



From the Pastor
17th Sunday in
Ordinary Time - A
July 30, 2023

ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS.

In reflection #6 on **Pope Francis' 2022 Apostolic Letter, 'Desiderio Desideravi,'** Latin for **Jesus' pre-Last Supper** words: **"I have earnestly desired [to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.]" [Luke 22:15]** we consider how active we are in **Sacred Liturgy.** **'Desiderio Desideravi'** dovetails so perfectly with my years-long series on the **2022-2025 National Eucharistic Revival** that this is **Part #35** of my reflections on the **Eucharist.**

"UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU WILL DO," This phrase comes from the admonition given by a **Bishop** as he anoints a newly **Ordained Priest's** hands: **"Understand what you will do, imitate what you will celebrate, and conform your life to the mystery of the Lord's Cross."** [Rite of Ordination to Priesthood] However, this directive applies to **all** worshippers; no one should be a spectator or mere observer at **holy Mass.** All are to join themselves to the **bread** and **wine** that the **People Provide** and **Offer**, the **Priest Consecrates**, and **God** returns to us as **Holy Communion.** Through this holy exchange, what we offer **WITH** the **bread** and **wine**: our prayers, acts of service, and donations, are transformed into acts of worship. While **bread** and **wine** become **Christ's Body** and **Blood** via the miracle of **Transubstantiation**, all our offerings also become vehicles of **Christ's Presence.**

A CRUISE SHIP TO HEAVEN. Many analogies can help us better appreciate our **Sacred Rites.** One is the **Church** is like a cruise ship, which we 'board' in **Baptism; Reconciliation** rescues those who go overboard; the seasick are **Anointed**; the Ordained are the **Captain** and his crew. It is **God the Father's Ship; God the Holy Spirit** sets the course; and **God the Son, Jesus**, provides the **Food!** Some have their own cabin, others cruise with family or friends. And while [hopefully!] all will arrive at the same destination: heaven, the experience is different for everyone.

Some take advantage of every excursion or side trip to make the most of their journey; some taste the wide variety of foods; some experience the cultural events with which they are unfamiliar; some stick to the basics; some even stay in their cabin the whole time and have little, if any,

interaction with others. Again, we are all headed for, and will hopefully arrive in, the same place: heaven ... but what a difference the ride is for those who **actively participate** in the journey!

It was not by accident that the revision of **Sacred Liturgy** was the first document issued by the **Second Vatican Council.** For it reaffirmed and set the course for living out its three main documents for how she sees herself. The **Church** is the **Light of the Nations [Lumen Gentium]**, who devoutly listens to the **Word of God [Dei Verbum]** and recognizes as her own the **Joys and Hopes [Gaudium et Spes]** of all people. And the way she best communicates all this to all the world is through the **Sacred Liturgy.**

This is one reason why the **Holy Father** is so upset with those who **reject** or **misinterpret** the liturgical reforms of **Vatican II.** In his **Letter**, he cites this as the reason for placing restrictions on who can celebrate the **Tridentine Mass** [often called the **'Old' Mass** or **'Latin' Mass**] and how frequently and where it can be celebrated. He also calls for, if not demands, that all **Priests** and **Seminarians** - and all the **Faithful**, especially those who serve in a liturgical ministry - be better educated in the true meaning of the **Council's** revisions. For we must all understand what we are doing to benefit the most from the **holy Mass!**

This is also why our **Parish PAYS** the **subscription fee** for any **PARISHIONER** who wishes to enjoy the **Catholic** online media service, 'Formed.' Simply go online to www.formed.org and follow the instructions. Then avail yourself of countless movies, video conferences, talks, spiritual reflections on the readings and saints of each day. There are many things for those of every age, even religious cartoons for children. I guarantee you: the more you understand **what** we do, **why** we do it, its **biblical basis** and, as it has been handed on from generation to generation, its development - the more the **holy Mass** and all our **Sacred Rites** will mean to you! And the more it means to you, the more you will benefit from the graces it provides.

What have you done, are you doing, and will you do to better understand what we do? How will you become a **more active participant** in it?

In His holy Name,

Rev. Thomas J. Serafin, KCHS