

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time – Cycle C

Focus: Our response to God's grace, mercy and forgiveness

First Reading
2 SM 12:7-10, 13

Psalm
PS 32:1-2, 5, 7, 11

Second Reading
GAL 2:16, 19-21

Gospel
LK 7:36—8:3

Good evening once again. Our readings today are a challenge to our posture, our thinking, and our deeds when face to face with the presence of God. You can see this very clearly in our first reading from Second Samuel. In it, God's Holy Prophet Nathan called out King David for his tremendous sin. We heard how David recognized his faults and repented. Upon doing so, heard the great news of God's grace and forgiveness. While many issues continued to plague the House of David, ultimately the Savior of the World came through this very house to fully restore it dignity and fulfill prophecy.

In our Gospel we heard of this women who was so steeped in sin that she took the form of the lowest of slaves to wash and clean the feet of Jesus with her tears and hair. Her physical act of repentance and atonement so moved Jesus as to forgive her very grievous sins. But how is it that she came and was let into the banquet in the first place? Why would the servants at the gate even let her in? Why did the Pharisee not physically remove her

upon seeing her? It makes you wonder does it not? You see her transgressions were known to many in the town and certainly to the Simon the Pharisee. Had Simon or any of his other guests leverage her services? We don't know. All we know is she was there seeking forgiveness and atonement from the very real presence of Christ in her midst.

What is interesting, however, is Simon's response, which was all in his head. You see, his righteous indignation at her great sin must have been physically apparent. Then Jesus made this quiet observation that sin no matter how great or small is still sin.

Those living by the letter of the law, as St. Paul's letter to the Galatians stated, are not justified. Only those who live and act according to God's Will and have faith in the Real Presence of Christ can atone and be justified.

Faith in the Real Presence of Christ! A couple of weeks ago we celebrated the Feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. We celebrated the very real presence that comes from all of us gathered here in Jesus' name, from the Word of God, from the

Persona De Christo who is our presider, and from the most Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist. With great mercy and divine guidance, God continues to give us examples of His Real Presence through the Eucharist. In the 8th century in Lanciano, Italy after the words of consecration, the bread and wine was changed physically into flesh and blood. In 1971, after 1200 years in the Luna of a Monstrance, a scientist tested the Blessed Sacrament and determined that it has heart tissue and the blood was still fresh.

In the 13th century in the town of Santarém, Portugal a women wanting to do ill to her cheating husband took the Blessed Sacrament from her mouth at communion and placed it in her veil but before reaching the doors of the church, the host began to bleed. Still determined, she put the now bloody host in a trunk that evening and a miraculous light emanated from the trunk. The next morning, she took the host to her priest and confessed her sins.

This brings me to the most recent Blessed Sacrament miracle in Buenos Aires in 1996, just 20 years ago. After mass one day in August, someone found a host on the floor in the back of the church. As is prescribed by the Church, the priest placed the host in water and having other work to do that day, put the host now immersed in water in the tabernacle. Remembering it was in the Tabernacle, the priest, on that Monday, went into the tabernacle to dispose of what should have been the water made cloudy by the dissolved host. But to his amazement, the priest saw no decomposition. On the contrary he saw what looked to be a wad of blood and flesh. In 1999, the Cardinal, Archbishop Bergoglio order it tested by science. Taking a sample to a well-know pathologist in New York, The Cardinal's representatives along with an atheist critic of the church were instructed not to tell the doctor the origins of the sample. After his study, he found the tissue to be form the interior of the heart. The presence of the large volume of white blood cells indicates the individual from whom this was taken had suffered sever trauma to the chest and upper torso. Further, he commented that the sample had to be

fresh as white blood cells do not survive outside the body but for just a few minutes.

So why all these stories of Eucharistic Miracles? The answer lies in the last paragraph of the Gospel. In this paragraph, we hear of the many women who were so forgiven and received the grace of peace of Christ, that they gave up living for themselves and traveled with Jesus and took care of Him and his apostles out of their own resources.

As we will say together what it is we believe as Catholic Christians. As we come to the table of our Lord and Savior to receive His very real presence. How do we meet Christ in our midst? With indignation that our sins are not so great as everyone else's or do we recognize our sinful arrogance, pride, unwillingness to forgive and break down in tears, drop to our knees to become the servant of servants?