

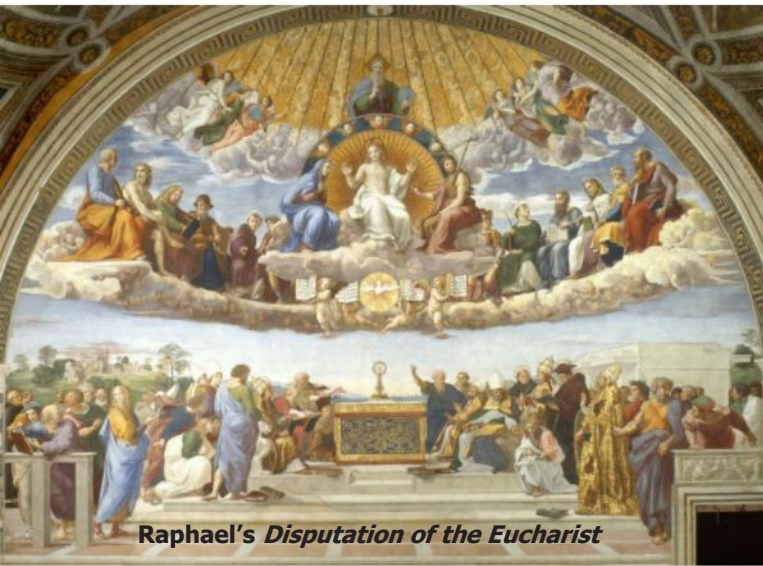
Msgr. Bill's Weekly Letter...

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

St. Maximillian Kolbe wrote, *"If angels could be jealous of men, they would be so for one reason: Holy Communion"*. We are most privileged that we have been chosen to be adopted daughters and sons invited to the supper of the Lamb.

Jesus is available to us every day. We can receive him at Mass or come to him in quiet adoration. We do not need an appointment, special "passes," inside people to get us close, or any of the merely human methods we use at other times.

Saint Damien de Veuster, SS.CC. [Saint *Damien* of Molokai] wrote of the importance of Holy Communion — "The Blessed Sacrament is indeed the stimulus for us all, for me as it should be for you, to forsake all worldly ambitions. Without the constant presence of our Divine Master upon the altar in my poor



chapels, I never could have persevered casting my lot with the lepers of Molokai; the foreseen consequence of which begins now to appear on my skin, and is felt throughout the body. Holy Communion being the daily bread of a priest, I feel myself happy, well pleased, and resigned in the rather exceptional circumstances in which it has pleased Divine Providence to put me."

Our faith teaches us that in the Eucharist, we possess Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity, our Blessed Savior, Jesus the Christ. Raphael's rapturous painting is one you can stand and gaze at for hours. Painted in about 1509, it captures the perplexity of trying to explain just how Jesus changes this bread and wine into his Body and Blood.

Transubstantiation is the word used to describe the process of how bread and wine are changed. The dogma is the True Presence of Jesus the Christ in the Eucharist. It really is the presence of Jesus himself. St. Paul teaches, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this blood you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes. Therefore, whoever eats this bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord" (1 Cor. 11:26-27).

From the very first days of the Church, the Eucharist has taken center stage as the very presence of God, Jesus, in our midst. For 2,000 years, the vast majority of Christians have accepted Jesus' words that unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood you cannot have life within you. When the people walked away, he did not try to explain it away for he cannot be contrary to himself for he is Truth. Jesus promised to stay with us always and this is accomplished, then and now, in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

If my memory is correct, Thomas Aquinas taught that the **virtus Christi** (the power of Jesus) is present in the Sacraments. However, in the Eucharist, it is **ipse Christi** (Christ himself, truly present, Body, Blood, Soul, Divinity), not just his power, but HIM.

Consider this week attending a daily Mass and receive the foundation of our being. Set aside an hour of adoration to be quiet with him. Then pray about making a decision to make these two small things a weekly commitment for you and him, who is your Lord. You will not be disappointed.

pace – bene,

Msgr. Bill