

From the Pastor

June 12, 2022

Trinity Sunday

Dear Parishioners of Our Beloved St. Paul:

Praised be Jesus Christ, and Mary, His Most Holy Mother!

THANK YOU: As I write this article (June 4th, Saturday) I must express sincere gratitude to all of you who have contributed to the great success of our 2022 Golf Outing. First, I must thank our honoree, Mr. Michael D. Sapraicone, a very devoted parishioner of St. Paul and a man of most charitable instincts and service. Mr. Sapraicone has spent his life in service to the law, both God's and man's. His dedication to St. Paul's has been outstanding.

As of today, more than \$134,000 has been netted for our parish. This is a testimony to Mr. Sapraicone and to all of you our dear parishioners. I will write more about the Golf Outing next week, when all of our figures are available.

CORPUS CHRISTI SUNADY: Next Sunday will be Corpus Christs Sunday. All of our little ones who made First Holy Communion in May are asked to come nest wee to walk in the Corpus Christi Procession. In n years past when Holy Communion was received universally "at the rail", distribution was carried out by the Priest, with no variation in reception on the part of the communicants. Today it seems that there are dozens of ways in which Catholics receive the Blessed Eucharist, yet this should not be so.

Though the official Catholic norm is still for reception of the Most Holy Sacrament on the tongue, if Holy Communion is to be received in the hand it should be so done in the following, correct manner: **While in line, the communicant reverences (makes a bow) to the Sacrament while the person in front of them is receiving. When the priest, deacon, or extraordinary minister says, "The Body of Christ," the communicant responds, "Amen," and puts out their tongue and receives; or puts out their hands (one hand under the other) as flatly as possible; the Sacred Host is then placed on the flat, horizontal palm. The communicant then steps aside (so that the next person can receive), and immediately places the Host on their tongue with the other hand, and returns to their place in the congregation.**

St. Cyril of Jerusalem (315-386 A.D.) gave instruction for the manner in which the faithful should receive: *"They should make a throne of their hands, laying the right upon the left to form a throne for the King, forming at the same time a cross. This symbolic gesture, so fine and so profound, is what concerns him: The hands of man form a cross, which becomes a throne, down into which the King inclines himself. The open, outstretched hand can thus become a sign of the way that a man offers himself to the Lord, opens his hands for him, that they may become an instrument of his presence and a throne of his mercies in this world."*

Presenting oneself to receive with hands that are curled, cupped, held down low to the body; held side-by-side and/or with open fingers... make it difficult for the one distributing to therein place the Sacred Body of our Lord. It also increases the danger of the Sacred Host falling to the floor. Please also remember that no communicant should ever “pluck” the Host themselves from the fingers of the one distributing.

One is never required or forced to receive our Lord in the Holy Eucharist (except for making one’s Easter Duty, in the state of grace); so if one is unsure as to whether they should present themselves or not in the Communion procession, it is probably best to err on the side of not receiving. The inside front cover of the missalette/hymnal has a useful guideline issued by the U. S. Bishops for the reception of Communion in the Catholic Church. (And no one should *ever* be chewing gum in church if they intend to receive Holy Communion.)

Unfortunately, I have experienced numerous abuses in the reception of Holy Communion. **Occasionally, parishioners find Hosts in the pews or on the floor!!!** *Please, please, please* be vigilant! Should you see someone not consume the Holy Eucharist, immediately alert the priest or deacon; or you may even take the Host back from them yourself and bring it to the priest. This is a very serious issue.

We cannot be too wary of abuses that can occur, either through ignorance or with evil intentions. Truly, there are practitioners of devil worship and of the occult who seek to obtain the Sacred Body of our Lord for use in so-called “black masses.” The main goal of this heinous act is to commit desecration and blasphemy towards God. **The Holy Eucharist is the Real Presence of Jesus Christ.** Ironically, the demons understand this while many of the faithful do not. So when we come to receive Him into our souls, may our reverence, modest dress and demeanor, actions, and love be displayed accordingly.

MASS MANERS: As you know, due to the great love and generosity of many of our parishioners, we have undertaken an extensive renovation of our Church building. This beautiful Church will uplift our parishioners for years. You may recall that during 2016, I wrote in this column each week explaining, the renovation and the rationale behind it. The finest architects in our country have worked on it, and, although not yet completed, we have had many visiting, bishops, priests, and architects visit. All have concurred that it is one of the most beautiful renovations ever accomplished on Long Island. Of course, as always, there will be a few critics, as there are critics in everything. Usually, such criticism is borne of an unfamiliarity of the nature and meaning of Church architecture and Sacred Art. It is my fond prayer that the critical spirit, always instilled by the Evil One, will dissipate before the Beauty of Holiness. I will be writing about our various shrines and the statues of the saints. We should all be encouraged by the fact that so many bishops and priests have come to our Church to see it. Many have remarked that it is the most beautiful Church they have ever seen. The new curtain wall bathes the Church in light and finally allows all of us to clearly see the beautiful window of Our Lord, the same, yesterday, today and forever.

You will notice that there are many places in the Church for the handicapped. Please save these places for the handicapped and do not take their places. The kneelers are all new and very lovely with fabric (not plastic) to kneel on. Please lower and raise the kneelers gently. Please do not let them slam the kneelers as this will damage them over the years and is very noisy. May I ask and beg everyone to please be careful, in the original sense, of that word. Please be filled with care and treat with respect the things of YOUR Church.

With a beautiful church now completed, it is my hope that all our parishioners, will take pride in it and keep it clean and beautiful looking. This is not hard. It essentially means simply doing nothing. When the hymnals are pushed into the racks open, when gum is laced under the pews, when papers are ripped and bulletins put into the hymn racks, that all takes effort. May I ask you to please respect the house of God and keep it clean. Perhaps if one should even see some paper on the floor, he/she may consider picking it up. As we enter the doors of the Church, we should always have in mind the words of Jacob in the Book of Genesis: *This is none other the House of God and the Gate of Heaven.*

O Lord I love the Beauty of Thy House and the place where Thy Glory Dwells

In Jesus and Mary,
Monsignor James F. Pereda