**Reverencing the Eucharist**

*Fr Louis Fowóyò̩*

The blood of Jesus helps us through the journey of life. Christ knows that this is strength for us and that is why He made the sacrifice.

* Ephesians 6:12; “For our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness, with the evil spirits in the heavens.”
* It is because of these rulers of darkness that we receive the power of the Blood of Jesus.
* The feast we celebrate today was instituted to honor the presence of the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. That Jesus is really present, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity.
* This real presence of Jesus is the joy and power of Catholics in the Eucharist and in Adoration. I say, Catholics because I know that the understanding of the real presence differs in other Christian Church. The Catholic Church believes and it is true that after the Eucharistic celebration, Christ is still present in the consecrated host.
* **St Thomas Aquinas:** “The words of consecration, pronounced by the priest, change bread and wine into the true body and blood of Christ. This sacrament is not a symbol or sign of Christ's body and blood; it is, in actual fact, the body and blood of Christ.”

The readings of today, bring out the importance of the liberating power of the Lord in the Eucharist.

* **1st Reading: Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14b-16a**: Moses reminded the people of the power of God that brought them out of slavery and fed them with manna. The manna in the desert foreshadows the Eucharist that Jesus Christ instituted at the last supper.
* He warns the people against pride. He made them appreciate the power of God who will always supply for their needs.
* "Remember how for forty years now the LORD, your God, has directed all your journeying in the desert… He therefore let you be afflicted with hunger, and then fed you with manna…”
* **2nd Reading: 1Corinthians 10:16-17**; is joy of oneness in the Lord. The people may be many, but their source of strength and joy is the same. Our joy is the participation in the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.
* **Gospel: John 6:51-58**; Jesus himself told the disciples that He is the bread of life that comes down from heaven. Whoever partakes in this one bread and drinks of the cup will have life.
* “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I have life because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on me will have life because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven.”

The Eucharist is to be given the proper reverence that it deserves all the time. It is the Lord and nothing else.

* Communion is to be distributed on the tongue to anyone who desires it anywhere, and in the hand to anyone who desires it in places where that has been approved as a practice. However, it should be consumed in the presence of the minister of Communion and it should not be given to someone in the hand “if there is a risk of profanation.”
* Priests, deacons or extraordinary ministers of Communion are forbidden to engage in any “profane business” while carrying the Eucharist to the sick or homebound.
* Any time the Blessed Sacrament is exposed for adoration, it “must never be left unattended, even for the briefest space of time.