

## **The Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ**

*Corpus Christi 2019*

June 24, 2019

Reflection by Sister Susan Quaintance, OSB

GN 14:18-20; 1 COR 11:23-26; LK 9:11B-17

I am probably the last person who should be reflecting on the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ. Corpus Christi celebrates the real presence of Jesus in the elements of the Eucharist, and while I understand that intellectually, I've never felt like my heart really got it. Remember how Sr. Pierre Marie used to sit for hours in front the tabernacle? I always envied the clarity of her devotion: hers and others who, like her, understood viscerally something that eluded me, except in the most fleeting of moments.

One of those moments was somewhere around 2004 or 2005. St. Scholastica Academy was struggling; it was one of the scary times for me and my friends in the SSA community. I remember standing around this altar at a morning mass, and as the bread was broken, it was as if I was seeing it for the first time. I thought, "Oh, man. That is what I have said 'yes' to, thousands of times." Brokenness – out of love, with no guarantee of outcome. And while I still maintain that other people would be better able to unpack this feast, I will tell you that that moment has informed many of my "Amens" at communion ever since.

Jesus said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." The actions, the words, the execution of its meaning. OK. So as with anything I have to learn, I practice. Bit by bit I claim my place in the Body of Christ. I falteringly humble myself, pour myself out, enter into the

mystery of self-giving love. I practice acknowledging my hunger and messiness. I rehearse following Jesus' model. I repeat, "Amen. That is who and what and how I want to be." In fact, through the mysterious grace of God, that is who and what and how I already am. That is who and what and how all of us already are.

Bread and wine are simple things, things we understand. Being broken and poured out: life makes sure we understand that, too. How this meal – how our lives – nourish and sustain the world: not ours to determine. But every once in a while, we get a glimpse. Thanks be to God for that.