



From the Pastor
21st Sunday in
Ordinary Time - A
August 27, 2023

THE POWER OF SIGNS & SYMBOLS. Reflection #10 on Pope Francis' 2022 Apostolic Letter, '[Desiderio Desideravi](#),' Latin for Jesus' pre-Last Supper words: "I have earnestly desired [to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.]" [Luke 22:15], looks at

how the prescribed communal actions in the **Sacred Liturgy** help us "become one body, one spirit in Christ." ' [Eucharistic Prayer III] For past articles in this series on the three-year **National Eucharistic Revival** [this is article #39!] and the **Holy Father's Letter**, visit our **Parish** website.

As we explained in one of our first reflections on '[Desiderio Desideravi](#),' there are two mindsets that affect the way we worship: **Individualism** and **Subjectivism**, which have similar traits. **Individualism** leads us to consider only ourselves, and not communal or collective aspects of worship. We hear it in the attitude that "I must get something personally out of it, for myself." It downplays or dismisses how our words and actions - or lack thereof - affect others. **Subjectivism** renders the purpose or meaning of things to each person; there is no place for revealed **Truths** or external reasonings. These easily destroy any sense of community or the collective purpose and meaning of **Sacred Rites**.

These two dynamisms are not the only things that have prodded some, perhaps many, to excuse themselves from weekly participation in the **holy Mass** and other **Rites**. **COVID** restrictions sadly broke revered routines that have yet to be reestablished; some have been culled into thinking that watching the **holy Mass** on a TV or computer screen is the same thing as being actively present for the **Sacred Mysteries**! Some erroneously believe it is enough to have a private '**Me & Jesus Moment**' ... but **Jesus** calls us into a **Community**, His **Church** - and comes to us most profoundly in the **Eucharist** which, unless you're an **Ordained Priest**, you cannot confect at home!

"ONE BODY, ONE SPIRIT IN CHRIST." As we mentioned above, the **Priest** prays these words after the **Consecration** in **Eucharistic Prayer III**. To help us 'see' this unity of body and spirit,

the **Church** intentionally has us move 'in unison' at various times during the **holy Mass**. These so-called '**Catholic Aerobics**' are not intended to create a pretty show, although pageantry is part of religious ritual. We do all this to give outward expression to the inward reality that we are "**one body, one spirit in Christ!**" We gather, carefully walk in processions, sit, stand, kneel, bow, strike our breast, sing, become silent, raise our voices in acclamations, look, and listen.

Many of these actions have a set purpose: a feeling or emotion, sentiment or belief. We bow to admit our unworthiness or humble gratitude; we kneel to express sorrow for sins and our need for forgiveness; we bend low as a remedy for our pride; we mark the **Sign of the Cross** on ourselves to personally accept the graces and blessings won for us by the **Passion, Death** and **Resurrection** of **Christ**. However, there is one outward sign highlighted often in the **Pope's Letter** which, I must admit, I try to encourage and practice, but often fail at; and that is: **silence**.

SILENCE, PLEASE! In a world of so much noise, where so many hope for a few moments of peace and quiet, the **Church** prescribes the remedy: the rubrics call for a few moments of **SILENCE** during the **Sacred Liturgy**. We are directed to pause for silent prayer: during the **Penitential Act**; after the invitation to "**Let us pray**" before the **Collect**; between the **Readings** and after the **Homily**; in the **Eucharistic Prayer** when we remember our intentions and the dead; and during the **Prayer after Communion**, unless a period of silence preceded it. Yet whenever we pause for silent prayer, everyone seems to get so antsy!

LET THE HOLY SPIRIT SPEAK! The purpose of liturgical silence is **NOT** to escape from reality or the cacophony of noise that inundates our ears and brain! It is to allow the **Holy Spirit** to speak. In the **Rite of Ordination**, when the **Candidate** for the **Diaconate, Priesthood** or the **Episcopacy** kneels before the **Ordaining Bishop** for the **Laying on of Hands**, it is done in **total silence**. After all is said and done by us, we allow **God** to speak in a moment of silence. Will we be more open to moments of silence during the **Sacred Rites**, to allow **God** to speak, and to let His voice to echo and reecho in our minds and hearts?

In Christ,

Father Mark

Rev. Mark A. Kreder, Pastor