

Corpus Christi 2017

Every week we do the same thing.

(1) We gather in this church,

(2) we listen to the Word of God,

(3) we offer bread and wine that, through the power of the Holy Spirit, become the body and blood of Christ so that we can share in the Eucharist.

For some, what we do is repetitive and boring. But not for me! The Eucharist we celebrate is a great mystery that can never be exhausted. It is the moment we are fed by God's Word and the Eucharist. It is the moment we participate in the sacrifice of the Mass.

Three things happen when we attend Mass.

First, the Risen Lord gathers us so that we can become the church, members of his body. It is not just a matter of us walking or driving to church. Something more important happens. It is the Risen Lord who calls and gathers us to worship. And so we are a community chosen and elected to praise God Father, through his Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Second, when we attend Mass, we hear the Word of God. The Word that we hear is unlike any other word because it is God's Word, a living Word that changes and transforms our lives when we allow it to enter our lives. The prophet Jeremiah says of this Word: "*When I found your words, I devoured them; they became the joy and happiness of my heart.*" The Word of God illumines our path ... if we hear and obey the One who is speaking to us. For when the lector proclaims this Word, it is the risen Christ who speaks to us.

Third, every time we attend Mass, we share in the body and blood of Christ. The bread we eat and the wine we drink is not a symbol; it is a profound sign that points to a deeper reality. Every time we eat the bread and drink from the cup, we enter the life of the crucified and risen Christ. Christ is truly present to us, and we are truly present to Christ. We are one with him in the most profound way, and he is one with us.

When we share in the Eucharist we become what we receive. We become one with the risen Christ. We become the body of Christ. We become the Church. We are changed and transformed into the image and likeness of God's Son. That is why Jesus tells us in today's gospel that if we eat his body and drink his blood, he will raise us up on the last day; for every time we participate in the Eucharist, we become more and more like Christ.

Yes, what we do week after week is repetitive, but it is ever new. What we do week after week seems old fashioned to some, but in this assembly we begin to see the beginning of God's new creation, the kingdom of God. What we do is boring for some but not for me; for what we do is life-giving. We enter into the great mystery. We participate in the very life of God through the risen Christ. This is why Christ gathers us every week to celebrate this Eucharist.