

Corpus Christi 2016

Every week we do the same thing. We gather in this church to celebrate Mass. What we do is somewhat repetitive, and I understand why some might complain, “Mass is boring; we do the same thing week after week.” But what we do here, in this building, week after week, is the most important moment of our week. For it is at this moment that we become the church of Jesus Christ. It is at this moment that we proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes again. It is at this moment that we enter into the mystery of Christ’s death and resurrection.

We do many good things here at St. Mary’s. We educate the young. We care for the sick. We minister to the elderly and those in need. We provide a community to support and strengthen each other. But the focal point of all we do is our celebration of the Eucharist. Without the Eucharist we are a service organization, a gathering of people who enjoy each other’s company. What makes us different, what gives meaning to our life in community, is our celebration of the Eucharist, week after week, until the Lord comes again.

First, when we celebrate the Eucharist we become the church, the body of Christ. In the Eucharist, Christ is present to us; and we are present to Christ. Christ lives in us; and we live in Christ. And because we live in Christ we are one with each other. To be sure, this building is our church. But the church is more than a

beautiful building; it is a gathering of God's people around the Eucharistic table, where we become the body of Christ, the Church.

Second, St. Paul tells us that when we celebrate the Eucharist we proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes again. For, every time we celebrate the Eucharist, we do what the Lord Jesus did. We remember that on the night before he died, he took bread and identified it with his body given for us. He took wine and identified it with his blood poured out for us. Every time we celebrate the Eucharist we do what the Lord Jesus did. We remember and proclaim his death. We remember and proclaim that Jesus gave his life for us.

Finally, when we celebrate the Eucharist, we enter into the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection. We are not merely spectators at Mass. We do not just remember the past. We share and participate in the Lord's death and resurrection until he comes again. Every time we celebrate Mass we die with Christ and rise with him into his risen life, life in the Holy Spirit.

Yes, we do the same thing week after week; and at times it can be boring and repetitive. But what we do here is the most important moment of our week. For at this moment we become the church, we proclaim the death of the Lord, we participate in the Lord's his death and resurrection. Every week we are entering more deeply into the life of the risen Christ. Every week we are becoming more like Christ. Every week we are growing in newness of life.