

Homily for
Corpus Christi
Preached by Fr. Brendan Freeman
(June 10, 2012)

[Scripture Readings: Ex 24:3-8; Heb 9:11-15; Mk 14:12-16, 22-26]

When the Lord called Moses to come up on Mt. Sinai he made it very clear who was to come with him. Aaron, of course, and Nedab and Abihu, the 70 elders, but—and the Lord was very clear on this— not the people. The words are, "The people shall not come at all," (Ex. 24:1-2).

The people, however, is a hallowed term for Americans; our government is formed of the people, by the people and for the people. In a democratic society the elected officials represent the people and are answerable to them. There is no such thing as entitlement in our government.

When Jesus came he did not identify himself with the ruling party either in government or religion. He was with the people. St. Thomas Aquinas reminded us at our Lauds reading this morning that the Eucharist was instituted for the salvation of all and for the benefit of all. He also said, the sacraments are for the people just as Jesus said the Sabbath is for man not man for the Sabbath.

In our religion all the baptized are priests and can draw close to God. Today we are celebrating the presence of Christ among the people in the Eucharist. Think of how many types of people approach the Eucharistic table everyday throughout the world, the worthy and the unworthy. In fact none of us are worthy yet we are invited just as Moses was to approach and come close. After all, no other sacrament has greater healing power than the Eucharist.

Each day the celebrant holds up the host and says, "Behold the lamb of God" and we respond by saying, "Lord I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed." I remember once Fr. Shawn said how would you feel if as the priest is distributing the host he came to you and said you are not worthy and went on to the next person? We would no doubt be highly offended, yet we just said we are not worthy. How deeply do we believe these words? I think it helps to paraphrase them. What we are saying is Lord, do not enter my life it is not a healthy place. Under my roof means my world, my environment, where I live, do not come Lord it is not a good place. Do not enter it Lord. Yet, say but the word and I shall be healed. Then my place, my life will be a temple for your presence, a shrine where I can adore. We all have our own secret world and our Lord knows what it is like and yet he comes in everyday and accepts us as we are.

The Eucharist is the perpetual memorial of Christ Passion where he was handed over and

poured out. In fact every day we hear the words of consecration, "This is my Body which is given up for you, this is my Blood which is poured out for you." When we receive the Eucharist we become another Christ and we should live like him. Jesus shows us the way to live in this world. The Eucharist is not just a pious devotion it is the secret of life. To give ourselves away is the only way to realize ourselves. Jesus does this each day in the Eucharist and when we lose ourselves as He did then only can we find ourselves. Our whole life is a Eucharistic sacrifice.