

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

The Body and Blood of Christ, June 22, 2014

This email, entitled Looking to Sunday®, focuses on the Gospel Reading for the coming Sunday. It prepares readers to hear God's Word at Mass and it offers a point of reflection to consider in the days leading to Sunday. Looking to Sunday is written by Father Tom Iwanowski.

ONE FOLLOWS THE OTHER

Spring follows winter.

Inauguration Day follows Election Day.

Adulthood follows adolescence.

One thing follows another. And it does so for a reason.

Spring arrives after winter as the earth tilts toward the sun and the increased solar energy overcomes the cold.

Government officials are inaugurated and take their oath of office after voters have gone to the polls and cast their ballots.

A person matures into adulthood after having endured the challenges and changes that come with adolescence.

What follows is related to what has gone before.

This Sunday we celebrate the Feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, often referred to by its former title, Corpus Christi. It follows the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity that was celebrated last Sunday.

The fact that one feast follows the other in the Church's calendar is more than a coincidence.

The Feast of the Holy Trinity proclaims our belief that God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The one God we worship is a trinity of persons, a divine community of love.

The Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ expresses our belief that Jesus Christ gives himself to us in the bread and wine that become his very body and blood during the celebration of the Mass.

Each feast is related to the other.

Last Sunday's feast reminded us that the one God we worship is a community of persons. If we are made in God's own image and likeness it follows that we are made for community. We were made to be in communion with God and with one another. As God said in the early pages of Genesis, "It is not good for the man to be alone." (Genesis 2:18).

This Sunday's feast calls to mind the dramatic way God draws us into communion with him. When we receive the Eucharist, God gives us his very life and unites with himself. As Jesus says in this Sunday's Gospel (John 6:51-58), "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him."

The reception of the Body and Blood of Christ also brings us into a relationship with our fellow Christians. All who share the consecrated bread and wine truly become “blood brothers” and “blood sisters” in Christ. We share the same flesh and blood, the flesh and blood of Christ.

The placement of these feasts teaches us that the gift of the Eucharist is not just about our receiving spiritual nourishment. It is also about our entering into a “holy communion” with the Lord and with our brothers and sisters who share in the one bread and one cup.

One feast following the other helps us to better appreciate the wonder of the Eucharist.

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