



Bringing Home the Word

Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (C)

June 23, 2019

A Joyful Encounter

By Mary Katharine Deeley

On a once-in-a-lifetime trip to Spain, my husband and I were privileged to witness a Corpus Christi procession near Barcelona that wound its way from the church through the streets and back to the church. At the head of the procession was a large ornate monstrance with a consecrated host inside held aloft on a platform carried by some of the priests and assisted by others. Following behind was another priest incensing the monstrance and then the various church groups, beginning with the children and including what I imagine were orders

like the Knights of Columbus or the Solidarity of Mary. The mood was not solemn, but celebratory. Flowers marked the path and the participants. In a tradition dating back to the sixteenth century, an egg was dancing on the water spout in the church fountain. We were enchanted.

I remember processions around my church—though never through the town—when I was a child. But they were solemn affairs and did not resemble the celebration we witnessed. What captured my imagination in Spain was the absolute joy on the faces of those processing. I remember the singing and the laughter, and I wondered, “*What better response could we give to the Lord who gives himself to us in the Eucharist?*”

Whether we process or not, whether we are in prayer before the tabernacle or monstrance, or just going about our day, let us project the joy that comes from knowing the Lord and encountering him under the appearances of bread and wine which have become the Body and Blood of Christ. +

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A Word from Pope Francis

The Eucharist demands that we be members of the one body of the Church. Those who approach the Body and Blood of Christ may not wound that same Body by creating scandalous distinctions and divisions among its members....The celebration of the Eucharist thus becomes a constant summons for everyone to examine himself or herself.

—On Love in the Family
(*Amoris Laetitia*),
March 19, 2016



Sunday Readings

Genesis 14:18–20

Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought out bread and wine. He was a priest of God Most High.

1 Corinthians 11:23–26

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.

Luke 9:11b–17

[Jesus] said to them, “Give them some food yourselves.” They replied, “Five loaves and two fish are all we have.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Do I remember to take joy in my faith, and in my relationship with Christ?
- Do I project to others my joy in knowing the Lord? Joy is contagious!

The Challenge and Promise of Change

By Susan K. Rowland

Researchers report that the more we welcome change into our lives, the healthier our brains remain and the younger we feel. That's no surprise. Enthusiasm about new things is a characteristic of the young and the young-at-heart. We're encouraged to try a new hobby, learn a language, take a class, travel—anything to keep those brain cells active. New activities challenge us, keeping us alert and lively.

How do you feel about change? Do you resist, especially when change involves old and dear rituals? Sometimes we love change, sometimes not. But whether it's welcomed and expected or sudden and shocking, change is a reality of life. It's one thing we can count on.

Different reactions to change are natural. Young people are often curious and open to new challenges. It helps for them to be enamored of change, for they're moving through the biggest changes of their lives. But later in life, many people are attracted to stability.

Many of the changes we experience as we age are unwelcome. We think: *Where did those wrinkles come from? Why don't I have the energy I used to have? Why do I have health problems? What is my purpose in life now that my kids are grown and I'm retired?* It's no wonder we'd like to stop the clock.



God and Change

In *Rediscover Catholicism*, Matthew Kelly writes: "Change is one of the laws of the natural universe. Nature teaches us that everything in this world is constantly changing. Everything God created is constantly in the process of either growing or dying!" Still, Kelly writes, certain things never

change: "Truth does not change; the supernatural realities of faith, hope, and love do not change; and God does not change."

Change is essential. Our physical bodies are in a constant state of repair and renewal. Our minds need to be challenged to stay healthy. And our spiritual journeys are characterized by conversion and growth. Change is important, but too much change can result in chaos. We won't grow properly or deepen our commitments if we rush from one thing to another. So God has built into us both a desire for change and a desire for stability and regularity. Thus our lives swing between change and sameness. Nature gives us distinct seasons. Each in its turn feels new and refreshing, yet each season is the same year after year.

In our Church year, we move from Advent to Christmas to Lent to Easter, fast to feast, over and over. Yet each season feels new again every year. The

rhythm of life is God's way of helping us embrace both the necessary changes in our lives and the seasons of sameness.

Conversion: The Most Essential Change

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says the essence of the Christian life is conversion, which is a radical reorientation of our whole lives. The biggest change demanded of us is turning from evil and toward God. "The human heart is heavy and hardened. God must give man a new heart" (CCC 1432).

This radical, interior conversion is necessary for every person. Jesus warns us, "Whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it" (Luke 18:17). We must change in order to grow into spiritual maturity. That's the main task of this earthly life. The need for growth and change doesn't diminish, no matter how old we get. We never "arrive" in this life. God insists that we keep moving forward—toward God.+

PRAYER

Lord, you love me and answer all my needs. Help me to be less self-focused in life and more attentive to the needs of others.

—From *Hopeful Meditations for Every Day of Easter Through Pentecost*, Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

WEEKDAY READINGS

June 24–29

Monday, Nativity of St. John the Baptist:
Is 49:1–6 / Acts 13:22–26 / Lk 1:57–66, 80

Tuesday, Weekday:
Gn 13:2, 5–18 / Mt 7:6, 12–14

Wednesday, Weekday:
Gn 15:1–12, 17–18 / Mt 7:15–20

Thursday, Weekday: Gn 16:1–12, 15–16 or
Gn 16:6b–12, 15–16 / Mt 7:21–29

Friday, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus:
Ez 34:11–16 / Rom 5:5b–11 / Lk 15:3–7

Saturday, Sts. Peter and Paul:
Acts 12:1–11 / 2 Tm 4:6–8, 17–18 / Mt 16:13–19