

JUNE 6, 2021

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Email: [info@saintalbertthegreat.org](mailto:info@saintalbertthegreat.org)

Office staffed T, W and Th, as we are able.

We continue to offer three masses each week to enable people to attend while maintaining appropriate social distancing. The Sunday 9:30 am mass continues to be live streamed on our Facebook page. We are also offering a Saturday 5:00 pm mass and a Sunday 12:00 pm (noon) mass.

Although state capacity restrictions have been lifted, we must still maintain six feet of physical distancing between groups, which means that our attendance is still limited. The 9:30 mass is the most popular. When your schedule allows, please consider attending one of the other two services.

Attendance at mass is still NOT required. Please make choices that keep you and the community safe.

Fr. Joe and the staff hold you all in our prayers, and ask that you pray for us and for all the essential workers who are striving to keep things running.

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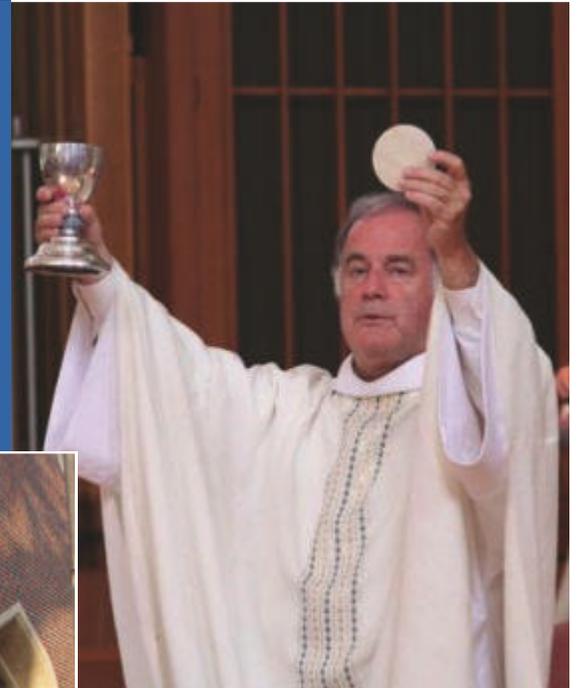
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We who have  
received the body and  
blood of Christ are  
called to be the  
Body of Christ  
for others.



Say YES to  
love and peace.  
Amen! Alleluia!



**This week at St. Albert's**(masses and intentions are in **BOLD** type)

*During the pandemic, we are offering **three** masses per weekend to help attendees maintain social distancing. Fr. Joe is still celebrating private daily masses for the intentions below.*

**Saturday, June 5 –**

**5:00 pm mass Frank & Richard Pink ††**

**Sunday, June 6 –**

**9:30 am mass – Genevieve McCarr †**

**12:00 pm mass – Antoinette Micko †**

**Monday, June 7 – Fr. Chuck Leute, O.P. †**

**Tuesday, June 8 – Tom Buckley †**

**Thursday, June 10 – Judith Sessions †**

**12:00 to 3:00 pm Crafters in the Social Hall**

**Friday, June 11 – Mary Cashman Olson †**

**Saturday, June 12 –**

**5:00 pm mass Kathy Post †**

**Sunday, June 13 –**

**9:30 am mass – Joe Messenbrink †**

**12:00 pm mass – John Arndt †**

**In our prayers**

We remember those who need healing, including Michael Callaghan, Joan Ellison, Curt Huovie, John Fink, Ben Wilkie, Steve Bach, Marianne Green, Copper Schadow, and Janeen Gault.

Please add a prayer for those who have died, including Rose Holland and in memory of John Roban.

*Due to HIPAA privacy standards, hospitals and care centers cannot notify us of your need for our prayers or visits unless you direct them to call.*

*If you or someone you know would like to be included in our prayers, or have the Sacrament of the Sick, or communion brought to you, please let the office know at 612-724-3643. Messages are checked regularly.*

**A request for mass-goers:**

Because the 9:30 am Sunday mass is getting so popular, we ask that those who arrive first fill in the MIDDLE designated spots in a pew. This will help keep all available spots accessible. Please cooperate with ushers who may ask this of you. Thanks!

To request that the Eucharist be brought to you at your home, please contact Fr. Joe at 612-245-3345, or Jim Curran at 612-483-1546. Volunteers will mask and safely deliver communion to you.

**As you consider returning to in-person mass:**

- \* **We are continuing to offer three Masses** each weekend for those who wish to attend in person at 5 PM Saturday and at 9:30 and noon on Sunday. We encourage those who are age 65 or older or who have underlying health conditions to stay home and view the 9:30 AM livestream. Anyone with symptoms or recent exposure to COVID-19 must remain at home.
- \* **ONLY Front center church doors are open, along with the elevator entrance. (One household at a time in elevator.)**
- \* Although we have previously asked that people separate themselves alphabetically by last name, you may attend the service that is convenient for you. The 9:30 AM Mass is the most popular, and we have recently come close to capacity limits. If you have the flexibility to attend at 5 PM Saturday or noon on Sunday, we invite you to do that. We have not yet had to turn anyone away due to overcrowding, but we will regretfully do this if we run out of space at any liturgy.
- \* **Thank you for wearing your masks!** This important health measure is still *required* in the city of Minneapolis until we reach vaccination targets. Please remember that your mask must cover both your nose and mouth and that you should keep it on for the entire time you are in church except when receiving communion. If you need a mask, we have disposable ones available.
- \* As appealing as our music is at masses with cantors, we ask you **NOT to sing, even while masked**. This is a precaution the Archdiocese recommends, as even when we keep six feet apart, viruses can still travel further through the air when propelled by speech or singing.
- \* **Please sit in marked spaces with members of your group only.** A group can consist of people from the same household or from two households that are part of a pre-existing “pod.” It can also include any number of individuals who attend together and have been fully vaccinated, which means that it has been at least two weeks since the final vaccine dose. We have marked three spaces in each open pew which are spaced out to ensure that people remain six feet apart. Please sit at one of these spaces. Larger groups may need to occupy two spots. *Do not sit in an available spot if you cannot maintain six feet of separation from people who are already seated in that pew.*
- \* We have been blessed recently with all kinds of weather, as Minnesota IS the “theater of seasons.” **Please dress appropriately** for a church that will have its front door and all of its windows open even when we would normally be running the air conditioning. Also, please do not close or adjust the windows.
- \* **We have resumed the distribution of communion during its proper place in the liturgy.** You may return to your seats after receiving communion. If you are not comfortable with this, you may also leave immediately after reception.
- \* Please **exit the church immediately after the dismissal** and move away from the front doors to ensure a path for other people to exit. The only people remaining in church will be staff and volunteers who are cleaning the church in preparation for the next service. You are welcome to have conversations outside with appropriate physical distancing.

## “Where do we find the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ?”

The contrast would be enormous: a dimly lit room in an Intensive Care Unit with one individual who lay dying versus the gaudily lit VIP section of the Target Center with thirteen thousand screaming fans. A few years ago, on a Wednesday evening, I was on my way to the Cher concert entitled, “Dressed to Kill”, when I received an emergency call from Hennepin County Hospital. Still clutching the VIP ticket to the concert that was a gift from Cher’s manager, I arrived at the hospital.

On the way to the Intensive Care Unit, I called Roger, Cher’s manager, and told him I would be late. Roger had been kind enough to provide a ticket to a Tina Turner concert some years ago, and I was looking forward to this concert, as well. Oddly enough, both Cher and Tina are contemporaries with me in age, but hardly in energy. I could never keep up with these women.

When I arrived in the ICU section of the hospital, I discovered that the life energy of the twenty-seven-year-old man who had jumped off a bridge was almost negligible. The hospital pillow was blood stained and the head injury left little room for me to anoint his forehead. His mother clung to her son’s body sensing that the tormented mental health issues had ceased, but so had the life of her only child. Leaving the hospital with images of sorrow and death, I could only imagine Mary clinging to the bloody body of her son, Jesus. In a short time, I would be catapulted into a fantasy world of pedestal entrances and aerial exits, surreal from beginning until end. Flash backs to the hospital room would, at times, override the outlandish stage productions, feathered costumes, pulsating bass sounds and renditions of “I’ve Got You Babe.” The exuberant life-giving force of Cher would gradually induce temporary amnesia on my part, blocking out the helplessness of the loss of energy and life in the quiet of the bland hospital room.

The fans at Target Center would be awe struck by Cher’s closing song: “I Hope You Find It.” With hope in the air, Cher disappeared in an aerial exit, gesturing in prayer and bowing discretely into oblivion, until, of course, the next final world tour. Like the dying man in the hospital, Cher’s presence had a way of leaving an indelible mark and a lasting real presence in my life.

This Sunday we are celebrating the Feast of Corpus Christi, currently know in the liturgical calendar as “The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ.” I must confess that I still like the “old name”, Corpus Christi. The Latin version seems to evoke a *“mysterium tremendum”*, a tremendous mystery surrounding the Eucharist and one that continues to fascinate worshippers. In the Synoptic gospels of Mark (14:17-25), Matthew (26:20-29) and Luke (22:14, 21-23) all three apostles identify the bread and the wine as the Body and Blood of Jesus. The theological implication remains that Jesus would pour out his body and blood for the forgiveness of sins and that in the liturgy of the Eucharist we would participate in the real presence of Jesus. The transformation of the bread and wine into the Real Presence of Jesus would constitute the mystery of “transfer” and the theological theory of transubstantiation.

The feast of Corpus Christi originated in the thirteenth century and was decreed a universal feast of the Church by Pope Urban IV in 1264. St. Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) was asked by Urban to compose the official structure of the feast for the Divine Office. Aquinas’ writings would include the Eucharist hymns, *“Tantum Ergo Sacramentum”* and *“Pange Lingua Gloriosi.”* The intense devotion to the Blessed Sacrament would reflect a remembrance of the institution of the Eucharist and a sacred respect for the contents of church tabernacles. The great devotion to the Feast of The Body and Blood of Jesus would introduce Benediction as a ritual in which a sacred container (monstrance) carrying the Host was used to bless the people.

The elaborate rituals of burning clouds of incense, the ringing of bells and the singing of hymns surrounding Benediction might have easily been incorporated into one of Cher’s musical numbers! On this day in Rome, the Pope traditionally presides over mass at the Basilica of St. John Lateran and leads a procession carrying the Host in a jeweled monstrance to the Basilica of St. Mary where Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament will take place.

*In the gospel of John (6:51-59), Jesus tells his disciples: “I am the living bread that has come down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.”* The implication, of course, is that this bread will provide us with life. Moving from a metaphorical perception of Christ in the Eucharist, the theology of the Church teaches the Real Presence of Jesus Christ among us. In St. Paul’s Letter to the Corinthians (10:16-17), he helps us to focus a greater understanding of Christ’s presence in the community and the unifying power of forgiveness: *“The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the Blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not the sharing in the body of Christ?”* Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.”

At the time of the Last Supper, Jesus would offer his disciples the “gift” of his body and blood as an undying symbol of his real Presence with them forever. The Eucharist would become a corporate source of unity for the ages to come as well as a corporate source of memory binding a doubting community with the unshakable strength of Jesus’ willingness to offer his life for the sake of the community. While it remains hard to imagine the reaction of his disciples to the literalness of his statements regarding the “eating of his body and the drinking of his blood,” Jesus never wavered in his invitation to enact the ritual of the Eucharist as a way of participating in the death and resurrection of his promise of eternal life. The ritual of the Eucharist is the meeting place of faith, hope and love for a community of diversity searching for unity. The beginning rituals of forgiveness at every liturgy signal an invitation to the confused, uncertain, skeptical, doubting and believing community to begin once again to enter the most radical leap of faith imaginable.

On that Wednesday evening, I would enter the contrasting worlds of suffering and entertainment. I think it fair to say that Jesus’ Real Presence could be found in Church, but also in the Intensive Care Unit in Hennepin County Hospital and on the floor of Target Center. The lifeless body of Bobby and the life filled body of Cher both carried the living presence of God’s grace, and the promise of eternal life. The blood, sweat and tears of that night continue to flaunt the Real Presence of Jesus in the most unlikely places. Cher, who was “dressed to kill” that night, would continue to live and, Bobby, dressed in bloody bandages, would die.

The invitation to celebrate the Feast of Corpus Christi continues in a world filled with both life and death, joy and sorrow. In one of Cher’s final songs entitled, “You Haven’t Seen the Last of Me” (perhaps a premonition of another tour appearance), I think it fair to say that we have not seen the last of Jesus’ Real Presence, as well. Rediscovering Jesus in the everyday world in which we live, enhances his comforting presence whether in an Intensive Care Unit or at rock concert. In her final number, Cher sang, “I Hope You Find It”, a comforting country ballad whose lyrics ring true: “And I hope you find it, whatever you are looking for. I hope it’s everything you dreamed your life would be and so much more.”

“Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.”

*Peace, Fr. Joe Gillespie, O.P.*

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