



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

ANGELUS

Saint Peter's Square
Sunday, 18 June 2017

Multimedia

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!

In Italy and in many countries we are celebrating the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ — the Latin name is often used: *Corpus Domini* or *Corpus Christi*. Every Sunday the ecclesial community gathers around the Eucharist, the sacrament instituted by Jesus at the Last Supper. Nevertheless, each year we joyfully celebrate the feast dedicated to this Mystery that is central to the faith, in order to fully express our adoration to Christ who offers himself as the food and drink of salvation.

Today's Gospel passage, taken from Saint John, is part of the sermon on the “*bread of life*” (cf. 6:51-58). Jesus states: “I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread...; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh” (v. 51). He means to say that the Father has sent him into the world as the food of eternal life, and for this reason he will sacrifice himself, his flesh. Indeed, on the Cross, Jesus gave his body and shed his blood. The Son of Man crucified is the true Paschal Lamb, who delivers us from the slavery of sin and sustains us on the journey to the promised land. The Eucharist is the sacrament of his flesh given so as to give life to the world; those who are nourished by this food abide in Jesus and live through him. To assimilate Jesus means to abide in him, to become children in the Son.

In the Eucharist Jesus, as he did with the disciples at Emmaus, draws alongside us, pilgrims in history, to nourish the faith, hope and charity within us; to comfort us in trials; to sustain us in the commitment to justice and peace. This supportive presence of the Son of God is everywhere: in cities and the countryside, in the North and South of the world, in countries with a Christian

tradition and in those newly evangelized. In the Eucharist he offers himself as spiritual strength so as to help us put into practice his commandment — to love one another as he loved us — building communities that are welcoming and open to the needs of all, especially the most frail, poor and needy people.

Nourishing ourselves of the Eucharistic Jesus also means abandoning ourselves trustingly to him and allowing ourselves to be guided by him. It means welcoming Jesus in place of one's own "me". In this way the love freely received from Jesus in the Eucharistic Communion, by the work of the Holy Spirit, nourishes our love for God and for the brothers and sisters we meet along the daily journey. Nourished by the Body of Christ, we become ever more concretely the mystical Body of Christ. The Apostle Paul reminds us of this: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Cor 10:16-17).

May the Virgin Mary, who was ever united to Jesus Bread of Life, help us to rediscover the beauty of the Eucharist, to nourish ourselves of it with faith, so as to live in communion with God and with our brothers and sisters.

After the Angelus:

Dear brothers and sisters, the day after tomorrow will be World Refugee Day, promoted by the United Nations. This year's theme is "*With refugees. Now more than ever we must stand with refugees*". This is the theme. Concrete attention is focused on women, men, children fleeing from conflict, violence and persecution. Let us also recall in prayer those of them who have lost their lives at sea or in backbreaking journeys over land. Their stories of pain and of hope can become opportunities of fraternal encounter and of true mutual exchange. Indeed, the personal encounter with refugees dissipates fear and distorted ideologies, and becomes a factor of growth in humanity, capable of making room for feelings of openness and bridge-building.

I express my closeness to the dear people of Portugal for the devastating fire that is ravaging the forests around Pedrógão Grande, claiming numerous victims and causing injuries. Let us pray in silence.

I address my greetings to all of you, people of Rome and pilgrims; in particular those who have come from the Seychelles; from Seville, Spain; and from Umuarama and Toledo, Brazil. I greet the faithful from Naples, Arzano and Santa Caterina di Pedara.

I offer a special greeting to the distinguished representatives of the Central African Republic and of the United Nations, who are in Rome these days for a meeting sponsored by the Community of

Sant'Egidio. I carry in my heart the visit I made in November 2015 to that country and I hope that, with the help of God and the good will of all, the peace process, a necessary condition for development, may be fully relaunched and strengthened.

This evening, in the Square of Saint John Lateran, I will be celebrating Holy Mass, which will be followed by the procession with the Most Holy Sacrament, to Saint Mary Major. I invite everyone to participate, even spiritually; I think in particular of cloistered communities, sick people and the imprisoned. Radio and television also help with this.

This Tuesday I will be going on pilgrimage to Bozzolo and Barbiana, to pay homage to Fr Primo Mazzolari and Fr Lorenzo Milani, the two priests who offer us a message that we need so much today. In this case too, I thank those, especially priests, who will be accompanying me with their prayers.

I wish everyone a happy Sunday. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch.
Arrivederci!