



SUNDAY REFLECTION

Jesus' performance in the synagogue in Capernaum caused quite a stir. It sent waves of enthusiasm through the whole countryside. He had preached with an authority way beyond anything people experienced in their scribes and had matched His words with the authority of His actions in casting out the demon. Here was one mighty in word and deed. Healing Peter's mother-in-law further confirmed His authority, this time for His disciples and immediate circle of friends. Meanwhile, the waves of enthusiasm continued to spread outward, causing the crowds to assemble around His door at sunset.

In our day we are familiar with the spectacle of enthusiastic fans and followers crowding around their idols. Pop-groups, athletes, politicians and film stars attract such worshipping crowds. Tycoons, entrepreneurs and godfathers attract adoring followers. All these have one thing in common: their power to attract depends on their performance, their ability to entertain, to impress and possibly to promote their admirers. Their power depends absolutely on their success. When they fail, their fans move on to the next idol or attraction. Power based on human achievement and endowment can be very ephemeral.

Jesus was aware of this as He saw the crowds gather, and experienced their enthusiasm. He was soon to see them dwindle and depart when the challenge of the Kingdom presented itself. Jesus, however, kept the source of His power, mission and inspiration alive and fully charged by prayer and constant communication with His Father, the source of all power. He was not dependent on human enthusiasm to buoy Him up. Neither was He dependent on human resources. This was brought out well in the gospels of Matthew and Luke where the temptations in the wilderness show His refusal to see His mission as one answering only passing physical need, or a mission of political and economic importance or spectacular signs. All these would have established and secured the enthusiasm of the crowd. But His mission was a very different one, requiring a power beyond human resources. It was to end in apparent failure,

unjust condemnation, the scattering of His disciples and His execution as a criminal. The strength to endure came from the relationship of the Son to the Father, a relationship portrayed here in Jesus' experience of prayer.

STEWARDSHIP: Like St. Paul in the second reading, the god steward can say, "I do all that I do for the sake of the Gospel in the hope of sharing in its blessings."

READINGS SIXTH SUNDAY

14 FEB '21

Lv. 13:1-2, 44-46: The book of Leviticus shows us the practical implications of the Law of Moses. At a time when people had no defense against virulent diseases, rules are laid down which exclude those with skin diseases from wider society, for the protection of the whole people.

1 Cor. 10:31-11:1: Paul is talking to early Christians about how to behave when dining with pagans. Paul balances the freedom of the spirit, which no longer requires strict adherence to the Law of Moses, and the need to avoid shocking the conscience of others.

Mk. 1:40-45: Jesus heals a man with a virulent skin disease and puts Himself at risk of being rendered ritually unclean in the process. There is nothing any of us could ever do that Jesus would not be willing to heal, at whatever cost to Himself.

The Feasts of Candlemas and St. Blaise were missed while I was in quarantine. Before we enter into the Lenten Season I would like to provide you with the opportunity of the graces of the two blessings associated with these feasts. Next weekend, 13-14 Feb, at the Vigil Mass and the three Sunday Masses you are invited to bring any candles that you would like to have blessed along with the ones used at church and place them along the first step leading up to the altar. Baskets will not be provided this year so as to avoid any possibility or fear that the virus will be spread by contact.

In regards to the St. Blaise blessing of throats at the end of Mass before the dismissal, instead of you coming forward individually and having the candles placed on your throats during the blessing, I will pray the blessing prayer over the entire congregation. Once again as a means of dispelling any fears, concerns or beliefs that the virus might be spread.

ASH WEDNESDAY 17 FEBRUARY

Basic information: We will follow the schedule for Masses and distribution that has been used in previous years: **Wednesday 17 Feb. Mass 6:30 a.m. 8:30 a.m. 12 Noon 7:00 p.m.**

THE MASS SIGNIFICANCE MEANING

The purposes of the Mass

What else should we do, besides having a lot of faith, if we want to attend the Holy Mass well? We should identify ourselves with Christ. We should remember the Scriptures and have "the same mind that He had on the cross" (Phil. 2:5). The same mind which means the same purposes. What purposes did Jesus have on the cross? What was He concerned about? We can sum up His ends or purposes as four: to give glory to God the Father; to thank Him; to make up for the sins of men; and to ask Him for graces for ourselves. If each time we go to Mass, we try to live at least one of these four purposes, we will attend Holy Mass well.

First Adoration

God is our Creator. He is the Lord of the whole world. We depend on Him for everything. He is infinite, eternal, all-powerful. His infinite greatness and goodness ought to fill us with amazement and enthusiasm. When people get enthused about God, they want to praise Him, they want to adore Him. Jesus Christ, with His humanity, gave perfect glory to God the Father from the cross, and He continues to do so from the altar. If we unite ourselves with Him, we will be offering a perfect sacrifice of adoration and praise. Pay special attention to the Gloria and the Sanctus.

The second purpose: to give thanks

God is infinitely good. And all the good things we have, have come from Him: life, family, sanctifying grace, faith, the sacraments, the gift of His Mother ... And so many other natural and supernatural gifts. It is good to give thanks. The person who is too proud to say "Thank You" is not only ungrateful but is bound to end up being unhappy. Unite yourself to our Lord in the Mass, giving thanks, and you will see how you also become more optimistic as a result, because you will become more and more convinced of the goodness of God.

The third purpose: to make up for our sins

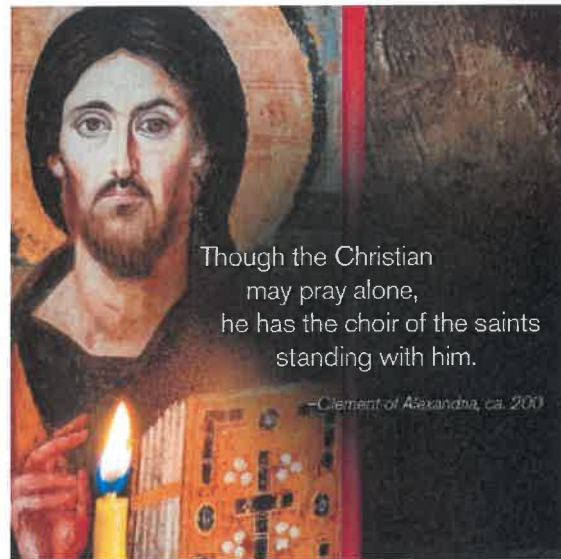
Jesus is perfect God and perfect Man. He is all-holy. Therefore He has not and could not have been guilty of any sin. But, as the Holy Scriptures says, He took our sins on Himself and made up for them. He did penance for us by dying on the cross. If we want to take part properly in the Holy Mass, we must be sorry for our sins. The person who is not sorry for his/her sins will never understand or love the Mass, nor will they ever really take part in it. But the person who comes to mass with real sorrow for their sins, will draw from it great strength to fight against temptation and to realize that, despite their weaknesses God loves them very much. The Penitential Act, the "I confess" or the "Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy" that we all say together at the start of the Mass does not pardon mortal sins. Forgiveness of mortal sins has to be obtained in the Sacraments of Reconciliation. It is also important to remember that a person who has committed a mortal sin cannot go to communion unless they go to confession beforehand. But the Penitential Act, if it is said well, certainly helps to obtain pardon for present venial sins as well as to stir up new sorrow for past sins that have already been forgiven. In this way it helps us to purify ourselves and so to take a better part in the Holy Mass.

The fourth purpose: petition

Our God is a merciful, and a very generous God. He longs to give. He wants to give us what is absolutely the best, what is the greatest gift imaginable: eternal life and all the help we need to make it ours. God wants to give. But He also wants to be asked: "Ask and you shall receive." That is why we ask with a prayer of petition. However, it is wise, when asking, to be able to back up our petition with some proof of special merit on our part. This is where we seem to run into a big difficulty. For when we look at ourselves, we see ourselves so full of defects and so lacking in merits that there seems to be no reason why God should ever heed our petitions. That is why we look to the merits of Christ, and to those of our Lady and the saints. That is why, if we are sensible, we unite our prayer to the prayer of Christ.

Christ's prayer is always effective because it is simply impossible that God the Father should not listen to the prayer of His beloved Son. Jesus prayed for us on the cross. He continues praying

for us on the altar. When we pray in the Holy Mass, therefore, and unite our prayers to that of Jesus, we can be sure that our requests will be heard by God the Father.



DAILY REFLECTIONS
FIFTH WEEK IN ORDINARY TIME
8 – 13 FEBRUARY 2021

“Scurrying” for Jesus

Monday 8 February St. Jerome Emiliani St. Josephine Bakhita

Gn. 1:1-19 Mk. 6:53-56

As they were leaving the boat, people immediately recognized him. They scurried about the surrounding country and began to bring in the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. (Mk. 6:54-55)

Jesus caused the people to “scurry.” That’s an interesting word to use and an interesting response from the people. What does “scurried” mean and what does it tell us about the people?

To “scurry” means one moves quickly and intentionally with short and hurried steps. It’s a very specific word identifying a very specific action. The people are not just moving toward Jesus in a quick way, they are scurrying.

When you think of this image of scurrying, it seems to reveal a certain intensity with which people were seeking out Jesus. The description of them hurrying to Him with these short and rapid steps reveals that they were intent on getting to Him while they seemed to have something else on their minds. What was on their minds? Healing. They knew that Jesus would be a source of true healing for those who were sick and so the people, with great intensity, brought them to Jesus wherever He was.

In a sense, this must be our approach to Jesus in regard to our life of faith. We must recognize Him as the source of all healing, especially spiritual, and we must keep our minds focused on

Him as the Divine Physician. Our longing and intensity with which we seek Him out must consume our full attention.

Reflect, today, upon this interesting image given to us in these Holy Scriptures. Try to put yourself into this scene of the Gospel, pondering whether you need to be more intentional and intense in your desire to be with Jesus. He is the source of all grace and mercy, and He is the Divine Physician who waits for you to come to Him with your every need. Scurry toward Him and let Him pour forth His grace.

Lord, increase my longing for You and my desire to be with You. Help me to know that You are the Divine Physician my soul desires. Help me to trust in You always, coming to You for the fulfillment of all my needs and longings. Jesus, I trust in You.

The Danger of Hypocrisy

Tuesday 9 February

Gn. 1:20-2:4 Mk. 7:1-13

“Well did Isaiah prophesy about you hypocrites, as it is written:

This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; In vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines human precepts.” (Mk. 7:6-8)

Once again, Jesus spoke the hard truth that the Pharisees needed to hear. He told them directly that they were hypocrites and that they were the ones of whom Isaiah spoke in the quoted passage. It most certainly was a tense scene.

Setting aside the drama of the encounter, let’s look more clearly at the actual quote from Isaiah. It says four things:

This people honors me with their lips.

Their hearts are far from me.

They worship in vain.

They present their own human laws as if they were God’s.

What would the ideal transformation of these hypocritical errors look like? If the Pharisees were to completely change, what may Jesus say of them? Perhaps He would say the following: Your worship of me is holy because you truly embrace my divine will in your life.

Therefore, the honor you give me with your lips flows from your pure heart of faith and love.

So what is the key message we should take from this for our own lives? We should take from it two simple facts. First, the will of God must take hold of our lives and become the basis and foundation of everything. His will, His law, His precepts are our rock foundation. God has established His truth as the basis of human life and we must strive to humbly embrace His law. His law includes all publicly revealed teachings of our faith, found in Scripture and in the Church, and it includes all that we hear God speaking to us in our own lives. The Pharisees, in their lack of humility, could not see these truths. Instead, they held onto their own ideas and convictions alone. God chastised them harshly for this out of love.

Secondly, we should realize that when we embrace the divine law, and His particular will for our lives, we will be pure of heart and will be freed to love Him with outward expressions. We will worship Him from our hearts and this will flow through our words and actions. But this will never happen if we do not start with His divine law.

Reflect, today, upon whether or not you are willing to humbly embrace all of the truths that God has revealed and whether you are willing to make them the foundation of your life. If you do this, all else will flow forth in love and worship.

Lord, help me to love Your holy and divine law. Help me to embrace it with my whole heart. I do believe in You and in all that You have spoken through the ages. I believe in what You speak to my heart regarding my own life. Give me the grace to embrace Your holy will and, in that embrace, to be transformed both interiorly and exteriorly. Jesus, I trust in You.

Why Do We Do What We Do?

Wednesday 10 February St. Scholastica

Gn. 2:4-9, 15-17 Lk. 10:38-42

“Nothing that enters one from outside can defile that person; but the things that come out from within are what defile.” (Mk. 7:15)

Conversely speaking, that which comes from within is what makes a person holy!

Often, we are more concerned about that which is on the outside than that which is on the inside. We often worry excessively about how we are perceived by others, how we look, or what our reputation is in the eyes of the world. This Gospel specifically addresses the charge of the Pharisees that eating certain foods defiles someone. Jesus isn't buying that. He is pointing our attention to our hearts. What is there in our hearts? And what is it that comes forth from the heart? This is what makes us who we are.

Though this deals with the worries that certain foods will defile, it also deals with much more. It addresses the tendency of purely external observances of God's law. Thus, it addresses the tendency of the Pharisees to be excessively worried about how they are perceived by others. Their external observance of the law reveals the fact that they seem to be overly concerned about what others think about them and what others say about them. They want to look holy. They want to look like they are beyond the smallest of indiscretions. But it's all an appearance and not reality.

For that reason, Jesus puts the attention on the internal. God sees what is in our hearts. Even if no one else sees this we should never forget the fact that God sees all. That's all that matters. That which is in our hearts can either do great damage to us or do great good. There are those who, in the public perception, are way off base. But from God's perspective they are right on target. Conversely, there are those in public opinion who are shining stars, but from God's perspective are way off base. There is only one thing that matters: What does God think?

Reflect, today, upon that which is inside your heart. This introspection should also challenge you to look at your motivations. Why do you do what you do and why do you make the decisions you make? Are they choices that come from an honest and sincere heart? Or are they choices that are based more on how you will be perceived? Hopefully your motives are pure. And hopefully those pure motives come from a heart that is deeply united to the heart of Christ.

Lord, please make my motives pure. Help me to live only out of a pure heart. Help me to always realize that holiness is found only in serving You and not in serving my public image. I love You my Lord. Jesus, I trust in You!

A Manifestation of Faith

Thursday 11 February Our Lady of Lourdes

Gn. 2:18-25 Mk. 7:24-30

Soon a woman whose daughter had an unclean spirit heard about him. She came and fell at his feet. The woman was a Greek, a Syro-phoenician by birth, and she begged him to drive the demon out of her daughter. He said to her, "Let the children be fed first. For it is not right to take the food of the children and throw it to the dogs." (Mk. 7:25-27)

Why did Jesus talk to this woman that way? She comes to Him, probably in fear and trembling, falls down at His feet, and begged Him to help her daughter. At first, one might expect Jesus to reach out in gentleness and compassion, ask her about her daughter, and say to her, "Oh, most certainly I will help your daughter. Bring me to her." But that's not what He says. He tells her, that "it is not right to take the food of the children and throw it to the dogs." Ouch! Really? Did He really say that? Why would He say such a thing?

First of all, we have to know that whatever Jesus says is an act of love. It's an act of the greatest kindness and mercy. We know this because this is who Jesus is. He is love and mercy itself. So how do we reconcile this apparent contradiction?

The key to understanding this interaction is to look at the final result. We must look at how this woman responded to Jesus and how the conversation ended. When we do this, we see that the woman responds with incredible humility and faith. What Jesus says is true. In a way, we can interpret what He says to mean that no one has a right to His grace and mercy. No one, including her and her daughter, "deserve" to have God act in their lives. Jesus knows this and, by saying what He says, gives this woman a wonderful opportunity to manifest her deep faith for all to see. His words allow her to shine forth as a beacon of faith, hope and trust. This is Jesus' goal and it worked. It worked because, when she came to Him, He was immediately aware of the fact that she did indeed have a deep faith. He knew that she would respond with humility and trust. The woman did and thus we are able to witness the manifestation of her faith and humility.

Reflect, today, upon the beautiful faith of this humble woman. Try to put yourself in her shoes and hear Jesus speak these same words to you. How would you respond? Would you respond with anger or agitation? Would your pride be wounded? Or would you respond with an even deeper humility, acknowledging the fact that all God gives is a gift which we have no right to receive. Responding this way is most likely the act of faith God is waiting for from each of us and is the key to that outpouring of His mercy we so need.

Lord, please humble me. Strip away my pride. Help me to fall at Your feet. Help me to trust You so deeply that You are compelled, by my love of You, to open Your storehouse of grace and pour it down upon me. Jesus, I trust in You.

The Authority of God

Friday 12 February

Gn. 3:1-8 Mk. 7:31-37

"*Ephphatha!*" (that is, "Be opened!") And immediately the man's ears were opened. (Mk. 7:34-35)

How often do you hear Jesus say this to you? "*Ephphatha!* Be opened!" Or how often do you hear Him speak to you with such authority?

Did Jesus say this only because this man was physically deaf and He wanted to physically cure him? Or is there a deeper significance? By healing this man unable to hear physical sounds, Jesus was revealing something to us about what He wants to do for us. Jesus is giving us a clear and deeper message in this healing. Certainly there are many messages we can take from this passage. Let's look at one.

The message is in Jesus' command: "Be opened!" These are powerful words commanding action. They are not optional words. They are clear and definitive. "Be opened" is not a question, not an invitation, it is a command. This is significant!

These two little words reveal the fact that Jesus has made up His mind to act. They reveal that He is not hesitant in the least in this choice. He has made up His mind and has spoken His will. And this action, on His part, is what makes a difference. These two little words reveal that God is not indecisive when He speaks. He is not shy or uncertain. He is absolute and clear.

This understanding should give us great comfort. Comfort in the sense that Jesus is ready and willing to exercise His all-powerful authority. He does have all-power and He is not afraid to exercise this authority when He wants to. Most importantly, He wants to exercise His authority when it will bring about the greatest good in our lives.

It should give us great comfort in the sense that we can trust that this all-powerful God all-powerful and in control. If He is even in control of the natural world (physical hearing), then He is most certainly in control of the spiritual world, too. He is able to do all things good.

When we find that we are in the presence of one who is not only all-powerful, but also all-loving and all-merciful, we should be able to breathe a huge sigh of relief and turn our absolute trust over to Him. He is able and fully willing to be in control.

Reflect, today, upon these two little words. Let this holy and divine authority of Jesus take control over your life. Let Him command you. His commands are perfect love and mercy. They are words that will direct you to your ultimate good. And this all-powerful God is worthy of all your trust.

Lord, I do trust You and I know that You can do all things. I know that You desire to have perfect authority in my life. Help me to turn my life fully over to You and to trust You enough to direct and to command every action of my life. Jesus, I fully trust in You!

Drawn to Jesus, Drawn to Mercy for Others

Saturday 13 February

Gn. 3:9-24 Mk. 8:1-10

"My heart is moved with pity for the crowd, because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat. If I send them away hungry to their homes, they will collapse on the way, and some of them have come a great distance." (Mk. 8:2-3)

This passage reveals some interesting points to reflect upon. Let's look briefly at three of them. First, it's important to note that the crowds were so drawn to Jesus that they were willing to spend three days with Him, listening to Him in a deserted place despite the fact that they were without food. They chose Jesus and His teaching over food and over the comfort of their own homes. This reveals the unwavering interest that the people had in Jesus and in His teaching. It reveals how drawn they were to Him. It's as if nothing else mattered. They simply wanted to be with Jesus.

Secondly, this passage reveals Jesus' deep concern for the people. His heart was moved with pity for them. He was grateful for their presence but He was more concerned for their physical well-being than they were.

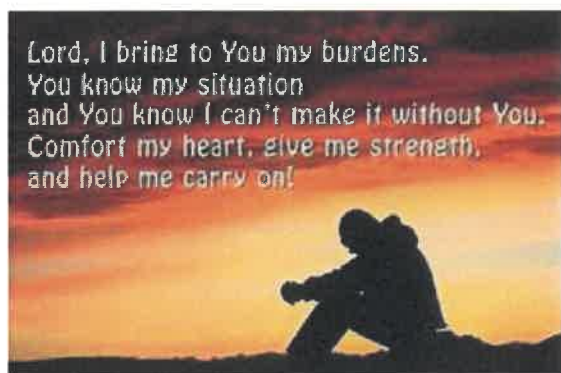
Third, it also reveals something quite subtle but profound. Jesus, in identifying the problem of people being without food for so long, invites the Apostles to see the problem. Note that He doesn't solve the problem right away. He doesn't immediately tell them what to do. Instead, He simply explains the problem. Why is that?

Perhaps one reason is that Jesus was trying to foster love and concern for the people in the hearts of the Apostles. Perhaps it was a moment in which He was testing them and training them to think about the needs of the people. By simply posing the question at first, the people were set before the Apostles so that they, too, could grow in heartfelt compassion for them. Jesus may have wanted their hearts to be "moved with pity for the crowd" just as His was.

Reflect, today, upon three things. First, are you drawn to Jesus with such intensity that He becomes the central focus of your life? Does a longing for Him flood your heart and consume your soul? Second, are you aware of the deep concern that Jesus has for you? Are you aware that His heart is "moved with pity" for you every day? Third, are you able to allow the love and compassion that Jesus offers to you, in turn be offered to others? Can you see the "dilemma" of the needs of others? And as you see these needs, do you seek to be there for them in their need? Commit yourself to these three teachings. If you do, you will also be worthy of being called one of His disciples.

Lord, help me to be drawn to You with intensity and longing. Help me to see You as the source of all that I long for and need in life. May I choose You above all else, trusting and knowing that You will satisfy my every desire. As I turn intensely to You, fill my heart with an abundance of mercy for all. Jesus, I trust in You.

PRAYERS



SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK OF SATURDAY 6 - SUNDAY 14 FEBRUARY

Saturday 6 Feb Memorial of St. Paul Miki & Companions

8:30 a.m. Mass (Preface of Martyrs & Eucharistic Prayer III

1:30 p.m.- 4:30 p.m. Confessions

5:00 p.m. Vigil Mass Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Proper Preface & Eucharistic Prayer III

Sunday 7 Feb Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time Proper Preface & Eucharistic Prayer III

7:00 a.m. Mass Preface & Eucharistic Prayer II

8:30 a.m. Mass Preface & Eucharistic Prayer III

11:30 a.m. Mass "

2:00 p.m. Mass Brig Mass

Monday 8 Feb Day Off

Tuesday 9 Feb

8:30 a.m. Mass Preface & Eucharistic Prayer II

11:00 a.m. Funeral Mass for Doris L. Veroneau

1:00 p.m. Liturgy Planning Meeting

3:00 p.m. Meeting Funeral Planning

Wednesday 10 Feb Memorial St. Scholastica

6:30 a.m. Mass Preface Holy Virgins & Religious Eucharistic Prayer III

8:30 a.m. Mass "

Thursday 11 Feb Memorial Our Lady of Lourdes

8:30 a.m. Mass The Blessed Virgin Mary, Health of the Sick Eucharistic Prayer III

2:00 p.m. Meeting BARC

3:30 p.m. Meeting

5:00 – 6:30 p.m. First Reconciliation Prayer Service

6:30 p.m. Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Health of the Sick Eucharistic Prayer III

Friday 12 Feb

8:30 a.m. Mass Preface & Eucharistic Prayer IV

11:00 a.m. Funeral

5:00 – 7:00 p.m. Adoration

Saturday 13 Feb

8:30 a.m. Mass Blessed Virgin Mary Image & Mother of the Church I

9:30 a.m. - Noon Baptisms

1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Confessions

5:00 p.m. Mass Vigil Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Preface Eucharistic Prayer III

Sunday 14 Feb Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

7:00 a.m. Mass Preface & Eucharistic Prayer II

8:30 a.m. Mass Preface & Eucharistic Prayer III

11:30 a.m. Mass Preface & Eucharistic Prayer III

2:00 p.m. Brig Mass

Up-Coming

17 Feb Ash Wednesday (beginning of Lent)



PRAYER *before* MASS

Almighty and ever-living God, I approach the sacrament of Your only-begotten Son Our Lord Jesus Christ, I come sick to the doctor of life, unclean to the fountain of mercy, blind to the radiance of eternal light, and poor and needy to the Lord of heaven and earth.

Lord, in your great generosity, heal my sickness, wash away my defilement, enlighten my blindness, enrich my poverty, and clothe my nakedness. May I receive the bread of angels, the King of kings and Lord of lords, with humble reverence, with the purity and faith, the repentance and love, and the determined purpose that will help to bring me to salvation. May I receive the sacrament of the Lord's Body and Blood, and its reality and power.

Kind God, may I receive the Body of Your only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, born from the womb of the Virgin Mary, and so be received into His mystical body and numbered among His members.

Loving Father, as on my earthly pilgrimage I now receive Your beloved Son under the veil of a sacrament, may I one day see him face to face in glory, who lives and reigns with You for ever. *Amen.*

- Saint Thomas Aquinas

VACCINE INFORMATION FROM CDC

IF I ALREADY HAD COVID-19 AND RECOVERED, DO I STILL NEED THE VACCINE SHOTS?

Yes. Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19 and the fact that reinfection with COVID-19 is possible, you should be vaccinated regardless of whether you already had COVID-19 infection. If you were treated for COVID-19 symptoms with monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma, you should wait 90 days before getting a COVID-19 vaccine. Talk to your doctor if you are unsure what treatments you received or if you have more questions about getting a COVID-19 vaccine.

DO I NEED TO WEAR A MASK AND AVOID CLOSE CONTACT WITH OTHERS IF I HAVE HAD BOTH VACCINE SHOTS?

Yes. Experts agree broadly on many issues people have questions about. They still don't know, for example, whether people who are vaccinated can get asymptomatic infections and pass them on to those who are not inoculated —therefore, it's important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to help stop this pandemic as we learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work in real-world conditions. Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others, stay at least 6 feet away from others, avoid crowds, avoid poorly ventilated spaces, and wash your hands often.

Scientists cite several reasons for staying masked and cautious as you start your post-vaccine life. Vaccines don't offer perfect protection; we don't yet know whether vaccinated people can spread the virus; and coronavirus is likely to continue its rapid spread until a large majority of the population is vaccinated or has survived a natural infection.

When people are fully vaccinated (a week or two after the second dose), their lives probably shouldn't change very much, experts say. It will most likely be safer for them to do things like visit the grocery store or the post office. People who work in places that leave them highly exposed will significantly decrease their risk — which is why frontline workers are among the first to be eligible for the vaccine. But vaccinated people should still wear masks and avoid large groups and indoor gatherings when possible.

Scientists also say it's unlikely that life will look exactly like 2019 again. In the new normal, there may be more mask-wearing during flu season or in crowded places because awareness has been raised. And there will probably be more systems in

place to prevent pandemics from being as deadly. These include methods for tracking emerging infections and screening before activities like flying.

CAN YOU STILL SPREAD CORONAVIRUS, EVEN AFTER YOU'VE BEEN VACCINATED?

Unfortunately, the answer is – yes. As good as the vaccines are, they are not 100%. If it's a 90% effective vaccine, that means there's a 10% chance that you could still get infected. So, for that reason, you need to consider, when you're in a high-risk situation – should you wear a mask, should you social distance? And, basically, the answer is yes, you should still continue to do that.

Even if the vaccine does work properly, it's possible that you could be protected against severe infection, but still have a very, very mild case that you don't even realize. But it is still possible to give to somebody else.

AFTER I GET THE COVID-19 VACCINES, IS IT SAFE TO VISIT IN PERSON WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY? Answer From Daniel C. DeSimone, M.D. (Mayo Clinic)

After getting a COVID-19 vaccine, it's still important to take safety precautions, such as avoiding close contact with others, to prevent the spread of the virus that causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Further research is needed to understand the immunity that a COVID-19 vaccine provides and how long protection lasts before experts will consider changing current safety recommendations.

After you get both doses of a COVID-19 vaccine, it takes about two weeks for your body to build up protection. But even then you could become infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. Keep in mind that the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is 95% effective in preventing the COVID-19 virus. The Moderna COVID-19 vaccine is 94.1% effective in preventing the COVID-19 virus. While your risk of getting the COVID-19 virus after being vaccinated is low, it is possible.

It's also not clear if the COVID-19 vaccines reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. As a result, it's not known if a person who is vaccinated could be a carrier of the COVID-19 virus and spread it to others, even if he or she doesn't become sick. More research is needed to determine if you are still contagious after being vaccinated.

Because of these factors, even once you're vaccinated you could still pose a health risk to unvaccinated family and friends by visiting with them in person. The risks of serious illness from COVID-19 are highest for people who are older. Nursing home residents are at high risk because they often have multiple underlying health problems, combined with advanced age.

Even after getting the COVID-19 vaccine, continue to follow safety precautions and consider avoiding in-person visits with friends and family until more is known about the immunity the vaccines provide. If you choose to have in-person visits, remember to keep distance between yourself and others (within about 6 feet, or 2 meters). Wear a mask. Visit outdoors, when possible, or open windows and doors to make sure the space is well-ventilated. And wash your hands often.

Your Guide to Masks

Updated February 2, 2021

CDC recommends that people wear masks in public settings, like on public and mass transportation, at events and gatherings, and anywhere they will be around other people.

Effective February 2, 2021, **masks are required** on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States and in U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and stations.

HOW TO SELECT: When selecting a mask, there are many choices.

DO choose masks that:

- Have two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric such as cotton.
- Completely cover your nose and mouth
- Fit snugly against the sides of your face and don't have gaps
- Non-medical
- Masks made with tightly woven fabric (i.e., fabrics that do not let light pass through when held up to a light source)
- Masks with inner filter pockets

DO NOT choose Masks that:

- Are made of fabric that makes it hard to breathe, for example, vinyl
- Are single layered
- Wearing a scarf/ski mask as a mask
- Have exhalation valves or vents which allow virus particles to escape
- Less effective fabrics for cloth masks are: loosely woven fabrics, such as knit fabrics

- Are intended for healthcare workers, including N95 respirators or surgical masks

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS: Gaiters, face shields, goggles & winter weather gear

- Wear a gaiter with two layers, or fold it to make two layers
- CDC does not recommend using face shields or goggles as a substitute for masks.
- Do NOT put a plastic face shield (or a mask) on newborns or infants.
- Face shields and goggles are primarily used to protect the eyes of the person wearing them.
- Goggles do not cover the nose and mouth. Face shields have large gaps below and alongside the face, where your respiratory droplets may escape and reach others around you.
- If you wear a face shield, you must also wear a cloth mask.
- DO NOT wear your scarf, ski mask or balaclava over your mask. They are not substitutes for masks.

MASKS FOR CHILDREN

- Find a mask that is made for children to help ensure proper fit
- Check to be sure the mask fits snugly over the nose and mouth and under the chin and that there are no gaps around the sides
- Do NOT put on children younger than 2 years old

HOW TO WEAR: Wear a mask **correctly** and **consistently** for the best protection.

- Be sure to wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before putting on a mask.
- Do **NOT** touch the mask when wearing it. If you have to often touch/adjust your mask, it doesn't fit you properly, and you may need to find a different mask or make adjustments.
- Do wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin.
- Fits snugly against the sides of your face.

HOW NOT TO WEAR A MASK:

- Around your neck
- On your forehead
- Under your nose
- Under your chin
- Only on your nose
- On your chin
- Dangling from one ear
- On your arm

HOW TO TAKE A MASK OFF:

- Carefully, untie the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops
- Handle only by the earloops or ties
- Fold the outside corners together
- Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth when removing and wash hands immediately after removing

HOW TO CLEAN A MASK:

Reusable masks should be washed regularly. Always remove masks correctly and wash your hands after handling or touching a used mask.

- Include your mask with your regular laundry
- Use regular laundry detergent and the warmest appropriate water setting for the cloth used to make the mask
- Use the highest heat setting and leave in the dryer until completely dry