

19TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Years ago on radio Paul Harvey would have a commentary show where he would tell you about things in the news and occasionally he would share stories about people and events that most people were not aware. Maybe it was about an incident in WWII about a private who saved people and today this private is a famous actor on TV. He would finish these stories with a famous tagline: Now you know the rest of the story.

Many times we think we know the whole story of someone only later to find out we were very mistaken about them. I know there was a kid who joined our class in sophomore year at my high school. Everyone thought he was a tough kid who was only going to make trouble. It turned out he was just as nervous about fitting in as we were about welcoming him. He became a good friend in time.

The prophet Elijah was sent by God to correct the king and his wife Jezebel from their errant ways. Needless to say, they weren't happy with his message. They, in fact, had planned on killing him. Elijah escapes into the desert, but doesn't want to be pursued by the king's men, so prays for death. God has another plan for him. The prophet can't see the whole picture, but he trusts in the messenger sent by God and continues his mission.

Jesus was sent by God to bring light and life to people, but many only saw him as a carpenter's son. They weren't ready to accept his message. Sadly, couldn't see the rest of the story and missed out on the greatest gift that Jesus could give: his life in the Eucharist. I wonder if sometimes we too can be like those people who take for granted the gifts we have been given. Maybe at times we too have lost reverence for Christ and respect for our neighbor.

I pray that we may foster a deeper awareness of Christ who is our Bread of Life. Here are a few ways we can do that every week when we come to worship. This hour of worship should be the most important hour of the week. We shouldn't be interrupted by cell phones and video games. So, please silence your devices as you come into church and focus your attention on God's word. Ideally you should be mentally prepared to hear that Word by reading it ahead of time. I encourage you to read the Sunday readings. You can find those at the US Catholic Bishop's website along with other websites and apps.

As you prepare yourself to come to Mass think about what you wear. The Eucharist is the banquet of the Lord. It should demand the best clothes you have in your closet. That is why we expect our ministers to dress properly when serving at the altar. So, think about what you do and come dressed appropriately.

Upon entering the church we show reverence to the altar by bowing profoundly. We give reverence to Christ reserved in the tabernacle by genuflection. In our church the tabernacle is found in the daily chapel. I ask that you respect an adult silence in the church before Mass. Too often the amount of conversation and what is being said makes it hard for people to pray and recollect themselves before Mass. Conversations can and should happen outside, in the narthex, and in the Parish Center.

When we receive Eucharist the Church has offered us a way to show reverence and unity. You may receive either on your tongue or in your hand. If you choose to receive on the tongue then tilt your head back, stick out your tongue and let the priest or minister place the host on your tongue. If you receive in your hand place your hands into a cross with one on top of the other. Then take the host with the other hand and place it in your mouth. When

receiving the cup you are to take the chalice from the minister and drink a small amount of the Precious Blood. Before you receive either the host or the cup you are to bow your head slightly. We receive communion in America standing. It is not necessary to genuflect or kneel.

We know that we receive the entire Christ in either the host or the cup, yet for the fullest sign of Eucharist one should receive both the host and the Precious Blood from the chalice. After you have worshipped and received Christ in the Eucharist, you become a tabernacle. Christ is within you. Christ is also within all your brothers and sisters who have worshipped with you. Too many people immediately rush out after communion. You haven't had an opportunity to let the Lord speak to you in the silence of your heart. Stay until the Mass is complete. Spend time with your brothers and sisters by stopping by for coffee and doughnuts, chatting with other parishioners before you zip home or to your daily tasks.

It is impolite to eat and run when you are visiting with people in their home. It is the same here. Take the time and get to know one another. How else will you truly be able to pray with and for one another if you don't know their needs? Be courteous in the parking lot by where you park and how you leave.

Our lives should be transformed by Christ and this can be reflected in our outward appearance, our respect for others, and by the way we live our lives every day.