



*From the Pastor
31st Sunday
in Ordinary Time - C
October 30, 2022*

ORATIONS: EUCHARISTIC ADORATION.

In part 12 of my series on *The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church* US Bishops' document, I'm reflecting on the 6th of the 7 prayers used to end *Benediction*. The 7 'themes' are: *Memorial; True God/True Man; Paschal Lamb*

of God; Heavenly Bread of Angels; Spirit and Truth; Life-Giving Bread/Viaticum; and Paschal Mystery Renewed. Past articles on this *Revival*, the whole document, and a free study guide, are on our Parish website: easeton.net; click on *National Eucharistic Revival Bulletin Articles*.

Eucharistic Adoration Oration: 6 of 7

*Lord, may this Sacrament of new life
warm our hearts with your love
and make us eager
for the eternal joy of your Kingdom.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

THIS SACRAMENT OF NEW LIFE. We rightfully call *Baptism* the *Sacrament of Rebirth* since it enables us to die or drown to sin and our former way of life and begin our new life in *Christ*. We see this more clearly in *Baptism by Immersion*, rather than *Pouring* [the most common method for *Roman Catholics*] or *Sprinkling*, which are valid ways to *baptize* but lack the visual impact of *Baptism's* reality. However, just as newborns need to be properly fed in order to live and develop, so do those reborn in *Baptism*. For just as our *bodies* need regular doses of food and drink, so, too, do our *souls* - which is why the *Eucharist* is called the *Sacrament of New Life*.

How does the *Eucharist* give new life? Again, we turn to the *4th Gospel's 'Bread of Life Discourse'* in which *Jesus* lays it all out for us. *"Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him the Father, God, has set his seal."* Then *Jesus* added: *"I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world."* [John 6:27, 51] And just as those who heard these words 2,000 years ago balked, so do many today!

In the *Latin* or *Roman Catholic Rite*, the *Eucharist* may only be given to one who is *baptized*, is in union with the *Catholic Church*, and has some understanding that the *Consecrated Bread* and *Wine* are not just 'regular' food. [In *Eastern Rite Catholic Churches*, like the *Byzantine Rite*, *Baptism*, *Confirmation* and *First Eucharist* are given at the same time - even to infants!] We may differ on when and how we receive *Holy Communion*, but the more we are fed from the *Heavenly Banquet Table*, the more we are infused with *Divine Grace*, the more easily we can become another *Christ*, and the more likely we will share in all *Christ* won for us - above all, eternal life. And the more time we share in the presence of our *Lord's Real Presence*, the more eagerly we desire to spend all eternity with Him!

WARM OUR HEARTS. Many years ago, soon after the *1962-1965 Second Vatican Council*, the *Church* began to promote what some dismissed as 'folksy' images of the power of the *Eucharist*. One was a short film entitled, *'Grandma's Bread'* - a schmaltzy tear-jerker about an Italian 'Nonna' who dies before her grandson's *First Communion*, whose parents discarded all her baking materials - but he had secretly saved them. It ends with the family - sans 'Nonna' - gathered at table with her traditional *Easter* bread - which they learned to make in her memory.

But before we write it off as silly, have we lost sight of the deeper meaning of this sacred meal *Jesus* left us the night before He died? For as the two disciples on the road to Emmaus on that first *Easter* night said, after the *Risen Lord* broke the bread *for* - and *with* - them: *"Were not our hearts burning [within us] while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?"* [Luke 24:32] Maybe we need to rediscover and develop the inner longing for - and rejoicing with - the *Risen Lord*, truly present in this *Sacrament of New Life*. That, in turn, would give us a taste of heaven - *"the eternal joy of [God's] Kingdom"* - here and now: each time we receive *Holy Communion*; each time we *'make a visit'* to the *Blessed Sacrament* in the *Tabernacle*; each time we simply pass a church and make the *Sign of the Cross* in humble, prayerful recognition of the *One* who is waiting in there for us: our *Lord Jesus Christ!*

In His holy Name,

Rev. Thomas J. Serafin, KCHS