

Today, we celebrate a great solemnity in the Church in honor of the Holy Eucharist. While we owe a great debt of gratitude to the theologians over the centuries who have contributed to the Church’s fuller understanding of this great sacrament, it is equally true that for many, the central truth of the Eucharist is more accessible, not through theological terms, but through the burning fire of love that the Eucharist produces in our hearts.

We are told in the Letter to the Hebrews that Christ entered once for all into the sanctuary by means of his own blood, shed for our sins. He deigned to enter our world to save and set us free. He even enters our bodies through the sacramental graces of the Holy Eucharist, desiring to transform us into His likeness by assuming the depths of our being. He is not hoarding His divinity, but rather sharing his humanity with us.

The saints have spoken beautifully about the Eucharist. For example, St. Leo the Great reminded us that “our participation in the Body and Blood of Christ does not tend towards anything else than we become that which we receive.”<sup>1</sup> It *almost* sounds heretical, so amazing it is. But it is not. Could we “become that which we receive”? It all depends upon our willingness to carry our particle of the Cross, so as to draw closer to him.

Think about all who labored, sacrificed, and planned for this Cathedral. It did not pop up overnight. People worked; artisans toiled in the hot summer sun for several years to carve the front of the Cathedral- “Going therefore, and teach all nations.”<sup>2</sup> It was an act of faith and trust by the people that God would bless their endeavors, and we are the beneficiaries of it. But, what legacy will we leave for those after us?

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<sup>1</sup> cf. Sermo 12, De Passione 3,7, PL 54, quoted by Pope Benedict XVI, Corpus Christi 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Euntes ergo docete omnes gentes, Matthew 28:19

Yet, another lens through which to see the Eucharist concerns our worthiness to receive such a graced sacrament. None of us is perfect- far from it in fact. We endeavor to exhibit coherence between what we profess to believe and our actions flowing from that believe. One leads to the other, and we strive to keep those in alignment. If I say one thing and do something radically different, that Eucharistic coherence is lost.

We pray for the grace to act in accordance with what we profess to believe. I am encouraged that our U.S. Bishops desire to discuss this issue from a broad perspective beginning this June in a manner that truly teaches the importance of that coherence, both in our lives and in the lives of those who hold public positions of authority and influence in society. We need their clear teaching and their leadership. May the Lord bless their discussions, both now and later this fall.

Jesus humbled himself and entered once and for all into our sanctuary, the sanctuary of our humanity and our brokenness. May he give us this Bread from Heaven today and every day, the living Bread that nourishes us and gives us strength.