

SUNDAY, AUGUST 12, 2018
NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Time after time, people were amazed at the actions of Jesus Christ and the power of his words. Why? Because when they looked at him, they saw just another human being, the son of the carpenter. They did not recognize God Incarnate. They looked upon Jesus with the eyes of this world, not the eyes of faith. Over and over again in the Bible, God asks us to have faith, to believe in him. And over and over, God performed miracles to help unbelievers become believers. Jesus himself told the people, "...if you do not believe me, believe the works so that you may realize [and understand] that the Father is in me I am in the Father" (John 10:38). Twice in the Gospels (at the Baptism of our Lord and at the Transfiguration) the voice of God our Father thunders from the heavens giving testimony to Jesus: This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased...LISTEN TO HIM!

We know that God's Word is powerful. He said, "Let there be light" and there was light. He said, "Let the earth bring forth vegetation" and every kind of plant came into existence. He said, "Let the earth bring forth all kinds of living creatures" and it came to be. Jesus, the Lord God, commanded the waters, "Be still" and they obeyed. He told the paralyzed man, "Stand and walk" and he did. He commanded Lazarus, "Come out" and he did! All this we believe! Jesus took ordinary bread, blessed it and commanded, "Take and eat, this is My Body..." He then took wine, blessed it and commanded, "Take and drink, this is the cup of My Blood..." Do we not believe this?

We also know that God can and did share his power with others. Did not Moses strike the rock and it brought forth water for a thirsty people to drink? Did not Elijah call down fire from heaven which consumed both the sacrifice and the altar? When Jesus "summoned the Twelve and gave them power over all demons and to cure diseases" (Luke 9) did they not do so and return reporting what they had done? When Jesus then sent out seventy-two others to preach and heal (Luke 10), did they not do so and return rejoicing over what they had done in his name? All this we believe! When the disciples of Jesus, in obedience to His command, celebrate the Eucharist, do they not receive the Body and Blood of Christ? St. Paul believed they did. He wrote, "The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the Blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the Body of Christ?" (1Cor10:16). Do we not also believe this?

In the transfiguration on the mountain, Jesus gave Peter, James and John a look at his great glory hidden by his human body. In Holy Communion, Jesus gives us his Body and Blood, hidden by what appears to human senses to be bread and wine.

During the Transfiguration on the mountain, God the Father spoke, telling us Jesus is His beloved Son and commanding us to "Listen to Him"!

Let us listen to Him. Let us believe Him. Let us take and eat and take and drink, receiving His Body and His Blood. Let there be no doubt. It is His Body. It is His Blood. It is our Lord whom we receive.

God bless you & may you have a grace filled week.

Father Tom