

111509 33rd Sunday in OT

Are the pages of your calendar seemingly just flying by? As the pages of our calendar at home turn faster and faster, we seem to relish good times. I just helped my wife babysitting our young granddaughters -- I played Candyland... make-believe... hide and seek. Good times for sure. And last weekend, my wife and I had a lovely get together -- spending time with two couples... one couple was from Pine... one was from our mission church in Young. During the ebb and flow of conversation, something about Colorado was mentioned. One friend said, "You talk about Colorado a lot..... " and then went on to make his point. I've thought about his words -- wondering if I talk about Colorado because of it's soaring beauty... or the nine years of friends and parish memories we have... You've probably heard me say I used to start every email with the words, "Greetings from God's Country."

So I'll start my homily with this story: In Colorado -- there is a woman friend of ours. Lucille is a consecrated virgin... she is a contemplative... she lives alone at about 8,500 feet elevation on the top of a mountain... She has solar panels which provide her electricity. She has a well for water and even though she is in her seventies, she puts in a garden in late spring and she raises vegetables for canning foods for the year ahead. Lucille does a great deal of phone counseling for people around the United States... and even in other countries. She welcomes visitors - but because of her lifestyle -- and the remoteness of where she lives -- she doesn't have many social callers. She offers summer visitors a chance to stay in her retreat cabins. Those who come to see Lucille are mostly visiting to counsel with her... or to help her with chores around her 35 acre high mountain property..

Why I'm mentioning Lucille is because she has a special authority granted to her by the Archbishop of Denver. She has permission for a tabernacle in her cabin... and she has the Blessed Sacrament. Jesus, in the Consecrated Host is present with her 24/7... As a matter of fact, when you walk from her entry into her main living area -- you pass through a small chapel room -- and you genuflect and there is always a lit red candle. Jesus is present with Lucille at all times... Lucille hasn't a worry in the world about the so-called 'end-times' or the end of her life. Spending time with the Eucharist is a far better thing to be called to than spending time wondering or speculating about the end times of this world... or the end of our lives...

Some of you know that I do a lot of work on the internet -- I'm on the computer quite a bit. The other day, I did a search on the words 'END TIMES' -- it came back with 249 million entries that had to do with end times. There are so many people caught up in either the End Times.. the Rapture... we've even had religions that have told us about the exact dates for the end of the world. This just seems so very strange -- because Jesus said that only the Father knows when the end times will come. Jesus said that the end of history will come, but he doesn't tell us when, because he wants us to live EACH OF THESE DAYS actively, vibrantly, fully. That's what the writer of today's Psalm means when he says, "I set the LORD ever before me, with Him at my right hand, I shall not be disturbed."

And so for you and me -- the challenge and message of today is found in these questions:

- How can we "set the Lord ever before" us?

- How can we live our daily lives with God "at our right hand" so that we too can live with interior peace, joy, courage, and wisdom?

The most excellent way is to give a bigger part of our lives to the Holy Eucharist. It starts in this Mass and every Mass you attend. The priest speaks the words of consecration and Christ Himself becomes truly present under the appearances of bread and wine. In Holy Communion, Jesus nourishes our life with His real presence, forgiving our sins, healing our spiritual wounds, and strengthening our good desires and intentions. After Mass, the Hosts that haven't been received in Communion are kept in the miniature temple on the altar -- it is called the Tabernacle. And for the next six days, Jesus really and truly waits inside there, patiently, humbly, quietly. And all of the remaining 167 hours till most Catholics return, He is in the tabernacle, thinking of you all the time, continuing to offer himself as a sacrifice to the Father for our sake.

And you know, we can come and visit him most any time, for five minutes or for an hour, sharing our joys and sorrows, begging his help, praying and meditating, or simply sitting and letting his grace penetrate our minds and hearts. The fellow who was my deacon mentor during my formation process in Colorado is named Deacon J. D. Dorwart.... Deacon J. D. would never... never ever come to the parish office without stopping to say hi to Jesus. He wouldn't think of it... even if he only knelt for 2 or 3 minutes. And so if you are willing to respond to a challenge to your existing faith walk, maybe you could start doing what deacon J. D. and others do. If you come by this way -- to the parish office or the school hall or St. Vincent de Paul, why not stop and say, "Hello Jesus, I love you... "

And then there's another gift we have access to... it's also so powerful and grace-filled. It is on the days when we have Eucharistic Adoration. Jesus is brought out in a larger format consecrated host and He is installed in the Monstrance. This happens every Friday from the end of the 8AM Mass until near 5:00 pm. You can stop for 15 minutes... or you can come for a regular hour of Adoration... special time spent with our Lord and Savior... By my count -- we may have 20 people or less who come to Adoration... in a parish of 400 families... only 20 people. Far less than 5% of our people that seemingly believe that Jesus is really present and waiting for quiet time with them... less than 5% of our people who realize that spending time with the Eucharist is the best preparation for an eternity to be spent with Jesus and His Mother. That's less than 5% of our parents giving the important example of good Catholic practice to their children or grandchildren.

Many of you know... many of you remember and you are tender about our friend and former parishioner Julie Philips. Julie is terminal with cancer and recently moved to Ohio. And you know how they say someone was or is a living saint? Well many of us feel that dear Julie Philips is a living saint... Her patience.... her suffering acceptance of the pain of bone cancer... her gentleness... these are examples for all of us. As long as she was able, Julie loved daily Mass and prayer... She loved the Eucharist...

And Julie Phillips reminds me of the story I heard from a priest friend back in Pennsylvania -- he spoke of Sister Christine, a Carmelite nun. About ten years ago when she went to the doctor, she was told, "Sister, I'm sorry to tell you this, but you are going to die."

And Sister started to smile. And he said "Sister, I don't think you understand, you have about one month to live, you have inoperable cancer..." And Sister smiled all the more and she said "Doctor, oh I don't think you understand. Either way I win. If I live, I am with Jesus, if I die, I am with Jesus. Either way, I'm with Jesus." Sister Christine sounds like my friend Lucille - living each day with Jesus.

Is that the way you live? That you focus so much on Jesus that either way you win, it doesn't matter? Our prayer today ought to be for the strength to focus on the Eucharist... on Jesus... so much so that we are never focused on the things of earth. Remembering that Jesus said, "heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away." So, what are you focused on? Are you focused on things of this earth, or are you focused on forever? Are you focused on the Eucharist... or on today's football game or your next golf outing? Is there any part of your week when you long to spend an hour with Jesus in the garden of Adoration?

The Sunday Morning Prayer of the Church -- what they used to call the breviary... it has these words from Psalm 63: "O God, for you I long... for you my soul is thirsting... so I gaze on you in the sanctuary to see your strength and your glory.

Can you -- do you have those words in your heart? Jesus is waiting to speak with you.

Reading 1

[Dn 12:1-3](#)

In those days, I Daniel, heard this word of the Lord: "At that time there shall arise Michael, the great prince, guardian of your people; it shall be a time unsurpassed in distress since nations began until that time. At that time your people shall escape, everyone who is found written in the book.

"Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some shall live forever, others shall be an everlasting horror and disgrace. "But the wise shall shine brightly like the splendor of the firmament, and those who lead the many to justice shall be like the stars forever."

Responsorial Psalm

[Ps 16:5, 8, 9-10, 11](#)

R. (1) You are my inheritance, O Lord!

O LORD, my allotted portion and my cup,
you it is who hold fast my lot.

I set the LORD ever before me;
with him at my right hand I shall not be disturbed.

R. You are my inheritance, O Lord!

Therefore my heart is glad and my soul rejoices,
my body, too, abides in confidence;
because you will not abandon my soul to the netherworld,
nor will you suffer your faithful one to undergo corruption.

R. You are my inheritance, O Lord!

You will show me the path to life,
fullness of joys in your presence,
the delights at your right hand forever.
R. You are my inheritance, O Lord!

Reading II

[Heb 10:11-14, 18](#)

Brothers and sisters: Every priest stands daily at his ministry, offering frequently those same sacrifices that can never take away sins. But this one offered one sacrifice for sins, and took his seat forever at the right hand of God; now he waits until his enemies are made his footstool. For by one offering he has made perfect forever those who are being consecrated. Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer offering for sin.

Gospel

[Mk 13:24-32](#)

Jesus said to his disciples: "In those days after that tribulation the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from the sky, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

"And then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in the clouds' with great power and glory, and then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the end of the earth to the end of the sky.

"Learn a lesson from the fig tree. When its branch becomes tender and sprouts leaves, you know that summer is near. In the same way, when you see these things happening, know that he is near, at the gates.

Amen, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

"But of that day or hour, no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."