

FROM OUR DIRECTOR OF FAITH FORMATION
August 20, 2023

Surely you can't be serious?!
Eucharistic Miracles Exhibit coming in September

From the beginning, the doctrine of the real presence has been a difficulty. The Jews in John 6 at first couldn't believe that Our Lord was serious, that He actually required them to eat His flesh and drink His blood. When Our Lord insisted that He *was* serious, they left Him. "Who can endure this?" they said.

They may have been the first, but they were not the last. Over the course of centuries, the doctrine of the Real Presence has been hard for some to stomach (literally.) My eyes tell me that it is bread and wine on the altar after the consecration; how could it be otherwise? Surely Our Lord meant something other than His real flesh. Besides, if He *was* serious, then gross.

You would think that this kind of objection was unresolvable, that the debates on the semantics of what Our Lord meant by "flesh" and "blood" could go on endlessly without coming to a definitive answer. By God's grace, this has not been the case. Over the course of history, Our Lord has gone out of His way to give a clear answer.

My favorite case of this happened in Lanciano, Italy. While a priest was offering Mass, he wondered for a moment whether in fact the host really did become Our Lord. At the words of consecration, he looked at the host and found that he was holding literal flesh between his fingers. In the chalice, there was literal blood. Of course the host could no longer be consumed in that form and so both it and the blood in the chalice were preserved as relics. Testing in the late twentieth century confirmed not only that they were flesh and blood, but that the flesh was of a distressed male heart tissue.

Why did Our Lord perform this miracle? To resolve the doubts of that one priest. Many people think that Our Lord *couldn't* have been serious about the Eucharist. Over and over again, Our Lord has given us eucharistic miracles like these to confirm that it *is* Him in the Blessed Sacrament.

On Friday, September 1 through Sunday, September 3, our parish will host a eucharistic miracles exhibit. This display recounts roughly 150 eucharistic miracles over the centuries and around the world that have taken place. Our Lord didn't just confirm the doctrine of the real presence once; He has done so numerous times. Come let your faith be strengthened and your doubts resolved. That *is* Him in the Blessed Sacrament, body, blood, soul and divinity, and there is good evidence for it.



—Joe Moreshead