

5th Sunday of Easter – May 18/19, 2019 – Reflection

"When Judas had left them ..."

The gospel passage this week begins with these ominous words ...

"When Judas had left them."

What happened when Judas left the Last Supper? Treachery and betrayal happened.

When Thomas absented himself from Mass on Easter Sunday night, what happened? Doubt and stubbornness filled his soul, "I won't believe unless I can touch His wounds!"

There was once a Mother who lived with her adult son.

One Sunday, she woke him out of a sound sleep and told him, "Hurry up and get ready or you'll be late for church."

He said, "Oh, I'm not gonna go!"

She said, "Why in heaven's name wouldn't you go ... you always go to church on Sunday!"

"Ma, I'll give ya two reasons why I'm not goin: first, the people at church don't like me, and second, I don't like them much neither!!"

And she said, "Well, I'll give ya two reasons why you're gonna go!"

"Oh yeah, why?"

"First, you may be 65 years old, but I'm still your mother, and I say you're gonna go!"

"Yeah? And what's the second reason?"

"YOU'RE THE PRIEST!!!"

Next weekend is Memorial Day Weekend which is the unofficial kickoff of summer and vacations. Many use that time to take vacations from God and Church and Mass and Holy Communion; and like that lazy priest in the joke, they ask why they should go to Mass anyway.

Well, I'm not your mother, but I am the one here you call Father, so I'll give ya 8 reasons why you should go to Mass:

1. God gave us the Ten Commandments and the third commandment says, "Keep holy the Lord's Day." That means go to Mass.
2. Christ gave us one commandment at the Last Supper, "Do this in remembrance of me." That means celebrate the Mass.
3. The first of the Catholic Church's Six Commandments is, "Worship the Lord on the Lord's Day." Go to Mass.
4. The Church's authority to command or teach anything comes from Christ Himself, "And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I build my church. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven." So the Church can tell us to go to Mass because Christ said so.
5. Jesus tells us, "unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you ..." So, if we stay away from Mass and Holy Communion, we starve and see our spiritual lives ebb away.

6. God made us to be not isolated islands but social beings to support one another and care for one another. The Mass is "where two or three come together in (His) name, and there (He) is in the midst of them."
7. It is our responsibility to pass on the faith to future generations as Jesus told the disciples on the Mount of the Ascension. If we let the faith lapse or die in our lives, who will give Jesus and Communion to the young who follow us?
8. Mass and Communion help us in ways we may not always see. Mother Theresa went to Mass and received Holy Communion almost every day of her adult life. She prayed: "Jesus is my God. Jesus is my spouse. Jesus is my life. Jesus is my everything. Because of this, I am never afraid." Over the years, she grew in her love for the Lord. She was inspired to do something wonderful for Christ.

Be patient. Bring an attitude of prayer and thanksgiving to Mass. You will reap spiritual riches, consolation, confidence, peace, deep happiness, and spiritual strength for life's challenges.

Come to think of it, isn't that why we go on vacations?

So, travel, have fun, rest, relax, play to your heart's content.

But, don't take a vacation from God!