

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Join us this Sunday to celebrate the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, honoring the Body and Blood of Christ. Our Gospel from St. John reminds us of the profound reality of the Eucharist: *"Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him."* The Eucharist is not a symbol; it is the living, beating Heart of Jesus Christ, given to us out of infinite love.

This year, our celebration of Corpus Christi takes on an extraordinary national significance. As our country prepares to mark the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops is leading a historic initiative. On Thursday, June 11, 2026, the bishops will gather to solemnly **consecrate the United States of America to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.**

Why the Sacred Heart? To consecrate means to "set apart for God." By dedicating our nation to the Sacred Heart, our spiritual shepherds are publicly declaring that our land, our culture, and our peoples belong to the love of Christ. As bishops like Archbishop Alexander Sample have noted, this act serves two vital purposes for our country right now:

- **An Act of Reparation:** It is a time to bring the historical wounds, divisions, and mistakes of our nation's 250-year history to the heart of Christ, begging for His healing mercy.
- **A Call to Action:** Honoring the Sacred Heart cannot remain a private devotion. It must transform us, compelling our community to look outward with greater love for the poor, the vulnerable, and the suffering.

There is a perfect connection between the Feast of Corpus Christi and the Sacred Heart. The host we receive at the altar flows directly from the same love that pierced Christ's side on Calvary. Pope Francis, in his encyclical *Dilxit Nos* (He loved us), reminds us that the world desperately needs to rediscover the tenderness of Christ's heart in an era filled with secularism and indifference. When we look at the Eucharist, we are looking at the Sacred Heart.

I invite every person and family in our parish to actively join this national movement. To prepare our hearts, we will participate in the following spiritual practices:

- **The National Novena:** Join us in praying the Novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus from June 3 through June 11. You can find a printable version of the novena on this website: <https://www.usccb.org/novena-sacred-heart-jesus>
- **Adoration:** Our parish will host extended Eucharistic Adoration this week. Please join us for an hour to pray for healing, peace, and unity across our nation.
- **Works of Mercy:** Let's honor our nation's milestone together by filling our community with love and service. You can help this week by donating to St. Vincent de Paul food pantries or visiting lonely neighbors.

We pray that this act of consecration may guide our nation's temporal affairs by the spirit of the Gospel. May our hearts be freed from bitterness, drawing us closer to the source of our fundamental rights to life, liberty, and genuine freedom. Through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, Patroness of our land, may the United States truly be *'One Nation Under God.'*

-Fr. Luke