Dear Father,

As the Eucharistic Revival moves into its second year in the United States, the Archdiocese of Chicago is engaging this important moment in the life of our local Church. As Cardinal Cupich has written to us, we trying to find a Eucharistic lens to focus and organize many efforts of renewal that are already underway: the Revival itself, the implementation of Traditionis custodes with a retrieval of the liturgical vision of the Second Vatican Council, and finally Building the New Reality as a part of our overall archdiocesan renewal linked to Renew My Church.

The upcoming feast of Corpus Christi offers us an opportunity to engage in the Eucharistic formation of our communities. If fact, both the Sunday preceding the feast and the Sunday following it can also be opportunities for formation.

In this communication, you will find notes that you can use as you develop your homilies for these three Sundays. These notes may also be helpful background for short bulletin articles. As you read these notes, I would suggest that you first look at the readings for Trinity Sunday, Corpus Christi, and the Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time.

May the good Lord bless us in our efforts to draw our communities of faith closer to the gift and mystery of the Eucharist.

Father Louis Cameli
**Trinity Sunday | June 4, 2023**

Trinity Sunday celebrates the mystery of the Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—that Saint Paul names in today’s second reading. That same Triune God is proclaimed in the Gospel’s description of the saving mission of the Son, sent by the Father, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Trinity Sunday also celebrates the mystery of the Church that draws her life and her mission from the Most Holy Trinity. So, for example, the Second Vatican Council quoting Saint Cyprian says: “Hence the universal Church is seen to be ‘a people brought into unity from the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.’” (*Lumen gentium*, 4) Then, there is the extraordinary and striking description of our life in the Church in *Gaudium et spes* (*Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*): “…the Lord Jesus, when praying to the Father ‘that they may all be one…even as we are one,’ has opened up new horizons closed to human reason by implying that there is a certain parallel between the union existing among the divine persons and the union of the sons and daughters of God in truth and love.” (*Gaudium et spes*, 24)

The mystery of God and the mystery of the Church come together for us every time we celebrate the Eucharist. Our worship is directed to the Father through his son Jesus and in the Holy Spirit. We join ourselves to the self-sacrificing love and self-gift of Jesus offered to the Father as his supreme act of worship in the power of the Holy Spirit. That is the heart of our full, active, and conscious participation in the Mass.

If we listen and join ourselves to the words of the liturgy, we will truly know that our worship as God’s very own people is directed to the Father through Jesus in the Holy Spirit. Every celebration of the Eucharist is a fresh encounter with the Holy Trinity. Listen to these words from the Third Eucharistic Prayer:

> You are indeed holy, O Lord,  
> and all you have created  
> rightly gives you praise,  
> for through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,  
> by the power and working of the Holy Spirit,  
> you give life to all things and make them holy,  
> and you never cease to gather a people to yourself,  
> so that from the rising of the sun to its setting  
> a pure sacrifice may be offered to your name.

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**Corpus Christi: Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ | June 11, 2023**

The feast of Corpus Christi was established some eight hundred years ago. It sought to foster devotion to the Eucharist and an affirmation of faith in the real presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament.

The readings for the feast are drawn from Deuteronomy, St. Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians, and chapter six of John’s gospel (Bread of Life discourse). The readings proclaim the heart of the Eucharist. It is the real presence of Jesus: “…the bread I will give is my flesh…” It is our real union with the Lord: “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him.” It is our real union with each other in the Lord: “The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because the loaf of bread is one, we, though many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.” It holds the real promise of eternal life: “…whoever eats this bread will live forever.” It is the real sacrifice
of Jesus on the Cross: “…the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.”

Across the centuries, there has been much philosophical and theological speculation about the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. How can he be present under the forms of bread and wine? How does it come about? And, in our own time, if polls are to be believed, a large percentage of Catholics either do not know about the real presence or are reluctant to embrace it as a part of their faith. How can we respond to these often-shaky convictions about the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist?

The best response seems to come from Saint Cyril of Jerusalem in the fourth century. His teaching was simple and to the point. He says:

Since Christ himself declared the bread to be his body, who can have any further doubt? Since he himself has said quite categorically, “This is my blood,” who would dare to question it and say that it is not his blood? Therefore, it is with complete assurance that we receive the bread and wine as the body and blood of Christ...Do not, then, regard the eucharistic elements as ordinary bread and wine: they are in fact the body and blood of the Lord, as he himself declared. Whatever your senses may tell you, be strong in faith.

The understanding of the Eucharist as sacrifice has generated much discussion, especially in Christian communities outside of the Catholic Church. We speak of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and we mean that every celebration of the Eucharist makes the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross real and present to us. Clearly, the sacrifice of Jesus is not multiplied. It is unique and unrepeatable. Rather, the Eucharist makes that unique sacrifice present and accessible to us in all its enduring and reconciling power across time and space.

Our participation in the Eucharist enables us to join the sacrifice of Jesus and, in our own lives, to live out that self-sacrificial love that the Eucharist makes present. The extension of the Eucharistic sacrifice is our Eucharistic living that Saint Paul speaks of in his letter to the Romans: “I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy an acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.” (12:1)

The Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time | June 18, 2023

At first glance, today’s readings do not seem to have much to do with the Eucharist. In fact, they powerfully reveal what it means to be and to live as a Eucharistic people. The people of faith who are nourished by the Bread of Life are enabled and empowered to go out in mission in communion with Jesus. And that is exactly the point of today’s gospel passage, which is drawn from a kind of “missionary handbook” for the early Church in Matthew’s gospel (chapter 10).

The concluding rite of the Mass is the dismissal. It takes several different forms: “Go forth, the Mass is ended” or “Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord” or “Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.” That simple and short dismissal rite is perhaps the most underappreciated part of the Mass. The dismissal is not, as some might suppose, a matter of sending people away. Rather, it means sending them out with a mission and purpose to take what they have celebrated and share that with the world to which they return. The word “Mass” itself derives from the word for sending or mission.

As the Second Vatican Council reminds us, the Eucharist is both the source and summit of the Christian life. Everything leads to our celebration of the Eucharist. And everything flows from that celebration, including our mission in and to the world. Our celebration of the Eucharist can never be an isolated or bracketed event. Our lives draw us to the Eucharist, and we draw from the Eucharist for our living.
In the Archdiocese of Chicago’s process of church renewal, we have aspired to form “missionary disciples,” people who follow Jesus and bring him to others. The Eucharist has the power to form these missionary disciples. Consider today’s readings.

The readings begin with a sense of our identity as God’s assembled people. The Lord speaks through the Book of Exodus and says: “…you shall be my special possession...you shall be to me a kingdom of priests, a holy nation.” Then, as God’s assembled people, the Eucharistic sacrifice of Jesus makes us fully conscious of how God’s compassion has touched and transformed our lives. From Saint Paul’s letter to the Romans: “But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us.” Then in his compassion (“...Jesus' heart was moved with pity for them...”), the Lord calls and sends his disciples to carry that compassion to others through their proclamation of the good news and their ministry of healing reconciliation.

The very same movement evident in the Scriptures belongs to us when we come together to celebrate the Eucharist. We are assembled as God’s very own people. As we enter the mercy and compassion of God through God’s Word and in the Eucharistic sacrifice of Jesus, we become conscious of how God’s compassion has reached into our lives. Then we are sent as missionary disciples to bring to others and to the world what we have received.