

***Interview with Martin Estrada III***

My name is Martin. I am 21 years old; I was born in Laredo, Texas. I am currently on mission in Colorado accompanying Fr. Angel Perez-Brown.

**What has your experience been with the Eucharist?**

My whole life I have been a Catholic. Before I did my first Communion, I saw everyone standing in line to go receive Communion, what they said was the Body of Jesus Christ. I did not know what it was exactly. When I took classes to receive my first Communion, the classes were good, but I was a tough child. I was hyperactive and would always get in trouble with my religious education teachers, but I was able to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion. When I took the Body of Jesus the first time, I was expecting something big because the priest said, “When you consume the Body of Christ, you are closer to eternal life.” Yet I did not feel anything when I consumed it. However, when I listened to the catechesis of the Neo-Catechumenal Way, I was introduced to the importance of the Eucharist and the fact that I needed faith to see Who was in the Eucharist. Those years I was lacking the faith to see Who I was truly receiving. I would say that when I really first encountered Jesus Christ was when I was part of a Bible study where many youth would study the Word of God. Afterwards we would have time to be in front of the Blessed Sacrament. At the age of 14, I saw the Blessed Sacrament exposed for the first time. Before that I did not have any idea of what adoration was. It was amazing because seeing the Blessed Sacrament, I was seeing Jesus. Right then and there I started speaking with Him about my struggles, suffering and family problems at the time. I wasn’t doing well, but when I was in front of Him I felt like a father (Jesus Christ) was hugging me. Then after that, every time I took Communion at mass, I knew Who I was receiving. For a time, I did not attend Church because of many problems (e.g. drug addiction, alcoholism, fornication). Basically, I was living a worldly life. Then I started to feel lonely, so lonely that I did not know my purpose in life or why I was living. But thanks to a pilgrimage from the Neo-Catechumenal Way, I encountered the love of Jesus Christ. It helped me to go back to the Eucharist. Since then, I am reminded of the love that Jesus has for me every time I have the Eucharist in my hand ready to be consumed. To see Christ in my hands scandalizes me because Jesus lets Himself be consumed by someone like me who has had a bad history full of sins.

**What is your favorite Eucharistic miracle?**

I don’t have a favorite, but I am touched by Eucharistic miracles and how they came about. I am astounded by a miracle case in which a priest had put the extra consecrated hosts left over after Communion in the tabernacle. The next day, one of the hosts had become flesh. When they tested the flesh, it came out to be that it was the flesh of an adult male in his mid-thirties who had been extremely tortured. In the blood, there were chemicals which are only activated when in strong suffering. I believe that it is amazing how Jesus appears in these miracles, and I still doubt His love for me. I grumble and rebel against His Will still.