

A NOTE FROM FATHER EICKHOFF

Last week I wrote about some of the practical aspects of the return of the Precious Blood of Christ to Holy Communion at the weekend Masses. This week I want to mention some of the more spiritual aspects of the Precious Blood of Christ. Please note that this is only one of the many aspects of the Holy Eucharist. To describe all the effects of the Holy Eucharist would take a much, much longer bulletin article.

We often refer to Jesus Christ as the “Lamb of God;” but do we spend much time thinking about what this phrase means? The Holy Mass deliberately references the sacrifice of Our Lord and Savior upon the cross which occurred during the Feast of Passover. This feast which was (and remains) one of the most important Jewish feasts recalls the last and most terrible of God’s display of power in Egypt prior to the Exodus of the Israelite people. During this moment of God’s might every firstborn male – both man and beast – was slain except those of the Israelites. The Israelites, who had been forewarned by God through Moses, had prepared for this moment and for their coming flight into the desert by preparing unleavened bread and slaying and cooking a lamb for food for their upcoming journey. The blood of the lamb was marked on the doorposts of their dwellings as a sign that God’s own people dwelt inside, and that the destroying angel of God was to “Passover” this house instead killing every firstborn male inside. Thus, the Israelite people would be saved.

During the Mass, at the moment of the consecration of the wine into the Precious Blood; the Blood of Jesus Christ, who is the Lamb of God, becomes truly real and present to us. This is in effect the same blood of the lamb that was marked on the doorposts of the Israelite people as a sign that the destroying angel was to spare the people inside from God’s wrath and justice. When we at Holy Communion receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ as part of the action which occurs is that we are being marked as belonging to God so that we might be spared from the dreadful wrath of God that is the natural result of our sins. Please note that this is not the only effect the Holy Eucharist has on us. We are also being inwardly transformed by the power of the Eucharist to become more like Jesus Christ so that we might not need God’s mercy as much to escape the effects of our sins, since with God’s grace and our cooperation with that grace we will not sin as much or as gravely. When we say “amen” to the words “the Body of Christ or the Blood of Christ” we are saying in effect that we believe that this is truly the Lamb of God who has the power to save us from our sins.

Having written about the Holy Eucharist I want to encourage you to attend the exhibit that our parish will be hosting this Friday through Sunday (November 17-19) that describes some of the miracles that are connected to the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. You can find more details in the bulletin. The exhibit will be open before and after the weekend Masses so please plan on coming early or staying late and attending the exhibit.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Stephen Eickhoff
Pastor