

Today is the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ; celebrating our belief that the Eucharist we share is the Real Presence of Jesus Christ – His Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity.

This feast came about in the 13th century ... because up to that time the only liturgical celebration dedicated to this Mystery was Holy Thursday. But on that day the liturgy commemorates Christ's washing of the disciples' feet, the institution of the priesthood, and the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. Concerned that too much was going on at one time, a unique and specific feast day was promulgated to the whole Church by Pope Urban IV.

The Eucharist, as a mystery, requires that we examine what we receive. Because when we receive the Eucharistic species – it appears to our eyes as mere bread and wine – and so we must examine it with the eyes of Faith.

This is more than a pious platitude.

Consider the person sitting next to you – and I address this to all of you here, but especially to the graduates. Look at the person sitting next to you ... your classmates and your friends.

Maybe you've only known them a couple of years.

Maybe you've known them since pre-school.

Is this the same person? Hard evidence shows someone who is probably taller, hopefully more mature and hopefully more educated.

But these facts – height, weight, size, shape – didn't you used to be smaller? shorter? lighter?

And I assure you, as you go on through life ... 5 years, 10 years, 20 years ... you may part company and then cross paths again after a time. When you meet then, looking at the surface, you most likely won't recognize each other. You'll do a double-take ... you'll hear a laugh ... a sneeze ... you'll see a wink ... a smile ... or a certain raising of an eyebrow.

And, then, you'll be right back – all those years ago – and catching up on things you cannot even imagine now ... while reminiscing on what you did last week or last year.

Those are the eyes of Faith – the eyes of your heart. It's not made up. It's very real.

You've already learned an awful lot of things. And much of it will help you. But there will be times where data and facts ... or theorems and equations ... will not solve things.

And then you'll need the eyes of Faith ... and the ears of Faith ... and a heart of Faith ... to guide your actions and your words.

The Eucharistic mystery that we celebrate today is more than Bread and Wine. It encompasses over 5,000 years of Salvation History. The entirety of the Scriptures is held in what looks like a small piece of bread. And more than that. Last week we celebrated the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity – the mystery of the Godhead. Three Divine Persons – One Divine Substance ... One God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The math doesn't add up. But if that was difficult – in the Eucharist you receive the wholeness of Christ's Divinity and His Sacred Humanity.

All in a tiny piece of bread.

Throughout life, the knowledge you receive ... and the accomplishments you achieve ... are all important in their own way. But who you truly are ... will always remain at the core of your being ... and your being will always mean more than your doing.

The important things cannot be measured in inches or pounds. There is no diploma for friendship, or love. No awards for relationships, or sacrifices.

The mystery will always remain. Life and death. Grace and mercy. Time and eternity. Divinity and humanity.

Jesus Christ is truly present in the Eucharist ... in a way that goes beyond external perception.

But the eyes of Faith will always connect you – to each other – and to Christ and God.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ ... let us look and listen ... let us hear and see ... with the eyes of Faith ... the Person of our Savior ... He who unites us and joins us into His body – in this simple mystery ... offered for our salvation ... in the mystery of the Eucharist.