Dearest members and friends of Grace,

As we pass through this Holy Thursday and long for the gathering of God’s people and the celebration of the Sacrament of the Altar, let us meditate on CFW Walther’s words and when this state of emergency is over, cherish our unity in the one body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 10: 16-17

16 The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? 17 Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

The apostle Paul wishes to say: Consider, beloved Christians, that when you receive the blessed cup and the blessed bread, each one partakes of  the body and blood of Christ; they are both common to all of you.  You come into body-and-blood fellowship with one another.  For just as many grains become one bread, so in the Holy Supper, you, though you are many, become one Body, one mass, because you are partakers of the one bread and with it one and same body and blood of Christ.

Because of the presence and participation of the body of Christ, the Holy Supper is a meal of the most intimate fellowship and, therefore, at the same time, the highest love-meal.  Just as fervent love is demanded, so fervent love is delivered.  We all come together, as children of the same family, to the table of our common, heavenly Father.  As great as the distinction between communicants in civic life may be, in the Holy Supper all distinctions evaporate.  We are all the same, in that we each eat the same earthly and heavenly bread and drink the same earthly and heavenly drink.  In the Meal, the subject and his king, the slave and his master, the beggar and the rich, the child and the old man, the wife and the husband, the simple and the learned, truly all communicants stand as the same poor sinners and beggars, hungry and thirsty for grace.  Although one may appear in a rough apron while another in velvet and satin, adorned with gold and pearls, when they depart, all take with them that for which they hunger and thirst:  Christ’s blood and righteousness as their beauty and glorious dress.  No one receives a better food and better drink than the other. All receive the same Jesus, and with Him, the same righteousness.