

Jesus always comes to us, even in unlikely ways



I've said it before, and I'll say it again.
[God spoils me.](#)

Throughout the pandemic, my parish's priests and seminarians have been very proactive about inviting parishioners into their lives of prayer and community – livestreaming daily Mass, the Rosary and some of the Liturgy of the Hours, creating a new podcast and website to help build up the domestic church, organizing a book club for young adults and doing a live Q and A session each Wednesday.

Then, on Good Friday, I happened to be scrolling through social media when I came across a post by my pastor. While we were unable to participate in the liturgies of Holy Week and Easter in person due to the health regulations for COVID-19, our parish was hosting a neighborhood Eucharistic procession after the Easter morning Mass with permission of our bishop.

The separation from parish life and the sacraments – above all, the Eucharist – has been painful for many people, so I was overjoyed to have some way of bringing Our Lord to his people and to set Easter apart from any other day.

So, on Sunday morning after livestreaming the 9 a.m. Mass, my roommate and I jumped into her car and drove to my parish. Though we live about 20 minutes away from the church, somehow we found ourselves near the beginning of the procession, still in sight of the monstrance.

I've been part of Eucharistic processions many times before. My home parish in Illinois annually processes the monstrance

from the original church building to the newer edition about a mile away on the feast of Corpus Christi. And last year, on the same feast day, my new parish introduced me to a similar tradition by making an altar outside of a parishioner's house and processing the Eucharist to their doorstep for a short period of adoration.

This time, it was different. Instead of being pilgrims on foot, we drove in our cars. And instead of singing songs of praise as a community, our priests and seminarians wore masks to follow health codes and were guided by a police escort. It was a startling sight, and yet so beautiful. Instead of feeling solemn, as it should have under the circumstances, there was an abundance of joy reverberating between cars and throughout the community.

During the drive – which made a loop through the neighborhoods of our parish district – my roommate and I listened and praised along with an [Easter playlist](#). Parishioners who lived on the route were encouraged to wait outside their homes for the procession to pass by, and many people – both parishioners and other neighbors alike – waved at us as we passed.

Then, as the procession ended back at the front doors of our beloved Church, we passed before Our Lord, truly present and risen in the Eucharist, receiving the blessing of the living Christ.

I was so focussed on following the monstrance from my view in the car that I forgot to look behind me during the procession. As my pastor noted in a news report, there were about 70 cars following Our Lord. What a beautiful witness!

Not all parishes or dioceses are able to do such a beautiful procession during this time or exercise the Faith in creative ways. But one thing stands true, no matter the circumstance: Christ has risen for us, and he will never leave us.

As Catholics, we are used to Easter being a sudden relief from

the season of Lent. This year is different. This year, it doesn't quite feel like Lent is fully over. This year, we are experiencing the uncertainty of the apostles as we try to understand what the empty tomb means. But, even if you were not able to see our Eucharistic Lord this Easter or during this season, don't forget to live in the truth of the Resurrection. Like the two men walking away from Jerusalem on the road to Emmaus, Christ meets us where we are and gives us the grace to see, believe and have hope. So, continue to let him enter into your homes and, more importantly, your hearts.

The Great Lent of 2020 (as many people have started calling it) has pruned us. May the Great Easter of 2020 purify us. Amen.

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