

August 22, 2021

Reverend Gerald Dennis Gill
Rector

Reverend Monsignor Arthur E. Rodgers
Rector Emeritus

Reverend Matthew K. Biedrzycki
Parochial Vicar

Reverend Monsignor Louis A. D'Addezio
Priest in Residence

Deacon Jesús M. Burgos
Permanent Deacon

Sister Eleanor McCann, R.S.M.
Pastoral Associate

Sister Mary Luchia, P.V.M.I
Parish Evangelization

Sister Mary Raphael Paradis, R.S.M.
Outreach Coordinator

Charlene Angelini
Director of Cathedral Parish Music

Mark Loria
Principal Organist

The Cathedral Shop is open
Wed. 10:30 AM - 2:00 PM / Sat. 11:00 AM - 5:15 PM
Sun. 10:30 AM - 6:30 PM / 215-665-9032

MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday 5:15 PM Anticipated Mass
Sunday: 8:00 AM, 9:30 AM, 11:00 AM in Basilica
12:30 PM Spanish in Cathedral Chapel
(Santa Misa en español, en la Capilla)
6:30 PM in Basilica

Weekdays: 7:15 AM, 12:05 PM in Cathedral Chapel
Saturdays: 12:05 PM in Cathedral Chapel
Holy Days: See website

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE SCHEDULE

Sunday: 9:00 AM and 5:30 PM in Basilica
12:00 PM (español) en la Capilla
Weekdays: 11:30 AM in Basilica
Saturday: 4:15 PM in Basilica

Please contact the Parish Office to arrange for the:

**SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM AND MARRIAGE,
SACRAMENT OF THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK,
AND HOLY COMMUNION OF THE SICK**

Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul And the Shrine of Saint Katharine Drexel

18th Street and Benjamin Franklin
Parkway, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

***Most Reverend Nelson J. Pérez, Archbishop of
Philadelphia***



Parish Mission Statement

With Jesus Christ as our Head and Foundation, the Cathedral Parish of Saints Peter and Paul forms a vibrant Roman Catholic community in Center City and serves all those who come to the Cathedral Basilica, the Mother Church of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Our parish community professes our Catholic Faith, ministers to others and welcomes all, as rooted in the Word of God and the celebration of the Sacraments of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Adopted by the Parish Council, August 10, 2021

Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter & Paul

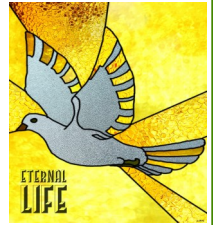
  @CathedralPhila

Parish Office Hours: Monday to Friday 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM
1723 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 • 215-561-1313
www.cathedralphila.org • info@cathedralphila.org
Shrine of Saint Katharine Drexel <https://www.saintkatharinedrexelshrine.com/>

Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday, August 22, 2021

*"Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life; you have the words of everlasting life."
R. Alleluia, alleluia." JN 6:63c, 68c*



Weekly Mass Intentions



August 21, Saturday

Saint Pius X

12:05 John Ober
5:15 Charlie Salisbury

August 22 Twenty-First Sunday In Ordinary Time

8:00 For the People of the Parish
9:30 Eduardo Osberg
11:00 Benedict Victor Arul
12:30 Antonio Alvarez
6:30 Peppino Difonzo

August 23, Monday, Weekday Saint Rose of Lima

7:15 Anthony Koterba
12:05 Mark Adamo

August 24, Tuesday St. Bartholomew

7:15 Intentions of Thomas
Chardy & Family
12:05 Michael Boyle

August 25, Wednesday, Weekday St. Louis; St. Joseph Calasanz

7:15 Intentions of Mathai &
Mariamma Thomas
12:05 Louis, Jamieann, Louis Jr.
Leonetti

August 26, Thursday, Weekday

7:15 Intentions of Melissa
Thomas
12:05 Joseph R. Mangano

August 27, Friday Saint Monica

7:15 Intentions of Steve Jun
12:05 Jerry Kammerdiemer

August 28, Saturday Saint Augustine

12:05 Jim Hennelly
5:15 Suzanne Watts

August 29 Twenty-Second Sunday In Ordinary Time

8:00 For the People of the Parish
9:30 Alfonzo Altobelli
11:00 Angela Pachioli
12:30 Luz Rodriguez
6:30 Edison Giacomucci

Dear Parishioners,

Today is the Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time! With the observance last Sunday of the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary with its proper prayers and readings for Mass, there was an interruption in the teaching of Jesus about the Holy Eucharist in John's Gospel. If last Sunday was not the Assumption, we would have heard in the Gospel (see John 6: 51-58), Jesus declare:

Amen, amen, I say to you,
unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood,
you do not have life within you.
Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life,
and I will raise him on the last day.
For my flesh is real food,
and my blood is true drink.
Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him.

This is a *remarkable* instruction that the Lord gives to us. So many wonderful tenets of our Catholic Faith are contained in these few lines. Jesus indeed, with the celebration of Holy Mass, gives us his true—his real—Body and Blood to eat and drink. When we eat and drink of his true, his real, Flesh and Blood, we ingest eternity. We partake of heaven on earth. The reception of every Holy Communion confirms our pathway to heaven. When we listen carefully to the Prayer after Communion offered by the priest celebrant at Mass, this is often the point of faith expressed. We hear in this Sunday's Gospel (see John 6: 60-69) that the teaching of last Sunday's Gospel was hard for those listening to accept. In fact, some of the disciples rejected this teaching by returning to their former way of life and no longer accompanied Jesus. For us the constant Christian challenge is not to do the same. Rather, it is to hear the teaching of Jesus, especially about the Holy Eucharist, make it our own and live by it. Like the Twelve Apostles in today's Gospel, we need to hear these words of Jesus with confidence that they are indeed the words of eternal life (see John 6: 68).

Presently, our Parish Pastoral Council is working on a Parish Pastoral Plan. This plan seeks to establish priorities for the parish leadership and members to further advance the mission of the parish. An important part of the development of this plan is gaining the input of parishioners. Over the next several weeks a cross section of the parish will be canvassed for their thoughts and ideas about these priorities. At this point, some these priorities include the development of ways to welcome more clearly people to our Cathedral Basilica, to better and more effectively communicate what is taking place and available at the parish to our parishioners, and to foster greater engagement of all parishioners in parish life. If you have some ideas on these priorities, you can share them with me at this point.

Next Sunday, the second collection will be directed to the young adult ministries of the Cathedral Parish. You can mail your Sunday offerings to the Cathedral Parish Office or make use of the many ways to give electronically. Please see <http://cathedralphila.org/donate/>. Thank you so very much for your goodness and generosity to the Cathedral Parish.

God bless you,
Father Dennis Gill,
Rector



PRAYER | PARTICIPATION | GENEROSITY

One of the best things about summer is the Joy of time away from work and worries with your family.

Remember to remain grateful through prayer for all the joy-filled opportunities. Your Cathedral parish priests *shore* do have a plan to pray that all of our parishioners have a happy summertime of fun, family and blessings!

There are some very cool ways to help us with our ministries this summer! As always, thank you for your generosity and for sharing your joy with us. Please remember our Cathedral parish with your gift.

St. Joseph, pray for us!

And let us remember to pray for each other always!

Have the Best Summer Yet!

Your generosity was:

Regular	\$ 5,084
Special	<u>1,159</u> (for Catholic University)
Total	\$ 6,243

Electronic giving for June 2021 (weekly average \$3,004):

Online	\$11,816
Text-to-Give	<u>200</u>
Total	\$12,016

We hope that your generosity will exceed **\$10,000** next week. Thank you!

Please consider a gift to support the good work of our Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul.

- Become a parishioner! – speak with Father Gill, Father Biedrzycki, Deacon Burgos or Sr. Eleanor McCann after any Sunday Mass and one of them can help you register
- **Planned Gifts** – call and leave a message for Rose at 215-561-1313, so she may discuss with you long-term ways that may be best for you such as annuities, life insurance, stock, estate planning and memorial gifts
- **Text to give** anytime, especially for your Sunday Mass offering – text “Cathedral” to 215-709-9955
- **Donate on-line** at <http://cathedralphila.org/donate/> or scan this QR code:



ST. JOHN'S HOSPICE

Saint John's Hospice is a Catholic Social Services shelter for men located in Center City Philadelphia. Established in 1963 by Monsignor Anthony J. O'Neill, Pastor of Saint John the Evangelist Church, and The Little Brothers of The Good Shepherd, Saint Johns was created as an outreach ministry to serve and assist the poor and homeless in the community. Saint John's continues to provide crucial, life-sustaining services with dignity, respect and compassion to homeless men in Philadelphia. Saint John's Hospice is an independent 501c3 agency associated with the charitable work of Catholic Social Services.

Programs: Residence for over 250 homeless men each year in St. John's Hospice & Good Shepherd programs; Case management, medical and counseling for all residents and day service guests; Mail Room for over 900 homeless men; 160 showers with clean clothing, underwear & shoes every week; Over 3,000 meals each week to homeless & needy men; Emergency shelter for 27 homeless men where they can receive a meal & bed every night.

Donate: Monetary donations: <http://saintjohnshospice.org/>
Contact information 1221 Race St. Philadelphia, PA 19107
adicesare@chs-adphila.org (215) 563-7763).

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION & CONFIRMATION AT THE CATHEDRAL!

*If any of your children need to prepare for First Penance, First Holy Communion or Confirmation, there will be classes here at the Cathedral Parish starting in the fall! **CLASSES IN ENGLISH** will start in early October! **CLASSES IN SPANISH** will start at the END OF OCTOBER!*

Classes are FREE except for books and materials, and are taught by volunteer catechists.

This is not a full religious education program.

- *Children may attend who are enrolled in a religious ed program, going to a Catholic, public or charter school, are being homeschooled, or not in religious ed.*
- *Online materials will be made available in case in-person classes become impossible due to Covid-19. Non-parishioners are also welcome.*

CONTACT SISTER MARY RAPHAEL, OUTREACH COORDINATOR, AT sr.mrparadis@archphila.org AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BEFORE AUGUST 27TH or CALL HER AT 215-561-1313 with questions. We need to order books for the classes! For classes in Spanish, please email Arturo Ceves at aceves28@gmail.com, or talk with him after the Spanish Sunday Mass at 12:30pm in the Chapel.

Please remember these parishioners and friends of the Cathedral Parish in your prayers/ Ora por los enfermos:

Daniel Damon, Nancy, Jacqueline and her intentions, Anthony Pelle, Jr., Baby Ava Hope, David Blue, Jeannette Argir, Judy Day, Wally Dalton, Baby Benjamin Summers, Eileen Maher, Carmine Meadows, April De Matto, Jim Mace Thompson, Levi Oattes, Rose McKenna, Sue Del Biondo, Paul Fischer, Valente family, Marlene Cinclair, Gloria Quici, Frank Munafo, Matthew Munafo, Rosemary Hennelly, and those in nursing homes or hospitals and all the sick.

To add or remove parishioners, friends or family members to the prayer list, please send an email to: sr.mrparadis@archphila.org, or call Sister Mary Raphael, Parish Outreach Coordinator, at the Cathedral Parish Office, 215-561-1313 Monday through Thursday. Por favor envíe un email o llame a la oficina parroquial para añadir o remover los nombres de la lista de personas que estén enfermas.

Declaración de la Misión de la Parroquia Catedral de los Santos Pedro y Pablo

Con Jesucristo como nuestra Cabeza y Fundamento, la Parroquia Catedral de los Santos Pedro y Pablo forma una vibrante comunidad Católica Romana en el centro de la ciudad y sirve a todos aquellos que vienen a la Catedral Basílica, la Iglesia Madre de la Arquidiócesis de Filadelfia. Nuestra comunidad parroquial profesa nuestra fe católica, ministra a los demás y da la bienvenida a todos, enraizada en la Palabra de Dios y la celebración de los sacramentos de Jesucristo, nuestro Señor y Salvador.

*Adoptado por el Consejo Pastoral
Parroquial, agosto 10, 2021*

BOLETIN INFORMATIVO

Oficina para Católicos Hispanos

[CLICK HERE](http://oficinahispanacatolica.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/August-Agosto-2021.pdf)

[http://oficinahispanacatolica.org/wp-content/
uploads/2021/08/August-Agosto-2021.pdf](http://oficinahispanacatolica.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/August-Agosto-2021.pdf)

¡PRIMERA COMUNIÓN Y CONFIRMACIÓN EN LA CATEDRAL!

Si alguno de sus hijos necesita prepararse para la Primera Penitencia, la Primera Comunión o la Confirmación, ¡habrá clases aquí en la Parroquia de la Catedral a partir del otoño! ¡LAS CLASES DE INGLÉS comenzarán a principios de octubre! ¡LAS CLASES DE ESPAÑOL comenzarán a FINALES DE OCTUBRE!

Las clases serán GRATUITAS excepto por los libros y materiales, y serán impartidas por catequistas voluntarios.

- *Este no es un programa completo de educación religiosa.*
- *Pueden asistir niños que estén inscritos en un programa de educación religiosa, que asistan a una escuela católica, pública o autónoma, que estén recibiendo educación en el hogar o que no estén en educación religiosa.*
- *Los materiales en línea estarán disponibles en caso de que las clases en persona se vuelvan imposibles debido a Covid-19.*
- *Los que no son feligreses también son bienvenidos.*

SI TIENE PREGUNTAS, CONTACTE LA HERMANA MARY RAPHAEL, COORDINADORA DE DIVULGACIÓN, en sr.mrparadis@archphila.org **ANTES DEL 27 DE AGOSTO o LLAME AL 215-561-1313** ¡Necesitamos pedir los libros para las clases! Para las clases en español, envíe un correo electrónico a Arturo Ceves a aceves28@gmail.com, o hable con él después de la misa dominical en español a las 12:30pm en la Capilla.

REFLEXIÓN DEL RECTOR

Estimados feligreses,

¡Hoy es el vigésimo primer domingo del tiempo ordinario! Con la observancia del último domingo de la Solemnidad de la Asunción de la Santísima Virgen María con sus propias oraciones y lecturas para la Misa, hubo una interrupción en la enseñanza de Jesús sobre la Sagrada Eucaristía en el Evangelio de Juan. Si el domingo pasado no fuera la Asunción, hubiéramos escuchado en el Evangelio (ver Juan 6: 51-58), Jesús declara:

Amén, amén, les digo:

En verdad les digo que si no comen la carne del Hijo del Hombre
y no beben su sangre,
no tienen vida en ustedes.

El que come mi carne y bebe mi sangre vive de vida eterna.
y yo lo resucitaré en el último día.

Mi carne es verdadera comida,
y mi sangre es verdadera bebida.

El que come mi carne y bebe mi sangre permanece en mí y yo en él.

Ésta es una instrucción *notable* que el Señor nos da. Tantos principios maravillosos de nuestra fe católica están contenidos en estas pocas líneas. Jesús ciertamente, con la celebración de la Santa Misa, nos da su verdadero — su verdadero— Cuerpo y Sangre para comer y beber. Cuando comemos y bebemos de su verdadera carne y sangre, ingerimos la eternidad. Participamos del cielo en la tierra. La recepción de cada Santa Comunión confirma nuestro camino al cielo. Cuando escuchamos atentamente la Oración después de la Comunión ofrecida por el sacerdote celebrante en la Misa, este es a menudo el punto de fe expresado. Escuchamos en el evangelio de este domingo (ver Juan 6: 60-69) que la enseñanza del evangelio del domingo pasado fue difícil de aceptar para quienes la escuchaban. De hecho, algunos de los discípulos rechazaron esta enseñanza volviendo a su forma de vida anterior y ya no acompañaron a Jesús. Para nosotros, el constante desafío cristiano es no hacer lo mismo. Más bien, es escuchar la enseñanza de Jesús, especialmente sobre la Sagrada Eucaristía, hacerla nuestra y vivir de acuerdo con ella. Al igual que los Doce Apóstoles en el Evangelio de hoy, debemos escuchar estas palabras de Jesús con la confianza de que en verdad son palabras de vida eterna (véase Juan 6: 68).

Actualmente, nuestro Consejo Pastoral Parroquial está trabajando en un Plan Pastoral Parroquial. Este plan busca establecer prioridades para los líderes y miembros de la parroquia para avanzar más en la misión de la parroquia. Una parte importante del desarrollo de este plan es obtener la opinión de los feligreses. Durante las próximas semanas, se analizará una muestra representativa de la parroquia para conocer sus pensamientos e ideas sobre estas prioridades. En este punto, algunas de estas prioridades incluyen el desarrollo de formas de dar la bienvenida más claramente a las personas a nuestra Catedral Basílica, para comunicar mejor y más eficazmente lo que está sucediendo y disponible en la parroquia a nuestros feligreses, y para fomentar una mayor participación de todos los feligreses en vida parroquial. Si tiene algunas ideas sobre estas prioridades, puede compartirlas conmigo en este momento.

El próximo domingo, la segunda colecta estará dirigida al ministerio de jóvenes adultos de la Parroquia Catedral. Puede enviar sus ofrendas dominicales a la Oficina Parroquial de la Catedral o hacer uso de las muchas formas de donar electrónicamente. Consulte <http://cathedralphila.org/donate/>. Muchas gracias por su bondad y generosidad con la Parroquia Catedral.

Dios lo bendiga,
Padre Dennis Gill,
Rector

With gratitude to Almighty God for the years of
Dedicated and faithful service to the Church
By our Religious Priests, Brothers and Sisters,
The Archdiocese of Philadelphia
Wishes to invite you to join in
Celebration of their
Jubilee Year.

Mass of Thanksgiving

*Archbishop Nelson Pérez
Celebrant*

Sunday, September 19, 2021 @ 11 o'clock
The Cathedral Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul
Parking available next to Cathedral
All are Welcome



PARISH GREETERS

The Cathedral Parish is always eager to welcome those coming to pray and Worship God at Holy Mass. We likewise, are anxious for regular attendees to consider becoming one of our Greeters for a few years at the Mass of your choice. Please contact Father Gill, Father Biedrzycki, Deacon Burgos or Sr. Eleanor McCann @ emccann@sistersofmercy.org with your name and phone number and a convenient for a phone call to discuss your interest.

Thank you and God bless you.



THE LEGION OF MARY CELEBRATE OUR 100TH ANNIVERSARY!

All parishioners are invited to join in celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the Legion of Mary with a **Mass of Thanksgiving** at the Cathedral Basilica of Sts. Peter and Paul, 18th Street and Benjamin Franklin Pkwy., Philadelphia on **Sept. 11 at 1:00 pm** with Most Rev. John McIntyre, principal celebrant, and Rev. Hugh Gillespie SMM, homilist. Before Holy Mass, the Rosary and Legion prayers will be recited at 12:30 pm.

The Legion of Mary is an international association of lay Catholics finding Jesus through prayer, works of mercy and evangelization rooted in Marian spirituality and commitment to the Holy Spirit. The first meeting of the Legion of Mary took place in Dublin, Ireland, on September 7, 1921.

For more information: www.philadelphiasenatus.org.

"THE SUMMIT"
Friday, August 27th 2021

7:00pm - Mass
8:00pm - Exposition
10:00pm - Benediction

**A NIGHT OF
WORSHIP, OUTREACH,
AND
COMMUNITY.**

Location:
The Cathedral Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul
215 N 18th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103
Free Parking Available

CHORAL EVENSONG
VESPERS IN THE ORDINariate OFFICE
NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

AT ST. AGATHA-ST. JAMES CATHOLIC CHURCH
3728 CHESTNUT STREET, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19104

SCAN TO
RSVP

WEDNESDAY, SEPT 8 - 6:30 PM
RECEPTION TO FOLLOW

Featuring William Byrd's Magnificat & Nunc dimittis, Anglican chant psalmody, and other works of the English choral tradition
Director: William Gatens, Director of Music at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church (Ordinariate)
Organist: Nathan Knutson, Director of Music at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary



CYO Cross Country

All K-8 Cathedral parishioners are invited to run cross country with the St. Francis Xavier CYO team. Races are Sundays at Belmont Plateau.

Contact daniel.p.kilpatrick@gmail.com
for more information. All are welcome.

HOLY HOURS WITH THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Need some encouragement? Join us for a holy hour with fellow priests, religious and lay faithful as we seek strength and hope from Jesus, our Good Shepherd, the saints and one another during these difficult times in the world and the Church. The Holy Hour includes Rosary, Litany and Benediction. Afterwards join us for a short talk on a saint, exploring how he or she remained faithful to Christ and His Church during the trials of his or her time. Meets quarterly on **Sundays, 2-4 PM** at St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church, Drexel Hill, PA. Details and RSVP at <http://www.phillyevang.org/events/>. Upcoming dates and talk topics:

- **Sept 19** - Talk: St. Gregory the Great's Reforms of the Church in Crisis -Fr. Dennis Gill
- **Dec 5** - Talk: How Carmelite Nuns Brought an End to the French Revolution - Fr. Sean Loomis


View the Flyer: <http://www.phillyevang.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Flyer-2021-Good-Shepherd-ALL-TALKS.pdf>

EVANGELIZATION NEWSLETTER

Office for New Evangelization

[CLICK HERE,](#)

<https://phillyevang.flocknote.com/note/12715036>



**Come to the Altar
- Be Renewed -**

**A day retreat for those who minister
with youth or young adults**

Come and be renewed at the altar
on Saturday, September 25 at
The Miraculous Medal Shrine on
500 E Chelton Avenue,
Philadelphia, PA

- Day begins at 9:00am and ends with 4:00pm Mass
- Includes continental breakfast and lunch
- Adoration, workshops, opportunity for Reconciliation/Confession, and much more
- \$40 per person
- Special guest of the day: Archbishop Pérez

***Register here!**
*Deadline is Sept. 12
*See the information sheet for additional details.

Brought to you by:

Office for New Evangelization (youth adults)
Adult Catechesis of the Catholic Church
PhillyCatholic.org | 215.587.4541

Office for Ministry with Youth
Ministry Services
PhillyCatholic.org | 215.587.2714

Facebook: @phillycatholic

FORMED Webinar "Back in His Presence" Wednesday, September 8, 2021 – 1:00pm

Join us for a webinar hosted by the Augustine Institute. We'll focus on how FORMED can help you invite your community back to the in person celebration of Mass and rekindle their love for the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

[Click HERE](#) to register for the webinar.

EVENING OF FORMATION FOR LITURGICAL MINISTERS

Wednesday, September 29, 2021,
7-9PM in the Cathedral Basilica

We will have an evening of formation and review for all Cathedral Parish Liturgical Ministers. Please join us if you are:
A parish lector and extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, parish greeter, parish cantor, and parish sacristan.

YOUNG ADULT GROUP

If you are interested in the **Young Adults of the Cathedral Parish** and would like to receive the most up to-date information about our group's events, please e-mail us at: youngadults.cathedral@gmail.com. Please search for our Facebook page: [Young Adults at the Cathedral](#). Follow our Instagram page: [@YAC-Philly](#). Our activities at the Cathedral are:

- ♦ Gospel Reflection: Every Thursday @ 7pm (Drexel Hall)
- ♦ Rosary on Saturday mornings @ 8AM in the Chapel followed by Gospel Reflection in the Neumann Room
- ♦ Meet and Greet: Last Friday of every month @ 7pm (Friday, August 27 will be sponsored by Philly Frassati—7pm Mass followed by Eucharistic Adoration and outreach event)

EVANGELIZATION

The Holy Mass –

Assisting at Mass vs. Going to Church – Part 3 of 4

Last Sunday, August 15, 2021, the Solemnity of the Assumption, the obligation to assist (be present) at Mass in-person is reinstated for Catholic Christians living in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. This means that we are to be present for Holy Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. Our absence carries with it the pain of grave sin. Exceptions to this obligation ordinarily consist of those obstacles posed by grave physical (illness) or moral (excess fear, anxiety etc.) factors that would make assisting at Mass difficult if not impossible.

Over the past few weeks we considered from where the obligation to attend Holy Mass each Sunday comes. We learned that our remembrance of the Passion, Death and Resurrection is not only an external one but one that literally changes us from within. As such, the Church requires her sons and daughters to faithfully be present for this memorial each Sunday, the definitive Lord's Day. Sometimes our participation at Mass can feel out of sync with how important we are told it is. At the Second Vatican Council, the Council Fathers recognized this very problem (it is ages old). As a result, they sought to encourage people to **actively participate** in the sacrifice of the Mass. What does this mean?

Active Participation does not so much mean "doing" something particular as it does being fully conscious and present to what Jesus is doing on behalf of his people. In Spanish, the verb used to describe "going to Mass" (our English expression) is *asistir* (to assist or to attend). In English, the term was and is still used by some describe their attending Holy Mass. The idea of "assisting" at Mass gives the impression that someone needs to be doing something in order to be at Mass. However, the expression involves a great deal more than simply executing a function.

The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council made it a point to illustrate the way the lay faithful participate in the life of the Church. Their words I believe help us understand how all of us who assist at Mass are called to do so. They teach:

"...the laity, dedicated to Christ and anointed by the Holy Spirit, are marvelously called and wonderfully prepared so that ever more abundant fruits of the Spirit may be produced in them. For all their works, prayers and apostolic endeavors, their ordinary married and family life, their daily occupations, their physical and mental relaxation, if carried out in the Spirit, and even the hardships of life, if patiently borne—all these become "spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ". Together with the offering of the Lord's body, they are most fittingly offered in the celebration of the Eucharist."

Some of the immediate things we do to prepare for Mass can assist us in consciously making an offering of the whole of our lives to God through Jesus Christ. Taking time to read the Word of God which will be proclaimed in advance is an important part of our preparation. Fasting for one hour from food and drink (except water/medicine) remind us physically of the absolutely unique guest we prepare to welcome into our hearts. Taking care to dress and groom ourselves well for Mass reminds us of the fact we kneel in the presence of the King of kings who deigns to call you and me his brothers and sisters.

Next week we will continue to look at our preparation for making a Holy Communion. See you at Holy Mass!

Fr. Matthew Biedrzycki