

**Homily – Wednesday of the Eighteenth Week in Ordinary Time  
Televised Mass with Senior Staff – August 7, 2024**

Pope Francis has quoted Pope Benedict XVI to remind us that *“we cannot approach the Eucharistic table without being drawn into the mission which, beginning in the very heart of God, is meant to reach all people.”*

Recently, some of us were blessed to participate in the National Eucharistic Congress, in Indianapolis. As we reflect on the profound gift of Jesus the Eucharist, and the missionary calling we receive from the Lord at Mass, I would like to draw some inspiration from the rich teachings and reflections shared there by the Papal Delegate, Cardinal Luis Tagle, and our Apostolic Nuncio, Cardinal Christophe Pierre; as well as the readings from Scripture we just had proclaimed. Let us embrace our missionary calling, received in this sacrament, as a remedy for the wounds of our souls, our bodies, and the Church.

Cardinal Pierre emphasized that true Eucharistic revival goes beyond devotional practices. It compels us to encounter Christ not only in the sacrament but also in our daily lives. The Eucharist is a source of unity, calling us to build bridges with those who differ from us, recognizing the presence of Christ in every person. This unity is not merely structural but deeply relational, as we are transformed by Christ’s love and sent forth to be His hands and feet in the world.

Cardinal Tagle reminded us of the intimate connection between the Eucharist and mission. Jesus, sent by the Father, gave His flesh for the life of the world. His presence in the

Eucharist is the ultimate gift, a self-giving that calls us to see everything through the lens of giftedness. In our world, where achievement and profit often overshadow the appreciation of gifts, we are called to rediscover the joy of seeing each other as gifts. We receive the Lord's gift of Himself in the Eucharist, so He can make of us his own gift for others, through our willingness to become pure gift-of-self. This vision transforms us into Eucharistic missionaries, bearing Christ's love to a world in need.

The readings remind us of God's everlasting love and His desire to restore us. Just as the Canaanite woman's faith moved Jesus to heal her daughter, our faith can move mountains. We are reminded that no matter the darkness we face – be it sin, pain, or societal challenges – Christ, the light of the world, is with us. The Eucharist is a constant assurance of this presence, a healing balm for our wounds, offering hope and renewal.

As Church leaders, we are called to partake in the Good Shepherd's mission in our local Church towards a deeper understanding and experience of the Eucharist. The Lord's presence in the sacrament transforms us into a compassionate people on mission. We must create spaces where Sunday Mass does not merely mark the beginning and end of every week, but where it is lived throughout the week.

Let us heed the call to "conversion to the Eucharist," as Pope Francis urges, and become a Eucharistic people, united and sent forth. May Our Lady of Guadalupe help us embrace the Eucharist as the remedy for our spiritual, physical, and ecclesial ailments, allowing it to renew us and propel us into the world as bearers of the healing love of Christ.