

June 18, 2017

Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ

Our 'assignment' from Fr. Gerry's homily was to learn about *clericalism* in preparation for the upcoming weeks. I confess, I could not give a definition when asked. The following is my layperson's view before we have discussions.

The secular definition:

Clericalism – A policy of maintaining or increasing the power of a religious authority

As it turns out, everyone knows what clericalism is, at least as a concept. This attitude and practice of protectionism happens in most professions with varying degrees of benefit and harm. Doctors and engineers use this type of protectionism to ensure public safety. It is easy to argue for the benefits of strict controls and limited participation in such cases.

In other professions, unionization often benefits the organizers themselves more than the profession or the public. Dues and decision making can be entirely in the hands of those no longer practicing the actual trade. The benefits and harm in such cases is more complex and difficult to declare with certainty.

In the case of the Church, the risks are even greater than those of doctors and engineers. Not just life is at stake, but eternity. The stakes could not be higher.

As with any profession, clergy spend a significant amount of time gaining advanced knowledge and understanding of their field of study. I would suppose this Ecclesiastical training would include biblical scholarship, Church doctrine, the equivalent of an employee handbook to explain the hierarchy and 'human resources' of the Church policies and procedures, and a good bit of psychology to understand the human nature of people as a whole. (again, this is a layperson's assumption with no real understanding)

This advanced training should be highly respected, especially about biblical scholarship. The miraculous interleaving of biblical references is often only realized through such studies. Pope Benedict XVI displays such outstanding depth and breadth of knowledge and understanding in his writings (often far above the everyday, common grasp). Such scholarship adds to the breadth and depth of the Church.

The importance of this advanced scholarship and human understanding are most evident for use in spiritual guidance. The role of priests and nuns as the point of contact for the Church is what people reflexively think of most and expect at the local level.

Being an earthly institution as well as Divine, the Church requires human organization, rules, and policies. For this reason, the Church requires people focused on administration – Not everyone can be primarily a scholar or spiritual guide.

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To Live as the Body Of Christ

Mass Intentions



Adoration This Week:

Monday– Friday 8:00 am– 12:00 pm
Wednesday 6:30 pm–7:30 pm

Week of June 19, 2017:

7:30 am Mon: Thomas McDonald (RIP)
7:30 am Tues.: Barbara-Ann Barber (RIP)
6:00 pm Wed.: Sisters in Faith– sp. intent.
7:30 am Thurs.: Nolen Hughes (RIP)
7:30 am Fri.: Emily Henry (RIP)
5:30 pm Sat.: Bridget & Michael Hehir (RIP)
8:00 am Sun: Anne Benandi (RIP)
10:30 am Sun.: Jewel Swan (RIP)

**Sacrament of Reconciliation:
Sat 4:30-5:00pm or by appt.**

Prayer Intentions

Lois Dean
Bobby Massey, husband of Gwen Massey
Wayne Kent, brother of Shearon Simpson

Pray for the Repose of the Souls

Kevin Vincent Graef, son of Vince Graef

New Announcements

Sharing Christ– We are excited to announce that registration is open on our website for the third part of our ChristLife series. Our first class will begin on Thursday evening, September 7th. (See page 3 for session topics.) All dates and times can be found on our website. If you are interested in a daytime session, please call the church office.

* **Weekly offering for June 11, 2017: \$26,094**



Altar Flowers

*In memory of James McQuitty and Bill Mathews
~ Jim & Kathy Mathews*

Blessed Mother Flowers

*In memory of Kevin Vincent Graef
~ Vince & Connie Graef*

Reminders

***St. Dominic's Ministry** will provide lunch and spiritual encouragement for the families of patients in ICU on Tuesday, June 27th. Please have all items in the kitchen before 10 am on the 27th. Thank you for your support of this ministry!

***THE BIG DEAL** is taking a trip to Geysers Falls on June 24th. All upcoming 7th–12th graders are welcome!

Sign up is required in order to provide transportation. Forms are located in the vestibule. Contact Cory if you plan to attend.

Follow **THE BIG DEAL** on social media:

Facebook: The Big Deal; Instagram: st_paul_brandon; Twitter: @st_paul_brandon

* **The Knights of Columbus** will be cooking and distributing smoked Boston butts on **July 2nd after both masses** in celebration of July 4th. See a Knight after all masses .

***Food Pantry:** Please consider that some families require greater food assistance during the summer months when children are not getting meals at school. The Food Pantry welcomes all nonperishable food in unbreakable containers. During the summer months, donations of quick-preparation foods are especially welcome. Gift cards, checks, and cash are also welcome. We will deliver your donations to the South Rankin Food Resource Center in Richland or the Stewpot Food Pantry in Jackson on an alternating basis. We also accommodate occasional direct requests for food assistance by members of the local community.

***Nursery and Children's Liturgy** available at the 10:30am mass. **The Nursery** is located in the Early Learning Center (enter through the cafeteria before mass). **Children ages 2-5** will be called up during the mass for **Children's Liturgy**.

***If you would like to honor a loved one or celebrate a special event, altar flowers and Blessed Mother flowers can be reserved through our website.** You can find it under to *Registration Forms* tab. (Sign up will close at the beginning of each month)

***Fr. Tom Delaney's 60th Anniversary Mass and Reception** will take place at St. John Catholic Church, 221 East Georgetown Street, Crystal Springs, MS 39059. The Mass will be Saturday June 24, 2017 at 11 am. There will be a luncheon to follow.

***The International Cultural Exchange Program** is looking for Catholic host families for the upcoming school year. They are in need of 3-5 families. The students will attend Northwest Rankin High School and stay for the whole school year. Anyone interested in more information can contact Allison Treadaway Singleterry. Her email address is allison.singleterry@gmail.com and her phone number is 601-942-3584

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Church clericalism becomes an issue when the focus on Church doctrine and policy supersedes the salvation of souls or acknowledgement of the infinite value of the individual. An attitude of exclusive understanding of the Church grows to the point where some in the hierarchy believe regular practitioners 'could never understand the real workings of the church' (intentionally lower case).

While the importance of leaders is critical to the success of the Church, the self-importance of leaders is devastating.

Clericalism is probably as old as the Church and arguably one of the most dangerous enemies.

Jesus said that we must be like the little children to enter the kingdom of heaven. It is more than unlikely He was looking for self-important, power-seeking individuals, wanting to act as gate keepers for salvation rather than servants to aid each other.


It is a part of human nature for such selfish behavior to occur, but rarely as dangerous as when it occurs within the Church. With Salvation available to all, any activity which would lessen this understanding is contrary to Christ's message.

Clericalism is not a recent phenomenon nor is it limited to the Catholic Church. The Pharisees were more interested in their own status than the welfare of Jewish people. Aware of it or not, those in the early Church who attempted to proclaim affiliation as 'disciples of anyone but *Christ alone*' were early practitioners of clericalism. What can be done about such a widespread and persistent problem?

The cure for clericalism is simple, but difficult. It requires those who don't seek authority in the Church hierarchy to argue against those who self-aggrandize. More importantly, It calls upon the layperson (us) to take more responsibility as a disciple – learning more about what is right, Becoming more than a weekly onlooker to our faith.

G.K. Chesterton and C.S. Lewis were both famous champions of the importance of the laity to the well-being of the Church. Given their impact on the modern understanding of how Christianity (specifically Catholicism) impacts and works within the modern world, I would argue they proved themselves right.

- Jim Steil



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