

First Sunday of Lent Homily Outline

“He became like us in all things.” Hebrews 2:17

Jesus suffers with us in our humanity so that he can win salvation for us in his Divinity

Year A First Sunday of Lent

As I've mentioned over the last couple of weeks – at Star of the Sea we are beginning a longer kind of systematic and intentional program of evangelization for all of us. “Evangelization” meaning to share the Gospel, the Good News. And that obviously begins with the person of Jesus Christ so that during lent at least we are going to focus on the truth and person of Jesus Christ.

For Lent:

1. Asking people to read the Gospel of Mark – Reading plan in the back – don't worry if you didn't start a couple of days ago – just jump in now.
2. Also prayer cards in the back – with some of our beautiful traditional prayers to Jesus – asking people to pray those each day of Lent and Easter – not just for themselves, but for our whole community – to see, know and love Jesus.
3. Wednesday evenings – gathering for the Rescue Project videos:
 - Mass at 6pm
 - Soup Supper at 6:30pm
 - 7-8pm – Video “Why did we need Jesus?” By Fr. John Riccardo

Prologue

Beginning of the Gospel of St. Mark – “Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”

Introduction

Story of Damien the Leper Priest: St. Damien lived amongst the lepers and gave his life so that they would know that God loved them.

We need to start with a correct understanding of who Jesus is. Start with the truth about Him:

1. Theological Truth about Divine Person – with a Divine and Human Nature

CCC 461 Taking up St. John's expression, "The Word became flesh" (John 1:14), the Church calls "Incarnation" the fact that the Son of God assumed a human nature in order to accomplish our salvation in it. In a hymn cited by St. Paul, the Church sings the mystery of the Incarnation:

HAVE THIS MIND AMONG YOURSELVES, WHICH IS YOURS IN CHRIST JESUS, WHO, THOUGH HE WAS IN THE FORM OF GOD, DID NOT COUNT EQUALITY WITH GOD A THING TO BE GRASPED, BUT EMPTIED HIMSELF, TAKING THE FORM OF A SERVANT, BEING BORN IN THE LIKENESS OF MEN. AND BEING FOUND IN HUMAN FORM HE HUMBLLED HIMSELF AND BECAME OBEDIENT UNTO DEATH, EVEN DEATH ON A CROSS. (Philippians 2:5-8)

CCC 462 The Letter to the Hebrews refers to the same mystery:

CONSEQUENTLY, WHEN CHRIST CAME INTO THE WORLD, HE SAID, "SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, BUT A BODY HAVE YOU PREPARED FOR ME; IN BURNT

OFFERINGS AND SIN OFFERINGS YOU HAVE TAKEN NO PLEASURE. THEN I SAID, LO, I HAVE COME TO DO YOUR WILL, O GOD." (Hebrews 10:8-9a)

Gospel of the Temptations

THEN JESUS WAS LED BY THE SPIRIT INTO THE DESERT TO BE TEMPTED BY THE DEVIL. ²HE FASTED FOR FORTY DAYS AND FORTY NIGHTS, AND AFTERWARDS HE WAS HUNGRY.

FOR WE DO NOT HAVE A HIGH PRIEST WHO IS UNABLE TO SYMPATHIZE WITH OUR WEAKNESSES, BUT ONE WHO HAS SIMILARLY BEEN TESTED IN EVERY WAY, YET WITHOUT SIN. Hebrews 4:15

2. Understanding this mystery

CCC 464 The unique and altogether singular event of the Incarnation of the Son of God does not mean that Jesus Christ is part God and part man, nor does it imply that he is the result of a confused mixture of the divine and the human. He became truly man while remaining truly God. Jesus Christ is true God and true man.

A divine person – not a human person. But he has a human nature, which was assumed at His Incarnation – and a Divine Nature.

3. So, why is this important?

How should God go about saving the world?

- Snap his fingers
- Another Flood
- Take away our freedom

He comes down from heaven – enters into our world, our lives, take on humanity and to bring about our salvations by walking the path with us.

- “The Son of God. . . worked with human hands; he thought with a human mind. He acted with a human will, and with a human heart he loved. Born of the Virgin Mary, he has truly been made one of us, like to us in all things except sin.” (Gaudium et Spes 22.2)
- He has lived our struggles, known our fears, and experienced life as we have.
- “He would allow himself to be wounded in his love affair with mankind, He would show Himself to be the one who acts in history, precisely by appearing in it, as one who suffers, and, in suffering, here, overcoming our wrongdoing” – Ratzinger, The Divine Project.

Conclusion

Knowing the truths of Christ’s human and Divine natures is to better know Him. It gives us a richer understanding of the Incarnation and the humanity of Christ.

We serve, worship, and follow a remarkable God of unparalleled perfection and love. God loved us so much that He entered human history and allowed himself to be wounded in his love affair with mankind and to know that he loved us so much he was willing to suffer and die for us.