



From the Pastor
25th Sunday in
Ordinary Time - C
Sept. 18, 2022

COMMUNION WITH CHRIST AND THE CHURCH. In part 6 of our series on the **US Catholic Bishops' The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church** document, we reflect on the third es-

sentential truth about the **Eucharist**: it is **Communion with Christ and the Church**. In past articles, we reflected on **Eucharist** as the **Sacrifice of Christ** and the **Real Presence of Christ**. To read past articles on this **Revival**, the whole document, or the free study guide, go to our Parish website: stjustin.org and click on **National Eucharistic Revival Bulletin Articles**. We begin with a quote from the **Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church: Lumen Gentium [Light of the World]** on the importance of ALL the **Sacraments**, but in a uniquely particular way, the **Most Blessed Sacrament**: the **Eucharist**:

The Eucharist is the Source and Summit.
"Taking part in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, which is the FOUNT and APEX [some translations say 'SOURCE and SUMMIT'] of the whole Christian life, [Christians] offer the Divine Victim to God, and offer themselves along with It."

SOME THINGS CANNOT BE DONE ALONE. A common response to the question, "Why don't you go to church?" is a variation of these words: "I can pray at home!" I usually reply by saying something like: "That's great; I hope - and pray - you DO pray at home, in the car, at the beach, up the mountains, or wherever you go! For we cannot be spiritually healthy if we only pray once a week, for just one hour, in church." [Let's be honest: how many people even do that much!] But among the many reasons we call it '**Holy Communion**' is that the **holy Mass** unites us to the **Lord AND to one another** - which we cannot do alone! As they say: no one can be a '**Lone Ranger**' **Christian** for many, many reasons!

The **Risen Lord** primarily works through those He chooses to lead His **Church** and her **Sacraments**. Between His **Resurrection** and **Ascension**, He delegated the **Apostles** to **baptize, confirm, forgive**

sins, drive out demons and heal the sick. He revealed Himself in the **Breaking of Bread**, the **Eucharist**; which requires us to join the **Church** in prayer! As **Eucharistic Prayer III** says, "Listen graciously to the prayers of this family, whom you have **SUMMONED** before you: in your compassion, O merciful Father, gather to yourself all your children scattered throughout the world." If we face consequences for ignoring an **earthly judge's summons**, what will the **Judge of Heaven and Earth** do if we ignore **His summons!**

Coming together for **holy Mass**, at least weekly, empowers us, by the one **Sacrament** that literally enters us, to be changed from the inside out into another **Christ**: the **Eucharist**. This intimate union with **God** also extends to all who gather for this sacred meal: our **brothers** and **sisters** in **Christ**. Our presence at - or absence from - **holy Mass** has far-reaching effects. Is it possible that few young people come to **Mass** because their parents and grandparents - especially the men - do not do so? In **Jewish** and **Moslem** rites, men usually lead communal and 'home-based' rites ... so what's up with **Christian** men? Come on, guys; step up to the plate ... the **Ciborium** or **Communion Plate**, that is!

This intimate union with our **God** also reaches beyond the bounds of time and space, for the **holy Mass** joins us with all our **brothers** and **sisters** worldwide. That's one reason our **main pastor** - the **Pope** - and **local Bishop** are always mentioned by name. So, too, are our greatest **Saints**: our **Blessed Mother** and **Saint Joseph**, and in a general way, all the **Apostles** and **Saints**. How sad that so many face life without the help from heaven available to us through the **Communion of Saints**.

WE ARE OBLIGATED FOR OUR OWN GOOD!
While the above-mentioned realities are reason enough for the **Church** to mandate that we "**Keep holy the Lord's Day**" - which, from apostolic times, was moved to the day of the **Lord's Resurrection: Sunday** - there's still more! It is one of the primary ways we 'identify' ourselves as **Christians**, so it also becomes our 'identity.' We become what, or rather, **Who** we receive! When we are absent, we deprive the **Church**, our family, of her unity. It's like missing a family wedding reception or funeral repast, birthday or graduation party. It's just not the same when anyone misses the **holy Mass!**

In Christ,
Father Mark