



*From the Pastor
25th Sunday
in Ordinary Time - C
September 18, 2022*

**COMMUNION WITH
CHRIST AND THE
CHURCH.** In part 6 of
my series on the *US
Catholic Bishops' The
Mystery of the Eucharist*

in the Life of the Church document, I reflect on the third essential truth about the *Eucharist*: it is *Communion with Christ and the Church*. In past articles, I reflected on *Eucharist* as the *Sacrifice of Christ* and the *Real Presence of Christ*. To read past articles on this *Revival*, the whole document, or the free study guide, go to our Parish website: easeton.net and click on *National Eucharistic Revival Bulletin Articles*. We begin with a quote from the *Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church: Lumen Gentium* [Light of the World] on the importance of ALL the *Sacraments*, but in a uniquely particular way, the *Most Blessed Sacrament*: the *Eucharist*.

The Eucharist is the Source and Summit.

*"Taking part in the Eucharistic Sacrifice,
which is the FOUNT and APEX
[some translations say 'SOURCE and SUMMIT']
of the whole Christian life,
[Christians] offer the Divine Victim to God,
and offer themselves along with It."*

SOME THINGS CANNOT BE DONE ALONE. A common response to the question, "Why don't you go to church?" is a variation of these words: "I can pray at home!" I usually reply by saying something like: "That's great; I hope - and pray - you DO pray at home, in the car, at the beach, up the mountains, or wherever you go! For we cannot be spiritually healthy if we only pray once a week, for just one hour, in church." [Let's be honest: how many people even do that much!] But among the many reasons we call it '*Holy Communion*' is that the *holy Mass* unites us to the *Lord AND to one another* - which we cannot do alone! As they say: no one can be a '*Lone Ranger*' *Christian* for many, many reasons!

The *Risen Lord* primarily works through those He chooses to lead His *Church* and her *Sacraments*. Between His *Resurrection* and *Ascension*, He delegated the *Apostles* to *baptize, confirm, forgive sins, drive out demons* and *heal the sick*. He revealed Himself in the *Breaking of Bread*, the

Eucharist; which requires us to join the *Church* in prayer! As *Eucharistic Prayer III* says, "Listen graciously to the prayers of this family, whom you have *SUMMONED* before you: in your compassion, O merciful Father, gather to yourself all your children scattered throughout the world." If we face consequences for ignoring an *earthly* judge's summons, what will the *Judge of Heaven and Earth* do if we ignore *His summons*!

Coming together for *holy Mass*, at least weekly, empowers us, by the one *Sacrament* that literally *enters* us, to be changed from the inside out into another *Christ*: the *Eucharist*. This intimate union with *God* also extends to all who gather for this sacred meal: our *brothers* and *sisters* in *Christ*. Our presence at - or absence from - *holy Mass* has far-reaching effects. Is it possible that few young people come to *Mass* because their parents and grandparents - especially the men - do not do so? In *Jewish* and *Moslem* rites, men usually lead communal and 'home-based' rites ... so what's up with *Christian* men? Come on, guys; step up to the plate ... the *Ciborium* or *Communion Plate*, that is!

This intimate union with our *God* also reaches beyond the bounds of time and space, for the *holy Mass* joins us with all our *brothers* and *sisters* worldwide. That's one reason our *main pastor* - the *Pope* - and *local Bishop* are always mentioned by name. So, too, are our greatest *Saints*: our *Blessed Mother* and *Saint Joseph*, and in a general way, all the *Apostles* and *Saints*. How sad that so many face life without the help from heaven available to us through the *Communion of Saints*.

WE ARE OBLIGATED FOR OUR OWN GOOD! While the above-mentioned realities are reason enough for the *Church* to mandate that we "*Keep holy the Lord's Day*" - which, from apostolic times, was moved to the day of the *Lord's Resurrection: Sunday* - there's still more! It is one of the primary ways we 'identify' ourselves as *Christians*, so it also becomes our 'identity.' We become what, or rather, *Who* we receive! When we are absent, we deprive the *Church*, our family, of her unity. It's like missing a family wedding reception or funeral repast, birthday or graduation party. It's just not the same when anyone misses the *holy Mass*!

In His holy Name,

Rev. Thomas J. Serafin, KCHS