Twenty-first Sunday of Ordinary Time

08.25.19

***FAITH, HOPE & CHARITY***

Fr. Viviano

Last night we had a beautiful baptism during the Mass at St. Joseph’s at the five o’clock Mass for this precious little baby, who received the indelible mark in front of the community, by receiving God’s gift of Faith, Hope and Charity - these three, theological virtues, God virtues…faith, hope and charity, which we will talk about in a second.

I would like to share a few things. One I am thankful to the parents with little ones who bring your kids to Mass. It is a beautiful, beautiful gift to train them in the faith even at these early ages. I know it can be challenging at times. When my daughter and son-in-law bring my grandchildren, ages five, three and two, my daughter says, “Yes, sometimes it is interesting given the kids dispositions before Mass. It can be a little scary!” (Laughter) Yes, it can be rough, and they (the children) get through that stage in time and they will be good to go.

I want to mention too that parents and grandparents if you have your little one and you come up to Communion holding your child, just go ahead and receive Communion on the tongue. I say this because in the past few months there have been at least four accidents where Mom or Dad were trying to hold their child and transfer the Eucharist and the Eucharist fell to the floor. Of course, it is an accident, and it is something we can avoid and avoid the embarrassment for them as well. In this way, you can simply hold your baby and be able to just focus on the Eucharist.

Also I want to mention that we have a kneeler up here (pointing to the kneeler in front of the step to the sanctuary). I have wanted to do this for the longest time and on the heels of Tim Francis’s presentation on the Eucharistic Miracles, I thought this would be the perfect time to do it.

We have a kneeler here now for those who wish to kneel and receive Communion on the tongue. Many of you will remember this was the only way we used to receive Communion before Vatican ll. This is another way to elevate the reception of the Host…the Eucharist, the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ. There is no expectation, but it is simply an offer, an opportunity if you so would like.

Today in the Gospel we hear that message again, that not everyone will make it to heaven. *“But, Lord, we ate and drank with you. We talked with you in the streets”.*   
And Jesus tells them, “*I do not know you”.* In other words, we can just go through the motions. Jesus is asking for our hearts. He wants to know that we are totally his. He is not looking for half-hearted souls.

And you and I have this great gift of our Catholic faith. We have been given the “road map” to heaven. We share in the one Church that God instituted on this earth: One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. In following the doctrines of mother Church we zero in on what God is intending for us. We zero in on the holy life that we are called to.

Now let us go back to the baptism this weekend at Mass. That child, just like you and me, within our Catholic Christian baptism, we are called to bring to life the gifts of faith, hope and charity. These “God virtues” that orient us back to the Creator. These virtues are ALWAYS with us. Sometimes they are dormant because we fail to nourish them with prayer and an intentional living of the holy life. Sometimes we depart from that path given to us. Sometimes, we begin to gravitate to self and to the world. But because of the indelible mark… the inerasable mark of God’s imprint upon our souls… we always, by the working of the Holy Spirit, can bring these treasures alive within us.

It is in bringing these virtues to life, by manifesting them by our love for God and neighbor that we are able to be a light unto those around us. We have the Church.  
We have the virtues. We have the Holy Spirit. May we have the will, the desire, and the courage to live the Catholic life we are all called to live.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen!

*Our Lady Queen of the Rosary…*

*Pray for us!*