



CORPUS CHRISTI

Homily of the Right Reverend Dom Jean PATEAU
Abbot of Our Lady of Fontgombault
(Fontgombault, June 4th, 2026)

*Cibavit eos ex adipe frumenti...
et de petra melle saturavit eos.*

He fed them with the fat of wheat,
and filled them with honey out of the rock.

(Introit of the Mass, Ps 80:17)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
My dearly beloved Sons,

THE MONTHS of May and June, in the heart of spring, are conducive to joy. Nature has awakened, now adorned in its finest attire. Birds brighten the day while the sun is not yet scorching. A time of joy, a time of celebration too. Thus follow Mother's Day, Father's Day, World Music Day, and the summer solstice, the longest day of the year. Why not celebrate God then? Or rather, why should we celebrate Him?

Most of our contemporaries, when they ask themselves the question, acknowledge that the world cannot be the product of pure chance. The presence of a creator, whom some have called the great watchmaker, is necessary. But after that? Are the earth, the moon, the stars, merely a distraction of God? The work of a fleeting moment? And God would have gone back to His business... And we, now created, would be free to go back to ours?

St. Paul did not share this opinion and expressed his views to the Areopagus:

God, who made the world and all things therein, [...] giveth to all life and breath and all things. And hath made of one all mankind, [...] that they should seek God, if haply they may feel after Him or find Him, although He be not far from every one of us. For in Him we live and move and are.^a

a. *Acts* 26:26–28.

God has therefore not been indifferent to His creation. He sustains it in life, in movement, and in being. Every moment in the history of the universe, every moment in the life of every human being, is a free gift from God. Few of our contemporaries acknowledge this.

The introit, however, recalls the moment when, as the people of Israel flees Egypt and ventures into the desert, food becomes scarce. They remember the pots of meat, the bread served in abundance in the land of their captivity. Who led the people into the desert? Therefore, the people grumble against Moses and against God. God says to Moses:

I have heard the murmuring of the children of Israel. Say to them: “In the evening you shall eat flesh, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; and you shall know that I am the Lord your God.”^b

b. *Ex* 16:12.

That very evening, a flight of quail descended on the camp, and the next day an unknown dew spread across the ground.

And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another: “Manhu! [...] What is this!” And Moses said to them: “This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat.”^c

c. *Ex* 16:15.

But in his address to the citizens of Athens, St. Paul speaks of man’s ultimate vocation: to seek, reach, and find God. Therefore, the Lord did not limit Himself to providing His people with purely material sustenance. St. Paul assures us of this:

For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, broke and said:

“Take ye and eat: This is My body, which shall be delivered for you. This do for the commemoration of Me.” In like manner also the chalice, [...] saying: “This chalice is the new testament in My blood. This do ye, [...] for the commemoration of Me.”^d

d. 1 Co 11:23–25.

But what good is a food if it doesn’t nourish life? St. John just mentioned this:

For My flesh is meat indeed: and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me: and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me and I live by the Father: so he that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me. [...] He that eateth this bread shall live for ever.^e

e. Jn 6:55–58.

Man’s path, his vocation, is born from a life: the life of Christ within us. The gift of this life was made on the tree of the Cross: “Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”^f The Cross of Christ, the supreme gift of God’s love, recapitulates all times, that is to say, reorients them, reorders them, and gives them a new meaning. Everything is for God, for His glory.

f. Jn 15:13.

The food of this new life in Christ is His body and blood. This food is our viaticum on our journey towards God.

We can also adore His body and blood, and we will do so especially today. To remain among us, the Lord has given us His body and blood through the species of bread and wine, one Body and one Blood for all, and one food for one life for all in Christ: *In Illo uno, unum*: “In Him, the One, we are one,” forming one body. In Him, we become members of the body of Christ, the Church. Then:

The lives of the faithful, their praise, sufferings, prayer, and work, are united with those of Christ and with His total offering, and so acquire a new value.^g

g. CCC, n. 1368.

On this path of an ever-deeper life with Christ, we can implore the help of her who called herself *the Handmaid of the Lord*. During his trip to the Marian shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary in Pompeii on May 8th, the first anniversary of

his election to the See of Peter, Pope Leo spoke the following words:

The Hail Mary repeated in the Holy Rosary is an act of love. Is it not characteristic of love to repeat, without tiring, “I love you”? An act of love which, through the beads of the rosary, as is clearly seen in the Marian painting in this Shrine, leads us back to Jesus and brings us to the Eucharist, “the fount and apex of the whole Christian life.”^h St. Bartolo Longo was convinced of this when he wrote: “The Eucharist is the living Rosary, and all the mysteries are found in the Holy Sacrament in an active and vital form.”ⁱ [...] In the Eucharist, the mysteries of Christ’s life are all found, so to speak, concentrated in the memorial of His sacrifice and in His real presence.^j

h. *Lumen gentium*, n. 1368.

i. *The Rosary and New Pompeii*, 1914, p. 86.

j. Homily, May 8th, 2026.

Overwhelmed with so many gifts, how could we not celebrate God? Let us renew our worship today. Let’s allow ourselves to be nourished by the wellsprings of salvation, the Body and Blood of our Saviour.

Amen, Alleluia.

