

Nativity of St. John the Baptist (6/24/07)

We congratulate St. John the Baptist parish on their 125th anniversary and wish them blessings for a continual growth in the Lord. On this feast of the birth of John the Baptist we remember that God chooses people for special work for Him not based on their own strength but on their weakness so they will know that it is the Lord who is doing the great things through them. John had a special mission, chosen by God from the womb, i.e. from conception, to be the last and greatest of the prophets. He would announce the coming of the messiah.

Sometimes we may think that only a few are chosen by God for special work, but in fact each of us has been chosen specifically by God to be doing right now what we are doing to increase His love in the world. Each of us is a prophet announcing the presence of God's love in the world, called through our baptism. Each of us, and all of us together, are called by God to be His presence in the world where many people have lost sight of the light and love of Christ. We are each chosen by God, whether in our families, our schools, our workplace, wherever we are, to rekindle the light of Christ and the hope of a better life and world in each other. May God bless all of us as His prophets! Amen!

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (6/17/07)

One of the best relationships with God reported in Scripture goes sour in our first reading. David was loved greatly by God while he was humble, but during the later years of his kingship his power and lust led him to adultery and murder. Confronted with his sin, he repented and God forgave him, but of course there were consequences from his sin. Nathan the prophet tells him from God, “the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised me & Because he repented, David was not killed but the tumult in his household would be a constant source of tension and even death in his family throughout the remainder of his life.

In the gospel story the woman who washes Jesus’ feet with her tears of repentance has her sins forgiven because of her faith. The entire purpose of Jesus’ incarnation of course was to reconcile God and humanity because of our sins. As we mentioned last week God does the impossible, working out a way for both perfect mercy and perfect justice to be satisfied. Jesus’ death and resurrection provide the forgiveness of the eternal consequences of sin (perfect mercy), which mankind was totally unable to do. And Jesus also provides the grace to help each of us to make up for the temporal consequences of sin (perfect justice). We make up for the temporal consequences of sin (the harm to one another in the Body of Christ) either on earth through our prayers, fasting and works of charity, or in Purgatory after we die, before we can enter the presence of God.

God is so passionate about sharing His love and grace with us that He was willing to suffer and die. He still respects our free will, however, and will not force us to receive his grace. May we always open our hearts to His love and grace through our repentance and works of prayer and charity so we can live in His love, both now and forever. Amen!

Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (6/10/07)

The Feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ ends our celebrations of special solemnities that began at Easter. Next Sunday we return to Ordinary Time Sundays. Our readings remind us of the extraordinary care God takes of His people. Although we have to work for the food of the earth, which God has provided in raw form, we only have to be willing to receive the spiritual food that God wishes to provide for us. Receiving takes some work also in that we need to focus and think about receiving God's gifts. We also need to remove sin from our hearts by repenting to allow God's grace to flow. Here is a question to ponder: what do I do to prepare myself to receive the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist when I come to church?

Think of how many churches throughout the world from the simplest huts to the grandest cathedrals repeat these same simple words of Jesus every hour of every day to make present the reality of Jesus as our food for life! What a miracle! And it is a miracle repeated over and over again just for us. Jesus promised He would never leave us alone. In His most holy Body and Blood He fulfills that promise. When we receive in faith with humble and contrite hearts, we allow Christ to live in us! There is no science in the universe that is as great as this miracle, which is so simple yet infinitely profound. God loves us every second of every day of our lives! WOW!!

May we live lives conscious of this indwelling of Christ and His Spirit and give witness to God by our daily lives of sharing our bread, our spiritual life, with our brothers and sisters throughout the world. Amen!

The Most Holy Trinity (6/3/07)

The central mystery of our faith is the nature of God, who has revealed Himself as Triune, three-in-one. The second mystery that flows from the first is the Incarnation, God becoming human. One of the proofs of the philosopher-theologians on the existence of God was that God is "that than which nothing greater can be thought", i.e., if I can think of a great all powerful and all merciful God, then the reality of God is greater than anything I can conceive. Or to put it another way, I can conceive of God as One, so therefore God must be greater than what I can conceive. According to this logic, then, the Trinity is a Revelation of God because human minds cannot comprehend how God could be Three-in-One.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit are the names we give to the triune members because they are revealed to us by Scripture, by Jesus. Jesus promises that He will return to the Father and that together they will send the Holy Spirit (Jn 15:26). God has gradually revealed himself to humanity throughout history, most completely in the revelation of Jesus. Now there is no more written Revelation because there is nothing more to be revealed. The challenge now is to try to understand more over time what God has revealed. Despite the scientific advances of the past 2,000 years our understanding of the nature of God is no more than then.

I find it very comforting that I cannot comprehend the nature of God. It takes an incomprehensible God to redeem humanity, and I have stronger faith in God because I cannot grasp how great God is. How wonderful!