

October 15, 2017

Heart of the World XLIV

Friday marked the 100th anniversary of Our Lady's last apparition to Lucia, Jacinta, and Francisco in Fatima. We have undertaken this series as a way to consider the message of the Fatima event.

The "message" of Fatima can be summed up such: penance, prayer and devotion to Mary's Immaculate Heart. If we expand upon penance, we can see reparation, repentance, sacrifice, and the abandonment of sin as well. Finally, if we recall the teaching of the Angel, he taught them how to be fervent, attentive, and composed in prayer, and the reverence we ought to show to Jesus in the Eucharist.

Using this as a backdrop, recently we have been considering our practice of receiving Holy Communion on the tongue or the hand. This has contributed both to spiritual and psychological issues.

Spiritual, because of the vast multiplication of abuses from the "*outrages, sacrileges, and indifferences*" to the drastic faltering of belief in the True Presence that has been steadily increasing.

Psychological, because when we receive Holy Communion in our hands and then feed ourselves, we are doing something very ordinary. This commonness of gesture fosters slouching into a mentality of 'taking' and 'feeding' ourselves. This silently and subtly insinuates volumes against the priceless immensity of the Gift of Christ.

These are all things that the bishops had warned against and by extension we can see in the message of Fatima too. Alas.

Next week I will go a little more deeply into the message of Fatima. As we examine ourselves and our Church in light of this message, what practical things can we do to answer more completely? I recommend three: daily Rosary, some time with the Blessed Sacrament at least once a week, and reconsidering our habits regarding Holy Communion.

We have many times already spoken of the profound difference praying a daily Rosary can make in our lives—both in preaching and in this column. Ask someone who has done it. They will not be shy in explaining what Mary has done for them.

Corpus Christi in E. Sandwich and Holy Trinity in W. Harwich both have perpetual Adoration chapels. We have Adoration here noon – 3pm Monday – Friday and 24hrs every 1st Friday. Similar to a daily rosary, ask someone who has committed to spending at least 1 hour a week in Adoration, what the Lord has done for them.

Finally, I do encourage receiving Holy Communion on the tongue, but that is a personal choice. What I do strongly recommend is that everyone spend at least a few minutes *after* Mass has ended thanking God for giving Himself and everything else to you. Minimally, **cease leaving Mass before the final blessing!** You are insulting Christ, the rest of the community, and negating your Sunday Observance. For what?

Fr. Michael