

Corpus Christi 2020 Homily Outline

One last thing from Fr. Walter Ciszek SJ. *He Leadeth Me.*

I know the sacrifices we made and the risks we ran in order just to have a chance to say or hear mass. When we were constantly hungry in the camps, when the food we got each day was just barely enough to keep us going, I have seen priests pass up breakfast and work at hard labor on an empty stomach until noon in order to keep the eucharistic fast, because the noon break at the work site was the time we could best get together for a hidden mass. I did that often myself. And sometimes when the guards were observing us too closely and we couldn't risk saying mass at the work site, the crusts of bread I had put in my pocket at breakfast remained there uneaten until I could get back to camp and say mass at night. Then during the long Arctic summer when the work days were the longest and our hours of sleep were at a minimum, I have seen priests and prisoners deprive their bodies of needed sleep in order to get up before the rising bell for a secret Mass in a quiet barracks, while everyone else clung to those precious extra moments of sleep... We would be severely punished if we were discovered saying Mass, and there were always informers. But the Mass to us was always worth the danger and the sacrifices; we treasured it, we looked forward to it, we would do almost anything in order to say or attend a Mass.

We would consecrate extra bread and distribute communion to the other prisoners when we could. Sometimes that meant we would only see them when we returned to the barracks at night before dinner. Yet these men would actually fast all day long and do exhausting physical labor without a bite to eat since dinner the evening before, just to be able to receive the Holy Eucharist, that was how much the sacrament meant to them in this otherwise God-forsaken place.

1. No procession

The Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ is a special day for us as Catholics and for our parish. This has always been a day for us to celebrate with a procession through the local neighborhood as we carry the Blessed Sacrament into our local streets and show our neighbors and friends the reality of our faith in Jesus Christ.

2. Year of the Eucharist begins today

This year as well Archbishop Etienne has asked that we celebrate a Year of the Eucharist beginning with the Solemnity of Corpus Christi and running throughout this year – to next year's Corpus Christi.

As I come to the end of my first year in Seattle, I invite all of us in this local Church to a renewed focus on the heart of our faith and the center of our parish life: the Eucharist. The Eucharist is an inexhaustible source of grace, the Paschal Mystery of Christ's dying and rising daily renewed for our salvation and for the salvation of the whole world. The Eucharist is the living presence of Christ in our midst.

After-Action-Review (just between you and God)

1. Did I read and watch things that were helpful in building up my knowledge and love for our faith? Or did I read and watch things which were poisonous and bitter and angry and caused anxiety and frustration in me?
3. Did I set aside time daily for meditation?
4. How often did I pray the rosary? The Divine Mercy Chaplet? The Stations of the Cross?
5. Did I fast? And finish out my Lenten resolutions?
6. Did I go to confession when I could?
7. Did I come to the church for adoration if I could?
8. Did I at least watch Mass and try to participate?
9. Did I grow in virtue? Especially in patience and understanding towards others?
10. Did I pray and intercede for the bishops, government leaders, medical workers and scientists, the vulnerable and the sick?

If you got like 8 out of 10 – then go ahead and complain about the bishops and your priest, and the government – if not...

The most important thing we can do in this situation is to be a saint and to make God's grace present in our world.