



Coloma Catholic Life.

**You cannot do kindness too soon,
for you never know how soon
it will be too late.**

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

RD

Corpus Christi



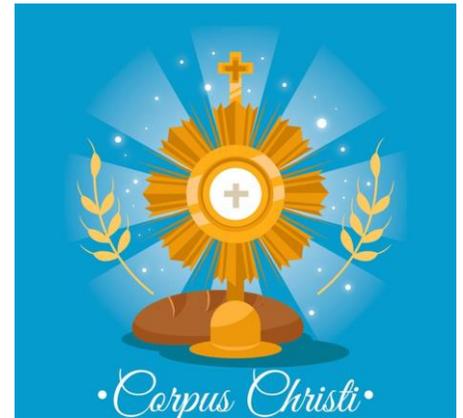
The fact that the Church celebrates the solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ makes good sense, given the Eucharist's centrality in the life of the Church, neatly described by the Catechism of the Catholic Church as the "sum and summary of our faith" (No. 1327). There is also the Second Vatican Council's famous reiteration of this reality in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, calling the Eucharist

the "source and summit of the Christian life" (Lumen Gentium, No. 11). These truths about the Eucharist seem to be at the heart of why the medieval saint Juliana of Liège was moved to guide the Church toward celebrating this yearly solemnity, more commonly known as Corpus Christi.

Historical Background

St. Juliana, a little-known Norbertine canoness from modern-day Belgium, spent much of her life advocating for a feast to honour and celebrate Christ's real presence in the Eucharist and all the meaning it holds for the Church. St. Juliana was prompted to advocate for the feast in response to not only her own personal devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, but also in response to private revelations.

Interpreted later, in consultation with spiritual guides, the visions of St. Juliana that began when she was 16 years old indicated the necessity of a liturgical feast in honour of the sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood. Given the culture of the early 13th century, she felt there was nothing she could do about instituting such a feast. However, she had confided in two



Pope Francis

Prayer Intention for June:

The Beauty of Marriage.

'Let us pray for young people who are preparing for marriage with the support of a Christian community: may they grow in love, with generosity, faithfulness and patience.'

Video:

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2021-06/pope-francis-june-2021-prayer-intention-beauty-marriage.html>

Tweet: "In the Eucharist fragility is strength: the strength of God's love that becomes so small so as to be welcomed and not feared; the strength of the love that is broken and shared so as to nourish and give life; the strength of the love that is split apart so as to join us in unity."

Liturgical Year

Week: Corpus Christi.

Colour: White

individuals, other than a few members of her monastery, about the visions — both of whom proved to be helpful in bringing its establishment to fruition. The young monk who served as St. Juliana’s confessor, John of Lausanne, collaborated with her to compose an office by which to celebrate this divinely inspired liturgical feast. Eventually their diocesan bishop approved the texts and authorized its celebration in his diocese in 1246.

Bl. Eva of Liège, an anchoress attached to the parish attended by St. Juliana and one of her confidantes, was instrumental in bringing the feast beyond its provincial origins after St. Juliana’s death. Bl. Eva had contacted Pope Urban IV with the request to celebrate the feast throughout the universal Church. The future pope originally was a priest of Liège and already had been familiar with St. Juliana’s visions and their meaning. So, it seemed, the hand of providence was behind the Pope’s 1264 declaration of the solemnity of Corpus Christi — the first universal feast to be imposed obligatorily by a Pope. He assigned papal theologian St. Thomas Aquinas to compose new liturgical texts for the feast. This promulgation came at a time when scholastics debated the corporeality of Christ’s presence in the Eucharist, chief among the defenders of which was St. Thomas, who supplied the philosophical backbone of the Church’s Eucharistic doctrine by defining transubstantiation. Many of the original texts for Corpus Christi composed by St. Thomas Aquinas, including *Adoro te Devote* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-xs67lnkZ3A>), remain an essential part of the Church’s sacred hymnography. The *Pange Lingua*, for example, is often sung during the Eucharistic procession after the Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday, to which the last two stanzas are referred separately as *Tantum ergo* and sung at Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DnrOwiYqTcc>)

Eucharistic Processions

One of the key liturgical facets of Corpus Christi is its procession. Processions have great biblical, liturgical and popular pietistic importance. Processions of the faithful enable Christians to give public witness to their faith, give glory to God, and they symbolize our earthly pilgrimage to the heavenly Jerusalem. Eucharistic processions began shortly after the institution of the solemnity of Corpus Christi. Often splendid and regal, the practice was encouraged by the Council of Trent so as to reiterate the Church’s belief in the real presence of the Blessed Sacrament.



The medieval Eucharistic processions on Corpus Christi were grand and stately affairs, involving entire towns and cities. They were particularly glorious in European Catholic monarchies, where sovereigns and nobility, other civic officials and military guards took part. The faithful knelt in place outside their homes as the procession came by. This is still seen today in the few vestiges of Catholic monarchy, such as in the Principality of Monaco, where the prince and members of his family kneel in adoration on the *Galerie Hercule* of the Prince’s *Palais* during the Corpus Christi procession led by their Archbishop.

In recent decades, a papal celebration of Corpus Christi winds its way through the streets of Rome to the Basilica of St. Mary Major, after the Mass at the Pope’s cathedral — the Basilica of St. John Lateran. Pope St. John Paul II restored this custom early in his pontificate. As Cardinal Archbishop of Kraków the future Pope was known to clash with Communist leaders as he sought to restore the full Corpus Christi processions known in Poland in his youth. St. John Paul said of Eucharistic processions: “Our faith in the God who took flesh in

order to become our companion along the way needs to be everywhere proclaimed, especially in our streets and homes, as an expression of our grateful love and as an inexhaustible source of blessings” (*Mane Nobiscum Domine*, No. 18). And, Pope Benedict XVI said, Corpus Christi processions allow us to “immerse [Christ], so to speak, in the daily routine of our lives, so that he may walk where we walk and live where we live.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ti3BKMJteTU> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5RABlPu9LM8>

Parish Celebrations Today

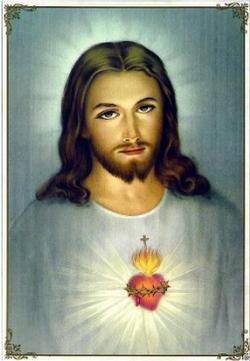
The practice of Eucharistic processions is encouraged today. They provide us with, as Pope Benedict said, “a renewal of the mystery of Holy Thursday, as it were, in obedience to Jesus’ invitation to proclaim from ‘the housetops’ what he told us in secret (see Mt 10:27).” Many parishes continue this tradition in a variety of different ways. During the procession, hymns of praise and thanksgiving or a simple chant are typical, although litanies and other prayers like the Rosary may be integrated. The solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ and its Eucharistic procession give us, as Pope Francis notes, “the joy not only of celebrating” the glorious mystery of the Eucharist, “but also of praising him and singing in the streets of our city.” They allow us to “express our gratitude for ... nourishing us with his love through the Sacrament of his Body and the Blood.”

Moving the Feast

The solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ was originally fixed to the Thursday following Trinity Sunday, and still is in many countries. However, in 1969, Pope St. Paul VI gave episcopal conferences the option to transfer the feast to the following Sunday. The significance of this solemnity in the life of the Church is evidenced in Canon 395 of the Code of Canon Law, which states that in addition to Christmas, Holy Week, Easter and Pentecost, the Diocesan Bishop is to be present in his diocese for its celebration, “except for a grave and urgent cause.”

Religious Festivals

The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus – 11th June



Devotion to the Sacred Heart (also known as the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus) is one of the most widely practiced and well-known devotions, taking Jesus Christ’s physical heart as the representation of his divine love for humanity.

This devotion is predominantly used in the Catholic Church and among some high-church Anglicans and Lutherans. The devotion especially emphasizes the unmitigated love, compassion, and long-suffering of the heart of Christ towards humanity. The origin of this devotion in its modern form is derived from a Roman Catholic nun in France, Marguerite Marie Alacoque, who said she learned the devotion from Jesus during some apparitions which occurred between 1673 and 1675, and later, in the 19th century, from the mystical revelations of another Roman Catholic nun, in Portugal, Mary of the Divine Heart, countess Droste zu Vischering, who requested that Pope Leo XIII consecrate the entire world to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Predecessors to the modern devotion arose unmistakably in the Middle Ages in various facets of Catholic mysticism.

The Sacred Heart is often depicted in Christian art as a flaming heart shining with divine light, pierced by the lance-wound, encircled by the crown of thorns, surmounted by a cross and bleeding. Sometimes the image is shown shining within the bosom of Christ with his wounded hands pointing at the heart. The wounds and

crown of thorns allude to the manner of Jesus' death, while the fire represents the transformative power of divine love.

The Feast of the Sacred Heart has been in the Roman Catholic liturgical calendar since 1856 and is celebrated 19 days after Pentecost. As Pentecost is always celebrated on Sunday, the Feast of the Sacred Heart always falls on a Friday.

The Immaculate Heart of Mary – 12th June

Historically, devotion to the Heart of Mary grew up in parallel, but at a lesser intensity than that of devotion to the Heart of Jesus, only starting to become more prominent during the time of St John Eudes. John Eudes was born in 1601 in Normandy, France. He entered the Congregation of the Oratory of France, founded in 1611 by Cardinal de Berulle and was ordained to the priesthood on December 20, 1625.



St. John brought people to love Christ and the Virgin Mary by speaking tirelessly about their Heart, the sign of the love God shows for us and the communion to which we are called. To offer them liturgical worship, he composed Masses and Offices in their honour and had the first Feast of the Holy Heart of Mary celebrated on February 8, 1648, at Autun (France,) and the Feast of the Heart of Jesus celebrated on October 20, 1672. He died on August 19, 1680 and was canonized by Pope Pius XI on May 31, 1925.

Nevertheless, it was not until after the Apparitions at Rue du Bac concerning the "Miraculous Medal" made to Catherine Labouré in 1830, and the establishment of a society dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, at the Church of Our Lady of Victories in Paris in 1836, that this particular devotion became really well known.

Since then, devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, has gradually grown more widespread in the Church, particularly since the apparitions at Fatima. The main difference between the devotions to the hearts of Jesus and Mary is that the one concerned with Jesus emphasizes his divine heart as being full of love for mankind, but with this love for the most part being ignored or rejected, while devotion to Mary's heart is essentially concerned with the love that her heart has for Jesus, for God. The love of her heart is meant to be a model for the way we should love God. The fact that her heart is immaculate, that is sinless, means that she is the only fully human person who is able to really love God in the way that he should be loved. Honouring Mary's Immaculate Heart is another way of honouring Mary as the person who was chosen to be the Mother of God, recognizing her extraordinary holiness and the immense love she bestowed on Jesus as his mother, the person who was called to share in and co-operate in his redemptive sufferings.

The aim of the devotion is to unite mankind to God through Mary's heart, and this process involves the ideas of consecration and reparation. A person is consecrated to Mary's Immaculate Heart as a way of being completely devoted to God. This involves a total gift of self, something only ultimately possible with reference to God; but Mary is our intermediary in this process of consecration.

Saints of the Week

St Ephraem, Deacon and Doctor – 9th June.



Born in Nisibis, Mesopotamia, he was baptized as a young man and became famous as a teacher in his native city. When the Christian emperor had to cede Nisibis to the Persians, Ephrem fled as a refugee to Edessa, along with many other Christians. He is credited with attracting great glory to the biblical school there. He was ordained a deacon but declined becoming a priest. Ephrem was said to have avoided presbyteral consecration by feigning madness!

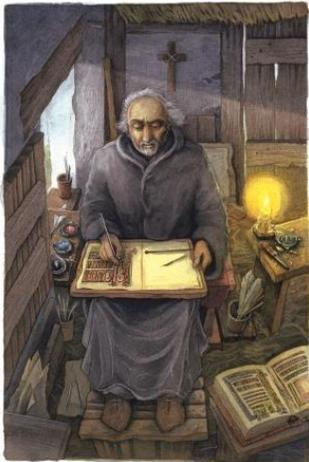
He had a prolific pen, and his writings best illumine his holiness. Although he was not a man of great scholarship, his works reflect deep insight and knowledge of the Scriptures.

In writing about the mysteries of humanity's redemption, Ephrem reveals a realistic and humanly sympathetic spirit and a great devotion to the humanity of Jesus. It is said that his poetic account of the Last Judgment inspired Dante.

He wrote hymns against the heretics of his day; he would take the popular songs of the heretical groups and using their melodies, compose beautiful hymns embodying orthodox doctrine. Ephrem became one of the first to introduce song into the Church's public worship as a means of instruction for the faithful. His many hymns have earned him the title "Harp of the Holy Spirit."

Ephrem preferred a simple, austere life; he lived radical poverty, wearing a patched and dirty tunic. He had a cave, overlooking the city of Edessa, for his home and a rock for his pillow. It was here that he died around 373. He died after contracting a disease from a patient he was caring for. Saint Ephrem was declared a Doctor of the Church by Pope Benedict XV in 1920.

St. Columba (Colum Cille), Abbot – 9th June.



St Columba (b521–d597) was born in Gartan in modern day County Donegal on 7 December 521 into an Irish noble family. His father Fedilmidh is recorded as being a descendent of King Neill of the Nine Hostages and his mother a descendent of Cathair Mór a former King of Leinster. This royal lineage placed him in line to the throne of the Uí Néill clan. Columba is the Latin for Colum-cille meaning 'Dove of the Church'.

As was the tradition in Irish aristocratic society, Columba was given to foster parents to be educated. In Columba's case his foster parent was a priest by the name of Cruithnechan who also baptised him into the church.

Columba's early career involved him being trained in poetry and the bardic tradition under a Christian bard named Gemman and he studied at a series of monastic schools most notably under Finnian of Moville and Finnian of Clonard. While he was studying at Clonard Columba was ordained as a priest by Bishop Etchen in 551. He is known as one of the 'Twelve Apostles of Ireland'. During his early career Columba established a number of monastic foundation most notably in Derry (545), Durrow (553) and Kells (554).

It was whilst studying at Moville that Columba became embroiled in a controversy that was to become a seminal moment in his personal life as well as the life of the Christian Church in both Ireland and Scotland. During his time at Moville, Columba copied a manuscript, which became known as 'The Cathach of St Columba'. Columba's intention of keeping the manuscript was challenged by St Finnian the Abbot and on appeal to Diarmait the Chief of the southern Uí Néill, the ruling was given in favour of Finnian with the famous words 'to every cow belongs her calf'.

From this incident the Southern and Northern Uí Néill clans fought a battle at Cooldrewny near Sligo in 561, with Columba's clan, the northern Uí Néill, being victorious. The Church, for his part in instigating the battle, subsequently cited Columba and moves were made to ex-communicate him, which failed due to the timely intervention of St Brendan of Birr at the Synod of Teltown. St Molaise (Laisren) who was Columba's soul-friend and confessor assigned a penance for his actions of going into exile and the saving of 3000 souls for the gospel. This number is said to have been the same as were slain on the battlefield of Cooldrewny.

At the age of 42, Columba set sail with 12 disciples from Derry and headed towards Dalriada in Scotland. King Conall, a cousin of Columba, granted the Island of Iona (Hy) as the place where the exiled Columba could settle and found his monastic community. From this location Columba would spend the rest of his life in missionary activity throughout Scotland, especially amongst the Pictish people. Columba is said to have returned to Ireland only once during his imposed exile, which was to attend a meeting at Drumcree (575) to intervene on behalf of the Bards who were being threatened with suppression by the Kings of Ireland, as well as negotiate the political relationship between Uí Néill clan and the Dalraidian Scots.

Columba died in 597, his monastic career was long and colourful and his legacy is still with us to this day. His life inspired St Adomnán, 7th Abbott of Iona, to write his famous hagiography entitled 'The Life of Saint Columba', from which most of our knowledge of Columba stems. Additionally, the missions from Iona continued long after Columba's death, the most famous being St Aidan's mission to Lindisfarne (Holy Island) off the Northumbrian coast in England.

