



DIOCESE OF FAIRBANKS

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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

15 June 2022

Eucharistic Revival

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On Sunday, June 19th, the Catholic Church celebrates the feast of Corpus Christi in which we honor the true presence of Christ within the sacrament of the Eucharist. The feast of Corpus Christi originated in Belgium when St. Juliana of Mont Carvillon, in her devotion to the Eucharist, petitioned the Bishop of Liege to institute a celebration in their diocese dedicated to the Eucharist. After the institution of this local feast, Eucharistic miracles began to appear throughout the Church. These miracles caught the attention of Saint Thomas Aquinas who petitioned Pope Urban IV to extend the feast to the universal Church instituting what we now celebrate as Corpus Christi, a feast focused solely on the Holy Eucharist, emphasizing the joy of the Eucharist being the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ.

This year's feast of Corpus Christi marks an especially important beginning in our diocese, and the rest of the dioceses in the United States, as we begin a Eucharistic Revival. Why now? Why a Eucharistic revival? Because the Church needs healing. And the world needs the Church. The Church has withstood scandal, division, disease, and doubt throughout history. Today, we are encountering them all at once. Our response in this moment is pivotal. In the midst of these roaring waves, Jesus is present in the boat (the Church), reminding us that He is more powerful than the storm. He desires to heal, renew, and unify the Church and the world. How will He do it? By uniting us once again around the source and summit of our faith—the Holy Eucharist. The National Eucharistic Revival is the joyful, expectant, grassroots response of the entire Catholic Church in the United States to this divine invitation.

Throughout the course of the next three years, our diocese will be rolling out events, programs, and various opportunities for the faithful to encounter Jesus Christ through the source and summit of our faith, the Eucharist, and be transformed. These encounters with Jesus Christ are rooted in three parts. The first part is **Hearing God**. We must take time in this revival to “listen with the ears of our heart,” as Saint Benedict says. Our world is full of noise and distractions blocking both our hearts and minds. During this time of revival, I encourage you to root out those distractions and focus on the guiding voice of our Lord. His voice is said to be found not in the fire and the earthquake, but in the stillness and gentleness of silence. This sacred silence can be found in adoration of the Most Holy Eucharist, in scripture meditation, and in prayerful contemplation, all things available throughout the Eucharistic Revival and beyond.

The second part is **Handing God Our Hearts**. Once you have opened yourself to hearing God, you must take the next step of surrendering your heart to Him. Saint Paul writes in his letter to the Hebrews, “Indeed, the word of God is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating even between soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart” (Heb 4:12). God's Word desires to penetrate our hearts and blossom within us, the same Word that became flesh and dwelt among us as the Son, Jesus Christ. The same Jesus Christ that knows the

innermost being of your heart. In this time of Eucharistic Revival, we must continually hand over our hearts to the Word Made Flesh. This handing over of our hearts is made available to us through the most holy sacrament of the altar. It is through the sacrament of the Eucharist in which we are invited to present our hearts to the Lord, and by consuming His Body and Blood allow Him access into the dwellings of our hearts.

The third and final part is **Having Hope**. Once we listen to the Lord and offer Him our hearts, we must have hope that He will transform us in unimaginable ways. The state of the world is one that fosters confusion and despair. Society is in desperate need of hope. Hope for a shift in the hearts of the masses. Hope for a reaffirmation and preservation of truth. And Hope for a society in which the light of Christ can shine brightly, extinguishing the flames of confusion and despair that run rampant in our world. Saint Paul in his letter to the Romans speaks of hope reminding us “since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access to this grace in which we stand, and we boast in hope of the glory of God...hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts” (Rom 5:1-2,5). Hope in the glory of God does not disappoint, so go boast about it. Bask in the glory of God, and the graces He pours into us because of our faith.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, once we begin to hear God, surrender our hearts to Him, and hope for that transformation within us and within each other, a genuine revival will happen. The Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith. We must turn to Jesus repeatedly trusting in those three steps, so that the Glory of God, through the Word Made Flesh, may speak to us, may penetrate our hearts, and transform us. Corpus Christi is just the beginning. I encourage you to be on the lookout for ways to reignite the fire of the Holy Spirit within your hearts during the next few years and to participate in tending to that flame during this Eucharistic Revival.

Sincerely in Christ,



†Most Reverend Chad W. Zielinski
Catholic Bishop of Northern Alaska
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