

Pope Francis' Catechesis on the Heart of the Church

New Series of Teachings on the Eucharist

Rome, November 8, 2017. Zenit.org

Dear Brothers and Sisters, good morning!

Today we begin a new series of catecheses, which will point our look on the "heart" of the Church, namely, *the Eucharist*. It's essential for us Christians to understand well the value and meaning of the *Holy Mass*, to live ever more fully our relationship with God.

We can't forget the great number of Christians that, in the entire world, in two thousand years of history, endured unto death to defend the Eucharist; and how many again today risk their life to take part in Sunday Mass. In the year 304, during Diocletian's persecutions, a group of Christians of North Africa were surprised, while celebrating Mass in a home, and were arrested. In the interrogation, the Roman Pro-Consul asked them why they did it, knowing that it was absolutely prohibited. And they answered: "We can't live without Sunday," which meant: if we can't celebrate the Eucharist, we can't live, our Christian life would die.

In fact, Jesus said to His disciples: "unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, you have no life in you; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day" (*John* 6:53-54).

Those Christians of North Africa were killed because they were celebrating the Eucharist. They left the testimony that one can give up earthly life for the Eucharist, because it gives us eternal life, making us participants in Christ's victory over death. A testimony that challenges all of us and calls for an answer on what it means for each one of us to take part in the Sacrifice of the Mass and approach the Lord's Table. Are we seeking that source that "gushes living water" for eternal life? Which makes of our life a spiritual sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving and makes us one body with Christ? This is the most profound meaning of the Holy Eucharist, which means "thanksgiving": thanksgiving to God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, which involves us and transforms us in their communion of love.

In the forthcoming catecheses I want to answer some of the important questions on the Eucharist and the Mass, to rediscover, or to discover how the love of God shines through this mystery of the faith. Vatican Council II was strongly animated by the desire to lead Christians to understand the grandeur of the faith and the beauty of the encounter with Christ. Therefore, it was necessary first of all to carry out, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, an appropriate renewal of the Liturgy, because the Church lives continually of it and is renewed thanks to it.

A key subject that the Conciliar Fathers stressed is the liturgical formation of the faithful, indispensable for a true renewal. And this is, in fact, the purpose of this series of catecheses that we begin today: to grow in knowledge of the great gift that God has given us in the Eucharist.

The Eucharist is a wonderful event in which Jesus Christ, our life, makes Himself present. To take part in the Mass "is to live once again the redemptive Passion and Death of the Lord. It's a theophany: the Lord makes Himself present on the altar to be offered to the Father for the salvation of the world" (*Homily in the Holy Mass*, St. Martha's Residence, February 10, 2014). The Lord is present there with us. We go there so often, we look at things, we chat among ourselves while the priest is celebrating the Eucharist . . . and we don't celebrate close to Him. But it's the Lord! If the President of the Republic came here today or a very important person of the world, it's certain that we would all be close to him, that we would want to greet him. But think: when you go to Mass, the Lord is there! And you are distracted. It's the Lord!

We must give thought to this. "Father, it's because the Masses are boring" – "But, what are you saying, that the Lord is boring?" – No, no, not the Mass, the priests" – Ah, the priests must be converted, but it's the Lord who is there!" Understood? Don't forget it. "To take part in the Mass is to live once again the Passion and Death of the Lord."

Let's try now to ask ourselves some simple questions. For instance, why is the sign of the cross and the penitential act made at the beginning of the Mass? And here I would like to make another parenthesis. Have you seen the way children make the sign of the cross? You don't know what they are doing, if it's the sign of the cross or a design. They do this [he makes a confused gesture]. It's necessary to teach children to make the sign of the cross well. Thus the Mass begins, thus life begins, thus the day begins. This means that we are redeemed with the Lord's cross. Look at the children and teach them to make the sign of the cross well. And those Readings in the Mass, why are they there? Why are three Readings read on Sunday and two the other days? Why are they there, what does the Reading of the Mass mean? Why are they read and what do they offer? Or why at a certain point does the priest who presides over the celebration say: "Let us raise our hearts?" He doesn't say: "Let us raise our phones to take a photograph!" No, it's an awful thing! And I tell you that it makes me so sad when I celebrate here in the Square or in the Basilica and I see so many phones raised, not only of the faithful, but also of some priests and even of Bishops. But please! The Mass isn't a show: it's to go to encounter the Passion and Resurrection of the Lord. That's why the priest says: Let us raise our hearts" What does this mean? Remember – no telephones.

It's very important to turn to the fundamentals, to rediscover what is essential, through what one touches and sees in the celebration of the Sacraments. The question of the Apostle Saint Thomas (Cf. *John* 20:25), to be able to see and touch the wounds of the nails in Jesus' body is the desire to be able in some way to "touch" God to believe Him. What Saint Thomas asks the Lord is what we are all in need of: to see Him, and touch Him to be able to recognize Him. The Sacraments come to meet this human need. The Sacraments, and the Eucharistic Celebration particularly, are signs of God's love, the privileged ways for us to encounter Him.

Thus, through these catecheses, which we begin today, I would like to rediscover, together with you, the beauty that is hidden in the Eucharistic Celebration and that, once revealed, gives full meaning to each one's life. May Our Lady accompany us in this new stretch of the way. Thank you.

Please pray for The St. Gerard Parishioners that died this year. Judy Riley, Lena Mickens, Dick Smoot and Anita Vachon.

Remember to write the names of your deceased loved ones in 'The Book of The Names of The Dead' if they are not already written there. So we may pray for them. The book is in the rear of the church.

St. Gerard Catholic Church



640 Edrie St. NE, Aiken, SC 29801
803 649-3203

Fr. Emmanuel O. Andinam: Administrator
Joseph A. Dennis: Deacon

SUNDAY READINGS

First Reading:

Wisdom 6:12-16(154A)

Responsorial Psalm:

Psalms 63:2,3-4,5-6,7-8

Second Reading:

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Gospel:

Matthew 25:1-13

Today's Missal

Lectionary Readings for Week of November 12, 2017

Monday: Wisdom 1:1-7;

Luke 17:1-6

Tuesday: Wisdom 2:23-3:9;

Luke 17:7-10

Wednesday: Wisdom 6:1-11;

Luke 17;11-19

Thursday: Wisdom 7:22b-8:1;

Luke 17:20-25

Friday: Wisdom 13:1-9;

Luke 17:26-37;

Saturday: Wisdom 18:14-16;19:6-9;

Luke 18:1-8

The Thirty Second Sunday in Ordinary Time November 12, 2017

Mission Statement

Called to be a People for Others

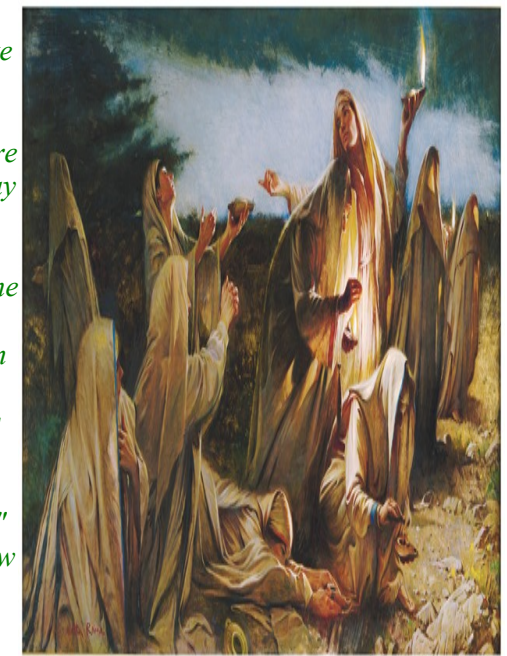
Vision Statement

Anchored by faith hope and love in Jesus Christ, we strive to be active disciples, serving each other and all God's people by welcoming and embracing the enriching diversity of our community of faith.



Then all those wedding attendants woke up and trimmed their lamps, and the foolish ones said to the sensible ones, "Give us some of your oil: our lamps are going out." But they replied, "There may not be enough for us and for you; you had better go to those who sell it and buy some for yourselves." They had gone off to buy it when the bridegroom arrived. Those who were ready went in with him to the wedding hall and the door was closed. The other attendants arrived later. "Lord, Lord," they said, "open the door for us." But he replied, "In truth I tell you, I do not know you." So stay awake, because you do not know either the day or the hour.

Matthew 25:7-13



Mass Times: Weekdays Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 8:15 AM,

First Friday Benediction after Mass

Weekend Saturday **Vigil 4:00 PM, Sunday 8:00 AM and 11:00 AM**

Confessions: after weekday Masses and by Appointment

Office Hours: 9:00 AM till 3:00 PM Tuesday - Thursday

Bible Study: Fridays 10:00 AM No Bible Study during Advent, **CCD:** No Class at this time

RCIA: Contact Deacon Joe 843 743-8779

Baptisms, Confirmations, Marriages and Funerals: By Appointment, Contact the office.

Contact Us: Phone 803 649-3203, **E-Mail** stgerardscatholi@atlanticbbn.net

Facebook @stgerardaiken, **Emergency number for Father 803 341-5933**



Pray for our sick:
 Marge Glauser
 Leonard Saunders
 Shirley Paige
 William and Jackie Cobbs
 Woody Alexander
 Rosa Johnson
 Brenda Ligons
 Joe Fulmer
 Jean Schodowski
 Janet Menefee



"Whoever exalts himself will be humbled; but whoever humbles himself will be exalted." - MATTHEW 23:12

Pastoral Council:
 David Didimamoff, Chairperson
 Janet Menefee, Vice Chair
 Payson Borst
 Jacqueline Brown
 Fredrick Cadek
 Joan Hesik
 Gregory Wright
 Patricia Hayes
 Matt Fitzpatrick

Finance Council:
 Clyde Hall, Chairman
 Anna Marie Key & Patricia Miles, Auditors
 Agnes Beckert, Secretary
 Art Wagner
 Michele Bullington

Weekend Offering
 November 5, 2017

Mass Intentions:
 4:00 PM Mass is for Anita Vachon from Nancy Griffis. 7:00 AM Mass is said for your own personal intentions. 11:00 AM Mass is for The Deceased members of The Legion of Mary

Collected \$4,182.00
 Needed \$2,612.00
Over \$1,570.00

The Gathering Hymn 208 BB
Come, Ye Thankful People, Come
The Offertory Hymn is 605 BB
I Want to Walk As a Child of the Light
The Communion Hymn is CHOIR 601 BB
Christ Be Our Light
Our Song of Praise is 591 BB
Let All Things Now Living

Attendance 146
Stewardship a way of life



Lector: Joan Hesik
E E Ministers: Mary Rose



Lector: Linda Cooper
E E Ministers: Ellen Heim

Saturday November 18	Sunday November 19	Sunday November 19
4:00 PM Vigil Mass	7:00 AM Mass	11:00 AM Mass
Lector: Joan Hesik	Denise Gelinas	Cathy Ciani
E E Ministers: Mary Rose	Roger Gelinas	Jeanette Coleman

Saturday November 25	Sunday November 26	Sunday November 26
4:00 PM Vigil Mass	7:00 AM Mass	11:00 AM Mass
Lector: Linda Cooper	Mary Kay L'Esperance	Janet Menefee
E E Ministers: Ellen Heim	Gerard L'Esperance	Mary Rose

The Advent Penance service is to be held on November 28 at 6:30 PM Please plan to attend.



Father has decided to change the time for the early Mass on Sunday. Starting next Sunday the 19th the first Mass will be at 8:00 AM Sunday. All other Mass times will stay the same. Safety concerns were the main reason for the change. This new time will be year round. Father hopes to see all the regulars and maybe some new faces.

Perpetual Novena in honor of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Tuesdays at the 8:15 Mass
 14 November is the date set for the Finance Council and Parish Council Meeting 6:00 PM Father has requested a joint meeting

The Legion of Mary is meeting at 1:30 on Fridays. Please consider joining. Call Paula Thurston at 803 226-1120

This weeks Second Collection is for the Church in Africa

Religious Education Holiday Schedule: Please note that religious education classes will not meet over Thanksgiving weekend (Sunday November 26) or during the Aiken County School District break (Sundays December 17, 24, and 31).

Father will be leaving on December 3rd after the 7:00 AM Mass, for his 40th anniversary in Nigeria. We will have a reception here after the 4:00 PM Mass on the 2nd. There will be no daily Masses while father is gone. With the exception of December 8th, The Feast of The Immaculate Conception. Father will return the week of the 18th of December. Father Ernie will fill in during fathers absents.

Volunteer Corner:

Veterans Day

There will be parades, speeches and ceremonies, flag waving, and retail sales to honor the day. What makes a young citizen sign up for the military?

What prompts this spurt of patriotism and the dedication to years of service? Many sent to serve on distant shores to settle some political score.

Every day a veteran is haunted by unrelenting memories recalling the horrors of war. Some have the fortitude to handle it, Others suffer from nightmarish dreams and never seem to recover. Some suffer severe disabilities-- Physically, mentally, and emotionally. Many languish in veterans' hospitals. Some lose their families and become homeless.

And, some have paid the ultimate price of a lost life, now just a picture in a wallet or a family album.

Some veterans suffer the loss of limbs or sight They learn to adapt and go on to lead fulfilling lives. Some are wheel chair bound, unable to stand on their own to salute our glorious flag, but they never refrain from offering a salute or a head bowed in tribute.

Those who have seen the horrors of war kneel only in petition to the Lord God. They stand to honor flag, anthem, country-- in tribute to every person who ever served in the military.

Remember a veteran today and then do it again tomorrow and again the day after that. May they never be forgotten!

Joan M. Lacombe
 Aiken's Poet Laureate
 Veterans Day, November 11, 2017
 (Two brothers and my husband served in World War II)
 Joan Lacombe
 harjo112@aol.com

Wish List
 This is an older campus. Things break and wear out. In order to keep you informed we are putting out a list of urgent needs.

Heat exchanger will be replaced as soon as part arrives from Carrier.

We are going to buy new 5ft. round tables for the church hall. These tables are lighter easier to move and store. They are also better for future uses that the council and father have planed. Anyone that would like to help offset the cost your help would be appreciated.

The state of finance at St. Gerard is to be presented to the parish at all 3 Masses in November. Date TBD

Your Spiritual Guide to the HOLY LAND & Holy Sites
 Our Vision is to assist Catholics/Christians have a truly spiritual and meaningful pilgrimage experience while touring the Holy Land and other major religious sites in Europe, call us at 1-844-400-9559

If you know of someone that needs The Blessed Sacrament brought to their home or hospital please call the office.

Natural Family Planning in November
 Natural Family Planning (NFP) encompasses moral, natural, healthy, modern and scientifically reliable methods of family planning that teach couples how to identify and understand their signs of fertility which can then be used to achieve or postpone a pregnancy in accordance with God's design and will. You are invited to attend the NFP sessions below:
 11.13.17 - Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, lower church (Charleston) - 6:30pm
 11.14.17 - Seasons Ob/Gyn (N. Charleston) - 6:30pm
 11.17.17 - Immaculate Conception (Goose Creek) - 6:30pm
 Don't see your parish or location? Visit <http://www.sccatholic.org/nfp> to find a full listing of NFP methods, instructors, and dates in the Diocese. Long-distance instruction is also available. Want more information or need to register? Visit <http://www.sccatholic.org/nfp> to locate the session and contact the associated instructor to register. Or contact Kelli Ball, Diocesan NFP Coordinator, at kball@catholic-doc.org or 803.807.0158.

Hospital Visits: If you or a loved one is in Aiken Regional Hospital (ARMC) please let St Gerards know. Remember - ARMC does not inform us of Catholic patients, even if you register as a Catholic; it is up to the patient or family to do so. You can: ask the ARMC Chaplain to call the Catholic church, ask your nurse to inform the Catholic church (name & room number), call-St.Gerard at 649-3203 and leave a message or email St Gerard at: stgerardscatholi@atlanticbnn.net. You should follow this advice for Nursing homes and rehabilitation facilities also.

In Harms' Way: Please remember in your prayers our Nation and loved ones of our parishioners currently serving in harms' way: James Ligons, Robert McHugh, Deja MS Pringle and Chris Solenberger. Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need. I ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen.