



From the Pastor
5th Sunday in
Ordinary Time - B
February 4, 2024

**ST. THOMAS AQUINAS &
THE EUCHARIST.**

Last week, we paid tribute to **Saint Thomas Aquinas** [1225-1274] for the great contributions he made to our understanding of the mystery of **Christ's Real Eucharistic Presence**. [All past articles on the **National Eucharistic**

Revival are on our **Parish** website.] He not only 'coined' the term '**Transubstantiation**' to describe how the **bread** and **wine** become **Christ's Body** and **Blood**, he crafted the orations we still use for **holy Mass** on the **Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ** or **Corpus Christi**. He not only wrote theological tomes on and preached about the **Most Blessed Sacrament**, he even composed many of the hymns we still sing during **Eucharistic Adoration**: '**Pange Lingua**' ['**Sing My Tongue**'] - '**Panis Angelicus**' - ['**Bread of Angels**'] - '**O Salutaris Hostia**' ['**O Saving Victim**'] or '**O Saving Sacrifice**'] - and the one we will expound on today: '**Tantum Ergo**' ['**Therefore so great**'] which are the last two verses of '**Pange Lingua**.'

This venerable hymn should be known by all, ideally in **Latin**. Online sites provide the correct pronunciation of the **Latin**, along with an **English** translation, so you can learn what we are singing or praying. In one of the highpoints in **Holy Thursday's Mass of the Lord's Supper**, '**Pange Lingua**' is sung as the **Blessed Sacrament** is carried in a candlelit **Procession** from the **Altar** to the **Place of Repose**. Once it reaches the **Place of Repose**, the last two verses, or the '**Tantum Ergo**,' are sung. Here are the **Latin** words, followed by an **English** translation:

Sacramentum Veneremur cernui:
Et antiquum documentum Novo cedat ritui:
Praestet fides supplementum Sensuum defectui.

DOWN in adoration falling,
Lo! the sacred Host we hail,
Lo! oe'r ancient forms departing
Newer rites of grace prevail;
Faith for all defects supplying,
Where the feeble senses fail.

Genitori, Genitoque Laus et jubilatio,
Salus, honor, virtus quoque Sit et benedictio:
Procedenti ab utroque Compar sit laudatio.

To the everlasting Father,
And the Son Who reigns on high
With the Holy Spirit proceeding
Forth from each eternally,
Be salvation, honor blessing,
Might and endless majesty.

A MOST POWERFUL HYMN. This hymn so perfectly summarizes what, or rather, Who, is present in the **Consecrated Host** that the **Church** grants a **PLENARY Indulgence** to all who recite or sing it on **Holy Thursday** or **Corpus Christi**, and a **PARTIAL Indulgence** at other times. What is an **Indulgence**? It is a gift, entrusted to the **Church** when **Jesus** gave **Saint Peter** the **Keys** or power to loose and bind, offered to those whose sins were forgiven by being **Baptized**, which washes away all sin, or by **Confessing** sins committed after Baptism. They must receive **Holy Communion** close to when they did whatever gained them an **Indulgence**, pray for the **Holy Father's** intentions, and strive to avoid sin. [There's no 'magic' 'sin eraser!'] A **PARTIAL Indulgence** removes SOME of the punishment due to sin; a **PLENARY Indulgence** removes all punishment due to sin.

Think of it this way: when a parent **forgives** a child for doing wrong, they may still 'ground' the child; but if the child shows signs of true repentance, that punishment could be partially or totally abrogated. Or, if I forgive someone for breaking my window, but I can still require total or partial replacement of the glass - or grant a plenary pardon, freeing them from have to make any repayment whatsoever. So, too, with our sins. Through His **Church** and her **Sacraments**, **God** forgives us, but we must still repair whatever damage we did by our sins. However, through the gift of His grace, and through the granting of an indulgence, **God** totally remits or limits our responsibility to atone for the fallout of our sins.

So, break out a hymnal, or visit a website that can teach you the **English**, or better yet, **Latin** version of this great **Eucharistic** hymn. That will 'up' our chances of one day singing with **Saint Thomas Aquinas** and all the **Angels** and **Saints** in heaven, where we will no longer need sacramental signs to see our **Lord** and **God**. And plan to sing it on **Holy Thursday** night at the **Place of Repose**!

In Christ,

Father Mark

Rev. Mark A. Kreder, Pastor