



# Bringing Home the Word

The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi)  
June 7, 2015

## Body and Blood, the Fullness of His Life

By Janel Esker

I'm a proud regular blood donor. No, I don't particularly enjoy needles or the sight of blood. But my mother trained me at a young age that donating blood is one of the most important things you can do to help people. For less than an hour of your time, a momentary prick, and sugar-laden goodies afterward, you can provide a gift that is unequalled in

significance—the life-giving force of blood.

Truly, donating blood is one of the most pro-life actions you can take.

Today we take time to particularly recognize the gift of life we receive each week at the eucharistic table. Jesus is, in a way, the ultimate blood donor. He gives us all of himself—Body and Blood, the fullness of his life—in our eucharistic meal. Just as blood donations can sustain life for the human family, Jesus' gift of his Body and Blood is our sustaining spiritual life force, a symbol of the covenant between God and humanity that is given to us freely and has no equal.

Though I do give blood regularly, I'm able to remember to do so only because my blood center is kind enough to nudge me to sign up again after the eight-week waiting period. We come to the eucharistic table each week, but each time we step forward do we remember how significant this gift is? As we receive, are we aware of Jesus' power within us?

This solemnity gives us that reminder to stay attentive to and grateful for God's gift of the Eucharist. †

### A Word From Pope Francis

Within the  
...context  
of mercy,

Jesus entered upon his passion and death, conscious of the great mystery of love that he would consummate on the cross. Knowing that Jesus himself prayed this psalm (136) makes it even more important for us as Christians, challenging us to take up the refrain in our daily lives by praying these words of praise: "for his mercy endures forever."

Excerpted from *Misericordiae Vultus*, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, April 11, 2015.



"A Word From Pope Francis" is a new feature of this newsletter.

## PRAYER

Lord, out of brokenness and  
weakness you saved my life.

Help me to embrace my  
weakness so that I can walk in  
solidarity with the poor and  
suffering. Amen.

### Sunday Readings

#### Exodus 24:3–8

This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you.

#### Hebrews 9:11–15

With his own blood, thus obtained eternal redemption.

#### Mark 14:12–16, 22–26

Take it; this is my body. This is my blood of the covenant.

# Catechized Through Signs of God's Presence

By Mary Birmingham

A sleeping giant has awakened. The Spirit of God that hovered over the waters of creation is recreating God's people in a renaissance of faith and spirituality.

Adult Catholics yearn to know more about their faith. They go to Mass and commit to daily prayer and service, but formal religious training ended for many of them at eighth-grade graduation.

The Church, however, teaches that catechesis is a lifelong journey; it's so insistent about the importance of adult faith formation that it has set forth criteria by which to judge what constitutes complete catechesis. These criteria are a barometer we can use to discern the extent of our personal adult faith formation.

We are formed in faith (catechized) through signs of God's presence, the primary sign being the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ. The Church insists that all catechesis must relate to this subject (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, 8).

Fully catechized people participate in the paschal mystery of Christ—his life, death, resurrection, ascension, and the sending of his Holy Spirit—and understand how to link joy and sorrow to the cross. They are in intimate communion with the risen Lord and aware that they are participating in the ongoing redemption of the world. No suffering is without meaning; it's all a gift.

It is possible to know all the



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Do you feel you have been catechized?
- Have you become involved in any adult faith formation activities? If so, how did the activities help you?

doctrines of the Church and not be the least bit catechized; if conversions of heart and intimate union with God aren't at the center of a person's spiritual life, then that person is not catechized.

The *General Directory for Catechesis*, a compilation of the principles set forth in all catechetical documents, dictates that thorough adult catechesis must foster and teach

- Knowledge of the faith that includes formation in Scripture and salvation history.

- Knowledge of the faith that includes formation in dogma as well as the life and history of God's people, the Church.
- Liturgical education with explanation of the sacramental and liturgical rites, especially the eucharistic liturgy.
- Moral formation that includes a comprehensive introduction to leading a moral life rooted in the Beatitudes and the Ten Commandments.
- Formation in prayer that includes a thorough introduction into the ways of prayer and spirituality and the necessity of an active prayer life.
- Formation in the life of the community that includes promoting participation in the life of Christ within the lived experience of the community.
- Formation in the missionary life that instills a mandate to use what we have to evangelize, brings others to Christ, and serves those in need.

How can these criteria help us discern what it means to be a fully catechized Catholic? By asking ourselves some of the following questions:

To what extent am I aware that living the paschal mystery is a primary theme of Christian life?

In what way have I incorporated the cycle of death and resurrection into my Christian life? Have I laid sin to death, taken up my cross, and linked my joys and sorrows to Christ's cross?

To what extent have I offered up my life for others who suffer?

Is openness to conversion a primary context in my life?

Do I see all human experience as an opportunity to encounter the risen Christ?

## WEEKDAY READINGS

June 8–13

**Mon.** Weekday  
2 Corinthians 1:1–7 / Matthew 5:1–12

**Tues.** Weekday  
2 Corinthians 1:18–22  
Matthew 5:13–16

**Wed.** Weekday  
2 Corinthians 3:4–11  
Matthew 5:17–19

**Thurs.** *St. Barnabas: Acts 11:21b–26; 13:1–3*  
Matthew 5:20–26

**Fri.** *Most Sacred Heart of Jesus:*  
Hosea 11:1, 3–4, 8c–9 / Ephesians 3:8–12, 14–19 / John 19:31–37

**Sat.** Weekday:  
2 Corinthians 5:14–21  
Matthew 5:33–37