

Link to Liturgy



6th Sunday in Ordinary Time Be Made Clean

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Lessons and Discussions

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“and kneeling down begged him”

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“he stretched out his hand, touched him...”

Introit (Entrance Antiphon) – Roman Missal

This should be chanted so that the time of prayer, study and discussion can be made sacred. Another song can be substituted, but should have the same theme.

Esto mihi *Ps 31 (30): 3, 4*

VI

BE unto me a protecting God * and a house of
refuge, to save me; for you are my support and my
refuge; and for the sake of your name you will lead me
and nourish me.

Learn how to Chant! - <http://youtu.be/Jy5q94sXg4U>

Alternate options:

All in All
Rescue

Collect –Roman Missal

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

O God, who teach us that you abide
in hearts that are just and true,
Grant that we may be so fashioned by your grace
as to become a dwelling pleasing to you.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
One God, for ever and ever.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

well, Lady most comely. Prevail upon Christ to pity us.
V. Let me praise thee, most holy Virgin.
R. Give me strength against thine enemies.

Let us pray. Grant, O merciful God, defense to our weakness;
that we who now celebrate the memory of the holy Mother of
God may, by the aid of her intercession, rise again from our
sins. Amen.

“The End” Notes

- [1] Matthew 8:17
- [2] Romans 5:8
- [3] Catechism of the Catholic Church - Glossary
- [4] Catechism of the Catholic Church - 2616
- [5] Reinhold Scheider (YouCat, page 140)
- [6] Mark 2:17
- [7] Order of Mass – Communion Rite
- [8] Blessed John Paul II, Homily, 17 February 1985
- [9] Blessed John Paul II, Homily, Rio de Janeiro, 2 July 1980
- [10] YouCat (Youth Catechism) question 241
- [11] [Link to Liturgy Lesson - St. Francis](#)
- [12] Heinrich Boll (YouCat, page 141)
- [13] Code of Canon Law - 840
- [14] Father Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalen, O.C.D.; Divine Intimacy; Vol. 1; 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B
- [15] Father Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalen, O.C.D.; Divine Intimacy; Vol. 1; 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B
- [16] Lev. 13:46
- [17] Father Francis Fernandez; In Conversation with God; Vol. 3; 44.1
- [18] Ephesians 2:8-10
- [19] Matthew 5:17
- [20] Revelation 21:5
- [21] Code of Canon Law – 843 §2
- [22] Father Francis Fernandez; In Conversation with God; Vol. 3; 44.3
- [23] Rite of Ordination
- [24] Council of Vatican II; Gaudium et Spes; Section 43
- [25] Father Francis Fernandez; In Conversation with God; Vol. 3; 44.3
- [26] Council of Vatican II; Lumen-Gentium; Section 9
- [27] Officium Divinum; Friday Sext; The Church and the Holy Eucharist
- [28] Council of Vatican II; Lumen-Gentium; Section 1
- [29] CCC – 1504
- [30] Roman Catholic Daily Missal; 1962; The Sacraments
- [31] Catechism of the Council of Trent; The Sacraments
- [32] Roman Catholic Daily Missal; 1962; The Sacraments
- [33] Catechism of the Catholic Church - Glossary

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Benefactor of all who turn to you, light of those in darkness, creator and principle of all life, gardener of all spiritual growth, have pity on me, Lord, and make of me a spotless temple. Do not consider my sins; if you pay attention to my faults I will not be able to stand your presence; but with your immense mercy and your infinite compassion cancel out my stains through our Lord Jesus Christ, your only most holy Son, the physician of our souls.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Marian Antiphon – Ave Regina Caelorum – Simple Tone

83b AVE REGINA CAELORUM

vi.

A - ve Re-gi-na cae-ló-rum,* Ave Dó-mi-na Ange-ló-rum

Salve ra-dix, salve porta, Ex qua mundo lux est orta :

Gaude Virgo glo-ri- ó-sa, Su-per omnes spe-ci- ó-sa : Va-le

V. Dignare me laudare te Virgo sacrata.
R. Da mihi virtutem contra hostes tuos.

English Translation

Hail, Queen of Heaven; hail, Mistress of the Angels; hail, root of Jesse; hail, the gate through which the Light rose over the earth.

Rejoice, Virgin most renowned and of unsurpassed beauty. Fare-

Amen

Gospel Reading – Mark 1:40-45 – Daily Roman Missal

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark
- Glory to you Lord

A leper came to Jesus and said, “If you wish, you can make me clean.” Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him, “I do will it. Be made clean.” The leprosy left him immediately, and he was made clean. Then warning him sternly, he dismissed him at once.

He said to him, “See that you tell no one anything, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them.”

The man went away and began to publicize the whole matter. He spread the report abroad so that it was impossible for Jesus to enter a town openly. He remained outside in deserted places, and people kept coming to him from everywhere.

The Gospel of the Lord.
- Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings (Saturday of the Fifth Week in Ordinary Time)

From a sermon by Blessed Isaac of Stella, abbot

Why, brothers, are we so little concerned to seek one another’s well-being, so that where we see a greater need, we might show a greater readiness to help and carry one another’s burdens? For this is what the Blessed Apostle Paul urges us to do in the words, “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ,” and also, “Support each other in charity. For this surely is the law of Christ.”

Why can I not patiently bear the weaknesses I see in my brother, which either out of necessity or because of physical or moral weakness, cannot be corrected? And why can I not instead generously offer him consolation; as it is written, “Their children shall be carried on their shoulders and consoled upon their knees?” It is because I lack the virtue, which suffers all things, is patient enough to bear all, and generous enough to love?

This is indeed the law of Christ, who truly bore our weaknesses in his passion and carried our sorrows out of pity, loving those he carried and carrying those he loved. Whoever attacks a brother in need or plots against him in his weakness of whatever sort, surely fulfills the devil's law and subjects himself to it. Let us then be compassionate toward one another, loving all our brothers, bearing one another's weaknesses, yet ridding ourselves of our sins.

The more any way of life sincerely strives for the love of God and the love of our neighbor for God's sake, the more acceptable it is to God, no matter what be its observances or external form. For charity is the reason why anything should be done or left undone, changed or left unchanged; it is the initial principle and the end to which all things should be directed. Whatever is honestly done out of love and in accordance with love can never be blameworthy. May he then deign to grant us this love, for without it we cannot please him, and without him we can do absolutely nothing, God, who lives and reigns for ever. Amen.

Responsory – Office of Readings (1 John 3:11; Galatians 5:14)

This is the message that you have heard from the beginning:

- love one another

All God's commands are summed up in one:

- love one another

What a Pity - Lesson and Discussion

“Moved with pity”

What is pity? Pity, comes from the Latin word “pieta”, which means to have compassion or to commiserate. Compassion means to literally share in the passion of another. Commiserate means to share in the misery of another. Jesus shows pity for us when He “took our infirmities and bore our diseases,”[1] on the Cross. Even though He had no sin, He shared in the misery of sin. “But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”[2] We are in Christ, He is the Head; we are the Body. Both Head and Body are united in the passion

“stage directions” which are similar to the red and the “script” itself, which is similar to the black.

TV SHOW – “Boy Meets World Eric Hollywood” – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 1:30 (STOP AT 6:09)

http://youtu.be/EMqYI_affHY?t=4m39s

The character of the show gets ask to play a role of a typical older brother, however all he has ever done is Shakespeare plays. Imagine going to a Shakespeare play in which the actors did not follow the stage directions or the script. The actions and dialogue could be altered in such a way that one might not consider it a Shakespeare play at all. The same is true of sports. There are rules that must be followed. Imagine a basketball game in which most of the rules were broken, you could no longer call the game basketball, for it might resemble basketball, but would not be basketball.

Don't rules and structure make things boring? Sports have rules. Music has rules. Yet, our culture cannot get enough of either. Pretty much all TV Shows; whether they are sitcoms or reality based, follow rules, structures and patterns. For example, American Idol has the same judges, same cast of nobodies who try to sing on a show where they can win fame. They are voted off by America. NCIS, CSI, Law and Order SVU and other shows similar to them have a dead body (or bodies), they try to figure out who killed the person (or people), and bring them to justice. *Phineas and Ferb* a Disney cartoon uses the same pattern every episode. In season 3, episode 20 “Tri-Stone Area” the writers change the look of all the characters and even use a “caveman” language so that the viewer doesn't know what is being said. Due to the constant pattern of the series, the viewer knows exactly what is going on and the episode is entertaining. In the Liturgy, we have the same pattern or template, what changes are the feasts, the readings, some prayers and the sentiments that we carry in our heart and mind. Pattern does not make things boring, we do. We must be careful though not to think of Mass as a television show where we may think, “oh, I've seen this episode before” and tune out. The difference is the Mass is the same one as Jesus celebrated 2,000 years ago and is not just a “recreation” or “representation” of what took place. It is the moment every time when Heaven comes down to Earth, and we kneel in awe and in thanksgiving.

Profession of Faith or Popular Devotion – Early Christian Prayer

ments, have the most impact in our life? The work of Christ through the Sacraments will act or have an impact in proportion to our disposition. The leper is the example of the perfect disposition in which to approach, receive, and accept the Sacraments. The beauty of the Sacraments is that they are effective and grace filled for us, not because of us. There is nothing we can do to add or take away from the Sacrament, but we can through our disposition, block or inhibit the grace that is offered to us.

What helps us to receive the Sacraments, so that we may get the most out them?[32] To help us do this [receive the Sacraments well], the Church makes use of solemn ceremonies in administering the Sacraments. The Council of Trent thus explains the part played by these ceremonies:

1. They surround these Holy Mysteries with a religious respect.
2. They help to make the Sacraments more effective by, in some sense, picturing them before our eyes, at the same time imprinting the holiness they produce more deeply in our hearts.
3. They excite in our souls sentiments of faith and charity, which dispose them in the best possible way to receive all the fruits of a Sacrament. All the Sacraments produce sanctifying grace, which heals our souls and raises them to a supernatural state.

Why is it important to be respectful and reverence in the preparation and reception of the Sacraments? As stated above our reverence and respect enables us “in the best possible way to receive all the fruits of a Sacrament.” We can ask for the Gift of the Holy Spirit called Piety. “Piety: One of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit which leads on to devotion to God (1831). Filial piety connotes an attitude of reverence and respect by children toward their parents (2215). Piety also refers to the religious sense of a people, and its expression in popular devotions (1674).”[33] Holy Mother Church, just like our own earthly mothers, give us rules or disciplines, so that we can get the best or the most out of what we are given. Teachers and coaches give us rules and discipline so that we can get the most out of the instruction. The Church gives us important rules in regards to how to celebrate the Mass and the Sacraments. These rules are also called norms, rubrics, instructions, or disciplines and are contained in the liturgical books such as the Rites and Roman Missal. In these books there are black text and red text. A popular saying in the formation of priests is “do the red, say the black.” This is very similar to the script of a play that gives

and misery but also united in the victory and glory. Jesus showed pity on us, and we show pity on Him. He shared in our passion and misery, and we share in his passion and misery. This sharing, this divine exchange, happens most perfectly at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

VIDEO – La Pieta and "The Gift" – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 3:12

<http://youtu.be/J1ssHjCCmAM>

A perfect model of pity is the *pieta* the famous statue by Michelangelo, there is no better example of a disciples practice of pity than that the Blessed Virgin Mary, who completely shares in the passion and misery of her Son.

Why was Jesus moved with pity? The prayer of the leper especially moves Jesus. “If you wish, you can make me clean.” The leper is an outcast and is forbidden by law to enter the town, but this does not stop his faith. There is nothing that is going to get in the way of this leper and his journey to Christ. He does not allow his social condition, embarrassment, and/or disease to keep him from Christ; instead he approaches Christ, and then knells and begs for healing. It is both his actions (knelling and begging) and his prayer, “If you wish, you can make me clean” that is a manifestation of a heart that is sincerely given to Jesus. It is this sincere and humble heart that moves Jesus.

How does prayer have to do with pity? “Prayer is the elevation of the mind and heart to God in praise of his glory, a petition made to God for some desired good or in thanksgiving for a good received or in intercession for others before God.”[3] The leper elevates his body, mind and heart to God. This elevation by the leper moves Jesus. “Jesus hears the prayer of faith, expressed in words (the leper, Jairus, the Canaanite woman, the good thief) or in silence (the bearers of the paralytic, the woman with a hemorrhage who touches his clothes, the tears and ointment of the sinful woman). The urgent request of the blind men, ‘Have mercy on us, Son of David’ or ‘Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me!’ has been renewed in the traditional prayer to Jesus known as the Jesus Prayer: ‘Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner!’ Healing infirmities or forgiving sins, Jesus always responds to a prayer offered in faith: ‘Your faith has made you well; go in peace.’ St. Augustine wonderfully summarizes the three dimensions of Jesus’ prayer, ‘He prays for us as our priest, as our Head, and prays to us as our God. Therefore let us acknowledge our voice in Him and His in us.’”[4]

[The Jesus Prayer; The Prayer Rope: History and Meaning] One of the first and most ancient prayers of the Church is called the Jesus Prayer, “Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.” The prayer can be loosely traced back to Jesus’ story of the parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector in Luke 18:9-14. In the story the tax collector begs for pity by God saying, “O God, be merciful to me a sinner.” Jesus tells us by this parable that we are all not above to ask for pity and mercy from God.

CHANT – Psalm 32 – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 2:32

<http://youtu.be/6OldxFtv0UI>

A perfect Psalm 32 is prayed in Liturgy of the Hours, Week I, during Thursday Evening Prayer. Any chant tone can be used or the Psalm can be spoken. It is good to alternate stanza from side to side or male and female. This Psalm helps us to have the attitude of the leper. We know our need, we desire to be healed, and we are overjoyed with thanksgiving. You can either use the PCC or pray from Week I, Thursday, Evening Prayer in the Liturgy of Hours.

Why does the leper recognize Jesus? “The sick person is able to sense more than other people notice.”[5] When we are sick we are sensitive to everything. For example, when a person has a migraine or the flu, they are sensitive to light, or movement. Another example is when someone has a stomach virus, and recognizes what they can and cannot eat and drink. The sick very often recognize Jesus before anyone else. In Mark’s Gospel, we see that the demons and the sick are the first to recognize the Messiah. Both the demons and sick recognize His authority and power, the demons, hate it; the sick, embrace it. “Those who are well, do not need a physician, but the sick do.”[6]

How can we imitate the actions of the leper? How do we recognize our sickness? Each night we examine our conscience during Night Prayer. This helps us to recognize our sin, our sickness and ask for mercy. In the Confiteor at the Mass, we imitate the prayer and action of the leper but first asking for forgiveness and mercy prior to receiving the intimacy and healing of the Eucharist. What is the last word we say together prior to receiving The Holy Eucharist? It is the word “healed”. “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.”[7] When we look at the Mass parts we see a continual “begging” of mercy from the Kyrie and Confiteor, to the Our Father and Agnus Dei. to desire and

are present; but they act in proportion to our dispositions. We must, therefore, not only receive them, but try to receive them well.”[30]

What does *ex opera operato* mean? *Ex opera operato* means “from the work performed”, this means that the Sacrament has grace simply because it is the work of Christ and is performed by the priest, who is in the person of Christ. The Sacraments are the works of Christ. He is working in the Sacraments, and thus the Sacraments are real and grace-filled.

Sacraments are not a sign or symbol; they are the work of Christ. The work of Christ through the Sacrament cannot be lessened by the minister. In other words if the priest lacks faith or is a sinful man, the work of Christ is not lessened. **Is there anything that could make a Sacrament invalid?** Yes. All the conditions for the Sacrament’s action must be present. **What are the conditions necessary for the Sacraments?** “Every Sacrament consists of two things: matter, which is called the element, and form, which is commonly called the word.”[31] We have to have the right matter (stuff) and the right form (words).

What is the correct matter and form for each sacrament?

[See the Sacrament Chart on the main page document section]

In today’s Gospel we see that Jesus uses both matter and form as He heals the leper. His very touch is the matter, “he stretched out his hand, touched him”. The form is His words, “I do will it. Be made clean.”

VIDEO – Bottle Whistle – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 1:39

<http://youtu.be/o7LFahY0vvl>

The Sacraments are like a bottle whistle. To make a whistle out of a bottle all we need to do is have a bottle and blow air across the opening of the bottle. The bottle and the wind do all the work. Many children when being taught how to make a whistle sound from the bottle and air, try to make the sound themselves. When they try to make the sound themselves from their own lips, the bottle whistles does not work. The bottle can be compared to the matter of a Sacraments, the blow or air can be compared to the form or words spoken. All we have to do is allow the Sacrament to happen, for it is truly Christ at work, not us, our role is to be receptive.

How can we allow the work of Christ, through the Sacra-

it may be the visible sacrament of this saving unity.”[26] The establishment of the Church was sacramental. “Jesus dies on the Cross; a soldier opens His side: blood and water flow out (John 19:34). Blood and water are symbols of the two chief sacraments of the Church: Baptism and the Holy Eucharist. Theme: Christ, the second Adam, is sleeping in death; from His side comes the second Eve, “mother of all the living,” the holy Church.”[27] The crucifixion is the birth of the Church from the side of Jesus. The crucifixion is tied to the Last Supper at which both the Eucharist and Holy Orders are instituted. We are established in the Sacraments. The Sacraments are what give us our strength, our unity, and they are universal (Catholic). Not only does the Church give us seven Sacraments to strengthen us in the Church but, because of its union with Christ they manifest to the world. “Since the Church is in Christ like a Sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely-knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race, it desires now to unfold more fully to the faithful of the Church and to the whole world its own inner nature and universal mission. This it intends to do, following faithfully the teaching of previous councils. The present-day conditions of the world add greater urgency to this work of the Church so that all men, joined more closely today by various social, technical and cultural ties, might also attain fuller unity in Christ.”[28] Why are the Sacraments a part of everything we do as Catholics? We participate in the Mass and others Sacraments in every moment and especially key moments of our life because they are “the center of our Church community.” This is why programs, private devotions, prayer groups, should never take priority over the Sacraments and the Mass. This is why we include the Sacraments and the Mass in our planning of catechesis, retreats, missions and important celebrations with friends and family.

Sacraments: The Work Performed – Lesson and Discussion

“he stretched out his hand, touched him...”

“Often Jesus asks the sick to believe. He makes use of signs to heal: spittle and the laying on of hands, mud and washing. The sick try to touch him, ‘for power came forth from him and healed them all.’ And so in the Sacraments, Christ continues to ‘touch’ us in order to heal us.”[29]

“In order to apply to men the merits of His life and Passion, our Blessed Lord instituted seven Sacraments. These Sacraments act *ex opera operato*, provided all the conditions for their action

then, finally, to receive healing. We first must admit that we are sick. We don’t take a well-running car to the mechanic. Those, who convince themselves that they are not sick, do not say to Christ, “You can heal me.” Those, who have ignored their conscience, do not believe they are in need of healing. As mentioned before in the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector, the Pharisee did not think he was sick and boasted the reason he was not sick was by his own doing “O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity...” The Pharisee, along with us sometimes, put too much acclaim on ourselves, rather than seeing we still have room to grow, and ask God for forgiveness in the times we are sick due to our sins.

What does the leprosy represent? The leprosy represents our sin. “Jesus cures the physical illness, and at the same time frees from sin. In this way He shows himself to be the Messiah, whose coming had been foretold by the Prophets, who ‘has borne our infirmities’ and ‘taken our sins upon himself’ (Is 53:3-12) in order to set us free from all that subverts our spiritual and material health. For this reason a central theme of today’s liturgy is purification from sin; sin is ‘the leprosy of the soul.’”[8]

Analogy – Sickness in Body and Soul

Upon our body, we might have a cut. The cut leads to pain, and the pain tells us that we need to fix the cut. If the cut is serious, we go to a doctor. The doctor will give a diagnosis. He will make a judgment about how bad the cut is. The doctor will also suggest a treatment, prescribe medicine, and give suggestions on how to rehabilitate and restore health.

In our soul we have sin. Sin is like a cut, separating us from God. **How do we recognize this sin?** We need to examine our conscience. There is also an indication of sin, when we feel sorrow, contrition, guilt or restlessness about our thoughts, actions, and/or life in general. Who is the doctor of our soul? Jesus is the doctor of our soul, and the hospital or clinic is the confessional. In the confessional the priest exercises the power of Christ. “The priest exercises this power not in his own name, but in the name of Christ. He acts in persona Christi – as an instrument in his hands. ..It is Jesus, Himself, who in the Sacrament of Penance pronounces the authoritative paternal words: Your sins are forgiven.”[9] Just as the doctor makes a judgment of the severity physical ills, Christ and His Church, through the instrument of the priest, makes a judgment on the severity of sin. Sacramental Confession is the treatment that brings for-

giveness. The priest then gives a penance, which is the medication and rehabilitation, and if we adhere to that it will lead to restoration of the soul.

[For more information on Penance please see Link to Liturgy Packet - All Souls]

Why did Jesus show so much interest in the sick?[10] Jesus came in order to show God's love. He often did this in places, where we feel especially threatened: in the weakening of our life through sickness. God wants us to become well in body and soul and, therefore, to believe and to acknowledge the coming of God's Kingdom. Sometimes a person has to become sick in order to recognize what we all – healthy or sick – need more than anything else: God. We have not life, except in Him. That is why sick people and sinners can have a special instinct for the essential things. Already in the New Testament it was precisely the sick people, who sought the presence of Jesus; they tried "to touch him, for power came forth from Him and healed them all" (Lk 6:19).

In this Gospel we see the Greatest Commandment, "Love of God; love of neighbor". The leper shows love of God, trust in the Messiah, and Jesus shows us the perfect example of love of neighbor, as he "stretched out his hand" to touch the most hideous neighbor, a neighbor that was an outcast and banned from the community. This love is put to the test each day as we encounter the outcast and the enemy.

Story – St. Francis and the leper

Saint Francis was afraid of lepers. He would do anything for God, but the idea of befriending and serving the lepers, disgusted him. His faith and charity were put to the test one day. As he was traveling horseback, and saw a leper walking up the same road. Francis' first reaction was to high-tail it away from the person, but something made him stop, get off his horse, give the poor leper some money, hug him, and even kiss his hand. The leper likewise exchanged the same greeting. When Francis started to ride away, he turned back to give a goodbye wave, and the leper had disappeared. He knew the leper was Christ, and that He was testing Francis. This experience filled Francis with joy. [11]

[See Link to Liturgy Lesson "St. Francis"]

4. They sanctify us, make us holy, and help us to be a holy witness to the world

The call to holiness implies that we be as holy as we can be and help others to be holy. The rule of Saint Benedict mandates that a monk, "not to wish to be called holy before one is holy; but first to be holy, that one may be truly so called." The Litany of Humility says, "That others may become holier than I, provided that I may become as holy as I should." This call to holiness is capable of being practiced and lived because of the grace we have been given and the faith we have in which to believe and receive it. **Do we live out our call to holiness with grace and faith equips us to do?** If we truly believe in the grace of the Sacraments and we accept grace with sincerity and faith, it only follows that we should live it out. The faith that we profess should never be separated from our life. "This council exhorts Christians, as citizens of two cities, to strive to discharge their earthly duties conscientiously and in response to the Gospel spirit. They are mistaken who, knowing that we have here no abiding city but seek one which is to come, think that they may therefore shirk their earthly responsibilities. For they are forgetting that by the faith, itself, they are more obliged than ever to measure up to these duties, each according to his proper vocation. Nor, on the contrary, are they any less wide of the mark, who think that religion consists in acts of worship alone and in the discharge of certain moral obligations, and who imagine they can plunge themselves into earthly affairs in such a way as to imply that these are altogether divorced from the religious life. This split between the faith, which many profess and their daily lives deserves to be counted among the more serious errors of our age." [24] In today's Gospel, the leper is overjoyed with the grace and healing that he receives that he goes out and tells everyone. "So great was his happiness that in spite of Our Lord's warning he began to tell everybody what had happened and spread the new of the great good that had been done to him. Such blessings were too great for him to keep to himself; he had to share his good fortune with others." [25]

5. They are the center of the Church community because they establish it, strengthen it, and manifest it.

"God gathered together as one all those who in faith look upon Jesus as the author of salvation and the source of unity and peace, and established them as the Church that for each and all

Faith – How do we approach the Sacraments? What is our disposition? Do we believe as the leper that the Grace from the Sacrament can indeed heal us? Do we trust Christ and give me our all, our whole self? If we are not in the state of Grace, the grace of the Sacraments are blocked or inhibited? How often do we approach Christ, go to confession, go to Mass? When we receive Our Lord in the Eucharist what is our disposition, our posture, our attitude and focus? Do we go to the Sacraments in the same manner that the leper went to Christ? “We must learn from this leper. He goes before Our Lord sincerely and kneeling, admits his disease, humbly asking to be cured.”[22] Are we sincere? Do we admit our disease (our failings)? Do we humble ask to be cured?

[See Link to Liturgy Lesson The Remedy for Sin]

We see that the leper kneels? What is the posture during each of our Sacraments? In baptism and anointing of the Sick, we are usually very vulnerable, actually carried to Christ by our parents (baptism) or surrounded by family maybe lying on our deathbed (anointing of the sick). In confirmation and holy matrimony, we stand. Confirmation prepares us to be ready to be a soldier of Christ, and Marriage makes us ready to stand before our spouse and the congregation, publicly declaring our vows. In the Eucharist, we may kneel or stand, and must show a sign of reverence before reception. In Confession, we kneel. During the Rite of Ordination, those who are being ordained, both kneel and lay prostrate. “He kneels down in front of the altar; the ordinandi lay themselves prostrate on the carpet, and the Litany of the Saints is chanted or recited. On the conclusion of the Litany, all arise; the candidates come forward, and kneel in pairs before the bishop, while he lays both hands on the head of each candidate in silence.”[23]

VIDEO – Benedict XVI Mass of Priestly Ordination – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 3:47

<http://youtu.be/YDWqwws9vIs>

The video shows Pope Benedict ordaining several men into the priesthood. We can see the postures the men take as they are going through their ordination.

Sacraments: Their Purpose - Lesson and Discussion

“The man went away and began to publicize the whole matter”

We live in a world that would like to disregard the sick and vulnerable, euthanize the elderly, and abort the unborn with defects. The Christian life is one that is open to all; we must love all, even the outcast (the leper) even our enemies. A Christian world should look different than a pagan world. “I would prefer even the worst possible Christian world to the best pagan world, because in a Christian world there is room for those for whom no pagan world ever made room, “Cripples and sick people, the old and the weak. And there was more than room for them; there was love for those who seemed and seem useless to the pagan and the godless world.”[12] The virtue of charity and the physical and spiritual works of mercy enable us to build a Christian world in which even the most despised is loved.

Sacraments: Grace is Given - Lesson and Discussion

“and kneeling down begged him”

What is a Sacrament? “The sacraments of the New Testament were instituted by Christ the Lord and entrusted to the Church. As actions of Christ and the Church, they are signs and means which express and strengthen the faith, render worship to God, and effect the sanctification of humanity and thus contribute in the greatest way to establish, strengthen, and manifest ecclesiastical communion. Accordingly, in the celebration of the sacraments the sacred ministers and the other members of the Christian faithful must use the greatest veneration and necessary diligence.”[13]

When or how did Christ institute the sacraments? How are they entrusted to the Church?

[See the Sacrament Chart on the main page document section]

What is the purpose of Sacraments?

1. They are how we express our faith.

“A leper came to him beseeching him and kneeling said to him: ‘If you will, you can make me clean’” (Mk 1:40). “What great faith! The poor fellow abandoned by men and considered to be abandoned even by God has more faith than many who are following, in Christ’s footsteps. Real faith does not get lost in subtle reasoning, but goes by a very simple logic: God can do all He wishes; He has only to will it. To his bold request expressing limitless trust, Jesus responds with an action that was unheard of among a people, who were forbidden to have and contact whatsoever with lepers: “He stretched out his hand and touched

him.”[14] In the Sacraments we do not get caught up in subtle reasoning asking questions like, “Am I really absolved and forgiven my sins?”, “Is the host really the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus?”, “Will baptism and confirmation really give me grace to live a holy life and be strong?” We could ask these questions about the Sacraments, but in the end, we come to Jesus as the leper did, with faith. We pray along with Saint Thomas Aquinas, “Faith will tell us Christ is present, when our human senses fail” or “God, I believe, help my unbelief.” The Sacraments are always a matter of faith; they stretch, challenge, and express our faith.

2. They are the means from which our faith is strengthened.

In the Sacraments we see the matter (material used in the Sacrament), and we hear the form (the words prayed or spoken), the grace given by Christ and His Church however invisible. We cannot see the Grace, itself, but either immediately as in the case of the leper “the leprosy left him immediately” or in time, we see the effects of the Grace in our life and the lives of others. The strength of faith we receive in the Sacrament is seen in the fact that we must continually come back to the source of Grace, Jesus and His Church. If we continue to go back we will receive healing and strength.

3. They are how we worship God.

VIDEO – Why I Hate Religion, But Love Jesus || Spoken Word – POP CULTURE CONNECTION

<http://youtu.be/1IAhDGYlpqY> - original video - 4:04

http://youtu.be/Ru_tC4fv6FE - one Catholic response – 2:55

Religion is the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power, especially a personal God or gods. Religion is what we believe and how we worship. If a person believes and worships, then they have a religion by definition. Our Catholic Faith, our religion, as established by Christ, is apostolic and sets forth for us what to believe (orthodoxy) and how to worship (orthopraxy). The Sacraments are essential to both orthodoxy (doctrine) and orthopraxy (prayer and worship). A Christian life without the Sacraments leads to confusion in error in the areas of doctrine, prayer, and worship.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus and the leper break the Old Testament law or religion and go beyond, to fulfill it. “Jesus, who had come to redeem man from sin and its consequences, had the right to

go beyond the old law, and does so with the deliberate action of one who had full powers...God is master of the law, and can break it...By welcoming and touching the leper, Jesus infringes the law; then he fulfills it, saying, ‘Go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded.’”[15] The Old Testament Law stated that, “The leper shall dwell alone in a habitation outside the camp”[16]. “Thus it is strange to find this leper inside a city. Perhaps he has heard of Jesus and has been eagerly looking for a chance to approach him. At last he found him and breaks the strict precept of the old Mosaic Law in order to speak to him. Christ is his hope, his only hope.”[17] The law is both broken, but also respected. Jesus is not a revolutionary, who breaks and then destroys the law, He rather respects the law, but desires to perfect and fulfill it. New law, new priesthood, new worship is not new because the old is destroyed, it is “new” because the “old” has been perfected and fulfilled by Christ.

It is Christ that is giving the grace. Grace is always primary. The leper shows faith. Faith is secondary. The new law is one of grace (the Sacrament) and faith (the one receiving the Sacrament). This Grace and Faith is at the core of our worship, and it is this worship that leads to works. “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God; it is not from works, so not one may boast. For we are his handiwork, created in Christ Jesus for the good works that God has prepared in advance, that we should live in them.”[18] Jesus did not abolish religion or law. “Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill.”[19] In Jesus the “old” becomes “new”, for “the one who sat on the throne said, ‘Behold, I make all things new.’”[20]

Three questions we need to ask our self in regards to the Sacraments and grace, faith and good works:

Grace – **Do we know what the Church teaches about the Sacraments? Are we in classes to prepare and learn more about the teachings of Christ and His Church?** “Pastors of souls and other members of the Christian faithful, according to their respective ecclesiastical function, have the duty to take care that those who seek the sacraments are prepared to receive them by proper evangelization and catechetical instruction, attentive to the norms issued by competent authority.”[21] Through this knowledge and preparation, we should come to a deep appreciation of what we are offered. **Do we appreciate the Sacraments and see them as a channel of Grace?**