

Trinity Sunday (2020)

(Revelation 4:1-11, St. John 3:1-15)

“...*Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power:*”

Do we believe Jesus is Really Present here in this church?

Do we believe when we assemble for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, that the Presence of Jesus is here with us and that we fellowship with Him?

I pray we do! If not, then why are we here...?

In asking this, I am not being flippant or trying to provoke.

My intention is to allow us to look inside our spirits and be honest with ourselves before God.

It is important for us to know what we believe and then practice that belief faithfully.

In truth, each time we gather here for mass we really and substantially join with and participate in the worship we have described for us in Revelation 4.

While this is true throughout the liturgy, we become fully connected at the *Sursum Corda* and when we sing the *Sanctus*.

At that point the worship we are participating in here on earth is “lifted up,” and like St. John we are “*in the spirit*” and enter into the throne room of heaven to sing “*Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts...*” echoing what St. John heard in his vision.

There we join with angels and archangels; with the four and twenty elders, and the four living creatures to present ourselves as living sacrifices.

There we join the re-presenting of the one, full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice of Jesus (once offered upon the Cross) to the Father; the ἀνάμνησις *anamnēsis*, the “rememberance” of Christ’s passion and death for our sins.

At mass, Jesus becomes Really Present...right here.

Actually He’s always Present here, in the Tabernacle, but by the words of institution and the invocation of the Holy Ghost, the bread on the altar becomes His Body and the wine in the chalice His Blood.

Not materially, but actually. Their eyes of faith see it and know it.

How God brings this into being is a Holy Mystery, but *that* He brings it into being is dogma; it is something we, the faithful, believe.

Why do we believe this?

Simply because at the Last Supper it is Jesus who said “*Take, eat, this is my Body.*” and “*Drink ye, all of it: For this is my blood of the New Testament...*”

We believe simply because in St. John 6:55 Jesus is the one that taught “*For my flesh is meat [βρῶσις, *brōsis* food] indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.*”

Jesus said and taught us these great truths, so we believe it!

Every time you and I assist at (attend) mass we enter into the worship that “*rests not day and night*” taking place perpetually in heaven, and feed upon the very resurrected and ascended life of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We fulfill what Hebrews 10:19, 20 states, we “...*enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. By a new and living way, which he (Christ) hath consecrated for us, through the veil that is to say, his flesh.*”

What sets the liturgy of the Holy Eucharist head and shoulders above all other forms of earthly worship (all preaching and prayer services) is two-fold:

First, it is the most Biblical form of worship.

In the New Testament, the *only* form of worship that Jesus institutes and that St. Paul instructs the Church on is the celebration of the Eucharist.

Second, the mass is the perfect balance of the means of grace God gives: Prayer, Penance, the Word and the Sacrament.

At mass we pray some of the most beautiful prayers ever written in the English language. Here we confess and are absolved of sin, we hear the Scriptures read and the Word preached verbally.

And then, as we receive the Eucharist, the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Jesus, we hear and see the Gospel preached visibly.

St. Augustine called the Eucharist “*the Word made visible.*”

More directly, in 1 Corinthians 11:26 St. Paul teaches “*For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew (καταγγέλλω *katangéllō*, announce, proclaim, declare) the Lord’s death till he come.*”

The mass is the most evangelical form of worship there can be.

It is a proclamation of the Gospel from beginning to end!

Its words and actions cry out the Good News of Jesus Christ, in a way that no other words or activity on this earth does!

The Eucharist is the primary means, appointed by God, to connect us to the resurrected, ascended and living Jesus Christ! As we draw near with faith, we partake to the salvation of our bodies and our souls.

In St. John 6:53, 54 Jesus says “*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.*”

Jesus only uses this language for a sacrament in one other place in Scripture, and that is for Baptism, in St. John 3:5 as we heard in today’s Gospel.

If we believe Jesus about the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, we must believe Him about the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

Brethren as I said at the beginning of this sermon, it is important for us to regularly evaluate what it is we believe and then practice (live) our belief.

Certainly the world, and even other churches are not going to support us in what we believe, so we have to do as St. Paul exhorts in 2 Corinthians 13:5 “*Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.*”

So let us examine and prove what we believe about Jesus’ Presence when the Holy Eucharist is celebrated. And then let us live out our belief.

For if we believe, truly believe, that Jesus becomes Really Present here when mass is celebrated, then why would we not want to be here every time it is celebrated?

Why would not want to be here to be in Jesus’ Presence, and to receive that Presence into our own body and soul?

So then, what do we believe? ***In the Name of the Father...Amen.***