

Homily by Fr. Gabor 17-B5

Please read first: John 6:1-15.

I am sure many of you like going out for a meal. I definitely like it, because it is a relaxing time and an opportunity to slow down and just sit and enjoy each other's company and share whatever you want, and through that sharing our friendships and acquaintances can get stronger, and we can be more at one with one another. Striving for that unity is I think the most important purpose of a meal together and not the actual food that we eat.

I am sure this is what God our heavenly parent wants for us, His church family, just like any human parent would want for his or her own family. St. Paul says in today's second reading that 'there is one Body, one Spirit.'

We celebrate that we are one in Christ when we celebrate the Eucharist, but at the same time we also recommit ourselves to that oneness when we receive Holy Communion, because a lot of things can happen between us and God and between each other that may have damaged our unity. So when you go to Mass, don't only go to be one with Jesus, but also go to be one with his Body, the Church, which is made up of people.

Oneness of the Body of Christ; oneness between us comes about when we show care mutually for one another, and not just walk in and out of church.

We can show that care through the diversity of the gifts that we have received, especially when we use them to support one another; just like the little boy who offered the two fish and the five loaves for everyone when there was a need for food. Jesus blesses what we offer and multiplies it, even if we only have a little. Even a few words of saying hello and a smile can make a big difference to someone in the Church. It was good to see how 8 pairs of hands could clean our big dusty church hall within just 2 hours this Saturday, and it is good to see all the help that is offered during the week and at the weekend, but at the same time I am sure there is much more talent and gifts lying hidden in those who only use the church, and don't take part in the building of the Church community, but simply walk in and out. Your gifts are also needed. So be an active part of the Church community beyond just being present to be nourished by the Eucharist. We all need to nourish each other as well with the gifts that God has given us so that the nourishment we receive is multiplied. If the Body and Blood of Christ is about his love and mercy than once we are nourished by his Body and blood we should also pass on Christ's love and mercy to others.

Nothing that is offered and left over is wasted and thrown out into the waste bin in the Catholic Church. All our offerings benefit someone who is not present. Remember in the Gospel reading the scraps left over were collected into twelve baskets. We do not put the left over Eucharist into baskets, but we have the Tabernacle in our churches, so that we can take the nourishment of Christ's love

and mercy to the sick, the dying and the housebound. The twelve baskets symbolise the twelve tribes of Israel, and also the new Israel, the Church.

This passage from the Gospel of John is truly about the mystery of our Mass; the true meal of God's family, the Church, where we re-present the love of Christ; that true love which he showed us on the cross; a love that unites us when we show the same love for God the Father and for one another in Christ and in the Holy Spirit.

There is much more to the mystery of Christ and soon a new series of talks will start at our Tuesday evening prayer Group at St. Columba's, where Bishop Barron will lead us into the mystery of Mass.