

“It’s time to get near to Him before the Blessed Sacrament, to spend time adoring Our Lord.”

FREEDOM FROM DESPAIR

by Fr. Rick Heilman

There is a stirring scene in the sixth chapter of John’s Gospel, a chapter referred to as the “Bread of Life Discourse.” Jesus had just told the crowd, “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life.” The response by nearly all was, “This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?” Jesus returns with, “The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing.” And then, in the 66th verse of chapter 6 of John’s Gospel, or rather John 6:66, almost everyone leaves: “From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.”

The crowd who abandoned Jesus had abandoned hope. They despaired. So, what did they do? They turned back to the emptiness of merely existing in the flesh. This emptiness, or desolation, is the place the devil wants us to be. It is Satan’s kingdom.

I believe it is no accident that the chapter and verse of this act of despair in John’s Gospel is 666. We are given free will. We can choose God or not. In the Book of Revelation, 666 is the number of the beast or the number of man. Once separated from God, Satan wants us to believe we are merely one animal (beast) among many; just part of the herd. So, like animals, we are left to scramble to fill this void with worldly wants and lusts; works of the flesh.

Make no mistake about it, the influencers of our culture (media, Hollywood, TV, universities, public schools, etc.) are, by and large, godless propagandists who are determined to instill in us the notion that we are “merely animals.” Therefore, women are objectified, men are just vulgar beasts, pre-born babies are a clump of cells, and the nuclear family – the bedrock of civilization – is outdated. As the Satanist Aleister Crowley said: “Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law.” Just be animals.

After the crowd abandoned Jesus in despair, He then said to the Twelve, “Do you also want to leave?” Simon Peter answered him, “Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that You are the Holy One of God.”

The Apostles were not buying the lie of the devil. No, we are not just animals; we are precious children of God, created in His image. Therefore, life in the Spirit is filled with the hope of a joyful and amazing journey of striving to please God in every way, especially by striving to become the best version of ourselves we can possibly be. And, just as Jesus demonstrated on the cross, we are called to a total selfless love of neighbor.

The crowd abandoned Him in despair, but the Apostles stayed with Him in hope. If we want the hope of all meaning and purpose in life as a child of God, we simply must get near to Him, because “the Spirit gives life.” We must combat the temptation of allowing our faith to devolve into merely “punching the clock” by fulfilling basic obligations. Many avoid an intimate relationship with the Lord because, like the crowd, they believe, “This is a hard teaching.” In other words, if we “let

God in” He will ask “too much” from us. It’s better to keep God at arm’s length – a manageable distance.

It's time to make it personal. It's time to get near to Him before the Blessed Sacrament, to spend time adoring Our Lord. This can be done by scheduling an hour at a local adoration chapel, or you can simply come early or stay after Mass. Be careful though, because you may just find yourself crying out, “My Lord and my God!” ... and then everything will change. Your life, filled with hope, will rise to new and exciting heights!

“Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint” (Isaiah 40:31).

Prayer of Reparation

My Lord and my God, we have allowed the temptation of the devil to move our hearts to despair in Your Presence and power. We have kept ourselves distanced from You, so that we may be safe from Your plan for our lives. We have been too fearful to trust in a personal relationship that may ask too much from us. In our doubt and despair, we have allowed the ancient foe to advance. We turn to You Lord, in our emptiness, and beg Your forgiveness for our despairing lack of trust. We beg for the grace to draw near to You, even as we watch, as did the Apostles, so many who abandon You. We know, Lord, if You will it, it will be done. Trusting in You, we offer our prayer to You who live and reign forever and ever. Amen.

Prayer of Exorcism

Lord God of heaven and earth, in Your power and goodness, You created all things. You set a path for us to walk on and a way to an eternal relationship. By the strength of Your arm and Word of Your mouth, cast from Your Holy Church every fearful deceit of the devil. Drive from us manifestations of the demonic that oppress us and beckon us to doubt and despair. Still the lying tongue of the devil and his forces so that we may act freely and faithfully to Your will. Send Your holy angels to cast out all influence that the demonic entities in charge of despair have planted in Your Church. Free us, our families, our parish, our diocese, and our country from all trickery and deceit perpetrated by the devil and his hellish legions. Trusting in Your goodness Lord, we know if You will it, it will be done, in unity with Your Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Litany of the Most Precious Blood of Jesus

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.
God, the Father of Heaven, *have mercy on us.*
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, *have mercy on us.*

God, the Holy Spirit, *have mercy on us.*
Holy Trinity, One God, *have mercy on us.*
Blood of Christ, only-begotten Son
of the Eternal Father, *save us.*
Blood of Christ, Incarnate Word of God, *save us.*
Blood of Christ, of the New and Eternal Testament, *etc.*
Blood of Christ, falling upon the earth in the Agony,
Blood of Christ, shed profusely in the Scourging,
Blood of Christ, flowing forth in the Crowning with Thorns,
Blood of Christ, poured out on the Cross,
Blood of Christ, price of our salvation,
Blood of Christ, without which there is no forgiveness,
Blood of Christ, Eucharistic drink and refreshment of souls,
Blood of Christ, stream of mercy,
Blood of Christ, victor over demons,
Blood of Christ, courage of martyrs,
Blood of Christ, strength of confessors,
Blood of Christ, bringing forth virgins,
Blood of Christ, help of those in peril,
Blood of Christ, relief of the burdened,
Blood of Christ, solace in sorrow,
Blood of Christ, hope of the penitent,
Blood of Christ, consolation of the dying,
Blood of Christ, peace and tenderness of hearts,
Blood of Christ, pledge of Eternal Life,
Blood of Christ, freeing souls from purgatory,
Blood of Christ, most worthy of all glory and honor,
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,
Spare us, O Lord.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,
Graciously hear us, O Lord.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,
Have mercy on us.
Thou hast redeemed us, O Lord, in Thy Blood.
And made us, for our God, a kingdom.

Let us pray:

Almighty and eternal God, Thou hast appointed Thine only-begotten Son the Redeemer of the world and willed to be appeased by his blood. Grant, we beg of Thee, that we may worthily adore this price of our salvation and through its power be safeguarded from the evils of the present life so that we may rejoice in its fruits forever in heaven. Through the same Christ our Lord.

Amen.