

NOTRE DAME PARISH

19th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Taste and see the goodness of the Lord!



"Life insurance is the bet you pay against your death."

The idea of life insurance is illogical but necessary in our society. Despite the mean jokes about insurance salespeople (and my apologies to lawyers, politicians, and car salespeople), they provide a valuable service. We pay

them in life, so they will care for our loved ones if we should die unexpectedly. It's a gamble, but one many of us are willing to take.

If so many of us accept the illogic of life insurance, why do so few of us accept the offer Jesus makes: trust me and live forever. He makes us this offer in Eucharist.

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, August 7 @ 8AM

Joan & Mike King

1PM, Olinger/Bobillo Wedding

4PM, Mary Lou Linnen

Sunday, August 8 @ 9:30AM

Deceased of Cate family

Monday, August 9 @ 8AM

Tom McDonald

Tuesday, August 10 @ 8AM

John Benish, Sr.

Wednesday, August 11 @ 8AM

George Boeckling

Thursday, August 12 @ 8AM

Georgiana Hood

Friday, August 13 @ 8AM

Ruth Smith

Saturday, August 14, 2021

Tom, Florence, & young Tom Gately

Let Us Pray

- For Cowan Olinger and Beth Bobillo, to be married this weekend
- For the chronically ill of our parish, especially Pat McDonald, and for all caregivers
- For a deeper devotion to and appreciation of the riches of grace available in the Mass
- For an end to the anger, vitriol, and bitterness

that has surfaced in recent years, even among Christians

- For those who have been evicted from their homes
- For the protection of democracies and an end to the drift toward despotism around the world

Alarmist Reporting on Religion

Our American bishops think that you, the laity, do not understand what the “real presence” of Christ in the Eucharistic means. Based essentially on a single question in a single poll by Pew Research in 2019, alarms have gone off all over the clerical world that Catholics don’t know what they’re doing when they receive Holy Communion.

I do not share that judgment.

First of all, the Pew Questionnaire, like many such polls, depends on the subject’s understanding of the words and wording.

Here is the question as posed:

Which best describes Catholic teaching about the bread and wine used for Communion? (a) They actually become the Body and Blood of Christ, (b) They are symbols of

the Body and Blood of Christ.

Although (a) is the more correct answer, (b) is true as well. That is, the appearance of bread and wine point to and conceal the deeper reality of the body and blood of Christ.

The goal of the Pew Survey was to assess “What Americans Know About Religion.” The survey was lengthy and broad, asking the subject’s knowledge of Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, and even Atheism and Agnosticism. Only the question above involved Catholicism.

Anecdotally, I am confident that those who attend Mass on a regular basis understand the Catholic teaching on the Real Presence of Christ. Even Protestants attending weddings and funerals generally refrain from approaching Communion.



The Catholic novelist, Flannery O’Connor when asked about her understanding of the Eucharist, replied flippantly: “If it’s only a symbol, to hell with it!”

Faith is not a matter of what we know intellectually (heresy of Gnosticism), but of what we believe and act upon. I am confident that Catholics, unless completely uncatechized and absent from Mass, cling fervently to Jesus Christ present in the Eucharist. *Father Keith & Rocco*

Welcoming a New “Normal”

By Bishop John Stowe, OFM, Cap.



When we walk together and truly listen, we can hear where God is calling us.

This pandemic has lasted long enough for many of us to have forgotten what “normal” looks and feels like. Pope Francis is not alone in suggesting that we cannot simply return to the way things were pre-pandemic; such a return would not be normal. He said that a large-scale crisis like the pandemic inevitably changes us; the question is whether it changes us for better or for worse.

If social distancing has led us to be more comfortable being harsh or thoughtless in the expression of our opinions and less conscious of

Continued on page 5



On Being Community

By Sister Jeana Visel, OSB

In light of the recent waves in the Catholic world regarding Latin mass, and the need to be in unity, it seems an appropriate moment to reflect on what it takes to be a community. Benedictine monastics have the particular charism of living community well, as a microcosm for the Church at large. We practice certain skills and virtues that are meant for the whole Body of Christ. Here are a few.

Prayer Before Ministry: Prayer in community comes first. Any ministry we do must flow out of prayer. If we are trying to manage our world without first asking God to help us be in synch with God's plan, something will go amiss.

Prayer in Common: The practice of praying together forces us to practice being one community. Our prayer will be more steady if we listen to each other and try to pray with one voice. Matching pace and pitch with each other comes easily some days, but other days it is really hard. It takes humility to let go of my own need to have things "my own

perfect way" if that's what is needed to stay in harmony with my neighbors. Sometimes we just need to relax a little and go with the flow.

Common Table: If we share meals together regularly, we have a chance just to be together, to practice speaking civilly with each other. No one wants to fight over a really good dinner. Why ruin it? Meals are a great place to practice humane conversation, care for the other. When we give each other our full attention, leaving our technological gadgets for another time and place, good things can happen.

Putting Our Gifts at the Service of Others: We need everyone's gifts for the good of the whole. We need the shiny noticeable gifts, and we need the subtle, strong gifts. We need graceful spiritual gifts, and we need concrete gifts of action and resources.

[Continued on page four](#)

Continued from page three

Everybody's gifts matter. Thus we need to invest in each other and support each other. We also need to be ready to develop whatever it is God has given each of us, and to use it for the sake of service. Gifts are not meant for one's own glory, but for God's.

Moderation: We call each other to moderation in different ways. Each should receive what is needed: not too little, but not too much. When we are moderate, it is easier to be considerate of others. Moderation also gives strength for the long haul. Extremism takes energy that cannot be sustained.

Stability: When we are committed to this group of people, this place, this family, we stick with it when things are hard. It allows us to be present when things are beautiful. It gives us time to notice growth over time, or to perceive change that has been subtle in developing. Stability helps foster trust in the people around us. Wendell Berry once spoke of how everything we need for our own salvation is right where we are. Put down roots. Learn about the language, the culture, the soil, the geology, the people. Learn to love what is right here.

Conversion: Part of stability is recognizing that if something or someone bothers me, I can't expect them to change. It's my own inner conversion that will help me learn to live with reality. Lifelong conversion is part of being Christian. We're on a journey of sanctification, and we

are not finished being purified until we see the beatific vision. Until then, we have to allow God to work within us and change us.

Trust: Learning to trust each other can take time, but this is the gift of true community. When we know that others will be there for us, and they know we'll be there for them, we can relax and focus on the important things in life. Trust is real currency today, and it is worth working to build and maintain it.

Unity in Diversity: A community needs an identity. Healthy boundaries are part of being human. But there is a real goodness and beauty in a community that can support a wide range of diversity while also holding a deep unity. Being able to nurture and enjoy the diversity among us is a sign of maturity and self-assurance. A unified, differentiated body has a range of helpful organs that help it do wonderful things. So in the Body of Christ.

Good Order: Every community needs some kind of good order to hold together. Benedictine houses have community rank, based not on intelligence or wealth or good looks, but simply on date of entry. Every community needs appointed leaders who can be the voice of decision, the eye looking out for the good of the rest. Leaders also need the counsel and wisdom of those who can help them do what needs to be done. Clarity

of roles helps.

Obedience: To obey, at its root, is to listen, *ob audire*. Obedience means making space for humble growth in holiness, not always getting my own way. It means listening to the needs of others as well as my own. It means listening to and respecting the wishes of those in authority, for the sake of good order and respect for the common good. Sometimes it can be hard, but with practice, if one is in the right place, it comes naturally, as joy in faithful service.

Relationship with Christ: In Benedictine life, as in the Christian life, we are invited to see Christ everywhere: in the person of the abbot or prioress, in the sick, in the guest, in the poor, in the young, the old, the irritating, the lovable. We are expected to spend a significant period of time every day entering into Scripture so as to encounter and be changed by Christ the Word. We meet him in the sacraments. This relationship needs to be at the root of everything we do, whether as individuals or as a community.

As a Church, it is our job to be the Body of Christ. Working at being community is part of our mission. If we can do it well, we will be a sign of the presence of Christ, and evangelize the world.

Sister Jeana Visel is a member of the Sisters of Saint Benedict, Ferdinand, Indiana.

Continued from page two, NEW NORMAL

their effects on others, we will emerge worse. If isolation has drained us of our inner energy and multiplied the worries and fears within us, we can make it better by reaching out for help and deepening our awareness of our dependence on God.

If the slower pace, and lack of travel and other things we miss have allowed us to do more reflection and contemplation, we will emerge much better. And if our reflection and contemplation has led us to a point where we can no longer accept the inequalities and injustices in our society, if we have deepened a longing for God's kingdom and desire to help bring it about, we will have something very positive to contribute to the creation of a "new normal."

As the title of Pope Francis' book urges, let us dream!

Although the pandemic has been playing with my "inner calendar" and I find myself asking, "Did we really get through Lent and Easter already?" June seems like a good time for dreaming. School's out, even though the way it was "in" was never quite in. Travel might be a possibility again. Getting together with people we have been distanced from is increasingly safer with vaccinations.

The warmth and vibes of summer suggest a relaxed pace and even time for "daydreaming." Such inactive but unwasted moments might be spent asking what we have learned from the unusual time that we have lived through: Have we grown closer as a family? Have we learned anything from our vulnerability? Have we discovered that we really are interconnected as a human family? Have we heightened the recognition of our need for God? Have we discovered that our material securities don't provide the security we expected?

Such questions and more, which can easily be pushed aside when the pace of our life is too busy, are part of the important process of discernment — a gift and a virtue in the Christian life. When we are in a hurry, we tend to prefer the less nuanced answers of yes or no, and the stark choices between right and wrong.

I suspect most of us know that an awful lot of life's answers are experienced more as "Yes, but ..."

and "It seems right, but how can I be sure?" Many of us would like God to whisper the answers to life's toughest tests right into our ears, but that doesn't seem to happen.

Remember the story of the prophet Elijah, who was expecting to experience a great epiphany of God's presence in an earthquake, or in a lightning storm, or in the loud thunder, but instead felt God in a gentle breeze as soft as a whisper. Following Christ might very well mean expecting to see Jesus coming on the clouds of glory, but it will more often involve discerning the voice and presence of Jesus in confusing and challenging situations, and in unlikely persons.

It involves seeking divine direction in stillness and silence and often having to work and act without having all the answers. Jesus didn't send out his disciples to announce the kingdom only when they knew all there was to know; he sent them with a share in his own Spirit and aware that they would often learn by getting things wrong a few times.

Pope Francis often describes the role of pastoral care in the Church as one of discernment and accompaniment. That is, helping each other see what God is up to and what God is communicating in the situations of our lives. It involves walking with each other on the path of the cross towards the Resurrection.

How often were the religious leaders of Jesus' time incapable of understanding him, or even hearing him, because they thought they already understood God's will so well? Don't we fall into that same trap ourselves when we fail to contemplate all that God is doing in our lives and in the world? When we judge others easily without knowing the depth of their inner selves and what God might be doing there?

The Second Vatican Council called for the Church to "read the signs of the times." What are the signs of our times ... this summer? ... as we longingly move towards the end of the pandemic? ... as we dream of what our lives or our world could look like in the new normalcy? Let's be attentive to that gentle breeze.

John Stowe is the bishop of Lexington, Kentucky and a friar of the Capuchin branch of the Franciscans.