

Homily: 26<sup>th</sup> Sunday: 2024: Cycle B: Nu 11: 25-29; Ps. 19: James 5:1-6; Mk 9:38-43, 45, 47-48

***“The Connection between Mass, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and the Integrity of Our Life as a Holy Witness to the Catholic Faith”***

1. This past summer we as a Church went through the entire Eucharistic chapter, or the Bread of Life discourse, of St. John’s Gospel, chapter 6, over a 5-week period, which hopefully has led us to a deeper understanding and **appreciation for the Mass and the gift of the Eucharist**. How much we benefit spiritually from Jesus’s Eucharistic Presence depends on the effort we make to draw closer to Him and enter into the mystery of the Mass. **In every Mass the one eternal Sacrifice of Jesus Christ offered on the Cross some two thousand years ago for the salvation of human beings is made present Sacramentally and the saving graces won by Jesus on the Cross are applied to the souls of the living and the dead**. Remember to offer Masses for departed souls – what a special gift!
2. Also attending **Eucharistic adoration** at St. Thomas which we normally have after the Monday morning 8 am Mass and after the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday 8 am Mass; and on every Wednesday at 3 pm at *Our Lady Guardian of the Faith Holy Hour* and Friday at our 3 pm *Divine Mercy Eucharistic Holy Hour*. Please try to attend regularly: **Eucharistic adoration** can help us immensely to draw closer to Jesus and to the Father and the Holy Spirit, and to also grow in charity for our fellow man - as the adoration of the Eucharist leads us back to its source of all love which is **the Blessed Trinity**. As St. John Vianney noted, when asked once by someone: *what is deep prayer?* - he then called to mind what an old farmer in his Parish at Ars once told him, when the Saint asked the farmer: *what are you doing every day in the Church when you make “a visit”*: the response - ***He looks at me and I look at Him***. The devout farmer was speaking about Eucharistic adoration and daily prayer before the Tabernacle, where the Blessed Sacrament is kept in every active Catholic Church in the world with the remembrance of a lit candle. How amazingly humble Jesus is to remain with us in such a simple yet profound way until the end of the world! **May we never take His Real Presence in the Eucharist for granted! Or receive the Lord with mortal sin on our soul!**

3. By coming before the Lord in faith and love at Holy Mass and seeing how He is placed on the Altar in the Monstrance, we are given the opportunities by the Church to ponder the mystery of **Jesus's Real Presence in the Eucharist and the Father and the Holy Spirit always in Communion with Him.** **Solemn Exposition** which we do each Wednesday and Friday at 3 pm offers us a privileged occasion **to develop a deeper devotion to the Eucharist and to deepen our spiritual communion with Jesus, and through Him with the whole Trinity, as well as the beautiful Benediction at 4 pm to show our love and respect for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.** When we come to Adoration, we can reflect in peace and quiet on this mystery of the **Lord's Real Presence.** There is no sense of rush to this prayer; we can take our time and pray quietly with recollection. **It should also lead us to understand the Mass on a deeper level as Jesus's offering of total self-giving love to the Father, which we are called to do likewise in our life. And to pray more for vocations to the ordained priesthood.** We also need time as human beings frequently **to reflect:** *to see if our life, both publicly and privately, is in harmony with the Gospel teaching of Jesus and all the teachings of our holy Catholic Faith.* **Eucharistic adoration provides us with the best way to do this,** right in front of Jesus Himself, in all His tender mercy, love, and saving truth. **That's why I always offer the Sacrament of Confession after the 3 pm Holy Hours** – **because often in adoration Jesus will show us our sins and the need to confess them to be forgiven and healed of them.** **Jesus's warning about the scandal** or bad example that our sins - (e.g., skipping Sunday/Holy Day Mass for no good reason) - can cause others to stumble spiritually, especially the young, **should hit our hearts** and cause us to take whatever steps are necessary to correct those behaviors, so as not to risk the fires of **Gehenna (Hell)** – **the big Jerusalem garbage dump**). *Time spent before the Blessed Sacrament in prayer, reflection, adoration, thanksgiving, petition, and reparation should lead us to want to be molded more profoundly into the image of our Savior; to be better witnesses to Him, of His truth and love in our increasingly sad, confused, and divisive world; and to pray with Mary for the conversion of hardened sinners.* God bless you. †