

August 13, 2017

## Heart of the World XXXV

We started this series as last year's Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy was concluding. The idea was twofold: to initiate a plan to carry forward the Grace of that time into the rest of our lives, and to look at how we can better cooperate with this Grace in our day-to-day lives. We began with the Eucharist.

In #1324, the Catechism of the Catholic Church quotes from a document of Vatican II where it explains that like the heart in the body, the very center and life-moving force of the Church is the Eucharist—the Heart of the World.

This year (2017) also marks the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the appearance of Our Lady to the three children (Lucia, Jacinta, and Francisco) at Fatima. We have discussed the prayer that the Angel taught them and have looked at Our Lady's requests and pleas for us to love Our Lord in the Eucharist (as well as prayers and sacrifices for sinners, etc.)

One of the things the Angel taught the children was how important Reverence (or Piety) is. We discussed that in this column over the winter (end of December into January), but I would like to revisit that now from a different angle.

Last week I introduced to you St. Cyril of Jerusalem (c313 – 386). He is the most widely studied and cited Early Church Father regarding the Sacraments of Initiation—Baptism, Holy Communion, and Confirmation.

I also mentioned the Liturgical Movement—a theological and spiritual studying and contemplating of how we pray and why, particularly how that developed over the centuries. This Movement was significant in its influence in our Vatican II Fathers as they considered liturgical reforms.

Regarding the receiving of Holy Communion in the hand as well as the traditional practice of receiving on the tongue, St. Cyril is always cited. Here is what he said in his last mystagogical catechesis (#21):

“... In approaching therefore, come not with your wrists extended, or your fingers spread; but make your left hand a throne for the right, as for that which is to receive a King. And having hollowed your palm, receive the Body of Christ, saying over it, Amen. So then after having carefully hallowed your eyes by the touch of the Holy Body, partake of it; giving heed lest you lose any portion thereof; for whatever you lose, is evidently a loss to you as it were from one of your own members. For tell me, if any one gave you grains of gold, would you not hold them with all carefulness, being on your guard against losing any of them, and suffering loss? Will you not then much more carefully keep watch, that not a crumb fall from you of what is more precious than gold and precious stones? ...”

Next week we will examine this teaching.

*Fr. Michael*