

## From the Pastor—August 9, 2020

**Spiritually Starving—No. 8** Paragraph 1335 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church states: *The miracles of the multiplication of the loaves, when the Lord says the blessing, breaks and distributes the loaves through his disciples to feed the multitude, prefigure the superabundance of this unique bread of his Eucharist. The sign of water turned into wine at Cana already announces the Hour of Jesus' glorification. It makes manifest the fulfillment of the wedding feast in the Father's kingdom, where the faithful will drink the new wine that has become the Blood of Christ.*

The Catechism puts together the above two Scriptural accounts of miracles of the Lord Jesus. The one involved the loaves and multiplying a few into many. The other miracle was changing water into wine. Think of it: taking water and making it become wine! This should amaze us! One of the saints has said, paraphrasing, that if we can believe that Jesus turned water into wine then we should understand how he can change wine into his Blood and bread into his Body.

1336 *The first announcement of the Eucharist divided the disciples, just as the announcement of the Passion scandalized them: "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" The Eucharist and the Cross are stumbling blocks. It is the same mystery and it never ceases to be an occasion of division. "Will you also go away?": the Lord's question echoes through the ages, as a loving invitation to discover that only he has "the words of eternal life" and that to receive in faith the gift of his Eucharist is to receive the Lord himself.*

Do we understand how the Eucharist and the Cross are stumbling blocks? People see the crosses we carry and they may wonder if being a Christian is what they truly want. Our attitude is that with the Eucharist to nourish us, we can overcome any cross; we can carry our crosses with integrity for as long as God calls us.

Jesus' question, "Will you also go away?" is haunting. Have you ever felt persecuted for your Christian beliefs, perhaps has someone pressed you on why you believe a certain doctrine? Most any questions we have, or that others have, can circle around and be addressed and/or answered by the Holy Eucharist. As 1336 of the Catechism states, Jesus has the words of eternal life. When he gives us his Body and Blood for nourishment, and if we are serious and devout, people will see eternal life shine from our countenance and they will be drawn to these same words of eternal life.

"Will you also go away?" There have been times in my life where I question why I believe, why I even bother. But in those times, which are probably attributable to the evil one, I think, "NO! I won't go away! The Eucharist is true, the Church is true, my God is true. How could I fail to believe this?" The Eucharist thus becomes the rock foundation upon which we base our faith. I think that for many who are going without the Eucharist due to Covid-19, they are truly spiritually starving as they see how a non-Eucharistic lifestyle is led.

I hope to continue these Catechism paragraphs and commentary into the future. My commentary is in regular print, while the precise text of the Catechism is italicized.

**Family Wedding** A cousin to me through my mother's side of the family invited me to her wedding. It was held in Kearney at the newly-built Prince of Peace Church. The church is very beautiful. My cousin had worked it out with the pastor of Prince of Peace that I could preach. So, that was very special. After the wedding, the reception was at the new hall in Doniphan, on the south end of town. The groom is from Doniphan; my cousin is from Odell. I am privileged to work with many who have long, happy marriages. It helps me to go to a wedding, or to have a wedding here in our parishes, and see that the beauty of marriage is still being lived out in freshly-minted new marriages.

**BXVI has Shingles** On Catholic media this week, it was reported that retired Pope Benedict XVI has a case of shingles. For any of you who have had this ailment, as I have, you will join me in saying a big "Ouch!" The pain is so intense; it strikes at the nerves; it is difficult to treat. Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI is reported to have shingles around his face. But he is also reported as being healthy otherwise. Please keep him in your prayers.

**New Day Off** Each priest receives a day off each week. This is because we work on the weekends (which we are blessed to do). Each priest is asked to choose a day, Monday through Friday, in which he occupies himself with something other than the prescribed responsibilities of his assignment. In my priesthood, I have taken Tuesdays as my day off for about the first 10 years. When I served at Lawrence, it became advantageous to take Monday as my day off. For a variety of reasons, I have decided as of August, 2020, to return to Tuesdays as my day off. I am at peace with the change. It seems like quite often there will be some important parish event that almost demands my time on a Monday. It will be a change, yet a good thing.

**Saturday** On Saturday, August 8, I will be attending a wedding. I have asked Father Chris Barak to come and offer Mass in my place. I will not be away overnight.

**Assumption is Non-obligatory This Year** The Holy Day of the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary does not carry an obligatory call to attend Mass this year, since August 15<sup>th</sup> falls on a Saturday. I will celebrate the Assumption by offering Mass in both parishes.

**God Bless You!!!**

**Father Grell**