

THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD CHRIST SUNDAY, JUNE 3, 2018

Over and over again as we read the Gospels, we encounter people who are surprised, amazed, and even shocked by Jesus Christ. People were repeatedly amazed and shocked by his teachings. Here are but a few examples: “When Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority...On the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue and many who heard were astonished, saying ‘Where did this man get all this? What is the wisdom given to him? What mighty works are wrought by his hands! Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary?...’” Do not marvel that I say to you, ‘You must be born again’...They said to each other, ‘Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road while he opened to us the Scriptures?’” People were also shocked by his actions. When Jesus told the paralytic to get up and walk, his sins were forgiven, “...they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, ‘We never saw anything like this!’” When the demon was cast out of the mute man and he spoke “...the crowds marveled, saying ‘Never was anything like this seen in Israel!’” The whole countryside buzzed with excitement, astonishment and shock at what Jesus was saying and doing. No wonder there were several thousand people present for the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. No wonder he got in a boat, pulled away from shore a little, and then, safe in the boat from being trampled by the crowds, he taught them. The Apostles were also astonished. Peter was so shocked that he fell down at Jesus’ feet saying, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man!”

For some, the shock and astonishment led to belief and following him. For others, their shock led to anger, fear and even opposition. When Jesus healed on the Sabbath, the Scribes and Pharisees “...were filled with fury and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.” Even many of Jesus’ own disciples who had followed him turned away in shock when Jesus announced they must eat his flesh and drink his blood or else they would not have life.

All of this leads us to the question Jesus asked his disciples, “Who do you say that I am?” It was Simon Peter who replied, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father.” The same question is posed to each of us, “Who do you say that I am?” Either we believe Jesus is God or we do not. There is no wiggle room, no middle ground. Jesus is God. Or he is not. There simply is no third option, ever. Jesus’ claim to be God is the sword that divides all time and all history into two halves: B.C. vs. A.D. The answer to the question also divides people into two halves. Either you believe he is God or you do not. If he is God (and he is), then every word he speaks is true. God does not lie. He does not make mistakes. He is never wrong. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Jesus took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and giving it to his disciples said, “Take and eat; this is my body.” Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, “Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood...”

God bless you!
Father Tom