

- The feast of Corpus Christ, or the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, is a feast of faith.
- Faith in the words of Jesus at the Last Supper when he said, “*This is my body ... this is my blood,*” and, “*Do this in memory of me.*”
- When the word of Christ is not proof enough that the Eucharist is his body and blood, sometimes God intercedes in history to prove otherwise.
- It was a lack of faith in the Eucharist that led to today’s feast.
  
- In 1263, a German priest, Peter of Prague, was on his way to Rome but stopped in Bolsena, Italy to celebrate Mass.
- He was a pious priest, but doubted in his heart that Christ was truly present in the consecrated Host.
- During the Mass, Fr. Peter, having just finished the words of Consecration, saw blood drip from the consecrated Host and run down his hands onto the altar clothes.
- The priest was confused at first, and then stopped the Mass.
- He was escorted to the neighboring city of Orvieto to meet with Pope Urban IV.
  
- The Pope listened to the priest’s story then investigated.
- The Pope had the Host and the linen cloth bearing the stains of blood enshrined in the Cathedral of Orvieto.
- One year after this Eucharistic miracle, Pope Urban created the feast of Corpus Christi.
- It is a feast that reminds us to have faith in what we receive and to believe the Amen that we recite after hearing, “*The Body of Christ.*”
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- In the first reading, Moses came down from the mountain and recited for the people the Ten Commandments.
- They responded, “*We will do everything that the Lord has told us.*”
- The Commandments were more than a mere contract.
- A contract protects both parties from one another with obligations, rights, and liabilities.
- A covenant, on the other hand, opens both parties to a very important promise and sacred bond.
- Moses sealed the covenant with a holocaust sacrifice.
- A holocaust was a whole, burnt offering; the animal was completely destroyed as a symbol of the total gift of those making the sacrifice and the binding nature of a covenant.
  
- Moses made a blood-covenant between the Lord and the Israelites by sprinkling the blood of the animal sacrifice.
- Because God began the covenant, the altar was splashed with the blood first.
- Before Moses turned to the people, however, he once more read the Law to them to make sure they understood the obligations they were undertaking.
- Again they responded, “*All that the Lord has said, we will heed and do.*”
- Then, Moses sprinkled the people with blood of the sacrifice.

- In the Gospel, Jesus commands his disciples to prepare a place to celebrate the Last Supper.
- The night before he died, Jesus made a new and eternal covenant with us through His blood.
- By our reception of the body and blood of Jesus at communion, we ratify or agree to be faithful to God.
- Our reception of communion is not a suggestion, but a commandment.
- Jesus clearly said, *“Do this in memory of me.”*
- How is it that we enter into a covenant?
- By an oath, like swearing to our testimony in court.
- An oath pledges our fidelity until death that we uphold something that we believe in.
- The Latin word for oath is *sacramentum*, or sacrament.
- We, therefore, enter into a covenant relationship with our God through the first sacrament, baptism, and renew it each time we approach the other six sacraments.
- Without the sacraments, we would be left wallowing in original sin and a fallen world.
- Just as the Old Covenant between God and Israel was sealed through blood sprinkled on the altar and the people so the New Covenant between Christ and his Church is sealed with the body and blood we receive in the Eucharist.

- St. John Paul II wrote, *“In the Eucharist, the Son . . . offers himself in sacrifice to the Father for all humanity and for all creation. In the Eucharist Christ gives back to the Father everything that has come from him. [Therefore,] man needs to honor his Creator by offering to him, in an act of thanksgiving and praise, all that he has received. Man must never lose sight of this debt, which he alone . . . is capable of acknowledging and paying back as the one creature made in God’s image and likeness.”*
- Christ’s body and blood, which we encounter in the Eucharist, brings us into contact with the living God.
- United in one voice and one faith, we celebrate this weekend in whose Blood we have been saved.
- For St. Francis of Assisi said, *“In this world I cannot see the Most High Son of God with my own eyes, except for His Most Holy Body and Blood.”*