

January 22, 2017

Heart of the World VII

Like the heart in the body, the very center and life-moving force of the Church is the Eucharist. All of the other Sacraments and the whole life of Grace and the Church in the world flow from it and lead back to it.

2017 commemorates 100 years since the apparitions of the Blessed Mother to Lucia, Jacinta, and Francisco at Fatima. In this column, we have been discussing how an Angel appeared to them three times in order to prepare them to meet Our Lady. In his 3rd appearance, (when he also revealed that he is St. Michael) he taught them how they are to comport themselves in the Presence of Christ in the Eucharist and a prayer:

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.

For the last few weeks, we have focused on how St. Michael taught them how to practice Reverence (or Piety). This Gift of the Holy Spirit precedes any interaction (prayer) with God and denotes an interior attitude that is also expressed outwardly.

We can worship in a way that Angels cannot—and they are full of wonder and amazement at that which we take for granted. (cf. Lk, 15:10; Eph 3:10; Heb 2) In fact, often we do not understand the meaning of what we do and/or only think of the inconvenience of it.

Angels, who perceive reality with perfect clarity, have a lot to teach us about Reverence. We become tired, or sore, or sick, or injured and get distracted by the gift of our bodies from what we can do with them.

What we do, how we do it, and how we dress express meaning whether we like it or not. We know how to dress and behave at a banquet, stage performance, wedding, funeral, etc., but we frequently do not think about these things at other times. If there is no viable alternative due to circumstances it is perfectly fine to come to Church “as you are”.

On the other hand, if we habitually present ourselves to God dressed like we just came from or are going to the beach or a cookout—is that not irreverent and disrespectful? Try that at a friend’s wedding.

Would you go to a stage performance and constantly talk to the person next to you? How would you feel if your intended spouse came late to, was looking at his/her watch during, and left early from your wedding? How about if at the slightest inconvenience, he/she didn’t even come?

Fr. Michael