

Corpus Christi Year “C”  
June 22-23, 2019

*They all ate and were satisfied.*

Readings: Genesis 14:18-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Luke 9:11-17

“They all ate and were satisfied.” While visiting with a nice family in front of me at the Grand ‘Ole Creamery, I could not help but notice the massive ice cream cone one of their children had ordered. “You cannot possibly eat the whole thing,” I remarked, to which the lad replied, “I assure you I can...no problem!” For me, those days are long gone! I ordered the child size dish and was perfectly happy! It took time to learn the distinction between eating until I am “full” vs. being satisfied.

The Latin root signifies “enough,” which is a different standard. All were satisfied. A follow-up question might well be, “Yes, but for how long?” Perhaps we should admit that some days it does not take very long before the aftermath of the Mass begins to fade—sometimes it happens in the parking lot on the way home.

Pope St. John Paul II spoke of the gift of the Eucharist as it relates to families. “In the Eucharistic gift of charity the Christian family finds the foundation and the soul of its ‘communion’ and its ‘mission’: By partaking in the Eucharistic bread, the different members of the Christian family become one Body, which reveals and shares in the wider unity of the Church.”<sup>1</sup> I would like to reflect on the Eucharist and family today.

Why do we fail to incorporate this basic teaching in our lives? Is it too sublime, is it too far beyond us, is it too much to handle? One problem seems to be an inability to put aside those daily concerns when we enter into Church. It is nearly impossible to leave them completely at the door, but are we even asked to do this? Not at all!

Instead of leaving them at the door, we lay them at the altar, confident that God desires to heal our families and our lives through the power of this great sacrament. It is powerful because of what it accomplishes in us.

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<sup>1</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio* #57

In a sermon to the newly baptized, St. Augustine remarked: “Remember: bread doesn't come from a single grain, but from many. When you received exorcism, you were ‘ground.’ When you were baptized, you were ‘leavened.’ When you received the fire of the Holy Spirit, you were ‘baked.’ Be what you see; receive what you are.”<sup>2</sup> Be what you see, be the living Bread that spiritually transforms and feeds your family.

Do we marvel at how the Eucharist can transform us, mold us, shape all of our actions when we measure the things of world against the promises of heaven? Do we really feel changed when heading for the Parking Lot? St. Ignatius of Antioch left no doubt whatsoever when writing: “They abstain from the Eucharist and from prayer because they do not confess that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ, flesh which suffered for our sins and which that Father, in his goodness, raised up again. They who deny the gift of God are perishing in their disputes.”<sup>3</sup>

Are you satisfied with your family life, or work or your friendships? It is critical that we are able to see the Holy Eucharist as the primary source of strength and unity for our families, primarily your nuclear family, but also the family of the Church. Certainly, when Ignatius spoke of those who were perishing in their disputes, he referred to heretical doctrines, but could we not apply it to our lives as well?

Our families can easily perish in our own disputes when we lose sight of the unifying power of the Eucharist. How else could we get in an argument on the way home unless we fail to appreciate what has just happened at Mass? Jesus Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist to give those who believe in Him the power they need to remain alive in His grace. The power of the Eucharist is so great that it can keep your families together. Eucharistic communion enables those who receive it to put it into practice: “Love one another as I have loved you.” (Jn 13:34; 15:12).

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<sup>2</sup> Saint Augustine, Sermon #272 “Augustine on the nature of the Sacrament of the Eucharist”

<sup>3</sup> Letter to the Smyrnaeans 6:2–7:1 [A.D. 110]

*They all ate and were satisfied.* I believe that your desire for a strong and unified life is abundantly clear. We in the Church desire to help you live this worthy calling in fidelity, fruitfulness and charity. A big part of this entails breaking down the barriers that isolate us: fear, greed, selfishness.

These chip away at family unity. So, fight against these tendencies. Protect this time together by giving it your highest priority—make the tough choices so that you are able to worship together if at all possible.

See Sunday Mass as the glue that helps to hold everything together. Early Christians died on account of this Eucharist, rather than deny its power. Allow it to transform you, and do not be afraid of being challenged and changed, for the Eucharist will certainly accomplish both in the hearts of all believers.