

ST. GERTRUDE THE GREAT NEWSLETTER

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FROM BISHOP DOLAN

THE FORGOTTEN FEAST

When I was growing up in Detroit, Michigan, before “the changes,” there was always one weekday Mass I never managed to follow in my daily missal, Corpus Christi. I would have my prayerbook set for the saint of the day, but the Mass was from the temporal cycle. It wasn't usually until the Sequence that I figured out it was the great feast of the Blessed Sacrament.

There was no special observance, no procession, no lights or flowers or incense, just the daily sung Mass my parish, Saint Suzanne, always had. But Forty Hours in the spring or the fall, as the chancery office mandated, *was* a glorious feast of the Holy Eucharist. The altar was always beautiful, the visiting clergy plentiful, the services well attended. The procession, however, was only ever indoors. But that was the extent of it, along with even back then, sparsely attended Tuesday and Friday evening Benediction. No one ever said anything about Corpus Christi, though. It was the forgotten feast.

In a way it seems fitting, because Jesus in the tabernacle is our forgotten God, little visited, little adored from Sunday to Sunday, with its obligatory Mass, and unavoidable irreverences. Small enough recompense to Him Who is “with us, all days...” But we have always tried to celebrate Corpus Christi as fully as possible, the feast day and its octave. Each day it is permitted by canon law to offer Mass before the Blessed Sacrament Exposed, and give Benediction. We do so. On the Sunday we observe the Solemnity, with First Communions, Benediction, adoration and the outdoor procession.

It is one of the highpoints of our year here, this eight-day celebration of Corpus Christi, regardless of the time and fatigue entailed. We are happy to join the flowers and candles in burning ourselves out for love of our Eucharistic God. Bugnini and his modernistic Masons managed to abolish the octave, the eight-day celebration, even *before* Vatican II. We have nothing to do with this frightful foretelling of the Novus Ordo. No longer is this the forgotten feast. If only you could have joined us and



The Sunday within the Octave of Corpus Christi was observed as the external solemnity of the great feast and was marked with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, First Holy Communion, as well as an outdoor procession and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. (Above) After the procession returned to the main altar Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was again given by Bishop Dolan to the faithful who filled the church.

our lively joyful celebration of this day of days, what a sense of triumph would be yours, if only for a few blessed hours. At Saint Gertrude the Great, Corpus Christi is not the forgotten feast.

But because people *are* busy with many things, it is a blessing to have religious in our midst, dedicated to prayer above all. Our Benedictine Sisters of Our Lady of Reparation are dedicated especially to making reparation for priests, and praying for them. On the feast of the Sacred Heart two novices, Sister Benedict Marie and Sister Perpetua Marie, received the holy habit...two more sisters for the great work of reparation.

NEWSNOTES

In February I made a weekend visit to Father Roberto Mardones' chapels in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, and El Paso, Texas, where I was happy to witness all of

the progress made by this energetic priest, who celebrated his twenty-fifth ordination anniversary with us this past January. Father's flock is relatively modest in size, but second to none in its devotion, and the beauty and charm of their chapels.

For Good Shepherd Sunday in April I traveled to Tijuana, Mexico, for a visit with Fr. Arnaldo Villegas and his faithful at Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe Church, and confirmations. His children entertained us after Mass with a wonderful presentation of a play, based on the life of Saint Gertrude the Great. Top notch! Later we drove across the Rumorosa Mountains to Mexicali and saw the progress made since last year on the construction of their church, dedicated to Saints Peter and Paul. Mass and confirmations were followed by an excellent outdoor supper. It never rains in Mexicali, but it rained that afternoon. Still, everything went well in this unusually well organized congregation. It is a pleasure to visit them each year, so that they know the bishop does not forget them.

Please remember Father Anthony Cekada in your prayers. He was recently diagnosed with a very rare and aggressive cancer, and is currently undergoing treatment. Father needs most of all the support of our prayers. Thank you for remembering to pray for him daily!

– Most Rev. Daniel L. Dolan



Bishop Dolan administered confirmation during his visit to Father Roberto Mardonez's chapels in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico and El Paso, Texas



Prior to receiving their First Holy Communion, Bishop Dolan reminded the youngsters of this year's class of the great Gift they were about to receive.



The Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was a busy day indeed at St. Gertrude the Great. (Above) At mid-morning, the students of our school assembled in the cloister to receive their final report cards of the academic year from school chaplain Father Cekada. Despite his illness, and recently started treatment, he was, to the delight of all, his usual upbeat self. (Left) Shortly afterward, two postulants of the Sisters of Our Lady of Reparation began their novitiate after having received their habits from Bishop Dolan at a midday ceremony. The day was capped by a lovely luncheon reception in the parish hall.