

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany (Latin Mass)
February 6, 2022
Year of Saint Joseph

“The Splendor of Truth shines forth in the works of the Creator and, in a special way, in man, created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26).” (Excerpt From: Veritatis Splendor - The Splendor of Truth: Encyclical Letter of John Paul II)

Last month I introduced a resolution to all of you that during this year of 2022 we would use this first weekend of each month to examine our Catholic faith from a theological aspect, a teaching moment. I believe we can all appreciate the need to understand the reasons for our believing in the manner we profess. Therefore, let us focus upon the need to understand “Truth” as it applies to our Catholic faith which encompasses so very much of our daily lives.

As Catholics, we profess that mankind is called to seek the truth which both enlightens our minds and moves us towards freedom. We likewise profess that this truth has found its perfection in Our Lord Jesus Christ who is “the image of the invisible God” (Colossians 1:15). It is only in the truth that Jesus is truly who He claims to be: the Word of God; the Son of God; the second person of the Blessed Trinity; who freely chose to offer His life as a sacrifice upon the altar of the cross; who rose from the dead on the third day. Once we accept this core statement that Jesus is all these things, then we can proceed to seek His truth present in His creation.

For the Catholic, my previous paragraph may not seem necessary. Some will say: “Yes, Father, I accept all these things. However, you must understand that there are those things God asks of us which are either hard or seem rather out of place, given the times we now live in. Should not the church change to meet the needs of our society?” At this point, I am reminded of another who wanted to “fling open the doors of the church to allow the Holy Spirit to flow freely.” One important point to this we, who have grown up in the South, have come to realize is – without the protection of a secured screen door, you can never know what else could enter through an open door. An unwelcome intruder (insect or human) could potentially enter into your home and cause much harm. Therefore, Truth must be that protecting screen door holding at bay those who would enter into our most valued home, our soul.

Yet, how can we know this protection which we call truth? Due to original sin, our intellects have been darkened to its light and our wills have been weakened to obeying its call. Burdened by this fact, and coupled with the sheer amount of purposeful dishonesty and confusing propaganda we are all subjected to each day, one may be tempted to despair. How can we come to know truth when all seem to profess it and few seem to possess it? Allow me to offer a hopeful statement from Pope Saint John Paul II taken from his Encyclical Letter “The Splendor of Truth.” The Pope wrote this: “But no darkness of error or of sin can totally take away from man the light of God the Creator. In the depths of his heart there always remains a yearning for absolute truth and a thirst to attain full knowledge of it.” It is my duty as your pastor to provide you with those means which will satisfy this thirst. And, on the first Sundays in the following months, I promise you I will use every means, available to me, to quench that thirst for truth, your thirst for God.