

## Mission in Midst of a Confused World

Dear brothers and sister in the Lord,

Why does the world seem so confused today? It may seem like an odd question, but consider the world as it is. The idea of voting for instance used to be prized in ancient times, but now not many ever practice it, let alone consider its worth. Reflection in regular life was considered by Socrates to be of very keen importance. He even went so far as to say that the un-reflected life was not worth living. Reflecting on what has been happening in our life nowadays just seems to be something for preachers, coffee-shop-keyboard-commandoes, and bulletin articles (ahem!). The thought of a mother being a stay-at-home mom is considered strange. If a man decides to withhold from relations prior to marriage, he is considered less of a man. A person who decides to push off social media and television, in favor of books and theater is considered radical. To the extreme, some believe we can choose which sex we want to be. Politicians lying has simply become a thing which everyone accepts and tolerates. The root of these problems seems to be as widely spread as its effects. I would like to suggest the solution is to embrace the calling that all Christians share.

At the end of each Mass, the Priest or Deacon says “Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord,” or “Go in peace,” or “Go forth, the Mass is ended.” See the theme? All of these closings have the same idea behind them. We are all sent on mission. The job of the Church militant (the Church here on earth), is to bring all men and women into the fold of Jesus Christ, to be in the world, but not to be a part of it. The job of St. Patrick Parish is to bring about the Gospel message to all whom we encounter. How do we do this?

The answer, simply put, is by living out an authentically Catholic life. We cannot propose to people that Jesus is the answer to gaining eternal happiness, if we ourselves do not live that out. That is to say that, we cannot allow ourselves to fall into the same traps that others have fallen into; we cannot join in their confusion. This simple answer however is ironically anything but simple. The question really becomes a matter of the ordering of one’s life. A simple question to test whether or not we are doing this might be: “Is my week formed around work or the tasks that I have to do? Or is it, rather, formed around my relationship with God (my prayer life, my attendance at Mass, etc.)?” To order our lives around our faith is not to ignore the needs of our families and friends, but is, rather, to place them in proper order. Some may recall that several weeks ago, Fr. Von said in his homily that the idea of marriage is not that each spouse completes the other, but rather that they both walk together towards the eternal fulfillment of God. He concluded saying that by loving God first, they learn how to love each other better. By loving He who is the embodiment of love itself, they learn what true love is. So that is the simple part: we need to surrender to God completely. What makes surrendering ourselves to Christ difficult, I think, is that we often do not know what “surrendering to Christ” entails.

Surrendering means that we put God back into His proper place. If we profess that He is the one true God, all loving, good, and faithful, then He is the greatest thing ever! We should want to be with Him all the time! I have spoken before about the idea of dying to ourselves daily (Catholic Trench Warfare – see article from June 25), but if we do not believe that God can work through everything (including evil) for the good of all, then this becomes just a burden and we will eventually abandon it as useless. As human beings, if we think things are useless, we cease to do them. If we think that the Mass is just some ceremony, just a ritual “which is good for some and not for others,” then we will stop going, and moreover, we will not try to spread the Good News. We need to recognize that Jesus is real! The Eucharist is in fact the Body of Christ! We need to be convicted with St. Pio that the world would be better off without the sun than the Mass! We need to start and end each day by praying! Once we recognize, personally, how important these things are, and we give them the place of first importance in our lives, then we would have surrendered our lives to Christ, and we can preach the Gospel to a world that is very confused. If you do not believe yet in your heart of hearts that Jesus has the way to fix the world, then I invite you to dive a little deeper into your faith. Consider doing a little reading up on the Faith, and learn about why Jesus is rightly called, “the way, the truth, and the life” (Jn 14:6).

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