



# The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington

## *Homily Helps*

### *Solemnity of Corpus Christi*

*June 19, 2022*

- This year's Solemnity of Corpus Christi has special significance for our local diocesan Church and our national Church. We have recently concluded the archdiocesan phase of the 2021-2023 Universal Synod called by Pope Francis. We heard from thousands of Catholics in the archdiocese asking for a renewal in our local Church - a renewal that will focus on parish life especially the Mass.
- The feast of Corpus Christi provides us this opportunity to commit to what the Synod calls for: a renewal of our focus on the Mass -- especially the Eucharist.
- The Eucharist is the center of our faith - the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of our Lord, Jesus Christ.
- The Eucharist is Christ's Body broken for us and shared with us. When we receive the Eucharist, we are loved, healed, and strengthened for mission.
- Today's Solemnity also falls on a new, nationwide federal holiday called "Juneteenth," which celebrates the freedom of enslaved Black people after the Civil War. While the Emancipation Proclamation took effect on January 1, 1863 in most slave holding states, enslaved persons in Texas would remain enslaved for another two years until on June 19, 1865, the news of the Emancipation Proclamation finally reached Texas.
- Although African Americans throughout the United States have celebrated Juneteenth since 1865, this year is only the second year that Juneteenth is officially being recognized as a federal holiday. Many people are unaware of the significance of this holiday.
- In addition, on this Solemnity, it is the seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) anniversary of the tragic shooting at Mother Emmanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina. The murder of nine



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African Americans while praying during their weekly bible study at Mother Emmanuel AME Church is a tragic reminder [of](#) how far we still have to go as a country to end America's original sin of racism.

- What does Juneteenth and the shooting anniversary at Mother Emmanuel AME Church have to do with the Solemnity of Corpus Christi? Juneteenth and the Mother Emmanuel shooting make us critically aware of just how much the Eucharist is the answer to ending hatred and racism in our country and world.
- Our world is broken like Christ's Body on the Cross. However, Christ's gift to us of His Body and Blood in the Eucharist is the solution because the Eucharist is love.
- The Eucharist heals us and it can help to heal the world of hatred and racism. The Eucharist helps us to love one another and to see each other as Christ sees us – as Children of God, our Father. Each of us is perfectly loved by God because we are created in His Image.
- The Eucharist compels us and strengthens us to go into the world to be witnesses to God's love by fighting to end racism through the living out of our Catholic Social Teaching (<https://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/seven-themes-of-catholic-social-teaching>), which calls us to love all of our brothers and sisters as Christ loves us.

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