

We have just come out of Holy Week. Holy Thursday commemorates the institution of the Holy Eucharist and Good Friday His sacrifice which is also made present at Mass. And this weekend we are celebrating First Communion at each parish. It is a good time, then, to talk about Eucharistic “revival,” something the USCCB itself took up the last several years. Why Eucharistic revival and what would such a thing involve? Eucharistic revival pertains to our final end – Heaven or hell. Heaven is not cheap, easy, or automatic. It entails building a relation with our Lord here on earth. Since the Eucharist *is* our Lord, getting to Heaven is tantamount to building a relation of love with the Holy Eucharist, a relation with the Eucharist like that between a husband and wife in a good marriage. Since this relation determines our final end, we’ll start by raising our mind above the here and now and focusing on that which is eternal.

What will your last day on earth be like? Will it come suddenly and unexpectedly through an accident or some sudden bodily failure like a massive heart attack or stroke? Or will we be able to see it coming through a longer term illness or a progressive weakening from old age? Either way, before we know it, the day of our last day on earth will be here. There will come a day when we have seen the sun for the last time, paid the electric bill for the last time, beheld the people and all the things around us for the last time. And then, all of the things of this life and this world will completely, decisively, and absolutely pass away forever – done and gone forever in a single instant. We will then go and stand before the judgement seat of the Lord. Will I know Him? Will I recognize in Him? Will I have friendship with the Judge? If I haven’t spent any real time and effort getting to know Him in this life, then, no. If a person doesn’t care now, they will when that moment comes.

If you want to get to know our Lord, if you want to forge real friendship with Him:

- 1) that is very much possible – for anyone and everyone,
- 2) you’re going to have to spend some time with Him, and
- 3) you’re going to have stop treating Him like an irrelevant doormat.**

Yes, I know, this is how “everyone” has treated Him, in His actual physical presence, for at least a half a century now. And since everybody’s doing it, well of course that makes it right – what other possibility is there for what is right and good and true other than...what everybody else is doing. Yes, for over half a century now, our Lord – residing in His Tabernacle – has been literally shoved off to the side, to the back, to the corner, or to some closet, with man replacing Him at the center. Yes, for over half a century now His house of residence, His Temple – the Catholic church building itself – has been treated like an event center, a social hall, and a playground. All to the tune of what? What is it saying? What is it teaching? NOTHING SPECIAL HERE. And of course all of this is done with great big smiles and a great sense of righteousness.

Do you remember the cleansing of the Temple? Our Lord said: you have made My Father’s house into a den of thieves. Have we not done the same thing today? Our Lord is going to purify His house again – perhaps through attrition, people falling away from the faith and more and more parishes closing. And this will continue until we believe and act like this is His House – *His* house, not yours, not mine, not the bishop’s. It’s not mine to do with as I please, whatever suits my whims and fancies. It is rather a place to come and bow humbly before Him with reverence and due silence.

But everybody’s doing it. No other priest has said anything. And why do priests say nothing? Perhaps a number of reasons but one is because they’re afraid of their own parishioners. Oh people will get mad, they will leave the parish, they will stop giving money, and, oh my, they will write letters to the bishop. Ah how cheaply we sell our Lord. At least Judas got 30 pieces of silver, which, incidentally didn’t do him any good either. How often Lord, the Holy Eucharist, is treated casually. Why would anyone believe He is present?

God said through His servant St Paul: people will chase after preachers who tickle their ears. Yes, for over half a century now people have chased after, indeed demanded, those who will tickle their ears – those who say: oh my yes, use the church however it pleases *you*; well of course have whatever *you* want in Mass; oh my no, *you* don’t have to respond to God’s love – there’s no such thing as sin and even if there is, it’s no big deal; ah yes, the centrality of me. And now we have been tickled to death. Will even death not sober us up?

In lieu of the 3-year “Eucharistic Revival” that the USCCB had, they pointed out that numerous studies have found that only about 1/3 of *Mass-attending* Catholics know and accept that the Eucharist is the person of Jesus. But why would anybody believe such a thing, given the way “everybody” acts in His presence? I am very much in favor of and supportive of this Eucharistic Revival. What to do? The USCCB offers a number of suggestions. To begin, here is one quote from their documents on Eucharistic Revival:

“How we worship matters. Emphasize reverence in the liturgy and elevate the practice of Eucharistic devotions, prioritizing an increase in opportunities for adoration and both parish and diocesan Eucharistic processions.”

### **Some things to do for Eucharistic Revival**

- **Bigger events** that are more or less: once and done, can be very helpful and even a badly needed shot in the arm, something to wake me up and refocus my attention. Some of these might be: outside speakers, on a parish level this might be a parish mission; Eucharistic Congresses – generally on a more diocesan or national level; an annual Corpus Christi procession and celebration. *But*, while these bigger events can be helpful, at the same time they will never be enough. If that’s all we look for, then just quit. They will not sustain true devotion without the routine practices of devotion. The USCCB recognizes this as well.
- **Confession**. People are going to have to start being conscientious about being in a state of grace before receiving Holy Communion. This is large part of treating our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament way too casually. It’s got to stop. God Himself warns, through His servant St Paul, that we eat and drink judgement on ourselves if we receive in a “state of sin.”
- **Adoration**. Do you have any interest in stopping by and paying a little, silent visit to our Lord? Confession and Adoration are the two most important preparations for Mass and Communion.
- **Treating the sacred as sacred, starting with our Lord’s own house – the church building: maintaining a reverent silence in the church building**. This *is* one of our first acts of worship, more basic than Mass or Adoration, which means that we cannot benefit from Mass, the Eucharist, Holy Communion, or Adoration without it. And it does teach. Not doing it teaches: Nothing special here, while doing it says: this is a special place. I have said this often enough. If “the people have spoken” and the answer is no, then at least we should be honest and put a sign on the doors that states what is actually believed and lived out: “Nothing special here. Treat this place as you would a social hall, an event center, or your living room. Please notice that we are just like everybody else.” We *have* to do better in this area.
- **How to receive Holy Communion**. First, if a person receives in the hand, the Church gives very specific instructions for this: put your hands together in the form of a cross and then place the host in your mouth with the hand that is not holding the host. If you cannot do this for any reason, then receive on the tongue. No one handed receptions and popping the host into your mouth. You are not receiving a handful of M&M’s. Reception on the tongue, incidentally, is not some outmoded, backwards practice. In fact, it is still the mind of the Church, the norm if you will. Reception in the hand is by way of indult only and an indult is an *exception* to the law. Considering receiving on the tongue as part of a personal devotion to the Eucharist and to build a true Eucharistic revival. Going with the crowd will not get you to Heaven.
- **Study the faith**. There are plenty of resources available for this. Use Scripture, lives and writings of the saints, study the Church’s instructions on how Mass is to be offered. Make your own study and become convicted.

God is the **only** source of life. Worshiping the satisfaction of my own immediate desires brings only death. There is no reason for death and misery. We *can* choose otherwise. But we do have to choose. For God’s sake and your own, choose life. If others choose otherwise, pray for them. Let’s make a real house of our Lord here in this pastorate and then see how life grows.

*God bless you, Fr Kuhn*