

Homily
May 14, 2023
6th Sunday of Easter
27:27 – 37:14

Our Second Reading notes that Christians, even soon after they are baptized, may suffer in some ways for doing good.

You all are suffering today because you did a good thing and you came here. I appreciate that. But for whatever reason, after doing all the technical things correctly, the AC is not functioning correctly. Even after I contacted Ross Maue and said, “Ross. This is what I’ve done – one, two, three, four...” and he said, “You’ve done all the right things. I don’t know what’s wrong. And I can’t help you because I’m in my car, driving from Kansas back to Indianapolis.” I thanked him. And he assured me, “no sweat” -- even though I was sweating at that moment! So, we’re all suffering.

Last night we celebrated First Holy Eucharist with ten of our children. It was a delightful celebration. They were all extremely attentive, as were their parents and their families. The church was full. It was a delightful time of giving praise and thanks to God for something that we may take for granted.

In the midst of the homily, I pulled this out (holding up a plastic Easter egg) and asked them, “What is this?” And you know what they said. (Response: “An Easter egg!”) And I said, “What’s usually in it?” (Response: “Candy!”) In my day it was just a hard yolk. And I said, “How many of these did you get this year?” And it was A LOT. And I said, “There was candy in every one of them?” (Response: “Oh, yeah!”) (Father) “And you ate it all as quickly as you could?” (Response: “Uh-Huh!”) (Father) “Did it taste good after you ate five pieces?” Some of them said, “Of course.”

But there is the **Law of Diminishing Returns**, right? The more you eat of something – well you just: nom, nom, nom – and you really don’t taste it. It’s not that good. It’s just going in. (pause)

And you all know what this is. (holding up a box of Girl Scout Cookies – Trefoils!) We’ve talked about this before. Eat two and they taste wonderful. Eat a whole sleeve...total Law of Diminishing Returns. You just ruang, ruang, ruang (motions stuffing it in his face) – and you wonder why that didn’t taste as good? Well, your body became used to it and now it takes for granted that taste.

I bring this up now, and for them last night because – are you tired of Easter? We’re in the 36th day of the Easter Season. Are you tired of it? It stretches for another 14 days. It’s **50** days long. And we’ve heard of the Resurrection. We’ve heard of the Early Community. We’ve heard from 1 Peter, the baptismal discourse to the newly baptized. Are you tired of that? I hope not.

It is the pinnacle of who we are as Catholic Christians. The Resurrection. The culmination of the life – death of the Lord Jesus for us.

Now it's true, with all the distractions we have in our lives, the pluses, the minuses going on right now and in our world, since Easter, it's easy to be distracted from that joy. It slips away. We've had so much of it, it almost might be like too many Trefoils or too much candy.

And yet, my brothers and sisters, we're invited to take it in every day of this Season. New. Each day. And praise God for the gift of the Lord's Life, Death and Resurrection. In all of those moments.

But since we were celebrating First Eucharist last night, I also noted with the children, "This is your first time to receive the Eucharist. Are you excited?" (Response: "Uh-huh!") "Are you nervous?" (Response: "Nuh-uh. Well, maybe.") "You now have from this point forward an entire lifetime of receiving the Body and Blood of the Lord – into your very person!"

Like it says in the Gospel. ***I am in you. You are in me. The Father is in us.*** The very person of Jesus, his full reality comes into us. And as St. Augustine says, we become what we eat. We become the very body of Christ and pour out our life for Christ, at least ideally.

But do you ever get tired of it? I think there are times when we get tired of the Eucharist. We get tired of the liturgy. Why? It's the same old thing.

I have members of my own generation who tell me – "You know, I went to Mass every day in grade school. And even in high school. And I'm done with it. I put in my time." (Gestures...what?!) Put in my time?!? For this greatest of gifts that comes forth from the very life, death and resurrection of the Lord. This living memorial, this sacrifice which ties us to him. And he who in Chapter 1 of John's Gospel volunteered to pitch his tent in our midst and dwell with us, now would come into us and dwell within us. And we're tired of that? – Oh, I hope not. I hope not.

Yes. It can get to the point of being almost "same old, same old." So does candy. So do Trefoils. (whispers, "Ohhh!") But those will not give life. Life to our spirit. Meaning to our lives and help to go forth from here, carrying that Lord with us to live what he has given and taught.

And then we come back, not for a McDonald's drive-thru. No. To come back and celebrate once again his presence in our midst, in Word, in community, sacrament. And he dwells within as we go out to live in his name.

Can we think something so precious and life-giving is "same old, same old?"

Perhaps we can reflect on that this week. When we come here – and I pray it's every week, at least – when we come here, are we coming to dwell with the Lord and to allow the Lord to dwell with us? And then carry him forth to the world.

If the world would have hope, that is its source, through us. For in Christ, he is in us and we are in the Father. And of course, in the Spirit that we long for.

May it be so.

