



From the Pastor
12th Sunday in
Ordinary Time - A
June 25, 2023

THE IMPORTANCE OF SACRED LITURGY. One year ago this week, on the **Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles, June 29**, Pope Francis issued an **Apostolic Letter**. Entitled '**Desiderio**

Desideravi,' Latin for "I have earnestly desired," its opening line is what **Jesus** told the disciples before the **Last Supper**: "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." [Luke 22:15] We say these same words in the **Introduction of Holy Thursday's Mass of the Lord's Supper!**

Desiderio Desideravi dovetails perfectly with our years-long series on the **2022-2025 National Eucharistic Revival**, of which this is **Part #30**. The theme of this **Letter** is the proper celebration of the **Sacred Liturgy at holy Mass**. Since **Eucharist** can only be confected during a **holy Mass**, and **Mass** without the **Eucharist** reduces it to a mere memorial or **Protestant Service**, these two documents are a perfect blend. So, for a few weeks, we will share with you its various themes. To read it yourself, search for it by its Latin name: '**Desiderio Desideravi**.'

THE CLIMAX OF GOD'S SELF-REVELATION. The **Bible** is a love story of **God's** self-revelation to us: first through **Creation**, then through the **Patriarchs, Commandments, Prophets** and **Temple Sacrifices** of old. By coming to live as one of us, **Jesus** completes **God's** self-revelation, but on His last night on earth, He chose to make His **Real Presence** visible, tangible, and receivable in the form of bread and wine. Which makes the **Last Supper** no ordinary meal; its preparations set the stage for the great miracle of our **Lord's Eucharistic Presence** until the end of time!

"LORD, I AM NOT WORTHY!" Those invited to the **Last Supper** were not worthy of receiving that great gift. **Scripture** never says if the **Blessed Virgin Mary** ever received **Eucharist**; if she did, the case could be made that she was worthy, as she merited bearing **God's Incarnate Son** in her sinless womb! And none of us are worthy to receive **Eucharist** or distribute that **Gift** as an **Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion** or **Deacon**, or confect it as a **Priest** or **Bishop**

However, all are invited to partake in the **Eucharist** in one way or another; but the onus is on them to fulfill every prerequisite to being the **Lord's** guest. Among them are: becoming a **fully initiated Catholic** who has received **Baptism, Confirmation** and **First Eucharist**; live according to **Church** teaching; if married, be in a **valid Marriage**; confess all serious, grave mortal sins before receiving, and, ideally, confess all sins at least once a year; be a **knowledgeable, regular, active participant** in the **holy Mass**.

A RESPONSE, NOT AN OBLIGATION! As the **Holy Father** notes, it was the desire of the **Lord Jesus** - at the **Last Supper** - to make Himself available and 'truly present' to all His disciples until His return in glory. **Jesus** was thinking of, and inviting us to, the **Banquet** as He sat at table with the **Apostles** that night! What a beautiful reality to reflect on: among whatever 'prompts' or 'moves' us to come to **holy Mass** and receive **Holy Communion**, is **Jesus'** desire for us to come to Him! Here's how **Pope Francis** explains it: "**We may not even be aware of it, but every time we go to Mass, the first reason is that we are drawn there by his desire for us. [We must] surrender to this love ... letting ourselves be drawn by him. Indeed, every reception of communion of the Body and Blood of Christ was already desired by him in the Last Supper.**" [Desiderio Desideravi #6]

TRULY PRESENT IN THE SACRAMENTS. From the very beginning, the **Church** was fully aware that the **Eucharist** was not merely a **memorial** or **remembrance** as **Protestants** profess. For **sacred Scripture** states, "**He was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.**" [Luke 24:35] Notice they were not reminded of **Jesus**, or simply able to recall what He said and did when they broke the bread; they came to **KNOW** Him! No wonder our **Blessed Mother**, who 'knew' Him better than anyone else, and needed no reminders to help her recall Him, joined the **Apostles** for, among other things, the breaking of bread. [Cf: Acts 1:14; 2:42] If our **Blessed Mother**, with all her graces, joined in the sacred mysteries, shouldn't we? Next week: the next section in the '**Desiderio Desideravi**' Letter: the **Liturgy: THE** place of encounter [for now!] with **Christ**.

Please keep in your prayers, our neighbor and friend, Father Robert Grodnicki, Pastor of St. Luke Parish who will retire this week. We thank him for his service and may Our Lord bless him in retirement.

In Christ,

Father Mark

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