

**A VISION OF HOPE, A PROMISE OF LIFE, A SPIRIT OF SERVICE**

Homily: Fr. Ed Hislop ~ Sister Mary Jo Quinn

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**I**f you choose, if you trust: Let your “yes” mean “yes.” VISION OF HOPE, A PROMISE OF LIFE, A SPIRIT OF SERVICE. The Word of God challenges us to remember how we live, what we value, who we trust, and how we choose.

We are here, in this place, in this House for the Church, gathered in faith around the Holy Table. We have entered following the Holy Cross, by which we proclaim the sacrifice of Christ, carried still by too many in our world. We are here because the cross we follow from the day our baptism, is A VISION OF HOPE, A PROMISE OF LIFE, and A SPIRIT OF SERVICE. We are here, *“the greatest and the least,”* because we have been summoned—summoned—to this “holy temple” by God, who embraces us with compassionate mercy. Here, not just by our own choice but by the choice of God, as the Church prays in the Great Prayer of Thanksgiving at the Sacred Altar: *“Listen graciously, Lord, to the prayers of this family, whom you have summoned before you: In your compassion, O merciful Father, gather to yourself all your children scattered throughout the world.”* Eucharistic Prayer III, Roman Missal

“Summoned,” we choose to be nourished from the Lord’s Table for HOPE, LIFE, AND SERVICE; in so doing we offer to all others the welcome we receive, *“opening wide the gates to let the love of Christ pour in, “fostering an encounter with God, and communion with our sisters and brothers.”*

We are “summoned to this sacred place, to honor the broken body of Christ, of which, and of whom, we are a part. A body broken in so many ways this very day: broken by killing; anger, unfaithfulness, hatred, and lies.

Summoned to this “house for the church” by God’s choice, to say, again and again, “yes” to compassion, mercy, faithfulness, hospitality,

wonder, beauty, and mystery. “Yes” to the wonder of God’s creation and God’s mandate to us to be its good stewards. “Yes,” to welcoming the stranger and loving every neighbor. “Yes,” to who we are and who we are summoned to be. “Yes,” to the cross, carried by so many, and “yes” to its promise. “Yes” to “A VISION OF HOPE, A PROMISE OF LIFE, AND A SPIRIT OF SERVICE.”

We are here because we value, faith, worship, and the “holy communion,” and long to be with those “scattered throughout the world.” We are here because we have made a choice to heed the loving summons of God, to trust in that “mysterious and hidden wisdom,” by which we “become one body, one spirit in Christ.”

*Eucharistic Prayer III*

Here, because in this house, the needs of sisters and brothers of every age, place, and kind are “set before us.” We are here to build on the faith and the vision handed on to us, *“and to move forward with vigorous hope and spirit, trusting that “we have yet to see what God has prepared...”*

We are here to say “yes!” “Yes,” again to the value of the “sacred space” in which we gather. “Yes” to the sacrifice we make and are making. “Yes” to the care, beauty, and wonder of the house in which this church gathers. “Yes” to the truth that God is revealed in faithful love, care, truth, wonder, beauty, and mystery. “Yes” to the age-old truth that *“Human Beings need beauty, our senses long for beauty.”* “Yes” to the place, space, and house that honors what is most personally ours and most nobly human. “Yes” to witnessing the great deeds God has done. “Yes” to the age-old covenant of love’s mystery. “Yes” to embrace *“what has not entered the human heart.”* “Yes” to the vision that *“the environment in which we gather must be a vehicle to meet the Lord, and to encounter one another; “yes” to the “full,*

*conscious and active participation*" in the worship we offer in the living vision of the true Tradition of our Church. "Yes" to the promise God sets before us; "Yes" to the immense wisdom of God and the deep mystery of Christ; "Yes" to what eye has not seen and ear has not heard. "Yes" to welcoming the many into an "*oasis of beauty with power to heal hearts and souls.*" "Yes" to opening doors to those whose hearts are broken and spirits crushed. "Yes" to bringing our gift to the altar, gifts which, as we will pray, can *cleanse and renew us and become the source of life and hope for others.*

*"The God of all grace has blessed us this day...all of creation joins us in praise...to the glory of God forever.*

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*Sister Mary Jo Quinn:*

In this grace-filled place, within these walls—and all the walls that have embraced us in our lives—today we ask ourselves how our place of worship can take our mission further.

How can we become together more compassionate, more loving, more generous?

How can we understand and live our call to service more intently?

How can the beauty of this place, and within it, this assembly, comfort the poor, the lonely, the fragile, the old and the young?

How can these walls become more precious to us in their own beauty, and in the beauty that God shows us?

My own baptism was in a newly-built church, a church built on a mountaintop. I was baptized in the sacristy, along with several other new-borns, because the font was not yet completed. By the time my youngest sister was born, 10 years later, the font was finished and she was baptized there.

As I grew up, the reforms of Vatican II had taken hold and the interior of the church was finished to support the "full, conscious and active"

participation of all the people. The existing art in the church continued, and the completing pieces were respectful of what was already present. The values that shaped that space continued through the many people that worshiped there long after my baptism.

Here, too, at Blessed Trinity (beginning as John XXIII and Holy Family parishes), the values of the Second Vatican Council, have continued to shape us. Our full participation in the liturgy in song that was instituted at dedication, has been reinforced by the addition of a beautiful pipe organ. We can look to the south wall and see the beginning of a chapel soon to gleam with the light of art glass, making visibly present our ministry to those who are sick, homebound, and dying. In the spring we will see a new baptismal font, replacing this one, the second immersion font built in our diocese, but needing repair and better attention to its beauty. Designs for a chapel for prayer to and with Mary, mother of God, along with altar, ambo and new seating for all are in process and will take shape through the coming months.

As we leave our assembly today, we will sing "Alleluia" for the last time before the Great Triduum of Easter. May our Alleluia bless these walls and all those who will gather within them, comforted and challenged by the mission that we will accomplish here, "a vision of hope, a promise of life, a spirit of service."

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*Fr. Ed:*

So here we are, feeling our mission, our hearts filled with compassionate hope. Our spirit moved to serve and care; our life renewed and our faith affirmed. Nourished with sacred story, both human and divine our hearts and minds have been stirred "*to work on God's house.*" We do not forget, we remember. Memory inspires sacrifice, ministry, and worship. Worship is turned to witness, our witness turned to love, our love turned to "yes" for a rainbow VISION OF HOPE, A PROMISE OF LIFE, A SPIRIT OF SERVICE. **WE HAVE CHOSEN!**

**Blessed Trinity Catholic Community**

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