

Today celebrates the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. The heart of the celebration is the **EUCCHARIST**. We believe that our Eucharistic celebration constitutes the body and blood of the Lord in our presence. Our Eucharistic prayer asks God to transform the bread and wine we bring as gifts into the body and blood of God's Son. God does so.

The gifts though are symbolic of ourselves. The point of the Eucharist is not to make the Lord present 'up there' on the altar or in the tabernacle. The point is to make **us** the body and blood of the Lord through the powerful release of the Spirit among us. The consecrated bread and wine is given to us so we too can become Christ's Body, offered to the Father as 'living praise.' If the bread and wine only is transformed, our Eucharist is incomplete.

Note that the Eucharist does not make **me** the body and blood of Christ by myself. It makes **us** Jesus' bodily presence. The Eucharist effects solidarity among us. We are in this together, not alone. An organ of the body that sets itself apart and begins to act exclusively is diseased. It is a cancer. One of our oldest Eucharistic hymns talks about the many grains making one bread. In Christ we become one body.

This is important to remember as we grow ever more into a **Tri-Parish community**. Many among us remember the days when others looked askance if you showed up in 'their' church! 'What are you doing here?' they were asked. In Youngstown the Irish were chased out of the Italian church and down the hill to 'their own' church. That was not Eucharistic.

This is important to remember too as we deal with the hot political question of **immigration**. We are currently challenged to make room in our community for newcomers who bring their gifts to our nation and our altar. The language and customs of today's newcomers are different from ours if we have been here long enough to learn English and become 'made in America.' As Eucharistic people we are called to look at our fellow human beings first as persons and equally children of God with the same dignity and inalienable rights as ourselves. All are called to the table of the Lord. We are to look at fellow Catholics as members of the Body of the Lord with us.

This Eucharistic sense provides background to our bishops' encouragement that we urge our political representatives to support Comprehensive Immigration Reform that will embody these five principles:

- Making family a priority – keeping families together
- Insisting that worker programs protect both U.S. and migrant workers
- Allowing earned legalization for those in the country who are undocumented
- Restoring due process protections for all persons
- Responding to the global economic, political and social root causes of migration.

With the bishops, I urge you to approach this issue as a member of the Body of Christ and to let that influence the way you approach it as a U.S. citizen.

With this bulletin I include a column from the Knights of Columbus magazine by their Grand Chaplain, Bishop Lori. It reminds us that we come to Eucharist not just to fulfill a duty but to be transformed. Rushing in and rushing out of Mass doesn't allow the Lord's work to be completed in us. Think about it.

St. Augustine long ago taught that when we say "Amen" to the presentation of the bread as the Body of Christ and to the cup as the Blood of Christ, we are saying in effect not only that 'it is' but that 'I am' and, I would add, 'we are.'

In the Risen Christ,  
Fr. Bob

**BAPTISTERY:** you may have noticed that the baptismal font is no longer in the sanctuary. This work is underway.

**PENTECOST VOLUNTEER GIFT SURVEY:** thanks to all who returned a form. If you didn't and want to offer your time and talent in service to God through our parish, please contact the office.