

### ***Message from Father Pergjini: (August 15, 2021)***

Jesus said to the crowds: I am the living bread that came down from heaven: whoever eats this bread will live forever; Last Sunday's bulletin, August 8th, we ended describing the Eucharistic prayer, the most powerful moment of the Holy Mass. The Eucharistic prayer is indeed the center and summit of the entire celebration which requires our faith to accept what God has revealed to us through Christ. Christ entrusted this sacrament of Charity to his Catholic Church and we, by faith, experience its power in our lives. Christ clearly states that the bread I will give is my flesh for the life of the world. And the bread of life, the real presence of Christ, body, blood, soul, and divinity is on the Altar of Christ, the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. After the consecration the priest and faithful united in the powerful spirit of the prayer that Christ taught us, the "Our Father." The "Our Father" is the "summary of the whole Gospel" (Tertullian) and Saint Thomas Aquinas said that the "Our Father" is the perfect prayer. Yes, indeed, it is the perfect prayer, and the summary of the whole Gospel for those who humbly and faithfully engage themselves in the power of this unique prayer. The Catechism of our Catholic Church reminds us that the full meaning of the "Our Father" is revealed in the Eucharist since its petitions are based on the mystery of salvation already accomplished in Christ. During the recitation of Our Father, as I observe at every Holy mass, are some people who open their arms. It has become like a norm for some, while others fold their hands. The catholic liturgical instructions explicitly states that only the main celebrant with the other Concelebrants, priests and deacons open their arms during the "Our Father." It is our duty as preachers to explain to the faithful regarding the liturgical norms. Liturgy is not liturgy if it is subject to us: to add or remove words or gestures as some would like to do is to go against what the Catholic Church universally teaches. And we are asked to be faithful to this liturgical unity given to us by our mother Church. After "Our Father" is the sign of peace. The Holy Mass by its nature is the sacrament of peace. The sign of peace is very important and a beautiful moment to express it. Christ gave His peace to his apostles and continues today at every time a Holy mass is celebrated. Sometimes the sign of peace is exaggerated, and people keep moving around the church exchanging the sign of peace. They have a good intention to do so, but they forget that on the Altar is the body and blood of Christ waiting for our reverence, a moment to worship what is sacred. Pope Benedict XVI reminds the faithful regarding the sign of peace: "that nothing is lost when the sign of peace is marked by a sobriety which preserves the proper spirit of the celebration, as, for example, when it is restricted to one's immediate neighbors." After the sign of peace is the distribution and reception of the Holy Communion. Majority of the faithful are aware and well prepared to receive the real presence of the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Christ. Still, are people lined up because they see everyone is going to receive? It would be impossible and redundant to announce every single time before Holy communion the rules how to receive Holy Communion. It is our duty, as priests, directly and indirectly during our homilies to instruct, and inform the faithful regarding how to properly receive the Body of Christ. And encouraging the faithful to use the sacrament of confession in order to be in a state of grace when we receive the Body of Christ. It is a very delicate and difficult issue nowadays. Many people think that is like being in a normal meal celebration that everyone must receive it. The holy Mass is not, and never will be compared, with a regular meal. Christ before his last supper prepared in a unique way his apostles: washing the feet of his apostles, a gesture of humility and forgiveness. The washing of their feet meant to remove the dirty part of our body, and to be ready for the most powerful divine celebration for our salvation and the salvation of the whole world. Saint Paul is very strong regarding how to receive the body of Christ. He reminded the faithful back then, and us today, that we should not receive the Body of Christ without being properly prepared otherwise we will receive our own condemnation. And this is to help the faithful so that they may receive the benefits of this most powerful sacrament on earth. Christ powerfully states in this passage of Saint John: **"and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world." (John 6:51) and this bread, which is flesh of Jesus Christ, offered for our salvation, and made possible, only through the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in our Catholic Church for our salvation. Amen!**

