

Homily: 26th Sunday: 2021: Cycle B: Nu 11: 25-29; Ps. 19: James 5:1-6; Mk 9:38-43, 45, 47-48

“The Connection between Mass, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and the Integrity of Our Lives”

1. This summer we as a Church went through the entire Eucharistic chapter, or the Bread of Life discourse, of St. John’s Gospel, chapter 6, over a 5 week period, which hopefully has lead us to a deeper understanding and appreciation for the Mass and the gift of the Eucharist which we participate in at every Mass. How much we benefit spiritually from Jesus’s Eucharistic Presence depends on the effort we make to draw closer to Him and enter into the mystery of the Mass. **In every Mass the one eternal Sacrifice of Jesus Christ offered on the Cross some two thousand years ago for the salvation of the human race is made present sacramentally and the saving graces won by Jesus on the Cross are applied to the souls of the living and the dead.** Also attending Eucharistic adoration which we normally have after the Monday morning 8 am Mass at St. Thomas – except this week we won’t have it because I have a funeral – and every Friday at our 3 pm Divine Mercy Eucharistic holy hour - please try to attend as much as possible – it will change your life! **Eucharistic adoration can help us immensely to draw close to Jesus in the depths of our soul, as adoration of the Eucharist leads us back to its source which is the Mass.** If we grow in our love for Eucharistic adoration we will grow in our love for the Mass, and vice versa. Yes, if we love the Mass it will lead us **to want to** adore our Lord Jesus in Eucharistic adoration, which is where we can gaze on our beloved Lord for a prolonged period of time. As St. John Vianney said once when asked what is deep prayer is - relating what an old farmer in his parish said, when asked by the Saint what he does every day in the Church when he would make a visit: *He looks at me and I look at Him.* The devout farmer was speaking about Eucharistic adoration and daily prayer before the Tabernacle, where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in every Catholic Church in the world. **How humble and loving Jesus is to remain with us in such a simple yet profound way until the end of the**

world! May we never take His Real Presence in the Eucharist or Blessed Sacrament for granted! Or receive Him with mortal sin on our soul!

2. By coming before the Lord in faith and love as He is placed on the Altar in the Monstrance, we are given the opportunity by the Church to ponder the mystery of His Real Presence in the Eucharist. **Solemn exposition which we do each Friday at 3 pm offers us the faithful a privileged occasion to develop a deeper devotion to the Eucharist and to deepen our spiritual communion with Jesus, and through Him with the whole Trinity, as well at Benediction at 4 pm to show our love and respect for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.** When we come to adoration we are able to reflect in peace and quiet on this mystery of the Lord's Real Presence. There is no sense of rush to this prayer, which sometimes can happen even at Mass because of time constraints; we can take our time and pray quietly with recollection. **It should lead us to understand the Mass on a deeper level as Jesus's offering of total self-giving love to the Father, which we are called to do likewise in our lives.** We also need as human beings frequently to reflect: *to see if our lives, both publicly and privately, are in harmony with the Gospel teaching of Jesus and all the teachings of our holy Catholic Faith.* Eucharistic adoration provides us with the best way to do this, right in front of Jesus Himself, in all His tender mercy, love and saving truth. **That's why I always offer the Sacrament of Confession after the Friday 3 pm holy hour –** because often in adoration Jesus will show us our sins and the need to confess them to be forgiven and healed of them. **Jesus' warning about the scandal** or bad example that our sins (e.g., skipping Sunday/Holy Day Mass for no good reason) can cause others to stumble spiritually, especially the young, should hit our hearts and cause us to take whatever steps are necessary to correct those behaviors, so as not to risk the fires of **Gehenna (Hell)**. *Time spent before the Blessed Sacrament in prayer, reflection, adoration, thanksgiving, petition and reparation should lead us to want to be molded more and more into the image of our Savior, and to be better witnesses of His truth and love in our hurting world.*

3. From our prayer before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, we will experience the joy of the heart the psalmist talks about today. We will want more and more to live by the precepts of the Lord rather than the false values of the world which St. James speaks about today in the 2nd reading - **materialism and selfishness**, and what the psalmist calls **wanton sin** - *which are all the sins of the flesh, sexual immorality of various sorts which are always celebrated by the worldly ppl, our own fallen nature and all the fallen angels*. By praying before the Blessed Sacrament throughout the year hopefully, we will be lead by the Holy Spirit to reflect more deeply on how well our lives mirror Christ's, in purity of mind and body. And then be given the grace and strength to put those reflections into practice. We will become more aware of Christ's presence in our lives, especially in the difficult moments when we have to bear our **Cross**; we will see more clearly that He is there to help us bear it in love. **We will more and more enjoy Christ's intimate friendship in our souls with the Father and the Holy Spirit**. We will be inspired to be more charitable toward our neighbor, to see Christ more readily in them, and eager to do good works and please God, and in a special way to work and pray before our Eucharistic Lord throughout the year that all human life will be protected and cherished from the moment of conception until natural death and that a Culture of Life will replace the Culture of Death, that we are tragically currently in as a society. Always praying and offering acts of penance for all those who support the culture of death, including some so called Catholic political leaders and judges. Hopefully we can all see that prayer before the Blessed Sacrament is a golden opportunity to grow in the virtues of Faith, Hope and Love and to be transformed by the Eucharistic heart of Christ. Don't let those precious times of prayer before our Eucharistic Lord pass you by – especially those of you who are retired and can come to daily Mass and the Eucharistic holy hour each Friday – if you make the sacrifice of time and make it a priority! What a spiritual gift which is always there to receive freely from our Lord Jesus with His open arms. If you can't always come to daily Mass and Eucharistic adoration because of work and other obligations – make a spiritual communion and/or visit to our Lord in the Church. God bless you.