

Knights of Columbus
Council 459
Spiritual Training
June - The Eucharist

Opening Prayer

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

The Eucharist

- We wanted to end this year's lecture series with the most important topic of all
 - It is the thing that's most central to our lives as Catholics - The Eucharist
 - It is the focus of the Mass, the highest communion we have with our God, and the central component of our identity as Catholics
- We have spoken about the Mass before, but the Eucharist is such a complex mystery that the least we could do is devote another special lecture to it
- Why is the Eucharist so significant?
 - It is directly enabled by Jesus' willing sacrifice of himself
 - It is truly the body and blood of Jesus - and not just a symbol
 - It provides opportunity for the most intimate, physical contact we can have with God in this life
- Jesus' sacrifice and the Eucharist
 - Every time the host is consecrated a connection is made, through time and space, with the moment on Calvary when Jesus gave himself up
 - Even though that sacrifice occurred two millennia ago, it is made immediately present to us, here and now, on any given day we attend Mass
 - This is possible because God is not bound in time
 - That moment of Jesus commending his spirit to the Father is an eternal gift. It is a constant act of love established not only in world history, but outside of time and space itself.
 - That gift of love is available to us, always

- Which brings us to the next reason the Eucharist is so important... Christ's real presence in it
 - When we partake of the Eucharist, we *are* really and truly consuming the body of Christ
 - Nothing chemically changes when the host is consecrated. Its physical properties remain exactly the same.
 - However, its significance, its essence, is that it truly is the body and blood of Christ
 - This is called Transubstantiation
 - This may be a difficult concept to grasp, but it is called a mystery for a reason
 - The true significance as the Body of Christ is far more important than its chemical makeup
 - The original hosts are not arbitrary, however. Bread and wine were selected by Jesus himself
- The Eucharist is indispensably valuable to us not only as Catholics, but simply as human beings
 - It is a supremely beautiful thing that it is available to us every day
 - It is the central component of maintaining our relationship with our Lord
 - "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him" (Jn 6:56).
 - It is really tragic that at present, some Christians do not participate in the Eucharist in its fullness
 - We need to cherish this gift as often as we are able to
 - This is the lynchpin that binds us with our God, and a shared experience of intense communion that binds us as brothers in faith

Closing Prayer - From the Prayer of St. Bonaventure (13th century A.D.)

May my soul ever compass you, seek you, find you, run to you, attain you, meditate upon you, speak of you and do all things to the praise and glory of your name, with humility and discretion, with love and delight, with ease and affection, and with perseverance unto the end.

Resources

- *Outlines of the Catholic Faith*, pg. 25-28
- *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1322-1419
- <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/the-mass/order-of-mass/liturgy-of-the-eucharist/the-real-presence-of-jesus-christ-in-the-sacrament-of-the-eucharist-basic-questions-and-answers.cfm>