

- With today's feast of Corpus Christi, we are quickly coming to the end of that time of year in which we celebrate so many of the important mysteries of our Catholic faith.
- Last week we honored our Lord as a Trinity of Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and in so doing we called to mind that our Lord is not an abstract concept or an uncaring or unknowable God. Rather, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, our Lord exists as a Communion of Love.
- In fact, God's very nature is love. He is Love Itself, and as His creatures created in His image and likeness, we are called to be love in the world, and to enter into this Communion of Love for all eternity. This is what God desires for us.
- That our one Lord exists as a Trinity of Persons is one of the central tenets of our Catholic faith, because the mystery of the Trinity is the mystery of God in Himself, and therefore it is the source of all the other mysteries of our faith.
- Indeed, the mysteries of our faith do not exist in a vacuum. They are all interconnected and build upon and support one another. Moreover, the mysteries of our faith all flow from and point to this fundamental reality that we see in the Holy Trinity: that God *is* love.
- And the mystery of our faith that we commemorate today, the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, is certainly no exception!
- As I just mentioned, at the heart of the Mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is love. Love is God's very nature; it's His essence. And each of the three persons of the Holy Trinity show forth God's love in a particular way, and we see this in the feasts of the Church.
- Two weeks ago we celebrated Pentecost, the feast of the coming of the Holy Spirit. In this feast we are reminded of the great love the Holy Spirit has for us, which is shown by the fact that He has come to us to guide and bring us peace.
- Pentecost reminds us that the Holy Spirit is our Advocate and our Comforter. He is the Spirit of Power that renews us and strengthens us for a life of holiness and virtue.
- Pentecost also brings to completion the Easter Season, which commemorates the particular love of Jesus Christ, who loves us so much that He suffered and died a very cruel and agonizing death on the cross in order that we might be saved from our sins.
- In the great celebration of Easter we are reminded not only of the great love Jesus showed us by dying on the cross, but also the love He has showed for us in rising from the dead so that we, too, might be raised up on the Last Day.
- And last week on the Solemnity of the Holy Trinity our readings reminded us of the abiding love God the Father has for His people, which has been shown by the tremendous ways He has manifested His power in human history.
- Today, as we honor our Lord's Most Holy Body and Blood, we come to an ever greater understanding of the tremendous love our Lord has for us, for in this mystery of our faith we come to see once again that our Lord will go to any length necessary to help us achieve the end for which we have been created: complete union with Him.
- It is God's great desire that we be in intimate union with Him, that we be joined to Him as a man is joined to his wife, which is why we refer to the Church as the Bride of Christ.
- In other words, God desires that we have a covenantal relationship with Him. A covenant is a binding agreement in which two parties join themselves together in mutual love and fidelity; it is an agreement to give one's very self for the sake of the other.

- Our readings today speak of the sacrificial offerings the Israelites of old made to our Lord in order to obtain forgiveness for their sins and to enter into a covenant with the Lord.
- To signify this covenant, our first reading tells us that Moses sprinkled the people with the blood of sacrificed bulls, saying: “This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you.”
- In contrast our second reading from Hebrews tells of how Christ effected a new and eternal covenant. As the great high priest, Christ offers a new and unblemished sacrifice: His very self. In so doing He enters into the sanctuary of Heaven to obtain eternal redemption for all.
- Lastly in the Gospel we hear Mark’s account of the Last Supper where Christ initiates the new covenant with the words: “This is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed for many.”
- Unlike the flesh and blood of sacrificed bulls which merely symbolized the covenant and the forgiveness of sins – a covenant that was broken over and over again, the Body and Blood of Christ actually creates a new and everlasting covenant that cannot be broken.
- As if it were not enough for our Lord to offer His very body and blood on the cross at Calvary some 2000 years ago, today’s feast teaches us that He loves us so much that He wishes to renew this covenantal action with us even daily!
- Not content to simply suffer, die and rise again for our redemption, Jesus Christ wanted also to leave us a memorial of His death and resurrection. Indeed, He wanted to leave us His very body and blood as real food and real drink.
- Thus it is that He gave us the gift of the Eucharist, His very Body and Blood, at the Last Supper. And to be sure, this is not just any gift. The Eucharist, my friends, is the very gift of salvation!
- And it’s in part because of this understanding that we have of the Eucharist that the Church obliges Catholics to attend Mass every Sunday and on holy days of obligation. The Church obliges us to go to Mass so that we can receive this gift of salvation!
- Whenever we receive Holy Communion worthily, we are saved! God’s saving grace is given to us in that moment: our venial sins are wiped away, we are strengthened against future mortal sins, and we grow in spiritual communion with our Lord.
- There is power in the Eucharist: the power to heal us, to forgive our sins, to convert us, to save us. For it is not just bread and wine that we receive in the Eucharist: it is really and truly our Lord’s Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity!
- My dear friends, our Lord is Love Itself. Jesus is Love Incarnate. And He wishes to share His very self with us in a covenantal relationship that is forged in our baptism and is consummated in Holy Communion.
- As we come forward today once again to receive the incomparable gift of the Eucharist, let us pray that we may always receive the Body and Blood of Christ worthily, so that we may become more like Him Whom we worship.