

That We May Be One...

Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Jesus [Corpus Christi]

Year A

*Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14b-16a
Psalm 147:12-13, 14-15, 19-20*

*1 Corinthians 10:16-17
John 6:51-58*

In the Gospel of John, Jesus speaks more than once of His great desire that His followers be united. As the Good Shepherd, He states that He must lead His sheep, as well as the sheep “that do not belong to this flock,” so that “there shall be one flock, one shepherd” (John 10:16). In His farewell address to his disciples (John 14:1-17:26), Jesus prays to His Father (17:1-26) for those who will come to believe in Him, “that they may be one as you, Father, are in me, and I in you...that they may be one in us” (17:21).

St. Paul was no stranger to this desire of Jesus that all may be one in Him and His Father. He speaks of the Church as a body that is “one though it has many parts, and all of the body, though many, are one body, so also in Christ” (1 Cor 12:12). For the great Feast of Pentecost, in which we recently wrapped up our fifty-day celebration of Easter, Paul spoke to us of the unity we all share in the Holy Spirit, “for in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body...and we were all given to drink of the one Spirit” (1 Cor 12:13). As Catholic followers of Christ, we can note his reference to the Sacrament of

Baptism, and clear references to Confirmation, in which we are all united in the Church of Christ, confirmed, inspired and united in and through the Holy Spirit dwelling within us.

Paul does not stop there, however, nor do we, who are united as Church through Baptism and Confirmation. Paul points out, “because the loaf of bread is one, we, though many are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf” (1 Cor 10:17). Jesus further unites us in the central Sacrament of His Body and Blood, whenever we celebrate the Holy Mass. We gather to be united in a Sacrament, the reception of which is appropriately called “Communion.”



This Eucharistic union, however, has far-reaching ramifications for us as Church, already united in the one Spirit through Baptism. Like any food, the Eucharistic Communion we share in the Body and Blood of Christ, in the sign and form of bread and wine, though now of a transubstantiated species, is absorbed into our bodies; not only a spiritual nourishment, but also a fundamentally physical union with

The Holy Eucharist

Christ. We become one with Christ who we physically “absorb” and “incorporate” in and through our consumption of His Body and Blood.

As Catholics who receive Communion whenever we celebrate the Holy Mass, our reception of Christ’s Body and Blood is one thing we all have in common. Therefore, as we share in the Eucharist, we are physically and spiritually united to one another in and through our physical and spiritual union with Christ. Ergo, in receiving His Body and Blood, we are more and more transformed and strengthened into the Body of Christ, becoming one with Him, in and through our

unity as His Body, the Church.

We repeatedly gather as one Body, united in Christ, sharing in the one Spirit. We gather to grow more and more into the One Body that is the Church in our shared worship, in which we all share in the one loaf. We gather together to answer His call to "do this in remembrance of me," as Jesus' fervent prayer, offered the night before He died, continues to be answered and fulfilled: That we may be one, as He and His Father are One.

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