**“Institution of the Holy Eucharist by Christ”**

Today is the first day of Easter Triduum. Though, the Church has divided the day into 3 days, all the events happened in one day. It was a day in which our Lord gave us three gifts, the Priesthood, the Eucharist and the Love stronger than death. All Catholics 18-59 are obligated to fast on Good Friday. However, it is recommended that they also fast on Holy Saturday. The two days, make up the Easter fast.

Last year, my homily was on the washing of the feet and the priesthood. This year, I would like to focus on the institution of the Holy Eucharist. In instituting the Holy Eucharist, Jesus said the first Mass and within the celebration, Jesus gave us the New and everlasting Covenant.

As from yesterday 8th of April, and until the 20th, devout Jews all over the world are celebrating the feast of the Passover Supper in remembrance of God’s deliverance of Israel from Egypt and His saving them time and time again with His awesome power during their Exodus. As recorded in the New Testament, on Holy Thursday, Jesus celebrated the Passover Supper with His apostles. It was during this Supper, that He instituted the Mass.

At the beginning of the Supper, certain events from Scripture that told the story of the Exodus were brought to the memory of those present. It was a custom for the head of the household to give an explanation of the history of the Exodus and the symbolism of the meal. It is similar to giving a homily. During the Supper, Jesus took the opportunity to elaborate on the Jewish ritual by giving a long sermon including prayers of praise and thanksgiving were said before the meal.

It was during this meal that Jesus set aside some of the bread and wine and changed them into His body and blood as a sacred sign of the sacrifice He would make the next day when He would pour forth all His blood from His body in death. As the sacrifice of the lamb saved the first born of the Jews in Egypt, so would the sacrifice of the Lamb of God save those who believe in Jesus.

St Paul in our second reading gave us an account of what Jesus did in instituting the Eucharist on the night Jesus was to be handed over to be crucified. To show is love for us, Jesus at the time He knew He would be sold for thirty pieces of silver, denied by one of His best friends and abandoned by all others, Jesus was preparing the most powerful sacrament for us sinners.

Yes, the apostles were able to see, and touch Christ because of the incarnation while He was with them on earth. However, it is in the Holy Eucharist that our faith becomes truly human. We do not just see and touch Christ with our faith. We also see, touch and eat Christ through the Eucharist. We do not have a long distance relationship with Christ, we can hug Him and He would hug us back because Jesus too is human. When we choose to talk to Him, He would talk back to us. That is why He is the way, the truth, and the life.

During this pandemic of the coronavirus, we feel for our brothers and sisters who could not participate physically in this sacrifice. But we represent them and Jesus is touching them in all the other sacraments. They can feel His presence in their lives. There not being here has created an insatiable hunger in their hearts. And when the virus is vanquished, they will be in ecstasy as they receive Him again into their body.

And as we come with the utmost reverence to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, let us pray to Him for an end to this virus.