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Faith Formation

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O Holy Banquet
in which Christ is
received,
in which the
memory of His
passion is re-
newed,
in which the soul
is filled with
grace,
and a pledge of
future glory is
given us.

(Corpus Christi Sequence)

Holy Father's
Intention for
June 2007

That the Holy Church in North Africa may bear witness, with its presence and its action, to God's love for every individual and all people.

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Heaven and Earth United

Lisa M. Gulino

A mother was putting her young daughter to bed. After prayers the mom leaned over, made the sign of the Cross on the girl's forehead and kissed her goodnight. The daughter asked, "Mommy can you sleep in my bed tonight." Lovingly, the mom answered, "Honey, you know God is with you always and will stay with you as you sleep." The daughter answered, "Yes, I know, but tonight I need God with skin."

Out of the mouths of babes we hear our human longing expressed. The human heart pines for the palpable presence of God. We need God with skin!

Our Catholic Faith teaches us that our Heavenly Father knows our needs. God reaches out from beyond time and space. In his plan of salvation, God gives Himself to us through His Son in an eternal embrace of love.

God reveals His nearness to us in two key moments. These unique moments of closeness are the **Incarnation** and the **Eucharist**. God becomes one of us and also He shares his very self with us as our **food for the journey**.



The Eucharist unites heaven and earth because Jesus Christ is "The word became flesh, he lived among us" (Jn 1:14). In the Incarnation, heaven comes down to earth. As the Church sings in the first Christmas preface, "In the wonder of the Incarnation your eternal Word has brought to the eyes of faith a new and ra-

diant vision of your glory. In him we see our God made visible and so we are caught up in love of the God we cannot see" (Roman Missal). God has skin!

Only in the mystery of the incarnate Word do we understand who we are. For by His incarnation the Son of God has **united Himself with all people**. Jesus worked with human hands, He thought with a human mind, acted by human choice and loved with a human heart. We give honor to the Sacred Heart of Jesus on June 15th—the Heart that was "pierced for our offenses."

It is in John's Gospel that we see the connection between the Incarnation and the Eucharist. Jesus says: "**I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for**

the life of the world." And again, Jesus said to them, "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day."

The Eucharistic celebration, also called the sacrifice of the Mass, is the supreme act of the public worship of the Church. It is an action that **involves the whole Church on earth, in heaven and in purgatory**. It has Jesus Christ as its Chief Priest and Victim. Indeed, it is he who through the Eucharistic mystery links earth to heaven. The young girl in our story articulated humanity's desire for both the tangible touch of God and the conscious sense of community. Our Mass conveys both of these innate desires. God becomes truly present on our altars—both the sacrificial altar and the altar of our heart.

It is during the Mass that the priest invokes the Holy Spirit to

transform ordinary bread and wine (the work of our hands) into the Body and Blood of Christ. Through the Holy Eucharist **humanity continues to share in the divine life** opened up for us by Jesus' incarnation and the Paschal mystery. Christ signifies and makes present his Paschal Mystery at Mass. When his Hour comes, Jesus dies, is buried, rises from the dead, and is seated at the right hand of the Father "once for all."

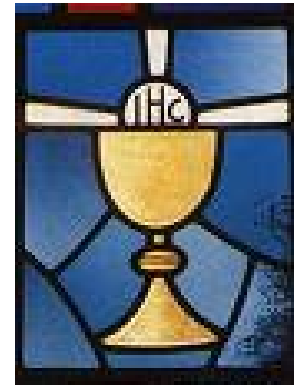
On Sunday, June 3rd we celebrate **Trinity Sunday**. We are reminded that the Liturgy is the work of the Blessed Trinity. The **Father** is acknowledged and adored. In his **Word** who became incarnate, died, and rose for us, he fills us with his blessings. Through his Word, he pours into our hearts the Gift that contains all gifts, the **Holy Spirit**. (cf. CCC1082)

On Sunday, June 10th, we

celebrate with great **solemnity the Body and Blood of Jesus** given to us that we may share in His eternal life.

June 15th and 16th are the Feasts of the **Sacred Heart of Jesus** and the **Immaculate Heart of Mary**. This pair of Feasts recall to us that love is at the heart of God's revelations and the saving mysteries of Christ.

The Church's liturgies in June assists us to recognize that the work of Christ and our worship at the Liturgy is in fact "heaven and earth united". It reminds us also that God's "got skin", and that we've "got life", eternal life in Christ.



The desire for God is written in our heart

and

our "dignity rests... on the fact that we have been called to communion with God."

(Catechism of the Catholic Church R27)

A Word of Thanks

To all the parents who have brought their children to the **CCD programs** and the **Liturgy of the Word for Children**. To hand on the gift of faith and the love of God to our next generation is surely the way to bring peace, justice and love into our fragile world.

To all who serve as catechists I thank you. Your **faithfulness** and your **profound sense of ministry** in handing on the faith is an inspiration.

Vacation Bible School

Save the **Wednesdays of August** as we will be hosting the **Vacation Bible School**. This is a wonderful opportunity for the entire parish family to come together and share reflection on God's word.

Candle Light Store

Stop by and see the new items that are in the store. A special thanks to **David Quarles** and the **Ministers of Hospitality** who maintain the **Candle Light Store**, located in the rear of the church and open during Mass times.