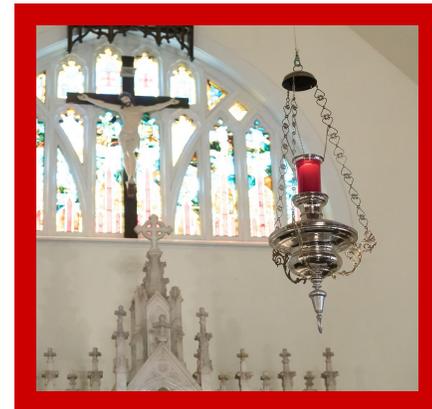


One summer I showed up at my sister's house. When I got out of my car, my three young nephews were excited to see me. They were screaming something to me from the porch. I couldn't understand what they were saying. My sister translated the toddler/young boy talk to me. Apparently, they were telling me that they were not saying, "hello" to Jesus when they went to Church. Previously, I had told them that they must say, "hello" to Jesus, in the Tabernacle, which is under the red light in the sanctuary of nearly every Church. Since they did not, this was my cue to pretend to get angry and chase them all around the house. Being a good uncle, I did so. I caught each of them and hung them upside down by their ankles, until they said they would say, "hello" to Jesus the next time they went to Church. Unfortunately, since they were my sister's kids, that was probably Christmas 😊.



I've spent half my life feeling bad for Jesus. Almost every time I've been to or celebrated a daily Mass or walked into a Church during the day, I feel bad for Our Lord. Generally, daily Mass crowds are fairly modest. Outside of daily Mass, not too many people walk into a Church during the day and spend any significant time with Our Lord. I'm a bit of a Church connoisseur. In my opinion, there is nothing man made more beautiful than a traditional Catholic Church. Unlike Starbucks, you can get a seat too. Unlike many museums, it's free to get in. Even the physically less attractive Churches are beautiful because of the Real Presence of Jesus in the Most Holy Eucharist. People should be making reservations just to get inside a Church. That stated, unfortunately, if it's not Sunday, you aren't going to see too many people in one.

People, who don't visit Jesus at their local Church, are like someone very sick refusing to see a doctor. They are like a lonely person unwilling to visit a nearby friend or family member or like a hungry person unwilling to get off the couch and go to the store. I'm not knocking friendship or therapy. Nonetheless, your friends and/or therapist only work on the natural level. Jesus works on the supernatural level. Spending as little as fifteen minutes before the Blessed Sacrament on a daily or thrice weekly basis can change your life.

Generally speaking, Jesus will not "seize" you unless you want on some level to be seized. Don't let sin or the thought people will think you are crazy keep you away from Him. That is Satan or one of his minions talking to you. Satan drives you into the darkness, as he did Judas. Jesus will meet you where you are at and help you shed your false self and find your true self.

This Sunday's Gospel is the Road to Emmaus. For those not familiar with this Gospel, two disciples of Jesus are walking to the above mentioned village when they are joined by a man. The man is the resurrected Jesus. Jesus' glorified Body looks different than His pre-resurrected Body. After His Resurrection, Jesus is not always recognizable. During the walk, Jesus explains to the men how the Scriptures pointed to the coming of Christ. Although they still didn't recognize Him, His explanations are so interesting that it causes their hearts to burn within them. Later, at dinner, Jesus breaks the bread and says a blessing. At this time, the two disciples recognize Jesus. Immediately afterwards, Jesus vanishes from their sight.

Usually, priests talk or write about the Eucharist when this Gospel is proclaimed. A Catholic should recognize Our Lord during the "breaking of the bread," in other words, in the Eucharist. Sadly, statistics show many Catholics do not. I'm not sure I believe the statistics. Regardless, just a reminder, when we receive the Eucharist, we are receiving **100%** Jesus and **0%** bread. We are becoming a walking and talking Tabernacle after receiving Communion. We should conduct ourselves accordingly.

The Eucharist is not currently available to us. I've heard so much griping about it. I understand why. Perhaps, that will be discussed in a future reflection. For now, I'd like all of us to reflect on where we were exactly when Jesus was sitting alone and unvisited in the Tabernacle all those years?