

August 22, 2021: 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

BELIEVING IN THE EUCHARIST

Exactly two years ago, many Catholics were SHOCKED by the results of a Pew Research Center survey on the BELIEF in the real presence of Jesus, body and blood, in the EUCHARIST. The headlines in the media were: "Just one-third of U.S. Catholics agree with their church that Eucharist is body, blood of Christ", or "Pew Survey shows majority of Catholics don't believe in Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist".

I too was shocked at the headlines...but looking at the details of the survey, I was less shocked. The survey selected people who identify themselves as Catholics, the so-called "self-identified" Catholics. These are not necessarily "practicing Catholics". As a matter of fact, a large majority of those surveyed did not attend Sunday Mass regularly. Among the so-called "Observant Catholics", those attending Mass at least once a week, it was found that TWO-THIRDS BELIEVED that the offered bread and wine actually become the BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST at CONSECRATION. This is what we call THE BELIEF IN THE REAL PRESENCE OF JESUS IN THE EUCHARIST: Body, Blood Soul and Divinity.

Of course, what people remembered was the headlines about only one-third of "self-identified" Catholics not believing in the Eucharist. For me, I chose to remember the TWO-THIRDS of "practicing" Catholics BELIEVING IN THE EUCHARIST. This could and should be improved, but it gave me HOPE! Another lesson was that all the teachers of the Catholic Faith (Pastors, Priests, Catechists and Parents) could and should do better in passing on the Catholic Faith to the little ones at an early stage of their life, especially in the preparation for their First Communion and First Reconciliation, and then assist them in going to Mass regularly while deepening their understanding of their Catholic Faith and all Sacraments.

There were also two broad lessons for all adult Catholics: 1. the importance to have a better understanding of the entire MASS; the Eucharist can be only appreciated and believed as an integral part of the entire Mass: listening, understanding and believing the WORD OF GOD (The Liturgy of the Word) and in the context of THE PASCHAL MYSTERY: the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ (The Liturgy of the EUCHARIST) and 2. the importance of attending Mass every Sunday, not only because it is an obligation to KEEP HOLY THE SABBATH, but because it is essential to maintain our FAITH, which is a pure GIFT OF GOD, and keep being FED SPIRITUALLY week after week. With such understanding and belief, can one proclaim with the entire Catholic Church that THE EUCHARIST IS THE SOURCE AND SUMMIT OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

This weekend, we complete the reading of Jesus' Bread of Life Discourse: JOHN's CHAPTER 6 (begun last month). Not unlike today's lack of belief in the REAL PRESENCE, MANY OF JESUS' DISCIPLES had a hard time believing in Jesus announcing that "HE WILL GIVE US HIS OWN FLESH TO EAT":

"The Jews (then) disputed among themselves saying: HOW CAN THIS MAN GIVE US HIS FLESH TO EAT? So Jesus said to them: TRULY, TRULY, I SAY TO YOU, UNLESS YOU EAT THE FLESH OF THE SON OF MAN and drink His blood, you have no life in you; HE WHO EATS MY FLESH AND DRINKS MY BLOOD HAS ETERNAL LIFE, AND I WILL RAISE HIM UP AT THE LAST DAY. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood ABIDES IN ME AND I IN HIM " (John 6:52-56).

We can ask ourselves today : DO I BELIEVE THOSE WORDS FROM JESUS? We live in a culture that tends to believe only "what can be proven scientifically". A culture where there is less and less room for the Sacred, the Supernatural, the MIRACLES. Almost the totality of non-Catholic Christians in our country today believe that the above words from Jesus were "symbolic": Jesus did not mean HIS FLESH, he was speaking "symbolically" using his flesh as a metaphor, as a symbol.

There is no doubt that the teachings of the Catholic Church are countercultural today as they were 2,000 years ago. However, Jesus could not be clearer through his words as transmitted to us through the Gospel of his closest disciple, his beloved disciple John (Chapter 6). He was announcing the GREATEST MIRACLE that will take place after His own Passion, Death on the Cross and Resurrection (Paschal Mystery): THE MIRACLE OF THE EUCHARIST THAT OCCURS AT EVERY MASS EVERY DAY!

Heavenly Father, help all of us to believe the Words of Your Son, who died on the Cross to save us, rose from the dead to lift us up to Eternal Life, and promised us: " HE WHO EATS MY FLESH AND DRINK MY BLOOD HAS ETERNAL LIFE".

Heavenly Father, HELP US TO BELIEVE IN THE EUCHARIST!!!

One in Christ,

Fr. Alain



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***We are asked to pray for:**

Dr. Michael St. Thomas
Bessie Davis
Brandon Mack
Dionne Gause

Jack Lyons
Margaret Clark
Joan Johnson
Tess Franch

Francesc Franch
Shirley Ehman
**Names will be removed after 3 months
unless you notify the office*



MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, August 21,
9:00AM: Sealey Family
5:00 PM: Joanna Oudraogo (+)
Sunday, August 22,
8:30 AM: OLHOC Parishioners
10:00AM: AnnaMarie & Jose
Gonzales & family
11:30 AM: Youth Core Team
1:00 PM: Ignatius Alphonso (+)
7:00 PM: Vanessa Vega (+)
Monday, August 23,
7:00 AM: Steven Breiner Sr. (+)
9:00AM: Heather Seaton Trotter

Tuesday, August 24,
9:00AM: Strawberry Family
Wednesday, August 25,
9:00 AM: Eleanor & Anthony
Rumore (+)
7:00 PM: Martine Etamane
Thursday, August 26,
9:00 AM: Peter Nikolai (+)
Friday, August 27,
7:00 AM: Cathleen Small (+)
9:00 AM: Gabriel Auza (+)

*Please remember to pray for the
Souls in Purgatory*

COME BACK TO CHURCH– SAFELY

The dispensation of the Sunday and Holy Day obligation has been lifted. The reinstatement of the obligation to attend Mass at church began at the end of June.

This does not apply to those who are ill, have reason to believe they have been exposed recently to the coronavirus, or any other serious or contagious illness. Anyone confined to a hospital, home or nursing facility or anyone having a serious underlying health condition will continue to have dispensation.

Please consult with Father Alain if you have questions regarding your obligation to attend Mass.

We implemented and have regularly adjusted a conservative COVID protocol for OLHOC constantly referencing guidance from CDC, MD state government, Charles County, and Archdiocese of Washington.*

- Masks are required inside our church and building for everyone over the age of five. This applies if you are vaccinated or unvaccinated.
- Maintain 3' social distance between household families.
- Wash hands frequently and use sanitizer when coming to Church.
- Stay home if you feel ill or vulnerable to Covid transmission.

*These may change as situation dictates



Tuesday Scripture Study - Join us on Tuesday mornings after the 9 am Mass to study the readings for the next Sunday.

Friday Scripture Study - The Friday night scripture study is now online. Please call the office for information on how to join us.

First Friday - The first Friday of each month the evening Mass is dedicated to promoting the Priesthood. Following evening Mass, devotion to the Alliance of the two Hearts.

First Saturday - Join members of the Marian Group on the first Saturday of the month after the 9 am Mass. Learn more about consecrating your life to Jesus through Mary.

Divine Mercy - Join us on the first Saturday of each month as we pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet as a community at 3 PM.

OLHOC Prayer Chain

If you have a prayer request, please call the parish office or send email to office@alhoc.org.

Mass Readings for August 29, 2021

22st Sunday in Ordinary Time

***First Reading**
Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8

***Second Reading**
James 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27

***Gospel**
Mark 7:1-8,14-15,21-23

www.usccb.org



Speak Lord, I'm listening!

Parish Registration

We know summer is the time of year when families are moving around.

If you are moving into our parish, welcome!

If you are moving out of the parish, we have enjoyed worshiping with you and hope you will come back and visit.

Forms to register are on our website: <https://olhoc.com/parish-registration>

Please notify the office if you are moving out of the parish
(301)645-7112

Mass Intentions

OLHOC offers Mass intentions for the deceased, the sick, to give thanks, in celebration of a special event, or for someone who may need extra prayer. Dates and times of Masses are on a first come, first served request. A stipend for clergy is usually offered with a Mass intention. The Archdiocese recommends that it be \$10.00. However, the decision is left to the requester of the intention. To request a Mass intention, please come by the office or call.

CCD Registration for 2021-2022

We are now accepting enrollment for the 2021-2022 Religious Education school year.

Pre-k/Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 7th & 8th grades will be in class every Sunday (9:45-11:15 am).

Special needs classes are held Mondays

(5:30-6:30), RCIC classes will be every Monday from 7-8 pm.

3rd, 4th, 5th & 6th grades will be blended/hybrid classes. Hybrid classes have the option of attending every other Sunday (9:30-11:15), or Monday (6:45-8:10 pm).

Please sign up online at: <https://olhoc.com/re> or call the office for guidance.

Catechists needed! If you hear the Lord calling you to share your faith, please speak to one of our Priests, Sister Rosario, Marlen Coles, or call the office.

RCIA

Interested in joining and learning about the Catholic Church for the first time? Want to complete a Sacrament (Baptism, Eucharist, and/or Confirmation)? For more information, please contact Deacon Rich at deacon@olhoc.org or Diane and Mike Spurgeon at RCIA.olhoc@gmail.com