

FEAST OF THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST (A) June 26, 2011
(CANADA DAY – July 1st)

“The bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world”

- 1) The Action of Jesus in the Eucharist “for the Life of the World”, for Social Justice and Social Love
 1. Today we are celebrating the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ, the Feast of the presence and action of Christ in the sacrament of the Eucharist.
 2. Christ becomes present for us in this sacrament and draws us into his saving offering, the total giving of himself that he made on the Cross and carries on now for us.
 3. What is Christ’s purpose in this sacrament? To bring all people together with God his Father, to have them be in God! ... to have the fullness of life in God! ... as he says: “the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.”
 4. Before his death he prayed at his offering of the first Mass, the Last Supper: “that they may all be one, Father, as you in me and I in you, that they may be one in us.”
 5. The mission of Jesus is to bring about our oneness in God and he carries on his mission now by his presence in us, making us one in him, and acting in us and through us.
Jesus is bringing to completion his Kingdom of his people living in truth, justice, love and peace.
 6. The Social Teaching of the Church shows how to love our neighbour in all the social relationships and groupings of society. By working to spread and apply this teaching for social justice and social, love, we are loving our neighbour. We need to apply it especially to the needs of the poor, with whom Jesus identified himself when he said: “I was hungry and you gave me to eat.” (Matt. 25)
 7. We are not participating sincerely in the Mass, we are denying the meaning of our participation, if we ignore or neglect our call to work in Jesus and have Jesus working in us to carry out deeds of love for all, especially the poor. If we have faith to see Jesus in the Mass, then we must see him there giving totally of himself for the life of the world. We are one with him in the giving of ourselves.
- 2) Gratitude for Our Country
 1. Canada Day on Friday is the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a happy coincidence. From his Sacred Heart, Jesus pours forth his love for our country. We realize how blessed we are to live in Canada, especially as we see the conflict, violence and heart wrenching poverty in many other parts of the world. God in his Providence has called us to live here. We can rejoice and be grateful for the good life we have. But we must also be mindful of our obligations as citizens and as stewards of what God has given us.
 2. God calls to work for the common good of all our fellow citizens, the good of each and everyone. God calls us to solidarity. As Pope John Paul stated, “solidarity is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good, that is to say, to the good of all and each individual because we are all really responsible for all.” (Social Concerns of the Church 38.4)
 3. Many of our fellow citizens cannot rejoice in their life in Canada. We are thinking of the many thousands who live below the poverty level, who are struggling to have enough to eat, especially for their children, after they pay the rent. They are working in minimum wage or low paying jobs, or have had to resort to inadequate welfare payments or disability pensions. Many do not have affordable housing.
 4. Our federal and provincial governments are not disposed to do much for the poor because the majority of Canadians are not concerned about their plight. Governments will take significant action to overcome poverty if a large number of voters voice their concern and protest the inaction of our governments.
 5. Better than individual actions you may take, is to join with an anti-poverty organization working for the poor such as Dignity for All. Dignity for All is a national organization supported by many groups, churches and citizens which is calling for action by the Federal Government to enact a federal anti-poverty law, binding successive governments. You can sign on in support of Dignity for All on their website: Dignity for All.
 6. It is important too, to express your concern to your M.P. and to your member of the Ontario Legislature. In Ontario and Quebec grass root movements prevailed on their provincial governments to pass a law to overcome poverty and social exclusion. This is the way social justice works. We have to join with others, work with others, to bring about social change. We have to see now that this anti-poverty legislation is carried out.

Jesus says to us today: “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me (lives in me), and I in them.” As we enter into Jesus’ saving offering and giving of himself in this Mass, let us give of ourselves, to be one with Jesus in his mission to bring life in him to the world.