

+ FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI

June 20, 2019

Homily of the Right Reverend Dom Philip Anderson, Abbot of Clear Creek Abbey

+In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
My very dear sons,

The Most Holy Eucharist, celebrated and consummated in the Sacrifice of Mass, is all about thanksgiving, a unique prayer of thanksgiving that embraces Heaven and Earth, past and present, and future, touching the very threshold of eternity. The giving of thanks is the very meaning of the Greek word from which “Eucharist” is derived. It is to be feared that we have very much lost this sense of thanksgiving to God under the spell of our godless modern world. Was it not really a lack of thanksgiving in France and in the whole Western World that set Notre-Dame cathedral on fire and brought down the spire that once pointed to the stars? This is a serious matter.

The lack of thanksgiving among human beings is nothing new. When, after the Exodus, the people of Israel began to regret having left Egypt, complaining to Moses,

“If only we had died by the Lord’s hand in the land of Egypt!” they said. “There we sat by pots of meat and ate our fill of bread, but you have brought us into this desert to starve this whole assembly to death!”...¹

And so God gave them the Bread from Heaven, the Bread of Angels, and the quails. This bread was of a marvelous sort, having a very pleasing taste. According to the Book of Wisdom, which also uses the term “food of angels,” the manna contained “every delight, to satisfy every taste. ... conforming to the taste of whoever ate it, it transformed itself into what each eater wished.”² But this too became a source of murmuring.

And speaking against God and Moses, they said: Why didst thou bring us out of Egypt, to die in the wilderness? There is no bread, nor have we any waters: our soul now loatheth this very light food.³

The bread of Angels was too light for them. They were ungrateful. Let this not be the case with us. Let us thank God for the ordinary daily bread we eat and especially for the Bread of Angels we adore and receive in the Holy Eucharist. Let our Eucharistic procession go forward today with thanks to rebuild a Christian world, to rebuild Notre-Dame cathedral, and to continue building our own church here at Clear Creek. We are already most grateful for what we have and venture forth with immense hope, following the golden monstrance holding the true Manna of our souls. Amen. Alleluia.

¹ Exodus 16:3.

² Wisdom 16:20-21.

³ Numbers 21:5.