

The Basilica of Saint Mary of the Assumption

PARISH OFFICE: 506 Fourth Street, Marietta OH 45750 PHONE: 740-373-3643
WEBSITE: www.stmarysmarietta.org www.facebook.com/stmarysmarietta EMAIL: info@stmarysmarietta.org



June 11, 2023

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

MASSES FOR THE WEEK

| | | |
|-----|----------|---|
| Sat | 5:30 PM | - Norma Jean Adams |
| Sun | 8:00 AM | - Dec'd Members of the Maffei Family |
| | 10:00 AM | - Mark Bradley |
| | 12:00 PM | - People of the Parish |
| Mon | 7:45 AM | - Lee Offenberger Family |
| | 12:05 PM | - Juliette Milsark |
| Tue | 7:45 AM | - Ellen Heiss |
| | 12:05 PM | - Dick Weber |
| Wed | 7:45 AM | - Liv/Dec'd of the Jim King Family |
| | 12:05 PM | - Mary Huck Zwick |
| Thu | 7:45 AM | - Russell Hupp |
| | 12:05 PM | - Lucille Henry |
| Fri | 7:45 AM | - Souls in Purgatory |
| | 12:05 PM | - Theo Binegar Huggins |
| Sat | 9:00 AM | - Patricia Hupp |
| | 5:30 PM | - Lee Bryant |
| Sun | 8:00 AM | - Joseph Wesel |
| | 10:00 AM | - People of the Parish |
| | 12:00 PM | - Liv/Dec'd of the Jim & Julia Matheny Family |

SUNDAY MASSES - Saturday 5:30 PM; Sunday 8:00 AM, 10:00 AM, 12:00 PM

CONFESSIONS - Saturday 3:30-5:00 PM (or anytime by appointment)

BAPTISMS - Contact Parish Office

WEDDINGS - Contact Parish Office *six months* in advance

Rector - Rev. Msgr. John Michael Campbell (fatherjmike@gmail.com)

Parochial Vicar - Rev. Edward Maxfield Jr. (emaxfield@diosteub.org)

Permanent Deacon - Rev. Mr. Lee Weisend

Music Director - Mr. John Ontko (740) 350-4224 (ontkotb@suddenlink.net)

St. Mary School - 320 Marion St, (740)-374-8181 (www.stmaryscatholic.org)

School Principal - Elizabeth Tokodi (elizabethtokodi@stmaryscatholic.org)

K of C Grand Knight - Mr. Pete Saliba (304) 494-6170

Parish Council President - Luke Strahler - (614) 309-8876

CWC President - Jenn Tinkler

Hibernians - Mr. William Rathbone (740) 374-5492

Prayer Line - & Eucharistic Adoration, Mrs. Shelly Medley (740) 525-6360

Health Ministry - Mrs. Janet Jaeger (740) 374-6768

Daily Bread Kitchen - Mrs. Carol Henshaw (740) 885-1181

St. Vincent De Paul - Help Line (740) 376-1334

Welcoming Committee - Jim Naylor (740) 350-5510

Divine Mercy Gift Shop - Barb Ritchie (740) 538-4733

*He fed them with the finest wheat and satisfied them
with honey from the rock.*

READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY.

Dt 8:2-3, 14b-16a; Cor 10:16-17; Jn 6:51-58.

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bulletin announcements must be in by Wednesday morning to be included in the following weekends bulletin. All announcements must be in writing. We do not take bulletin announcements by phone.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEWLY BAPTIZED:

Jack Andrew Eichhorn and Paula Silva on Saturday June 10, 2023.

FREE HELP FOR PARISHONERS

If you need a ride to and from Mass, a doctor's appointment, or need help with errands, like picking up groceries, etc., please call or text Anne-Marie at 609-471-5294. Twenty-four hours' notice is appreciated, but not necessary.

VISITORS WELCOME! We welcome any visitors who are joining us for Mass this weekend. We hope your stay in Marietta is enjoyable. Any new parishioners at the Basilica are asked to please register with the parish office.

PARISH OFFICES are open from 1:00 PM until 4:00 PM on Mondays and from 9:00 AM until 4:00 PM Tuesday through Friday, with a lunch break from Noon until 1:00 PM each day.

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

| | | | |
|-----|---------|---|---|
| MON | 6:15 PM | - | Our Lady of Perpetual Help Devotions. (See announcement) |
| WED | 8:20 AM | - | 7:00 PM – Eucharistic Adoration in the Chapel of the English Martyrs. |
| FRI | 8:20 AM | - | 7:00 PM – Eucharistic Adoration in the Chapel of the English Martyrs. |

The Lord Will Never Be Outdone In Generosity!

Total collection last weekend: \$ 17,620.50

2nd Collection \$14,225.00

God bless those who support our Basilica Parish!

ONLINE GIVING

Online giving is available at the Basilica. For more information, please visit this website:

<http://www.stmarysmarietta.org> and go to the left side of the web page. Click on the GIVE ONLINE button to see more information or to sign up.

BASILICA FOUNDATION:

A fund has been established by the Marietta Community Foundation for the maintenance and repairs of our Basilica. This fund is separate from the monthly maintenance collection.

SCHEDULING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Please check with the parish office before scheduling a meeting in the Basilica Social Hall, Conference Room or using the Basilica Kitchen. If you cancel & reschedule, please make sure the new time & date are available. All meetings and events must be put in the master book in the parish office.

NEW ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER?

If you have recently moved please call the parish office to give us the new address. Also, many parishoners have done away with their land line and are just using cellphones. Please give us that information so we can update our roster. Thank you for your cooperation.

SAINT MARY SCHOOL NEWS

St. Mary Catholic School summer office hours are in effect. The school office is open on Wednesday's from 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM. The office will be closed the week of the 4th of July.

St. Mary Catholic School has the following job postings for the 2023-2024 school year.

- **Tag teacher** (part time)
- **Technology teacher** (part time)
- **PreK teacher** (full time, we will be having 2 PreK classes in the Fall)
- **Middle School Social Studies teacher** (part time)
- **Director of Religious Education** working within the school and the Basilica)

All job postings/descriptions are on the school website at stmarys.k12.oh.us

The Irish Booster Scholarship application for two St. Mary Catholic School alumni is open for submission. The scholarship application can be found on the school website home page at stmarys.k12.oh.us

Due to unforeseen circumstances, Vacation Bible School previously scheduled July 10-14 is postponed until July 2024.

Have a great summer.

FATHER'S DAY FISH FRY

K of C Council 4671 is sponsoring a Fish Fry on Father's Day, June 18th from 12:00 PM until 3:00 PM. Cost is \$15.00 each. STAG – Open to gentlemen of the public and K of C members! All you can eat fish-fries-coleslaw and drinks. There will be a 50/50 and tool raffle at the door! Questions? Call Scott Wells at 740-516-3279.

PILGRIMAGE TO ITALY

Join Father Tom Nelson on a Pilgrimage to Italy, January 1-12, 2024. Stops include Assisi, Norcia, Cascia, Loreto, Lanciano, San Giovanni Rotondo, Monte San Angelo, Montecassino, and Rome.

the discount price of \$4,989.00 per person is enjoyed by those paying with Cash or Check (based on a minimum of 30 participants with double occupancy). For full itinerary visit: <https://catholicfaithjourneys.com/>. For more information contact Maggie McDaniel: email: maggie@catholicfaithjourneys.com or phone: (419)290-8782.

MARY'S HOUSE- GOLF OUTING

Mary's House Golf Outing is Saturday, June 24 at Lakeside Golf Course in Beverly, Ohio. Cost is \$70.00 per person. Cost includes 18 holes of golf, cart, mulligan, food, and drink. Hole sponsor is available for \$100.00. Call Jordan Welch to sign up your team and hole sponsor, 740-538-9901.

SERVICE MEN

Please pray for all of the young men & women who are serving our country in the Military. We especially remember those from our own Parish & friends & relatives of our parishoners. May God watch over them & keep them safe.

2023 DIOCESAN/PARISH SHARE CAMPAIGN

This year our parish goal is \$115,639.21. This is an increase of \$4,381.21 over last year. So far, the Diocese has received \$85,808.00 from our parish. This means that our parish has only met 74% of our goal.

Thanks once again to those who participated in this year's DPSC. If you've not yet turned in your pledge, please do so. You can place your pledge in the collection basket, or you can mail it directly to the diocese using the pre-addressed DPSC envelope. Additional pledge cards are available at the parish office. You can also contribute to the campaign on line at www.Give.Dioasteub.org.

Our parish has always met and surpassed our goal. Please help us to do so again this year.

BASILICA BOOK CLUB NEWS

Living Joy: Thanks to a donation, the book "Living Joy" by Chris Stefanic is available for check out in our parish library. Due to the content that asks for reflection, the book will be discussed at the June meeting of the Basilica Book Club.

Remember: ALL are welcome, bring a friend. Snacks and drinks are provided. If you are not able to read the book, a summary is presented, and you can participate at whatever level is comfortable for you. Any questions, information or if you want to be added to the Basilica Book Club email list: contact Debbie Lazorik, lazorikd@marietta.edu or 740-434-3769.

The next book club meeting will be Wednesday, June 28th at 6:00 p.m. in the Basilica Social Hall.

MINISTRY SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEKEND OF June 17 & 18

| | Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion | Lectors | Altar Servers |
|----------------------|---|----------------|---|
| Sat: 5:30 | Evelyn Potter (CAPT) Gregg Black (HOST) Sherri Black (HOST) Deb Lazorik (CHALICE) Missy Deskins (CHALICE) | Tina Thomas | Drew Heiss Liam Lang Mary Tokodi-Ruth |
| Sun: 8:00 | Theresa Huck (CAPT) David Baker (HOST) Suzanne Baker (HOST) Nancy Funk (CHALICE) John Douglass (CHALICE) | Carol Wharff | Babs Douglass Charles Kremer Jerry Huck Joe Flaherty (swap req.) |
| 10:00 | Cathy Rauch (CAPT) Gerald Cooke (HOST) Deacon Lee (HOST) Cheyenne Greenwood (CHALICE) Elizabeth Tokodi (CHALICE) | Mary LaBarre | Nico Marasco Valentina Marasco Grant Palmer Annie Tokodi-Ruth |
| 12:00 | Stan Vanlandingham (CAPT) Dennis Nau (HOST) Sandy Bickert (HOST) Jeanette Flowers (CHALICE) Joe Schmidt (CHALICE) | Irene Cain | Evan Huffman Grant Huffman Christian Isaly |

Sat., June 17–Not Filled

CORPUS CHRISTI

Today's Feast of Corpus Christ is a Feast which expresses gratitude to the Lord Jesus Christ's True Presence – Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity in the Most Holy Eucharist, really, truly, and substantially present under appearances of bread and wine. This presence happens through the change which the Church calls Tran substation (change of substance), when at the consecration of the Mass, the priest says the words which Christ Himself pronounced over bread and wine at the Last Supper. "This is My Body, this is the chalice of My Blood, do this in remembrance of Me."

THE NEW SUMMER HOURS FOR OUR CHANCERY IN STEUBENVILLE

In an effort to reduce utility expenses, the Chancery will move to a 4-day work week until the end of summer. The staff will be extending their workdays Monday-Thursday to serve the needs of the Diocese.



THE FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI

June 11, 2023

Jesus said to the crowd: "I am the Living Bread, having come down from heaven. If someone should eat of this Bread, he will live into the age (of the Kingdom); but the bread which I will give is My flesh, for the life of the world."

"Listen!" Jesus replied. "If you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you do not have life in you. The person who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For My flesh is real food and My blood is real drink. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood remains in Me, and I in him. The living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father. So, the person who eats My flesh will also live because of me. This bread that came down from heaven is not like the manna your ancestors ate. They died. But, the person who eats this bread will live forever."

Jesus freely gave himself up on the cross for the world. Jesus freely gave bread at the Last Supper with the words, "This is my body." John clearly wanted to see salvation on the cross celebrated in the bread shared in the Eucharist. Jesus freely gave himself to us on the cross. He freely gives himself to us in Communion. The gift of these two different events is the same. Jesus offered them something more than food to feed their bellies. He offered them the feast of eternal life!

Jesus used the idea of the living God when he described himself as the "living" bread from heaven. He bridged the title "I AM" with bread. Unlike the manna God sent the Hebrews as they wandered the desert, Jesus came to feed people as the living bread Who "came down from heaven".

Intimacy with Jesus (flesh and blood) was the only thing that really mattered for the believer (eat true food...drink true drink). Jesus became the conduit for the Father's very life to the believer. Jesus has life through the Father. The believer has life through Jesus.

Unbelievers (symbolized by the Jewish antagonists of Jesus) held they lived close to God, for their ancestors ate the manna bread from heaven (i.e., their ancestors based their lives solely upon God's providence). But there was a difference between one truly living close to God and believing one lived close to God because that person enjoyed a good life. Living close to God involved risks (being misunderstood and even persecuted for faith); enjoying God's favor merely meant a relatively comfortable life. The one who chose intimacy with God was spiritually alive. The one who simply paid lip service to God for his blessings was spiritually dying.

Christians base their faith not so much on the facts, but in a trust relationship with Jesus of Nazareth. Trust of a person, not knowledge of the facts or obedience demanded by duty, defines the Christian life. In John's gospel, Jesus revealed trust as the key to eternal life.

Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 1407-1418)

The Eucharist is the high point of Christian life because 1) Eucharist remembers and celebrates the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, and 2) in the Communion, Jesus unites his followers with himself. (1407)

The two parts of Eucharist are 1) the Liturgy of the Word where the Bible is read and taught, and 2) the Liturgy of the Eucharist where God is thanked for all his gifts, the bread and wine are consecrated (changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus), and Jesus' followers share in his Body and Blood at Communion. (1408)

Since the Eucharist celebrates the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, Jesus acts as high priest (by offering himself to God the Father) and victim (who died in our place). The ordained priest represents Christ as priest in the Mass; the consecrated bread and wine is Christ sharing himself with us. (1411)

The sacramental signs of Eucharist are 1) the bread and wine, 2) the prayer asking for the blessing of the Holy Spirit and 3) the word of Consecration ("This is my body...this is my blood of the new covenant..."). (1412) All of Jesus is present in the consecrated bread and wine, not merely his Spirit. Jesus is present "Body, Blood, soul and divinity." (1413)

In order to receive Eucharist, one must be forgiven of serious (or "mortal") sins. Someone with a serious sin must receive the sacrament of Reconciliation before they receive Eucharist. (1415) Eucharist does forgive less serious (or "venial" sins) and strengthens one against serious sin. (1416) A Catholic must receive Eucharist at least once a year, but all Catholics are encouraged to go every time they attend Mass. (1417)

Since the tabernacle contains the consecrated bread (which is really Jesus), one shows honor to the consecrated hosts (known as the "Blessed Sacrament") by genuflecting. (1418)

Christ invites us to consume him in Word and Sacrament. He entreats us to constantly renew our commitment to his Lordship. The question that lies before us is simple. Do we take his invitation at its full value?

At one point or another, every Christian says a prayer or receives communion without thought. Christian practice becomes second nature. And the Christian takes elements of a faith life for granted. Our post-Christian society will make such a lax attitude more difficult to sustain. The media tempts the Christian with the easy life. The need for economic gain invites the believer to cut corners with personal relationships. Even voices on the fringe have become rabidly anti-Christian. The Christian can no longer depend upon culture to maintain faith. The cacophony of voices from media, the stress of daily living, and even those on the edge ask one question: How strong is our commitment to Christ?

In John's gospel, Jesus debated this question with a hostile crowd. In doing so, Jesus taught them and John's readers the true meaning of Communion.

Special Events & Scheduled Pilgrimages at the Basilica:

June - 19, - 4:00 pm. Priest Jubilee Mass – St.Clairstville
Sept. - 24 - 9:30 am. Confirmation – Saint Henry Church
Oct. - 1, - 10:00 am. Respect Life Mass - Bishop
Oct. - 27, - 8:45 am. Diocesan Teacher in Service Day
Oct. - 29, - 12:00 pm. Women Religious celebration
Dec. - 12, - 11:00 am. Our Lady of Guadalupe Celebration



Perpetual Help Devotions This Monday

Perpetual Help Devotions will resume this evening at 6:15 pm. Parishioners are encouraged to participate in this devotion celebrated every Monday evening in our Basilica. We ask Our Lady to guide and protect our Basilica, all visitors, and each one of us.

Adoration of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will take place in our Basilica's Chapel of the English Martyrs. this week on Wednesday and Friday from 8:15 am. until 7:00 pm. Jesus remains in the Blessed Sacrament to refresh and love us.

Deceased priests of the Diocese of Steubenville



On Wednesday, we remember the 29th anniversary of the death of Msgr. Jan Kish. On Friday, we remember the 21st anniversary of the death of Msgr. Joseph Kloss. We thank God for these two priests who served the Church in our Diocese to the best of their ability.



"You say: it is finished, and you bowed your head in silence. It was finished, your path as a man on earth. From the beginning your throne of glory was prepared for you at the right side of the Father, and you ascended thereto. But you did not separate yourself from the earth. You were united to it for all time."

—St. Edith Stein

Penitential rite held after naked man stands on St. Peter's Basilica's main altar

Two days after a naked man stood on the high altar of St. Peter's Basilica in a shocking security breach, the basilica's archpriest on Saturday reconsecrated the altar during a penitential rite as required by canon law in cases where sacred places are desecrated.

The unidentified man was a Polish national who approached the high altar on June 1 as the basilica was about to close. He quickly undressed, and climbed onto the altar. As officers of the Vatican Gendarmerie approached, the man did not resist but cooperated as they led him to the police station inside the Vatican. After ascertaining his identity, the man was handed over to the Italian police, and was issued an expulsion order and instructed to leave Italian territory."

The basilica's main altar, where the pope celebrates Mass, is called the Altar of the Confession. Reached by climbing seven steps, the marble altar is located directly above St. Peter's Tomb and is crowned by Gian Lorenzo Bernini's large Baroque sculpted bronze canopy.

Cardinal Mauro Gambetti, the basilica's archpriest, led the penitential rite, held at noon Rome time Saturday. Canons of the Chapter of the Papal Basilica of St. Peter's and several members of the faithful also participated. During the act of reparation, the cardinal pointed out that "it is the structure of sin that conditions the hearts and minds of people. This structure of sin is the one that feeds the wars, the one that inhabits our society," he added.

After praying the Creed, the cardinal blessed the water and later spread it on the altar as a sign of purification. Later, two nuns dressed the altar with a tablecloth, candles, flowers, and a crucifix. The Code of Canon Law and the Ceremonial of Bishops **provide guidance for situations where altars or other sacred spaces are violated.**

Canon No. 1211 states, "Sacred places are violated by gravely injurious actions done in them with scandal to the faithful, actions which, in the judgment of the local ordinary, are so grave and contrary to the holiness of the place that it is not permitted to carry on worship in them until the damage is repaired by a penitential rite according to the norm of the liturgical books."

The Ceremonial of Bishops, Nos. 1070-1092, specifies that crimes that can desecrate a church are those that "do grave dishonor to sacred mysteries, especially to the eucharistic species, and are committed to show contempt for the Church, or are crimes that are serious offenses against the dignity of the person and society." A penitential rite, either a Mass or a Liturgy of the Word, should be carried out as soon as possible after such a desecration, the norms state.

MEETINGS, EVENTS, AND MASSES FOR THE WEEK:

Monday, June 5,

7:45 am. - Mass
12:05 am. - Mass
6:15 pm. - Perpetual Help devotions

Tuesday, June 6,

7:45 am. - Mass
12:05 pm. - Mass

Wednesday, June 7,

7:45 am. - Mass
8:20 am. - Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
12:05 pm. - Mass
7:00 pm. - Reposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Thursday, June 8,

7:45 am. - Mass,
12:05 pm. - Mass
1:00 pm. - Basilica tour

Friday, June 9,

7:45 am. - Mass
8:20 am. - Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
12:05 pm. - Mass
7:00 pm. - Reposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Saturday, June 10,

9:00 am. - Mass
11:00 am, - Baptism
3:30 pm. - Confessions
5:30 pm. - Mass

Sunday, June 18,

8:00 am. - Mass
9:30 am. - Mass (St. Henry)
10:00 am. - Mass
12:00 pm. - Mass

Gänswein ordered to leave Vatican, return to home diocese without new role



The longtime private secretary of Pope Benedict XVI has been told to return to his home diocese of Freiburg in southwest Germany but has not been given any role or assignment, the Welt newspaper reported on Friday.

The report claims that Pope Francis informed the 66-year-old Gänswein of his decision during a private audience on May 19.

The future role of the late Benedict's secretary has been the subject of rumor and gossip across Rome and the Church in Germany for months. The eloquent prelate is fluent in several languages, including German and Italian. Pope Francis "referred to the custom that the former private secretaries of deceased popes did not remain in Rome."

A longtime secretary to Benedict, Gänswein also served as prefect of the Papal Household to both Benedict and his successor, Pope Francis, until February 2020.

Hailing from the Black Forest region of Germany, the son of a blacksmith was ordained a priest in 1984 by Archbishop Oskar Saier in Freiburg and holds a doctorate in canon law from Ludwig-Maximilian University in Munich.

Gänswein is expected in Germany later this week: He is scheduled to preside over Mass on Sunday, June 4, for an annual pilgrimage to the Cistercian monastery of Stiepel near Bochum, in Western Germany.



THE BASILICA OF SAINT MARY

4TH STREET • MARIETTA OH 45750 • 740-373-3643



June 11, 2023

Dear Parishioners,

Today as we celebrate the Feast of Corpus Christi – a feast which unfortunately has ceased to amaze us. Sunday Mass has become so routine that it has lost its wonder and attraction, and since covid, many people have not returned to Mass.

This Feast of Corpus Christi is a reminder to us of the reality of the Eucharist, and our need to celebrate the fact that from the first moment of the Last Supper until now, Christ abides with us. It was not enough that Jesus endured His passion for us – that He offered every drop of His blood. It was not enough that Jesus endured His Passion for us – that He offered every drop of His blood for us on the cross – but now in the Eucharist, he is truly present offering us the salvation He won for us on the cross.

In the Eucharist – in the Sacrifice of the Mass – We come into contact with the real, living person of Jesus Christ – the Son of God. We need this Feast of Corpus Christi as a reminder of God's love for us. Our human tendency is to take for granted special gifts like the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. We tend to lose our appreciation for some of the most precious gifts and treasures we possess. Going to Mass every Sunday can become routine – something that we have to get done and out of the way and cross off our list.

History bears this out. When Jesus established the Holy Eucharist, the early Christians accepted the truth of the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. The celebration of the Eucharist was the core teaching of the Apostolic Church. In the first years of the Church, the liturgy of the Mass did not consist of readings from the scripture, because the scripture was not yet compiled and completed by the Church. Nor was the Mass considered to be a "Memorial Meal". The early Christians had known memorial meals – like the Passover Meal when they were practicing the Jewish faith, but the Eucharist was different.

Those early followers of Jesus were witnesses to Jesus' miracles, and to His passion, death and resurrection. They knew and believed that Jesus was God, so they accepted Him at His word. If He could become present in the womb of a virgin, He could become present in the simple elements of bread and wine if He willed to do so.

By the year 200 (before the New Testament Canon of Sacred Scripture was accepted), the Eucharist was set aside for adoration and for bringing the Holy Eucharist to the sick and dying.

Sincerely in Christ,

Rev. Msgr. John M. Campbell

LITURGICAL FEASTS THIS WEEK:

Monday, June 5, Saint Boniface (Bishop & Martyr)

Boniface founded the abbey of Fulda. He was bishop of Mainz. He was martyred with 30 companions in 754 at Dokkum in Frisia. He is known as the "Apostle of Germany."

Tuesday, June 6, Saint Norbert (Bishop)

Norbert founded the Premonstratensians or "Norbertines" (O. Praem), today numbering 1,175 members. He was the archbishop of Magdeburg. He was a strong supporter of Church reform and evangelization. He was a strong supporter of the Holy Eucharist.

Friday, June 9, Saint Ephrem, (Deacon & Doctor of the Church)

Ephrem was a Syrian theologian and poet who authored biblical commentaries, homilies, and many hymns used today in the Syriac liturgy. He is known as the "Harp of the Spirit", and Peter was an exorcist. Under the order of Diocletian, they were both beheaded in the year 303.

The Eucharist is a sacrament of faith.

The Consecrated Host looks no different after the consecration than before. It looks, smells, feels, and tastes like bread. Only one of the five senses gets to the truth. As St. Thomas Aquinas' *Adoro Te Devote* expresses, "Seeing, touching, tasting are in Thee deceived. What says trusty hearing that shall be believed?" The ears hear His words, "This is My Body; this is My Blood," and faith takes us beyond the veil of appearances..

Christians are used to looking beyond appearances. The baby in the manger does not look like God; nor for that matter does Christ on the cross. Yet by faith we know He is no mere man. The Bible does not have a particular glow setting it off from other books, nor does it levitate above the shelf. Yet by faith we know it is uniquely the Word of God. The Eucharist seems to be bread and wine, and yet by faith we say, "My Lord and My God!" as we kneel in adoration.

The same dynamic of faith that enables us to see beyond appearances in these mysteries enables us to see beyond appearances in our neighbor. We can look at the persons around us, at the annoying person or the ugly person or the person who is unconscious in a hospital bed, and we can say, "Christ is there as well. There is my brother, my sister, made in the very image of God!" Is the Sacred Host too small to be God, too unlike Him in appearance to be worshipped? The slightest particle of the Host is fully Christ. Eucharistic Faith is a powerful antidote to the dangerous notion that value depends on size.

The Eucharist is the Sacrament of Unity.

"When I am lifted up from the earth," the Lord said, "I will draw all people to myself" (Jn.12:32). He fulfills this promise in the Eucharist, which builds up the Church. The Church is the sign and cause of the unity of the human family. Imagine all the people, in every part of the world, who are receiving Communion today. They are receiving the one and only Christ? Through this sacrament, Christ the Lord, gloriously enthroned in heaven, is drawing all people to Himself. If He is drawing us to Himself, then He is drawing us to one another. When we call each other "brothers and sisters," we are not merely using a metaphor that dimly reflects the unity between children of the same parents. The unity we have in Christ is even *stronger* than the unity of blood brothers and sisters, because we *do* have common blood: the blood of Christ! The result of the Eucharist is that we become one, and this obliges us to be as concerned for each other as we are for our own bodies.

As St. John remarked, Christ died "to gather into one all the scattered children of God." Sin scatters. Christ unites. The word "diabolical" means "to split asunder." Christ came "to destroy the works of the devil" (1Jn.3:8). The Eucharist builds up the human family in Christ who says, "Come to me, feed on My Body, become My Body."

The Eucharist is the Sacrament of Life.

"I am the Bread of Life. He who eats this bread will live forever. I will raise Him up on the last day." (See Jn.6:47-58) The Eucharistic sacrifice is the very action of Christ by which He destroyed our death and restored our life. Whenever we gather for this sacrifice, we are celebrating the victory of life over death.

The Eucharist is the Supreme act of Worship of God.

Two lessons each person needs to learn are, "1. There is a God. 2. It isn't me." The Eucharist, as the perfect sacrifice, acknowledges that God is God, and that "it is [His] right to receive the obedience of all creation." Real freedom is not the ability to do whatever one pleases, but the power to do what is right.

The Eucharist is, finally, the Sacrament of Love.

St. John explains, "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us" (1Jn.3:16). Christ teaches, "Greater love than this no one has, than to lay down his life for his friends" (Jn.15:13). The best symbol of love is not the heart, but rather the crucifix.
