

Homily given by Fr. Ted Hottinger, S. J. on June 9, 2013 during his
Mass of Thanksgiving for 50 years of priesthood
10th Sunday in Ordinary Time C

Introduction: description of my first Solemn High Mass at this very
back altar in Latin with a deacon, subdeacon, archpriest,
And Fr. Czarneski as homilist. What a contrast to this day's
celebration.

My vocation to the priesthood was formed within this square block
where I attended Mass with my family and was educated by the
School Sisters of Notre Dame. The example of the Jesuit Community
of Priests led me to choose the Jesuit way of life.

The Holy Spirit led me in my early life at SS Peter and Paul with four
special guidelines.

a) the motto of our Jesuit founder St. Ignatius of Loyola All for the
greater glory of God or in Latin Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam. The statue
of St. Ignatius holding the scroll with AMDG was and is a constant
reminder of this call of Jesus Christ..

b) Jesus words I have come to serve and not be served.

c) To Jesus through Mary. I especially recall the Living Rosary
when we would gather in the playground with a student
representing each bead of the Rosary.

d) and most important of all a love of the Eucharist.

It is especially through the Eucharist that I give glory to God and
serve God and God's people. The greatest privilege that God has
given me is His power to lift the prayers of a few or hundreds in the
celebration of the Mass -- through Christ, with Christ, in Christ all
glory and honor be to the almighty Father forever and ever. Then to
hear echoing back to my heart a resounding AMEN. Yes Lord we
remember, we celebrate, we believe.

Jesus Christ the Son of God is with us now in His Body and Blood.

We remember how Christ died for our sins that we might live in the
new life of Christ through our Baptism and Confirmation. We
celebrate this mystery as Jesus taught us. Paul tells us today that he
handed down to us what Christ handed down to him and then down
through the centuries to teachers and ministers of the faith.

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It is a great privilege to be a part of this heritage.

It always gave me great joy to baptize an infant or adult entering our Catholic faith and then to Confirm that same adult. It gives me greater joy to see many of you growing up in the faith here at SSPP.

The word of God today speaks of the compassion of the prophet Elijah and Jesus as they bring back to life the sons of grieving widows. Seeing the spiritual strength that comes when I share the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick with those in pain and the elderly helps me to handle my aches and pains with greater trust in God's love for me.

Compassion is at the heart of Christ's ministry. Especially in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. How powerful God works through me as I pray over a penitent: I absolve you from your sins. May God grant you peace.

I smile when someone comes up to me and says "You married me." No husband and wife marry each other not Fr. Ted. I stand as the primary witness for the Church to the marriage. The couple consummate the sacrament. I joyfully witness the blessed union.

The greatest gift of the faith community to me was my affirmation as a priest of God through the Sacrament of Holy Orders. My friend assisting me in this celebration Deacon Chris Walchuk shares in the power of this Sacrament as well as our Bishop John Quinn..

I have received the power to act in the person of Christ as I bring Christ's gift of the sacraments to you. It has been an awesome responsibility that I have tried to carry out to the best of my ability.

A couple of simple anecdotes to help you understand that growing with compassionate faith demands the support of all around me.

- a) A few years back I noticed that a parishioner was receiving Holy Communion as several weekday Masses. I quietly approached him and reminded him that the Church says only once a day. He quietly ask me to check the Catholic

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Catechism where it teaches as long as we participate fully in the Mass, we can receive Communion at each daily Mass we attend. Was I embarrassed but proud that this person had the courage to correct me.

- b) I spent 3 months at our Jesuit University in Seoul, Korea teaching conversational English. I lost my glasses and only had prescription sunglasses to assist my vision. Intelligent me I brought the card from my eye doctor containing the prescription. A Korean Jesuit took the card to the optometrist and he filled the prescription. The lens was fuzzy and not ground correctly. I was mumbling to myself about the poor quality of work that Koreans do. Not like us efficient Americans. My friend took me to another optometrist who checked the prescription on the sunglasses and gave me an eye test. We discovered that the original card was five years old. Was I embarrassed! I thought that I was not biased, not judgmental, not prejudiced but discovered otherwise. I have been much more careful in accepting people and much less judgmental since that lesson.

Last Friday we celebrated the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The statue you see at the center of the high altar has always been an inspiration for me. Yes the blood of Christ poured out on the cross, pours out on all of us bringing new life, new grace, new love, new values. To be able now through the grace of Christ to transform the wine into the Blood of Christ poured out today for our salvation is my greatest gift from God and from you the Church.

To be a priest of God is to be a servant bringing the love of Jesus Christ into the lives of God's people. It is only with the grace of God that I carry out this vocation – this call that enables me to grow over 50 years of priesthood in a deeper love of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and a deeper love of you the people of God.

With the psalmist today all I can pray is:

**Sing praise to the Lord, you his faithful ones,
And give thanks to his holy name.**

O Lord my God, forever will I give you thanks.

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