

HOMILY ON THE CORPUS CHRISTI

PREAMBLE: Last Sunday the church celebrated the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity, the doctrine which sounded so stupid to the human sensibility and which many, trying to interpret intellectually, have gone and led many astray just because they left faith aside while doing that. Today we are celebrating another wonderful and interesting mystery which actually is the soul of the church but which also appear insensible and stupid to the uninitiated people, that is, those who are outside the circle our faith THE MYSTERY OF THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST. When Jesus was insisting that anyone who would be His authentic disciple must eat His flesh and drink His blood, the Jews were justifiably confused because they were not cannibals and even if they were, if Jesus were to be killed for them to consume, how many people will Jesus flesh feed. These questions and the likes I guess constituted the confusion of the Jews and made them not to believe Him. So they never took Him seriously, and the disciples who heard Him say that stopped following Him, saying that that was an intolerable language which no sane person should care to believe. He turned to His twelve apostles and asked “are you not going away with the rest, because I am not prepared to recall what I have said? Representing the rest of the apostles, Peter said, “to whom shall we go, you have the message of eternal life.” The apostles said that not because they understood the teaching but because they trusted their master, knowing that He cannot mislead them so they said to whom shall we go, you have the message of eternal life. This should be our approach to any doctrinal teaching especially those ones that are beyond our comprehension, once we trust that our leader knows the way and will never lead us astray and once we know that we are finite being whose power of knowledge of is limited, we should always profess our unalloyed faith in Him saying to whom else should we go.

In the doctrine of the body and blood of Christ, the church maintains that after the word of consecration by the validly ordained priest, the ordinary bread and wine we know cease to be mere bread and wine but become the body, the blood, the soul and the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, even though there is no physical change in those species, either in appearance or in the taste. In His teaching, Christ did not say that it resembles or represents His body and blood but take and eat this is my body, take and drink, this is my blood. On another note, when Jesus did the

first consecration, neither the bread nor the wine changed physically into His body and blood respectively.

THE BODY OF AND BLOOD OF CHRIST IS THE SACRIFICE OF THE NEW COVENANT

The blood of Jesus is the blood of new and eternal covenant between God and mankind. Christ Himself said that His blood is the blood of covenant that is poured out for the forgiveness of our sins. In the letter to the Hebrews it is called the blood of eternal covenant (Heb 13:20). The same letter to the Hebrews says that this blood pleads more insistently than the blood of Abel (Heb.12:24). What this means is that this blood is not just the blood of the new and eternal covenant but also the sacrifice for the sins of mankind. As the blood of goats and bulls were no longer capable of taking away human sins Jesus, in His determination to redeem human beings, made this supreme sacrifice. With this done every sinner is now called to come to Him for healing and restoration.

THE BLOOD OF JESUS IS THE PASSOVER MEAL

The institution of the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ was done on the Jewish feast of the Passover. This blood of the lambs sacrificed in Egypt and smeared at the entrance of the doors of every Israelite which the angels of death saw and passed over them without causing them any harm, actually prefigured the blood of Christ which become the mark of salvation to all who believe in Christ. To have the mark of this blood is a sure sign salvation. When I see the blood I will pass over you. This blood sets the devil on the run and claims us for Christ (God). Do you know these people putting on white cloth?, the angel asked St. John, and when the latter said no, the angel explained, these are the people who have gone through great tribulations, they have washed their robes clean in the blood of the lamb (Rev. 7:13-14).

EVERYBODY IS CALLED TO THIS BANQUET

The invitation to participate at the table of the Lord (the table of the Eucharist), is actually for every person just as the kingdom of God is for everybody but unfortunately, not everybody is qualified to partake of that holy banquet just as it is not everybody that will qualify to enter the kingdom of God on the last day. In his letter to the Corinthians 11:23ff, St. Paul communicating to us what he received from the Lord, said ...anyone who eats or drinks the body or the blood of the Lord

unworthily eats or drink unto condemnation (1Cor. 11:27). St. Thomas Aquinas the angelic doctor, said in today's sequence that what the virtuous receives, the sinner receives too; but although both receive the sacramental Jesus, while the virtuous receives life the sinner receives condemnation. The first Eucharist was received by the twelve apostles but the scripture says that immediately Judas received in his turn, the devil entered him and he left the college of his brothers and began to plan on how to betray his master. It means that we have to get ourselves prepared by repenting of our sins going to the sacrament of reconciliation (especially when we not in the state of grace) before we can approach the table of the Lord in the Holy Eucharist. We should maintain a proper decorum each time we participate, assist or celebrate the Holy Eucharist. This we can do by taking few moments to reflect on the mystery we are about to celebrate. We should not be object of distraction in any way or allow ourselves to be distracted.

OUR PRIDE AS CATHOLICS

Our pride as catholic is the Eucharist as this is one of the major things that differentiate Catholic from other denominations. A lots of miracles has been recorded in the history books where Jesus proved to the world that He is truly present in the Eucharist. Your internet is there for your perusal on this topic. The church is therefore calling on all her children to put aside whatever pose itself as obstacle towards receiving this sacrament. People should take up the ministry of teaching others the importance of the Holy Eucharist.