

St. John's Newsletter



Feast of Corpus Christi June 11

The Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, historically known by its Latin name, *Corpus Christi*, celebrates the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist—Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. It is traditionally celebrated on the Thursday following the Solemnity of the Holy Trinity. The feast dates to the Middle Ages and originated with a visionary nun and a Eucharistic miracle. This year it will be celebrated on June 11.

Pope Urban IV in 1264, instituted the Solemnity of Corpus Christi. It is believed that the devotion of St. Juliana of Cornillon and a miracle that occurred in Bolsena, Italy, facilitated the Church's official recognition of the specific feast.

St. Juliana' Vision

St. Juliana of Mont Cornillon in Belgium (1193-1258) was a very learned nun and mystic with an overwhelming devotion to the Eucharist and the Real Presence of Jesus. She received visions during adoration that led her to reach out to the leaders to celebrate the Eucharist with a special solemnity.

In the Bull of its institution, entitled *Transiturus de hoc mundo*, (11 Aug. 1264), Pope Urban even referred to Juliana's mystical experiences, corroborating their authenticity. He wrote: "Although the Eucharist is celebrated solemnly every day, we deem it fitting that

at least once a year it be celebrated with greater honor and a solemn commemoration."

Miracle in Bolsena

In 1263 a German priest, Fr. Peter of Prague, made a pilgrimage to Rome. He stopped in Bolsena, Italy, to celebrate Mass at the Church of St. Christina. At the time he was having doubts about Jesus being truly present in the Blessed Sacrament. He was affected by the growing debate among certain theologians who, for the first time in the history of the Church, began introducing doubts about the Body and Blood of Christ being actually present in the consecrated bread and wine. In response to his doubt, when he recited the prayer of consecration as he celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, blood started seeping from the consecrated host and onto the altar and corporal.

Fr. Peter reported this miracle to Pope Urban IV, who at the time was nearby in Orvieto. The pope ordered that the host and blood-stained corporal be brought to Orvieto. Even today, the relics can be seen in the Cathedral of Orvieto.

Inspired by the miracle, Pope Urban commissioned a Dominican friar, St. Thomas Aquinas, to compose the Mass and Office for the feast of Corpus Christi. Aquinas' hymns in honor of the Holy Eucharist, *Pange Lingua*, *Tantum Ergo*, *Panis Angelicus*, and *O Salutaris Hostia* are the beloved hymns the Church sings on the feast of Corpus Christi as well as throughout the year during Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

Pope Urban IV instituted Corpus Christi for the Universal Church and celebrated it for the first time in Orvieto in 1264, a year after the Eucharistic Miracle in Bolsena.



Photo by Judy Williams

Italy trip makes it real

In 2015, several members of St. John's parish, guided by Father Geraldo Menchaca (Father G), spent 10 days in Italy visiting several sites important to the Catholic Faith.

Judy Williams remembers the visit to Orvieto where the sacred host and corporal from the 1263 miracle are on display. She described how the group was affected by the experiences.

"We had heard the stories, but to be there and see it makes it so real," she said.

She shares the picture of the tabernacle holding the sacred host and corporal still showing the blood from the miracle.

**St. John the Evangelist
Eucharistic
Procession
After the 10 am Mass
June 11**

Sources:

<https://www.thecatholicthing.org/2020/06/14/saint-juliana-and-corpus-christi/>
<http://www.therealpresence.org/eucharst/mir/bolsena.html>
<https://www.catholiccompany.com/magazine/east-of-corpus-christi-story-6077?epik=dj0yJnU9VjBvc2pFaWJBVWdT001hTXoyeHRLOFILQkYiVXBvRVkmcD0wJm49UWZJamIzSWFpRHBSIc3VXdNdDU2dyZ0PUFBQUBFR1J>

Feast of Corpus Christi
MASS AND EUCHARISTIC PROCESSION
Sunday, June 11, 2023
5:00 PM Mass at San Fernando Cathedral
6:00 PM Eucharistic Procession
All clergy, religious, and laity are invited to join as the visible Body of Christ in the joyous Feast of Corpus Christi Procession emanating from Mass through downtown San Antonio led by Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller, M.Sp.S. Stay for a free concert by Niños Cantores de Morelia from Mexico after the Procession.