

Message from Father Pergjini: (August 22, 2021)

Jesus then said to the Twelve, "Do you also want to leave?" Simon Peter answered him, **"Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God."** John 6:68-69 This Sunday we end the sixth chapter of Saint John's Gospel. Through this chapter of Saint John we discover and rediscover the redeeming value of the Holy Mass, offering the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ for our salvation. The last part of this chapter confronts all of us, as it did back then, the powerful words of Christ: "Do you also want to leave?" Christ addressed this question to the Twelve respecting their freedom to make a free decision to follow him or to leave as the others left. Those who left Christ never knew His real power, His divine presence. They were unwilling to follow his divine Truth, his commandments, his sufferings and finally to know the Glory of the Resurrection. The door is always wide open for each and every one of us. Saint Peter who speaks on behalf of the Twelve answers that moving and encouraging answer in a form of question that they could not find anyone on this earth who has the ultimate words that every human being needs to have, the words of eternal Life. The Twelve firmly believed that Christ is the Holy One of God. We never can fully experience the power and the beauty of our faith if we are willing to live superficially our Catholic faith. We must enter into the depth of our faith. We cannot pretend to know Christ unwilling to follow Him to the end, to enter into the Divine Truth, his demanding commandments and experience His mercy and Love. I never forget the homily of Pope emeritus Benedict XVI when he came to New York, Saturday, April 19, 2008, at Saint Patrick's Cathedral. During his homily the pope pointed out toward the beautiful stained glass windows of Saint Patrick's cathedral saying: **"If you are outside right now you cannot see the beauty of these windows, they will appear dreary, but within the church these same windows come alive as the light passes through them and reveals their splendor."** The humble Pope, with his genius mind, continued with his soft voice: **"likewise, the true understanding of the mystery of the Church must come from within. It is only from the inside, from the experience of faith and the life of the church that we see the Church as she truly is, flooded with grace, resplendent in beauty, and adorned by the gifts of the Holy Spirit."** Yes, indeed, these wise and very significant words of Benedict XVI encourages all of us that we must come inside the church, into her divine truth, commandments, sacraments, and precepts in order to experience this powerful beauty that saves the world and our broken souls. Many people whom we know very well have left the church unwilling to come inside and know the church from within. They are unwilling to accept the demanding requirements, the Truth that make us free. On the other hand, there are many others who peacefully go to the Catholic Church, as the first American born Saint Elizabeth Seton powerfully said, "where the faith first began, I will seek it among those who received it from God Himself." She was a convert who learned and lived the redeeming value of the holy Mass. The powerful question of Christ addressed to the Twelve is also the same question addressed to us, too. Will we answer as Saint Peter did? **"Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God."** Yes indeed, we will answer that question taking refuge in the most powerful celebration on earth, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, to say to Christ what Saint Peter said. "The Eucharist is the core of our Christian divine service." Almighty Father through the sacrifice of his only son, placed in the human hands of an ordained Catholic priest, an act that can be fulfilled only by the Divine, Christ himself. And this is the power of the Holy Mass providing for us his divine words, touching our souls, minds and hearts, feeding us with his divine flesh, food that last forever. Only in this way we can follow him humbly and patiently, faithful to his commandments, accepting our pains and sufferings and our daily cross. May we be faithful to the redeeming power of Holy Mass and follow Christ as the Twelve followed Him to the End, without End. Amen!

