

Corpus Christi

The Thursday after Trinity Sunday, this year it falls on 23rd June, is observed as Corpus Christi, a Day of Thanksgiving for the Institution of the Holy Communion. At Holy Cross Church we attend a special Mass at 8pm in the Old Church for a reflective service in which the themes of Holy Communion are explored year by year. In many countries, Corpus Christi is a major holiday and there are gaudy processions through the streets. This act of worship is central to our Christian lives and it is good to take time to think and pray together amidst all the busyness and business of our parish and personal lives. Here is a poem to start us off.

Holy Communion

Not in rich furniture, or fine array,
Nor in a wedge of gold,
Thou, who from me wast sold,
To me dost now thy self convey
For so thou should'st without me still have been,
Leaving within me sinne.

But by the way of nourishment and strength
Thou creepst into my breast;
Making thy way my rest,
And thy small quantities my length;

Which spread their forces into every part,
Meeting sinnes force and art.

Yet can these not get over to my soul,
Leaping the wall that parts
our souls and fleshly hearts;
But as th'outworks, they may controll
My rebel-flesh, and carrying thy name,
Affright both sinne and shame.

Onely thy grace, which with these elements comes,
Knoweth the ready way,
And hath the privie key,
Op'ning the souls most subtile rooms;
While those to spirits refined, at doore attend
Dispatches from their friend.

Give me my captive soul, or take
My body also thither.
Another lift like this will make
Them both to be together.

For sure when Adam did not know
To sinne, or sinne to smother;
He might to heav'n from Paradise go,
As from one room t'another.

Thou hast restored us to this ease
By this thy heav'nly bloud;
Which I can go in, when I please,
And leave th' earth to their food.

by **George Herbert** 1593-1633

