

Deacon Mike's Homily for August 16 2015

"There is no serious problem in life except not becoming a saint"

Several times in the last several weeks we have heard Jesus clearly say "Amen, Amen" in the 6th ch. of John, meaning listen this is very important for your salvation, becoming a saint.....

In Jn. 6, Jesus states **eight times in no uncertain terms** that we must eat of his flesh and drink of his blood to have life and to live forever eternally in heaven.

Why would he say this so many times? I am sure that as he looked about the crowd he saw a shocked response in most of the crowd; they didn't seem to get it.

Next week we will hear in the Gospel reading that the crowd murmured that this was hard teaching, who could possibly believe this.

Also you will hear that they all left him, except the twelve. This was out 5,000 adults that had just witnessed the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and the fish!

Is it really any different today with so many who hear the truth thru the Church and the Holy Scriptures, have also walked from him and so many find it hard to believe in the Catholic faith because of the Eucharist which is his body and blood, they say, "this is hard teaching....."

Many of those outside the Catholic faith, or those who have left the faith, may believe that Jesus has been raised from the dead, raised others from the dead, healed the sick, was conceived and born of a virgin, was prophetic of the future, converted water into wine, and cast out demons.

Why then is it so hard to believe, that in Jesus' own words, **we must eat his flesh and drink his blood**, clearly emphasizing it?

Some things never change.....

At the Last supper Jesus was so clear in Mt.26:26,

“While they were eating, Jesus took the bread, said the blessing, broke it and giving it to his disciples said, “Take and eat; **this is my body**”.

Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, “Drink from it, all of you, **for this is my blood of the covenant**, which will be shed on behalf of many.....

In Luke’s Gospel we are told to “**Do this in memory of me**”.

And so we do at every Catholic Mass!

Catholic teaching is explicitly clear as it is in scripture, that the bread and wine that we will soon bring up in procession and thru the consecration by the priest will become his body and his blood under the appearance of bread and wine.

USE THE DOLLAR BILL AS AN EXAMPLE! Explain the importance of faith in Jesus’ words.....

How blessed we are to be graced by his physical presence among us, being fed and spiritually nourished with his body and blood , nothing more, nothing less.

Since the time of the apostles, thru their disciples and for 2,000 years the church has honored the command of Jesus to do this when we gather together at Mass.

Sadly, so many of our Christian brethren, but not all, have dismissed Jesus’s teaching on the Eucharist as making no sense much like the crowd of 5,000.

When was the last time we shared the teaching on the Eucharist with others???

And even worse, so many millions have never been invited to Mass to worship with us, nor had anyone adequately explain the significance of the receiving the Eucharist, the bread of life, and the truth found in his Holy Church.

Jesus is depending on us as he has for the last 2,000 years.

There is a short story of when Jesus had returned to heaven, he and the Archangel Gabriel were talking. Even in heaven Jesus bore the marks of the crucifixion.

Gabriel said, "Master, you must have suffered horribly! Do people know and appreciate how much you love them and what you did for them?"

Jesus replied, "Oh, no; not yet. Right now only a few people in Palestine know.

Gabriel was perplexed: "Then what have you done to let everyone know about your love?"

Jesus answered, "I have asked Peter, Andrew, James and John and few more brethren to tell others about me.

Those who are told will tell others about me, and yet others in time until the last man and the last woman in the farthest corner of the earth will have heard the story of how I gave my life for them because I love them so much."

Gabriel frowned and looked rather skeptical. "Yes, but what if Peter and the others grow weary? What if the people who come after them forget? Surely you have made other plans?"

Said Jesus, "Gabriel, I haven't made any other plans. I'm counting on them."

Brothers and Sisters, he's counting on you.....

Each one of us who are Catholic must lovingly invite back those who have left, for it is a spiritually life and death matter.

We can also invite those not of our Catholic faith, Christian or not, to attend the RCIA program through which the Church teaches about the fundamentals of Catholic Christianity, and maybe you could offer to attend with them. You can always learn more too.

The RCIA program can also prepare those adults who are not confirmed to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. We modify the program depending on your needs.

Lastly, those of you who feel inadequate in witnessing to our faith, or if you have the desire to learn more about what your faith teaches, and the “whys” behind it, the RCIA would be of enormous help in your spiritual journey.

For those of you here today who are not Catholic, I warmly invite you to “come and see” what the RCIA is all about and you would be under no obligation.

Sessions begin Weds Aug. 26 from 7-9 p.m.. Call the office for info. Or see me or Father in the back of Church.

My brothers and sisters we don't have to look far for a heavy dose of God's grace to enable us to reach out to others.....

Simply listen with an open mind and heart to the Lord's promise we have been hearing for the last few Sundays in 6th Ch. of John's Gospel:

“Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day;

for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them.”

For those of us who will soon receive the Eucharist we should pause in awe – the Lord's promise and guarantee is simply mind boggling!

Amen

JMJ