

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily
Sunday, August 18, 2024
20th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Cycle B

Everywhere we look, we are tempted by the promise of instant gratification and satisfaction. From fast food restaurants promising a quick and tasty meal to streaming services offering endless entertainment at the click of a button, the message is clear: you can have it all, and you can have it now. But this “culture of immediacy” often leaves us restless and unfulfilled. The quick fixes may satisfy us for a moment, but they rarely lead to lasting happiness or contentment.

In today’s gospel reading, Jesus challenges the “culture of immediacy” by offering us something far more lasting than the quick fixes of the world: his own Body and Blood in the Eucharist. While the world tempts us with instant gratification that leaves us empty, Christ invites us to partake in the true and eternal nourishment that brings genuine fulfillment and peace.

If we truly believe that Christ is in the Eucharist, we will not be deceived by the world’s empty promises. Christ alone is the bread that can nourish us in the most real and lasting way. He is the living bread that came down from heaven, and only he can satisfy the deep hunger of our souls. If we truly believe in the life-giving power of the Eucharist, our lives must be centered on and rooted in it. The Eucharist must be our highest priority. It is not just one option among many in our spiritual lives; it is the heart of our faith.

We will not waste our time and energy chasing after a “good life” in other things or people if we understand that the Eucharist offers us the best life possible – eternal life with Christ. If we truly believe that Christ is in the Eucharist, we must approach the Mass with fervor and enthusiasm.

The Sunday Mass should not be seen as just an obligation, something we do out of habit or duty. Rather, we should recognize it as something we deeply need, a sacred encounter where we are nourished by the Bread of Life.

St. Augustine beautifully describes the Eucharist as a different kind of food. He says, “When we eat the Eucharistic food, we do not digest and transform the Body of Christ; rather, we are the ones transformed by it.” This transformation is not just spiritual; it has practical implications for our daily lives.

The Eucharist calls us to active participation in the life and mission of Christ. It demands that we become Christ to one another, embodying his love, mercy, and compassion in all that we do, in every aspect of our lives. The Eucharist is not a passive experience; it calls for our active involvement. We are not just spectators; we are participants in this divine mystery, in the Holy Sacrifice.

The Eucharist transforms us so that we can go out into the world and be the hands and feet of Christ. As we receive the Body and Blood of Christ, we are commissioned to bring his Presence into our homes, workplaces, and communities.

So, my dear sisters and brothers, let us reflect deeply on the gift of the Eucharist. If we truly believe that Christ is present in this Sacrament, then let us allow him to satisfy our every hunger and quench our every thirst. Let us center our lives on the Eucharist, approaching it not as an obligation but as a profound need, our connection to the Lord.

Let us celebrate the Mass, knowing that in doing so, we are being transformed into the Body of Christ especially for our needing world today.