presence of Christ and upon the Body of Christ as it is present in the *Church*; the intimate communion which Jesus shared with his disciples.

For us Catholics, the Eucharist is one of the clearest places to encounter Christ. In Holy Communion, we receive Jesus Christ, and this intimate union with Christ both signifies and strengthens our union with Him and His Church. While the practice of attending and participating in the Mass is central to our faith, the last year has been particularly challenging, given the realities of Covid. In the early months, public Masses were suspended and access to Confession and other sacramental celebrations were restricted. Many Catholics could not physically receive Jesus Christ in Holy Communion, yet their commitment to God and Church were not deterred. They still embraced the presence of Christ in the Scriptures, with each other, and in the vulnerable, especially evident in the various good works shown to others during the pandemic.

As we celebrate the Solemnity of the Most Precious Body and Blood of Jesus Christ this weekend, let us give thanks for this beautiful Sacrament and be reminded that our worship of Jesus in His Body and Blood calls us to offer to God our Father our undivided love and an offering of ourselves to the service of others.

✠Richard W. Smith
Archbishop of Edmonton
June 2021