Corpus Christi 2021

We have always been much more comfortable talking and thinking about the Body of Christ than talking and thinking about the Blood of Christ. For many reasons - receiving the Precious Blood was not common until about 30 years ago. It is easier to think of the Body of Christ as food for our souls, and all the other imagery surrounding bread. We are much more distant from the significance and meaning of the Blood of Christ. Today’s readings explore some of this - and it is very powerful.

Moses has received the ten commandments and this has begun an intimate relationship between God and his people. It is sealed symbolically as Moses sprinkles the people with blood. Blood is life, representing God’s life. By being sprinkled with it the people are linked with God. In further Jewish practices being sprinkled with blood signified forgiveness. Symbolically the power of God to forgive was represented through blood.

In the blood of Christ we are not drawn close to God through the blood of a sacrificed animal sprinkled over us, we are drawn close by Jesus giving himself to us under the form of wine to drink. His very life blood in us; God’s forgiveness and reconciliation freely given.

I am only too well aware that speaking of these things when we cannot receive the Precious Blood from the chalice; and indeed must wonder how we will take up the practice once more post-covid; might seem to be a bit mistimed. But the time is always right for deepening our understanding of the eucharist. To receive the Blessed Sacrament only under the form of bread is to fully receive Christ. As it is only to receive from the chalice. However sacramental signs matter. The form they take deepen our encounter with God.

I spoke a few weeks ago of the intimate personal meeting we experience with Jesus when we receive Holy Communion. He comes to us as our dear friend, our strength, our healer, our counsellor. And He comes with power, giving his very life blood to us. Sacrificing Himself for His people; bringing forgiveness and wholeness. Hopefully we will soon be able to receive him; body and blood - a sharing in His divinity to sustain us until the day WE are received into the eternal love and joy of Heaven.