**Eucharistic Hymns and Prayers**

In 1264, the Feast of Corpus Christi (“the Body of Christ”) was added to the Church’s universal calendar by Pope Urban IV. This feast was instituted to honor the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar – the Holy Eucharist. Saint Thomas Aquinas, arguably the greatest of Catholic theologians in the history of the Church, was chosen to write the hymns and prayers for the liturgy. Almost 800 years later, we continue to adore Christ in the Blessed Sacrament using the hymns and prayers of Saint Thomas.

Two hymns in particular have a central role in Exposition and Benediction. During Exposition, the priest/deacon leads the people in singing *O salutaris hostia* (“O Saving Victim”). This is actually the final two verses of *Verbum Supernum Prodiens* (“The Heavenly Word, proceeding forth”), a longer hymn written by Saint Thomas for Morning Prayer of Corpus Christi.

At the time of Benediction, we have the singing of *Tantum ergo* (“Down in Adoration Falling”): again, this is the final two verses of the longer hymn, *Pange lingua gloriosi* (“Sing, my tongue, the Savior’s glory”).