

The 22nd Sunday of the Year
August 28, 2011

Recently I read an article by a pastor in the diocese of Rockville Center, i.e. Long Island. He is one of those who have worked on the preparation of the Roman Missal that we shall all be using on Sep 27, if not before. He emphasized that this version/edition of the Missal has the identical inspiration and goal that had its 1970 predecessor --the one we have been using for 41 years. Each is a response to the great Constitution on the Liturgy of the Sec. Vatican Council, promulgated in 1963. I took a quick look through The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. One word and notion that stuck out was "participation." Allow me to quote a fairly brief paragraph:

"The Church . . . earnestly desires that Christ's faithful, when present at the mystery of faith, should not be there as strangers or silent spectators. On the contrary, through a good understanding of the rites and prayers they should take part in the sacred action, conscious of what they are doing, with devotion and full collaboration. They should be instructed by God's word, and be nourished at the table of the Lord's Body. They should give thanks to God, offering the Immaculate Victim, not only through the hands of the priest, but also together with him, they should learn to offer themselves. Through Christ, the Mediator, they should be drawn day by day into more perfect union with God and each other, so that finally God may be all in all. (# 48)

For me this aspect of commonalty, communion, rings like a bell through the whole of the mass. Or, *can* do so. Our Scriptures today remind us that life is not always sweetness and light. We're experiencing the same lesson with this hurricane. Several deaths have been reported.

Our first reading gives us a cry of agony by Jeremiah the prophet. His strong predictions of disaster bring him nothing but outrage and violence. But then his call is "like fire burning in my heart." I think Martin Luther King Jr. must have sympathized with the woes of Jeremiah. We recall that he was gunned to death.

Violence is also a theme of the Gospel, as Jesus predicts to his disciples that he will suffer greatly at the hands of the Jewish leaders, be put to death and yet rise on the third day. Peter can't believe this; Jesus takes him to task for not judging by God's standards but by man's.

As we celebrate in the Eucharist Christ's self offering let us offer ourselves, through him. with him, in him.

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