

基督圣体圣血节 (6/11/2023)

— 摘自 John J. Gilchrist 蒙席案卷, 1996 年 6 月 9 日

上周主日我们庆祝了圣三节。这周主日我们庆祝基督圣体圣血节。读经一选自旧约的【申命纪】。梅瑟向那些逃离埃及后在旷野里游荡的以民呼吁不要忘记天主每天都在眷顾着他们, 每天都从天上降下【玛纳】, 一种类似面包的食物喂养着他们。

圣保禄宗徒在给格林多人书信中提到耶稣基督圣体圣血的奥迹: 【我们所祝福的那祝福之杯, 岂不是共结合于基督的血吗? 我们所擘开的饼, 岂不是共结合于基督的身体吗?】保禄强调基督的追随者们要共融合一, 因为“我们虽多, 只是一个身体, 都共享这一个饼”, 那就是耶稣基督。

圣若望福音展示耶稣对圣餐明白无误的教导。这段若望福音没有讲最后晚餐的细节, 而是特别提到耶稣的话: 【我是从天上降下的, 生活的食粮; 谁若吃了这食粮必要生活直到永远, 我所赐的食粮就是我的肉, 为使世界获得生命。】耶稣进一步引用申命纪的片段并指出: 【不像你们祖先吃了玛纳仍然死了, 谁若吃了这食粮, 必腰生活, 直到永远。】

耶稣那天讲这些话时, 引发了一些后果。首先, 一些人说: “这话生硬, 谁能相信!” 也有一些人抱怨这话非常冒

犯。还有一些人决意找机会干掉他。耶稣当然知道所发生的事, 但祂没有退缩。祂看着很多人转身走掉时, 便问祂的十二个宗徒: 【难道你们也愿走吗?】西满伯多禄回答说: 【主! 惟你有永生的话, 我们去投奔谁呢? 我们相信, 而且已知道你是天主的圣者。】

对耶稣和那些忠信祂的宗徒和门徒来说, 那些日子一定很困难。不像当下的我们, 那些男女门徒们没有事后的认知。他们经历了所有事件后, 最终大部分致命。他们可能没有预见到在他们身上将要发生的事, 但他们决意要选择跟随耶稣基督。这些决定影响深远。

在我们当下的生活中, 耶稣基督在每一次的弥撒圣餐中与我们在一起。祂向我们发出邀请: “(你们) 拿去吃, 这是我的身体, (你们) 拿去喝, 这是我的血。”在全世界每一个天主教会(的圣堂)里, 耶稣基督在神龛里临在, 护守着每一位热爱祂, 前来朝拜与祂独处的信友。今天的圣体圣血节强烈地提醒我们: 圣父把祂的圣子给予我们, 祂在感恩圣餐祭的圣事中临在直到世界的终结。

*The Feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ
(Corpus Christi)*

June 11, 2023

— From the archives of Msgr. John J. Gilchrist June 9, 1996

Last week we celebrated the Feast of the Blessed Trinity. This week we celebrate the glorious Feast of Corpus Christi, the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. The first reading today comes from the book of Deuteronomy. Moses appealed to the people who were wandering in the desert after leaving Egypt that they never forget how God cared for them daily. Each day God provided them with manna (a kind of bread-like substance) from heaven.

Saint Paul, in the letter to the Corinthians speaks of the mystery of the Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus. "Is not the cup of blessing we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread which we break a sharing in the Body of Christ?" Paul goes on to stress the unity which should exist among all who are followers of Christ because "many though we are, we are one body for we partake of the one loaf – the One Jesus Christ."

The gospel passage from Saint John finds Jesus presenting teachings that are an unmistakable reference to the Eucharist. In Saint John's gospel, there is no account of the Last Supper. Rather, this particular passage takes its place. "I myself am the living bread come down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever, and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh." Further, Jesus makes reference to the passage from Deuteronomy when he says, "Unlike your ancestors who ate (manna in the desert) and died nonetheless, the one who eats this bread will live forever."

On the day that Jesus said these things, a number of consequences were set into motion. First, there were those who said, "This is a hard saying, and who can believe it." Then there were others who complained that such talk was offensive. Still

others made the strong determination to find "an opportunity to kill Him." Jesus knew all these things, but He did not back down. He watched as so many turned their backs on Him and walked away. "So Jesus asked twelve, "Do you also wish to go away?" Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that You are the Holy One of God."

Those must have been very difficult days for Jesus and for the apostles and disciples who chose to continue their allegiance to Him. Unlike ourselves, these men and women did not have the advantage of hindsight. They were living all those events which would eventually lead to martyrdom for most of them. They probably understood nothing of what was happening. They had cast their lot with Jesus Christ, and they were in it for the long haul. And it would be just that – a long haul.

In our own lives, Jesus Christ comes to us in the Eucharist at every Mass. He extends the invitation, "Take and eat, this is My Body, take and drink, this is My blood." In every Catholic Church throughout the world, Jesus Christ is present in the tabernacle and keeps vigil for those who love Him and come to spend time with Him in solitude. This feast which we celebrate today reminds us very forcefully to pause and consider the gift which God has given us in His only Son who was chosen to remain with us in the sacramental Presence which we call the Holy Eucharist until the world as we know it comes to an end.