

Blessed Trinity Catholic Community + Spirit of Christ Mission

Twenty-first Sunday Summer Ordinary time ~B~ August 26, 2018

Joshua 24:1-2a, 15-17, 18b; Psalm 34:2-1,16-17,18-19,20-21; Ephesians 5:2a, 25-32; John 6:60-69  
Homily ~ Fr. Ed Hislop

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**I** concluded last Sunday's homily with these words from Bishop Thomas: "*With our now watery eyes and wrinkled skin we say in one voice, let justice come, but the truth be heard.*"

Words echoed by St. Paul today as he writes to the Church at Ephesus and to us: "*Christ loves the church...cleansing her by the bath of water and word that he might embrace a church in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.*" These words, as Paul describes them, are indeed a great mystery as we continue to hear again in ever more graphic detail too many heart wrenching accounts of evil and criminal acts in the church, perpetrated by those in whom trust had been placed.

It is true: The Lord has been forsaken for the service of other gods. We are still outraged, exhausted by it all and many feel a deep hurt which seems to be beyond healing.

But in the midst of all this horror and violation God still speaks today: The psalmist sings: "*The Lord confronts the evildoers...When the just cry out, the Lord hears them, and from all their distress he rescues them. The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and those who are crushed in spirit he saves...*" During these days that vision, promise and hope is "a hard saying," difficult to believe, hard to accept, but "to whom shall we go?"

Jesus, we are told, knew from the beginning that he would be betrayed, as he has been again and again. He warned that belief, faith

and belonging would not be easy and that some could not believe.

Yet Christ still longs for us to be in Holy Communion with him; He still longs for each of us and all of us together as the church, "to let truth be told and justice come."

Even in the face of lies and evil he longs for us to be at Table with him, to feel his loving care, to be nourished for truth, strengthened in compassion and sent to cherish all who have been forsaken, "because we are members of his body." Still he wonders: "Do you also want to leave?" But **we** are the Church summoned this very day to this Sacred Table and we will not let ourselves be sent away embittered by the sins and evil of others.

This is a hard saying and we and many others may wonder who can accept it, but we will not be absent, we will not serve other gods and we will not be silent until the church is cleansed by "*the bath of water and word,*" by strong and unending deeds of transformation and renewal, by real change of heart, ways and spirit so that the splendor of Christ's presence will be seen and felt "*without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.*"

To whom shall we go? Christ has the words of eternal life. We have come to believe. As for us and our household, we will serve the Lord. With our now watery eyes and wrinkled skin we say again in one voice, **let truth be told and justice come!**



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