



Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Peace

Cathedral of the Honolulu Diocese • Founded 1843 • National Historic Register

The Solemnity of the Most Holy Body & Blood of Christ

June 2, 2024

Beloved Disciples of Christ,

Greetings of peace, love, and joy!

“A Banquet to be Celebrated and Lived!”

One of the many activities my family and I would do on a Sunday was to attend Mass in our Parish Church. We would normally sit close to the altar so that we could see what was happening. As a kid, I looked around and saw what the ministers were doing, especially the priest. When it was time for consecration, as the priest lifted the Host and Chalice, I remember being told to look up and gaze and bow my head when he laid it down on the altar. The actions or gestures were expressions of reverence, for through the words of consecration, the bread has become the Body of Christ, and the chalice with wine becomes the Blood of Christ. With time and becoming a priest, it is of utmost care that I do it with reverence and devotion whenever I lift the Body and Blood of Christ. I allow the Lord Jesus to make me His instrument of sharing this wonderful gift that would sustain our life on our journey toward the Kingdom of God.

How wonderful it is that this Sunday, a celebration dedicated to the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, is given to us. A day to come together to realize that this celebration that we often participate in, on weekdays or Sundays, is no ordinary celebration. It is not like a birthday or a wedding party that we are invited to participate, eat and drink, and enjoy one's company. And, when the party is done, we go back to our homes and live our lives ordinarily.

The Solemnity invites us to realize that what Jesus left for us at the Last Supper is a Sacrament that would sustain us and change us into becoming like Him. Thus, whenever we receive Jesus in Holy Communion, He becomes part of us, and is called to live like Him in word and deed. Our understanding of the Sacrament is essential because if we do not clearly understand what we are receiving, the celebration becomes ordinary. Like a birthday or wedding party, we join the festivities, eat, drink, and go.

When I received the Informed Newsletter issued by Augustine Institute, I was quite concerned that 69 percent of US Catholics believe that the bread and wine “are symbols of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.” 43 percent believe that the bread and wine are merely symbols of Jesus and that “this reflects the position of the Church.” With these results at hand, we are now at a point of losing our understanding of Christ's Real Presence, Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity every time we celebrate the Holy Eucharist. The false belief in the Eucharist diminishes our encounter with Jesus and thus has no impact at all in our lives other than we just come to Mass, eat and drink, and leave.

Christ's Presence in the Eucharist is Real and True. As we journey in faith during this Eucharistic Revival Days, may our celebration of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ enrich our minds and deepen our faith that whenever we participate in Mass, we have a real encounter with Jesus. Through Holy Communion, we are nourished and sustained in this life until we participate in His Eternal Banquet.

Your friend in Jesus,

Fr. Pascual