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New Zealand

Pastoral Letter for the Feast of Corpus Christi, the Body and Blood of Christ.

TO BE READ AT ALL MASSES ON THE WEEKEND OF JUNE 1/2, 2013.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Today's great celebration of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ reminds us that the Risen Lord continues to live among us in the most Blessed Sacrament of the holy Eucharist. He teaches us that he is present to his Church in many ways. Most especially, however, Jesus is present in the consecrated bread and wine of the Holy Eucharist. As the Catholic faith teaches us, the conversion of the bread and wine at Mass into the body and blood of Christ is accomplished by the action of the Holy Spirit and the efficacy of the Word of Christ.

The presence of the risen Christ begins in the Mass at the moment of the consecration. His presence endures for as long as the forms of consecrated bread and wine remain. We are reminded of this real and permanent presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament by the sanctuary lamp which burns in our churches and shows us that the Holy Eucharist is reserved in the tabernacle.

In this Year of Faith for the Church, we will see the commencement of perpetual adoration of the Holy Eucharist. Perpetual Adoration means that the Holy Eucharist will be placed in a monstrance on the altar all day and all night. It will require at least two persons to make a commitment to come and adore Christ in the Eucharist for an hour each week. Can we do it? Can we find enough adorers, 336 per week, to carry out such a grace-filled project? We will not know unless we make the endeavour and I encourage you to consider being generous with the Lord in this way.

The chapel at St. Gregory's Church, Bishopdale is the venue chosen for perpetual adoration of the Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. It is eminently suitable and adequate arrangements for security and safety have been made. I invite all of you, and any

visitors to come and spend time with the Lord as well as those who have signed up to pray at specific times. Here we can pray for ourselves, our families and for all in need. Here we can ask the Risen Lord to bless our diocese with all it needs to be faithful to the Gospel. Here we can grow, one by one, in closeness to Jesus, who is the gift of the Father to each of us.

I invite everyone to participate in this perpetual adoration of the Lord in the Holy Eucharist. There will be an opportunity to sign up next Sunday. This will mean indicating willingness and commitment to spend one hour a week in adoration of the Eucharist.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Jones", with a small cross symbol to the left.

† Barry Jones
Bishop of Christchurch