July 17, 2022—16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

There is a famous painting of the scene from the First Reading today when Abraham fixes a meal for three strangers; they are actually angels. In this painting the angels are seated at a table and represent the 3 Persons of the Blessed Trinity. They don’t look like the usual pictures of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit that we normally see in art, such as in our paintings in the sanctuary. Here we see God the Father like an old man with grey hair and beard, and Jesus pictured with dark, long hair and beard, and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove. In the painting of the three visitors to Abraham they are young men and could be triplets because there is no difference between the figures representing the Holy Trinity. It reminds us that each of the Persons is equal to the other two and they are eternally young and vital.

We are reminded that here in the Holy Eucharist we are seated at the table of God in the Presence of the Most Blessed Trinity. We give what little we have—bread and wine, our sufferings, works and joys, our poor hearts—and in this marvelous exchange, Jesus gives us His very self in Holy Communion.

In the Gospel, Martha and Mary and Lazarus invited Jesus, God into their home for dinner. What a guest! Martha criticizes her sister in front of Jesus for not helping her with all the meal preparations. Mary was sitting at the feet of Jesus and listening to His words. Jesus answered, “**Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her**.” No doubt Martha was doing good things to prepare the meal, but one can overdo things. Here was God in her home and she was not taking advantage of His wisdom and holy Presence like her sister.

We all have many things to do in life, but we too need to remember what is important. If we don’t take time each day and spend it with Jesus in prayer, then we are missing what is truly vital to a happy and fulfilling life. The Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist are necessary for our spiritual lives. If possible, you should do more than come to Sunday Mass. More people are realizing that daily Mass and Holy Communion start the day in the right way. We have doubled the number of people coming to daily Mass since the Covid restrictions ended. Especially if you are retired, please consider coming to Holy Mass during the week. We need Jesus more, not less.

I always think Martha is looked down upon for her part in this Gospel. We see her again after her brother died. She was the one who went out to meet Jesus when he finally arrived and professed her faith in Jesus and the resurrection of the dead. In the midst of her sorrow, Martha showed great faith in Jesus. To make the point that He is the source of all life and to confirm the faith of Martha, Jesus went to the tomb of Lazarus and brought him back to life.

Our faith in Jesus and the Holy Eucharist is something that we cannot keep to ourselves. If we have a living faith, we want others to join us in the Catholic Church. We shouldn’t try to hide our religion or be afraid to let others know in an appropriate way that we believe in Jesus. After all, we have the fullness of the teaching of Jesus and the power of the sacraments, as well as, the example and friendship of the greatest of saints down through 20 centuries to help us on our journey through life.

In the fall, we will begin our classes for those interested in learning about the Catholic faith with possible conversion to our Church. You are the ones who must invite people to come and see. Not only does your example of faith draw them, but also your invitation. Perhaps it is a family member or a neighbor that just needs to be asked. Is there a co-worker that you can invite? Even if they are not near us, no matter where they live, there is a Catholic Church nearby that would welcome them. There is often confusion about what the Church believes that hinders people from joining us that can be cleared up through these classes. Most importantly, pray for the person that God may give the grace to overcome any obstacles. God wants to work through you to expand His Catholic family.