

Heart of the World II

For a couple of weeks now, we have been looking at the Eucharist as it is described in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) as “...the source and summit of the Christian life.” “The other sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. For in the blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself, our Pasch.” (CCC #1324)

We have talked about how this is actually a combination of quotes from two of the principle documents of Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium (LG)*, and The Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, *Presbyterorum Ordinis (PO)*.

In *LG #11*, it further explains that like the heart in the body, the very center and life-moving force of the Church is the Eucharist. It is the very physical Presence of the Living God among us, but it is even ever so much more than that. All of the other Sacraments and the whole life of the Church in the world flow from it and lead back to it.

This is why, as Catholics, the very best (practical) gauge of our spiritual life is how intently, intentionally, and intensely we are devoted to Christ in the Eucharist—both at Mass and praying in His Presence either exposed on the Altar or contained in the Tabernacle.

Mother Theresa understood that if she could not recognize her Lord in the Eucharist, then she would never be able to recognize Him in the poor whom she was serving. In fact, she understood that she was simply taking the Love which she received from Him in Communion and Eucharistic Adoration out to the poor—somewhat like a vessel. Perhaps more like an artery, if we want to maintain consistency with the heart metaphor.

This is also why before Our Lady appeared to Lucia, Jacinta, and Francisco at Fatima, an Angel was sent to them three times to teach them how to pray. The third time was with and regarding the Eucharist. He taught them to pray:

“Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, I adore You profoundly. I offer You the most precious Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for the outrages, sacrileges, and indifference, by which He is offended. By the infinite merits of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I pray for the conversion of poor sinners.”

This year (2017) marks the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the appearance of Our Lady at Fatima. As we continue discussing our practice and understanding of the Eucharist, I plan on looking deeply at what the Angel taught, and how we, like the Fatima children, can learn from him.