

June 14, 2009—5pm vigil
Solemnity of Corpus Christi—Year B+40th Anniv. of Jim and Pat DeSalvo
Father David Lawrence

This evening we celebrate the great mystery of the Eucharist in which Jesus gives us his own body, blood, soul and divinity. This great sacrament which we celebrate every day here at St. Dominic is a gift beyond compare and worthy of our utmost gratitude and admiration. One of the remarkable features of this great gift of almighty God is its scandalous humility. Jesus gives us his body and blood today not with all of the drama of his arrest and passion and crucifixion, but hidden under the simple appearances of bread and wine. And by these simple appearances Jesus means to teach us not that his gift is cheap, but rather that it is to be our daily sustenance. Every single day of our Christian lives is to be animated by his love.

Today we also have the special opportunity to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Jim and Pat DeSalvo's sacrament of marriage. The sacrament of marriage has a deep inner connection with the sacrament of the Eucharist. 40 years ago Jim and Pat made a complete gift of themselves to each other in their marriage vows. They laid down their lives for each other to become bearers of God's own love which is faithful, fruitful and forever. And this love which is so great and holy isn't always full of drama. Certainly Jim and Pat have had dramatic moments in their lives, life and death crises, moments of great joy and intense sorrow, but that's not every day. Some days are very humble and simple and yet they contain that same gift of self that began on their wedding day.

Through the years, their faithfulness to marriage reveals to us the faithfulness of God's love and shows us his presence in our world today. Marriage is indeed a sacrament of God's presence much like the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

Thus the decline in marriage commitments over the past fifty years or so is linked to the decline in Mass attendance. If we as a culture undervalue this simple but profound gift of God's self that we celebrate here on this altar, how can we value the essence of marriage? My friends as we celebrate today with Jim and Pat their married love and as we celebrate with the whole Church the feast of Corpus Christi, let us pray and work for a transformation of our culture that it may be filled with God's love.