



# The Branches

By: Archbishop Jeffrey S. Grob

*But Israel I will feed with the finest wheat,  
I will satisfy them with honey from the rock. (Psalm 81:17)*

June 9, 2026

Hello Everyone —

But they urged him, “Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over.” So he went in to stay with them.

And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. (Luke 24:29-30)

What a blessed feast it is — Corpus Christi — The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. As Luke recounts, the Lord Jesus went in with them — but we also know that He remains with us still. The following is one of those stories from life that requires no explanation:

Roberta had always been active in her parish on the west side of the city. One Sunday, her pastor caught her after Mass and asked if she would consider becoming an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion. After much hedging, she finally agreed and attended the customary training sessions to become a minister at Mass.

Later, interviewed for the diocesan newspaper, Roberta told the reporter that she was an absolute nervous wreck on the first Sunday that she was scheduled to minister. When the moment came, Roberta proceeded to the altar — just as she had been instructed — her heart pounding in her chest.

“What if I forget what to do? What if I mess up and go to the wrong station? What — oh, horror of horrors — if I drop the chalice?” All these questions were racing through her mind.

But she took the chalice as she was supposed to and went to her station. Her hands shook as she presented the cup to each parishioner with the simple words, "The Blood of Christ." But Roberta noticed that it was not long before her nervousness was transformed into awe. As she continued to distribute the chalice, Roberta began to reflect upon the profound love of God who gives us such a wonderful sacrament. She was struck by the gentleness with which so many approached to receive the precious gift. She gazed at the many hands which opened up to receive their Lord — the many different hands — of the elderly and the young — of the worker and the student — of the homeless and the successful.

Roberta went on to recount that later that very same week, she was asked to stand-in for someone at the soup kitchen in the inner city. Now this she could handle, she thought — having volunteered many nights and weekends at the facility for more than five years.

As she carefully ladled soup into a bowl and handed it to a poor, elderly woman, she found herself strangely holding the bowl with a similar reverence as she did the chalice the Sunday before. Of course, she realized the difference between the two. But she felt her heart flooded by God's peace. She looked at the frail woman standing before her with the same love and concern as the person receiving the chalice on Sunday. Roberta was overcome with the same awe and wonder and love at the soup kitchen as she had serving at God's altar.

In the final analysis, Roberta realized that she had learned a critically important lesson that day — not only is the Eucharist an incredible gift to be received — but it is something that must be shared.

The following prayer will be used on Thursday, June 11, 2026, by the U.S. Catholic bishops to consecrate the United States to the Sacred Heart of Jesus:

O Most Sacred Heart of Jesus:

You know the longings of our hearts, and you desire that we enjoy friendship with you.

From your pierced side, you have poured out the wellspring of life, for which we thirst.

Your heart burns with a love for all people to return to a right relationship with you.

We celebrate the abundant gifts you have given this nation, founded on the self-evident truths that our Creator has endowed all people with the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

We make reparation for the offenses against you and against human dignity that have taken place in this nation.

May our hearts be united to yours, so that our families and communities enjoy peace and happiness; may broken relationships be reconciled, injustices repaired, and the wounds of our land be healed.

May your holy Catholic Church serve as a sign, pointing all people to your infinite love.

O Desire of Nations and Center of History, we ask you to bless these United States of America.

Who live and reign with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us!  
Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us!

As I do for you, please pray for me,

*Most Reverend Jeffrey S. Grob*  
*Archbishop of Milwaukee*

