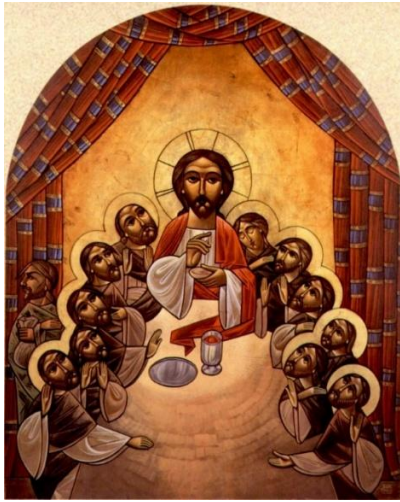


## June Scripture Reflection on the Feast of Corpus Christi.



### Reflection on the Feast of Corpus Christi

Fr Richard Rohr, a Franciscan modern-day mystic and writer, guides us to think that on this feast we should think of the Eucharist as not just centred on bread and wine but including *all of creation*. It is not just about the bread and wine on the altar, but extends to all people and everything that exists. It's about God's love eternally present in the world.

He says that God so loved the world that he entered into his beloved creation, culminating in the incarnation of his son Jesus. At the institution of Holy Communion at the Last Supper, Jesus invites us to "take God into ourselves". The bread and wine, earthly nourishing elements, are infused with the presence of God, which as we take them, remind us of the living presence of God within us, as He is in Jesus. "This is my body. This is my blood." Jesus is pointing to everything material and spiritual, not just a piece of bread and some wine. God is present in **all** his creation. Jesus invites us into this sacred understanding through Holy Communion.

St Paul's letter to the Corinthians develops this idea when he says that *we* become the active Body of Christ in the world: his head, ears, eyes, legs and arms. We are called to become Christs; active in the world.

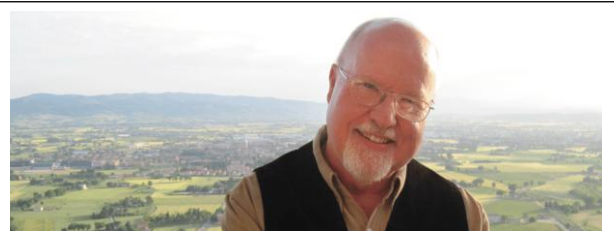
### The Origins of the Feast of Corpus Christi

The feast of Corpus Christi used to be known as the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, which has its origins in the 13th century. St Juliana of Liege, a canoness in present day Belgium, had a recurring vision of a full moon with a dark spot in the centre. She interpreted this as the Church (the Moon) lacking a specific feast (the dark spot) dedicated solely to the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. The Bishop was so impressed with this interpretation that he instituted the first celebration of this feast in his local diocese.

A little later in 1263, a German priest, Peter of Prague, was struggling with the idea of the Real Presence, and whilst saying mass one day witnessed a consecrated host bleeding onto the altar linen. The Pope, Urban 1V, who was nearby in Orvieto, saw the stained cloth and invested the miracle. The cloth remains venerated in Orvieto Cathedral to this day.

### St Thomas Aquinas

On August 11 1264, the Bull "Transiturus de hoc Mundo", established the feast on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday. The Pope commissioned St Thomas Aquinas to compose the official prayers and hymns for the feast including the famous hymn Pange Lingua (Containing the Tantum Ergo Hymn).



Fr Richard Rohr: author of "The Universal Christ"

"Jesus has made himself the Bread of Life. If you want to grow in love, come back to the Eucharist, come back to that Adoration" Mother Teresa.