

St. Eusebius of Vercelli lived in an interesting time. In his early life, Christianity was illegal and he even saw his own father die a martyr's death in Sardinia.

He lived through the Edict of Milan, when the leaders of the western and eastern empires agreed to treat Christians benevolently.

This, however, led to many becoming Christians for political reasons or without much commitment; and further led to the multiplication and spread of various heresies.

One such heresy was Arianism, which denied that Jesus was "consubstantial with the Father" ... claiming He was a created being, and not "God from God, Light from Light, True God from True God."

In fact, these words from our Creed were written in direct opposition to Arianism - which believed that Jesus was a created being, different from God and different from humanity ... who was created to save humanity. Sort of a demi-god with divine attributes and human attributes.

Eusebius found himself in the middle of this controversy, and even though the government was treating Christians benevolently, the Arians were adamant in trying to change the Apostolic teachings of the Church.

Eventually the Emperor got involved, and wanted some sort of compromise, but Eusebius stood for the Faith ... and was sent into exile. After three exiles, he was finally allowed to return from exile - at the age of 78 ... and he died ten years later in the year 371.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ - let us pray for a deeper understanding of our Catholic Faith ... as well as a deeper appreciation of the trials and tribulations of those who went before us over the last 2,000 years. May we stand fast in the Faith, and not be tempted to compromise our beliefs in service to Christ Jesus and each other.