

Nourished by the Eucharist, United in Christ

A Call to Communion, Unity, and Discipleship

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace and peace to you in the Lord Jesus Christ. As we journey together as one parish family, we are reminded that the source and summit of our Christian life and mission is the Most Holy Eucharist. In this sacrament of divine love, Jesus Christ remains truly and substantially present among us. He feeds us with His Body and Blood, gathers us into His Body, the Church, and draws us ever more deeply into communion with Himself and with one another.

Saint Paul proclaims this mystery with clarity: *“Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread”* (1 Cor 10:17). From the one Eucharistic table flows our identity as the People of God. The Eucharist is never a private possession; it is the sacrament that creates the Church, builds communion, and sends us forth as witnesses of the Gospel.

To receive the Body of Christ is to become the Body of Christ. For this reason, communion with the Lord is inseparable from communion with one another. Where Christ is truly received, division must be healed, indifference overcome, and reconciliation embraced as a lived necessity of discipleship.

Our parish, blessed with many cultures, languages, and traditions, is called to make visible the unity that the Eucharist accomplishes invisibly. The prayer of the Lord—*“that they may all be one”* (Jn 17:21)—is not merely an aspiration, but a mission entrusted to the Church in every age.

This unity does not erase difference. Rather, it is the work of the Holy Spirit who gathers diverse peoples into one communion. In the Eucharist, our differences are not abolished but transfigured—becoming gifts offered for the building up of the Body of Christ.

Flowing from this Eucharistic identity, the Church is sent into the world. The Eucharist forms a people who live not for themselves, but for Christ and for others. It shapes us into disciples who build communion where there is division, and who become instruments of reconciliation in a fragmented world.

As our nation commemorates the 250th Anniversary of the United States of America, we give thanks to Almighty God for the blessings of freedom and opportunity that have shaped our shared life. This moment invites us to gratitude, but also to reflection on the moral and spiritual foundations of civic life.

The strength of any society ultimately depends not only on its institutions, but on the character of its people. Laws alone cannot sustain justice; they require hearts formed in truth, responsibility, and charity. Civic renewal is therefore inseparable from moral renewal, and moral renewal is born from spiritual conversion.

As Christians, we contribute to society not as a political force, but as a Eucharistic people. Formed at the altar, we are called to be leaven in the world—serving the common good, defending the dignity of every human person, promoting justice, and witnessing that authentic freedom is lived in truth and love.

This mission must first be visible within our parish life. It is expressed in the reverent celebration of the Sacred Liturgy, in faithful service of one another, and in the daily commitment to communion over division. Every person who enters our community must encounter a Church that is welcoming, prayerful, and united in Christ.

Let the Eucharist we celebrate shape not only our worship, but our way of life. What we receive from the altar must become visible in our relationships, our speech, our decisions, and our shared mission. If we partake of one Bread and one Cup, then we are called to live as one Body—marked by forgiveness, respect, humility, and charity.

As we mark this national milestone, we do so with gratitude, but also with responsibility. Yet our deepest identity is not defined by any earthly nation, but by our baptism into Christ. We are a pilgrim people journeying toward the Kingdom where God will be all in all, and where the unity begun here in faith will be brought to perfection in glory.

Entrusting our parish to the maternal care of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Grace, we ask her to form us in the likeness of her Son. May she teach us to live the unity we celebrate, to guard the communion we receive, and to become a living sign of Christ's presence in the world.

Nourished by the Eucharist, strengthened by the Holy Spirit, and united in Christ, let us go forth as one parish family—faithful disciples, joyful witnesses, and builders of communion in a divided world.

With prayerful best wishes and my blessing, I remain

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Fr. Vilaire Philius

Pastor