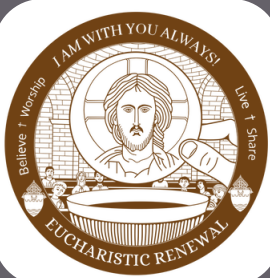


Encountering the Eucharist

Believe ✦ Worship ✦ Live ✦ Share



The Monstrance is a vessel that contains the Blessed Sacrament for adoration and benediction. We get the word Monstrance from the Latin *mōnstrāre* meaning to show, to point out, to teach. All these definitions are helpful because this vessel is literally used “to show” the consecrated host to the people. It “points out” that who we are showing is Jesus truly present in the Eucharist. Finally, the monstrance “teaches” us to adore our Lord with proper reverence. Pope St. John Paul, II said, “The Eucharist, in the Mass and outside of the Mass, is the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, and is therefore deserving of the worship that is given to the living God, and to Him alone.” In the 16th century the monstrance took its present shape: a circular pane of glass set in a cross or surrounded with metal rays. The host is placed in a holder called a lunette, which fits into an opening behind the glass.

About This First Issue

The Diocese of Evansville is launching a year long “Eucharistic Renewal” that will culminate in the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis from July 17–21, 2024. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has requested that all the dioceses across the country participate in a Eucharistic revival for several reasons. In 2019, a Pew Research Study revealed that less than one-third of self-identified Catholics expressed a belief in the Real Presence. Additionally, the COVID-19 crisis forced the Church in the U.S. to suspend public liturgies. During this crisis, many of the faithful expressed a renewed desire for the Eucharist, but there is also a concern that some may lose the sense of the need for the Eucharist and not come back to regular Mass attendance. This first monthly issue of “Encountering the Eucharist” is intended to connect you with the rich Eucharistic Traditions and Teachings of the Catholic Church through articles on the beliefs, the worship, the lives of Saints devoted to the Eucharist, and ways we can share our Catholic identity with the world especially as it relates to Jesus’ Real Presence in the Source and Summit of our faith: The Most Holy Eucharist. May you find this resource helpful.

The Feast of Corpus Christi

The feast of Corpus Christi was established by Pope Urban, IV in 1264. It was St. Juliana who contributed to the institution of this feast. She had a profound sense of Christ’s presence, which she experienced by living the Sacrament of the Eucharist especially intensely and by pausing frequently to meditate upon Jesus’ words: “And lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age” (Mt

28:20). In his bull*, *Transiturus de Mundo*, Pope Urban, IV said:

“Although this sacred sacrament is celebrated every day in the solemn rite of the Mass, we nevertheless believe it is useful and worthy that a more solemn feast be celebrated, at least once a year, especially to confuse and refute the hostility of heretics.” Meaning that



Urban saw this feast day as a way to evangelize the non-Catholics, through Eucharistic Processions in public, of our belief that the consecrated host is truly, really, and substantially the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

* The document is named after the leaden seal (bulla) that was traditionally appended to the end in order to authenticate it.

What We Believe...

The Doctrine of the Real Presence



The doctrine of the Real Presence asserts that in the Holy Eucharist, Jesus is present—body and blood, with His soul and divinity—under the appearances of bread and wine. This teaching is based on a variety of Scriptural passages including 1 Cor. 10:16-17; 11:23-29 and especially, John 6: 32-71 wherein Jesus delivers the famous “Bread of Life” discourse. The belief in the Real Presence has been solidly held by the Church since its beginning and the early Church Fathers interpreted the Scriptures literally. For example, St. Theodore of Mopsuestia said, “When [Christ] gave the bread He did not say, ‘This is the symbol of my body,’ but, ‘This is my body.’ In the same way, when He gave the cup of His blood He did not say, ‘This is the symbol of my blood,’ but ‘This is my blood.’” [*Catechetical Homilies* 5:1 (c. A.D. 410)]. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* adds: “This presence is called ‘real’—by which is not intended to exclude the other types of presence as if they could not be ‘real’ too, but because it is present in the fullest sense: that is to say it is a *substantial* presence by which Christ, God and man, makes Himself wholly and entirely present” (#1374).

“Perhaps you may be saying, ‘I see something else; how can you assure me that I am receiving the body of Christ?’ It only remains for us to prove it. And how many are the examples we might use! ...Christ is in that sacrament, because it is the body of Christ”

~St. Ambrose,
The Mysteries



Life in the Eucharist: St. Juliana of Leige



St. Juliana of Leige (1193-1258) was born in

Belgium. At the age of five, she lost her parents. Juliana and her sister Agnes were raised by the nuns at the convent of Mount Cornillon. She read the writings of St. August-

tine and cultivated an ardent love for the Blessed Sacrament. Juliana received visions from Christ, who pointed out that there was no feast in honor of the Blessed Sacrament. Based on this, she promoted what we know today to be the feast of *Corpus Christi*. In her vision, Juliana saw the full

moon in its splendor crossed diametrically by a dark stripe. God gradually helped her to interpret the moon as the life of the Church and the darkness the lack of a feast in honor of the Body and Blood of Christ. We can learn from this that without the Eucharist, our life is in darkness and isolation.

Sharing Our Very Life: Eucharistic Processions

Processions are part of ritual and liturgy and are rich in meaning. In general they symbolize our earthly pilgrimage towards heaven. We are a pilgrim people, and we’re making our way through life to God. A Eucharistic procession is a public witness of the veneration and adoration that we have as Catholics. A consecrated host is placed within a monstrance, which is then lifted up and carried by the priest who leads the faithful in the procession. These processions are, at the same time, an act of worship and a way of evangelization. We are telling the world about the Real Presence of Jesus.

