

Corpus Christi

June 19, 2022

Reflection by Sister Virginia Jung, OSB

Gn 14:18-20; 1 Cor 11:23-26; Lk 9:11b-17

This morning, we have gathered to hear the word of God and to celebrate the Eucharist together on this Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ. As always, the Eucharist is a feast of remembrance, Jesus says – “Do this in remembrance of me.” Today we do remember the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We also especially remember Mrs. Erica Hall, who, like Jesus, used meals as a way of acknowledging and making visible God present in the world. Everyone here has experienced this. She fed her family and friends, she fed our Sisters and our friends, and she fed Jesus’ beloved friends – the many people in need through her church’s kitchen and food pantry. Erica understood the significance of and worked for food security in the community long before it became a thing in political and economic circles.

Today we also remember and celebrate our fathers, the fathers who gave us life and who handed on their faith to us. In the first reading, the mysterious priest Melchizedek shares a ritual meal of bread and wine and blesses Abram. Abram, who is about to become Abraham, in the cutting of the first covenant. Truly, he is our father in faith. Abraham, is the father of so many believers throughout the world today and across thousands of years, as many believers as the sands on the shore of the sea or as the stars in the sky, as God promised him at that first covenant. I hope that image gives you the confidence and the hope and the knowledge that there is more than enough life and love to go around throughout our world and that you have an important part to play in that beautiful truth.

In the second reading, St. Paul hands down the story of the First Eucharist, another shared ritual meal of bread and wine, which Jesus calls the new covenant. Let’s keep in

mind that a covenant is a solemn promise – this one is between God and ourselves. For almost as long as we can remember, we have believed, because our mothers and fathers taught us, that Jesus is present in the Eucharist and that all together we make up the Body of Christ. As adults, I think it is important to acknowledge that we continue to struggle to bring that dream into being. Another celebration today is Juneteenth, a longtime celebration of freedom, but that as a nation, are only just beginning to celebrate. Somehow, it escaped the national memory that liberty and justice for all can really only be celebrated when they exist for all of the people. Truly, the struggle continues to see God present in every person, to love and act in love – in our homes, in our Church, and in our nation. As we remember the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, let us acknowledge generations upon generations of needless suffering that people have imposed on other people in so many ways and recommit ourselves to incarnating Jesus' mission of love..

The gospel of the loaves and fishes is so familiar to us that we might take it for granted. Reflect on Jesus who elsewhere, said – “I came that they may have life, live in abundance.” We are called to take a risk, well, it seems like a risk to us, but what Jesus shows it is not really a risk at all because there is enough, more than enough to go around. More than enough mercy, more than enough justice, more than enough love. The disciples believe they are being very practical in their assessment and suggestions but Jesus, through his miracle, shows us the deeper truth that lies beneath appearances. Our modern society is even more ruled by appearances today – so look deeper, into the heart of Christ, into the hearts of your brothers and sisters, and into your own heart. That is where to find the love of God and the solidarity we need in order to truly manifest the Body of Christ that we are blessed to receive in the Eucharist.