

Behold the Lamb; Inviting Hungry Hearts to the Banquet

A written, full-text version of these Homily Notes will soon be available on Deacon Jeff's new website: www.joyoftheword.org. The site is new, and content is added every day, so check back often!

- I. Jesuits in North America – One Priest's Adventure
 - A. Late 1690's, Jesuit Priest and interpreter
 - B. Lying flat on the ground, observing on hilltop
 - C. Suddenly surrounded by braves
 - D. 3 Force them down to village, to a large wooden hut
 - E. Take all their possessions, even clothes
 - F. Standing there naked, alone, afraid for his life
 - G. priest reports he prepares himself for martyrdom
 - H. Forced inside the Lodge
 - I. Recalls Christ called him, showed him mercy and Love, and he would bring that Love to others, even if it meant offering his life to plant the seed of faith.

- II. Inside the Lodge
 - A. Eyes adjust, large fire in the center
 - B. Elders explain
 - i. Custom to conduct peace councils naked
 1. No weapons
 2. No distinctions or ranks, all equal

ii. Heard there was a “Black Robes” in their territory

1. Bringing Good News of peace for all tribes

III. What gave the young priest courage?

A. Encountered the Love of Christ, moved to share Christ’s love with others.

It is a defining characteristic of true Love that the Loved cannot hold the love received, for that would be selfishness, but is moved to Love in return.

IV. Pattern in John’s Gospel – revealed in today’s reading

A. Christ calls, We respond, Bring others to Christ

i. Completes the flow of Love extended to us

B. John the Baptist recognizes Jesus as the Christ

i. Invites others, “Behold the Lamb of God”

ii. Two disciples, Andrew and (John) follow Jesus

C. Andrew finds his brother, Simon, and brings him to Jesus, “We have found the Messiah!”

D. Later, Andrew and Simon Peter bring Phillip

E. Phillip brings Nathaniel

F. What about (John)? He is inviting US with Gospel

G. Pattern repeats throughout John’s Gospel . . .

H. Called by God, We Respond, and We bring others to Christ

Beyond the Gospel - St. Katharine Drexel as well

- I. Writing to her sisters in the order who were teaching children, SKD said,
 - J. **“We must attract them by joy in order to lead them to its source, the Heart of Christ.”**

- V. Who have we evangelized? What are our obstacles?
 - A. What keeps us from sharing the Good News, or sharing it more often?
 - B. Is it Fear?
 - i. Fear of rejection?
 - ii. Fear of argument?
 - iii. Fear of offending someone?

- VI. St Augustine–Confessions–Great insight into humanity
 - A. **“O Lord, you have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You.”**
 - B. Recognize it or not, all people have a restlessness, a hunger, for God, and
 - C. Like Samuel in the first reading, people have need of an Eli, loving disciple, to help them find the answer to their restless, to fill their hunger.
 - D. We have the answer, the Bread of Life, Christ present in the Eucharist, that feeds the hunger!
 - E. When, like the young Jesuit Priest
 - F. We are Fearful and afraid of the unknown on the other side of the lodge door
 - G. When fear prevents us from evangelizing, inviting others to the mercy and Love of Christ . . .

H. Find our courage, find our strength, in knowing we are inviting others to the Love that fulfills them!

VII. Practical Ways to Get in the Game, Get the job done

A. Family – Faith an integral part of daily life

i. Faith is proportionally strong as its presence in daily life

B. Friends – Invite to parish social events

C. Social Media – Reach more in a day than St. Paul in a lifetime

D. Be a visible person of prayer

E. Get involved in our Frederick community, but do it in the name of the Lord!

F. Do the work of Social Justice, Poor, Prisoners, Sick, Immigrant, and Homeless

i. Invite others to the source of our service, Christ

VIII. Take a moment, and call attention to a community in particular need of evangelization

A. Our youth and young adults, aged 18 to 35.

i. I remember when 35 seemed “old,” but I’ve crossed midfield, the 50 yard line,

ii. I can now say “young”!!!

B. Among 18 to 35 year olds in America:

i. 50% raised Catholic no longer Catholic

ii. 78% leave the Church before age 23

iii. Ana Maria, Pastoral Associate, tells me the latest statistics are even worse

C. Consequences?

- i. We are just two or three generations away from an empty Church....

D. Opportunities?

- i. Reach this 50% raised Catholic, and we will double our size!

E. Why are they leaving?

- i. In short, felt religion of their childhood did not help them face realities of adulthood.

IX. We need to reach out, tell them they are not alone

A. A loved one died, and this is how my faith....

B. I was devastated by infidelity, and this is how....

C. My child told me they have a sexual orientation different than my own, and this is how my faith...

D. I was abandoned in divorce, and this is how...

E. I was addicted, and this is how my faith . . .

F. Get involved with the 18 to 35 year olds, find them, seek them out, and share your experience and faith.

G. Find courage in St. Augustine's observation –

H. Remember all have a hungry, restless heart . . .

I. And are waiting for their Eli, their “Blackrobes” to guide them on their way.

X. In today's Eucharist, when you hear the words of John the Baptist, “Behold, the Lamb of God...” recall that

A. Since John the Baptist, disciples in finding Christ respond to Love by inviting others to Christ

B. Like the young Jesuit priest, may grace found in today's Eucharist lead us to Love, and to the courage to invite others to the source of our Love, the Risen Christ.