

## **Twentieth Sunday – August 16, 2015**

When I was growing up, many decades ago, one of the Sunday mass practices was a meditation after communion. When people returned to their places after receiving communion, they usually knelt, put their head in their hands, and focused on the real presence of Christ who had just entered into them. It was a “mini” meditation because the priest usually resumed the final prayer of the Mass rather quickly. In those days, priests were often clocked to see how fast they could say Mass. But many people stayed on after Mass to continue the meditation they had begun.

I have no idea what other people did in that meditation quiet. I don't even remember, in any detail, what I did. But I do know that for me it was the most meaningful part of Mass. It was guaranteed intimacy with Christ. For a short time during and after the host dissolved, God was somehow really accessible. In my growing up years, this was incredibly important. In my later years, this importance has returned.

Now, something even more important has surfaced for me. I began to sense I could be there with the real presence, but I could not hold on to it. There was that moment when it was over, when somehow I knew it was time to move on. The everyday world was in my mind, modified by my time with Christ, but as insistent and demanding as always. I knew that one eating and drinking of the Lord Jesus would never do it. I would have to return again and again.

I always enjoyed this after communion meditation, but I never fully understood it. I was never sure if I left the presence of Christ in the church because I decided to leave, or if Christ, by the very nature of his vastness, decided to withdraw. It was as if I was holding to myself the wealth of the world without being able to possess it or even penetrate it. It was as if the host and the cup were receding from me even as they drew me on. God and the universe and the innermost consciousness of Christ were all beyond my capturing.

You and I eat the body and drink the blood of Jesus Christ on a regular basis, some every Sunday, some every day. Anything done on a regular basis can become rather routine. If we are prone to giving into routine then even the Eucharist can become somewhat ordinary or humdrum, perhaps it's good to dip into a deeper pool of meditation on the Eucharist. Receiving communion can bring us more deeply into the mind and heart of Christ, and dipping into the mind and heart of Christ is always quite the trip.

It's all about communion: communion with Christ, communion with brothers and sisters (past, present, and to come), communion with the universe, communion with the heavenly saints and angels. Communion – it's all about communion.