

Holy Thursday – The Lord’s Supper – Homily – 04-09-2020

Holy Thursday – The Mass of the Lord’s Supper – the day our Lord instituted the Sacrament of his Love – Holy Communion.

Normally I would be washing the feet of a few men in the parish at after the homily but not this year. This year things are quite different everywhere. Nothing this year is as usual.

Perhaps we’ve gotten too busy and too distracted from what’s really important. The Lord has a very unique way of getting our attention and distilling everything down to only what is necessary.

Perhaps you might remember a story I told in a Sunday homily several months ago. It seems fitting today to repeat it so please bear with me.

Imagine you have a little daughter or granddaughter who is the light of your life.

Now imagine one day you take her on a picnic in a most restful spot situated on a very steep bluff overlooking Lake Michigan.

What would you do if suddenly you realized that this little girl was far off chasing a butterfly and was heading toward the bluff? And you know if you don’t stop her she may very well fling herself right off the bluff and into the water below and die. What would you do?

Well, I know exactly what you would do. You would chase her down as fast as you can and if need be you would tackle her to the ground.

How do you think she would feel? She was having the time of her life chasing that butterfly and suddenly you came along right out of the blue and took her feet right out from under her. Now she gets up, dusty and spitting out stones, crying and bleeding and wondering why you would have done such a terrible thing to her.

You may have just saved her life but she can't understand that right now.

Sometimes God sees us blindly running toward a cliff and the only way he can get our attention is to tackle us with one of life's trials.

Well coronavirus is certainly one of life's trials. This isn't to say that the Lord caused it or the ensuing anguish that so many people are experiencing right now but since he is the Creator of the universe and we know that at a simple command Jesus calmed the rough seas he could very well end this if he so chooses.

But as it is, Jesus is allowing this situation to wreak havoc on our lives but some might argue not without good reason.

Most of the world has been running blindly toward a cliff chasing butterflies – completely oblivious to their impending doom. God won't allow this forever. Eventually he will tackle us in an attempt to open our eyes.

The coronavirus may not be the big divine tackle – who really knows but Him. However, if we don't learn from this and turn to him something else much worse may likely come along.

As a priest I have been charged with teaching what the Church teaches. Not with what I think she ought to teach, what I wish she would teach or what fits into my lifestyle or anyone else's.

I can't gloss over the more difficult teachings just because it might offend someone and maybe make my life and theirs a little bit uncomfortable.

Most of the world is ignoring Christ and the teachings of his Church. I don't want the people of Saint Joseph the Worker to be among them.

As I said before, normally I would wash the feet of a few men in the parish after this homily but not this year.

Normally, almost everyone would receive Holy Communion today also but not this year.

But what we need to ask ourselves is do I accept all the teachings of the Catholic Church and strive to live them and if I fail do I get to confession regularly – at minimum once a year – my Easter duty.

The answer to this question determines whether we are in full communion with the Catholic Church or not and whether we should receive Holy Communion or not.

Today is the day that our Lord instituted this wonderful Sacrament of his Love and sadly even those properly disposed cannot receive him.

Let's pray that we will all be open to what our Lord wants to teach us in our current situation and that it will end soon. Most importantly, let's pray that we will all come to a deeper knowledge and love of Christ and his Church so that nothing worse will happen in the future.