

“Build your bridge...”

A message of reflection considering the essential act of building a bridge in our daily life, so that not only do we stay in touch with ourselves and others who are like minded, but also, most importantly, Jesus. The Eucharist is that bridge. Build it, cross it. Daily.

15/8/21

I speak in the name of Jesus the Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, to the glory of God the Father.

Amen.

Let us pray:

“O God, who declares thy almighty power most chiefly in showing mercy and pity: Mercifully grant unto us such a measure of thy grace, that we, running the way of thy commandments, may obtain thy gracious promises, and be made partakers of thy heavenly treasure; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.”

Amen.

The Lord be with you.

An extract from today’s Gospel reading:

“Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”

(John 6: 54)

I came across this poem recently by Paul Boynton:

SOMETIMES

we need a bridge and sometimes we are the bridge. No one I know has escaped troubled waters, rough seas and challenging, scary days. There are times in our lives when we could use a little help, and other times when we are given the chance to be that help for someone else. It really doesn't matter where you are right now. What matters is that you remember we are stronger together, and taking a hand is just as important as offering one.

Paul Boynton / **Power of Wordz** 
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When I was a youngster, my parents, who were both avid readers, kept a large supply of books neatly arrayed on the room divider in the lounge. One of the hardback books, I will never forget, was titled, "A Bridge too Far" by Cornelius Ryan. I later learnt that this book recounted a failed attempt by the Allies during World War Two, to break through German lines by taking a series of bridges... whilst my message this morning is not a history lesson, it does focus on the importance of bridges in life, both from a military strategic point of view and merely ease of access.

Let us park the idea of a bridge for a moment and consider what the Gospel has shared with us this morning...

The Gospel of John tells us how Jesus reflects strongly on the power of participating in the Eucharist or Mass. Jesus is definitively clear about the importance of taking part in consumption of His flesh and blood, what you and I would call the Eucharist or Mass today. Jesus is abundantly clear about how, as Christians, and followers of Jesus, we need to be regular partakers of His Body, so that we can be reminded constantly of His gift of eternal life to us...

When I considered these words over the past week, a clear metaphor of a bridge came to my mind, as I realised how powerful partaking in the Eucharist can be for everyone... in a sense, we could call the Eucharist a bridge.

You might ask why?

Bear with me for a moment, as I share my thoughts with you:

Firstly, by partaking in the Eucharist we are building a bridge to ourselves, our very souls. We cannot be centred and holistic if we are not in touch with ourselves, our true feelings, our true values, our true emotions, our true suffering, our true hurts and our true being. Some people call it being "woke". Some people call it being in touch with ourselves. Some people call it being real. I merely call it being centred. When we participate and partake in the Eucharist, we are essentially reminding ourselves of our true nature, who we are when we stand before Jesus, with all our strengths AND with all our faults. We cannot ever pretend to be someone we are not when we stand before the altar and partake of His flesh and blood. We have to be ourselves, spiritually naked and vulnerable. This is the first bridge that we build and , perhaps

arguably, the most important, for if we are unable to be true to ourselves, then how can we possibly open our hearts to others and most importantly, Jesus?

Secondly, by participating in the Eucharist, we build a bridge to other Christians around us. We partake in the Eucharist together, as a Body of Christ. It is very seldom that we partake in the Eucharist alone. This normally happens when one is ill at home or in hospital and the Eucharist is brought to you. When we partake of the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ together, we build strong bridges to one another. We are all sharing a common experience of love and peace through Jesus and we are blessed by the Holy Spirit, as we celebrate the Eucharist. These very same bridges that we build to reach each other within the Body of Christ are very strong. I am not an engineer but I know that concrete is made up of cement and rebar or reinforced metal bars... our bridges to each other are made of the strongest concrete and rebar available... you know exactly what I am talking about. You have experienced the strength of these relationships yourselves. However, do not take your bridges to each other for granted. Maintain them. How? Simple. Share the Eucharist together regularly.

Thirdly, when we partake in the Eucharist we build a very real and strong bridge with Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer. He is, ultimately, The Bridge. He is the bridge of life, the bridge to the Father, the bridge to the Holy Spirit, the bridge to the light, the bridge to grace, the bridge to forgiveness, the bridge to growth and the bridge to salvation. No Jesus no bridge. No Eucharist no bridge. The bridge is our lifeline. The Eucharist is the bridge in our life. Treasure it. Guard it. Love it. Respect it. Give thanks for it. For it is our life, our very soul, our very being.

The Eucharist, which we will have the privilege of celebrating together in a few moments, is a beautiful and powerful cosmic event where we, as present Christians, are able to transcend time. By this we mean that as we partake in the Eucharist, we are in essence joining in the Heavenly Table with ALL Christians, past, present and future, for God is above and beyond time. When we partake in the Eucharist we become part of the saga incarnate of Jesus Christ and His blessed earthly mission to save us from ourselves. We become a real part of His birth, death and resurrection and all that this means for our lives. The Eucharist is, perhaps, the greatest event and drama that we could

ever partake in on a regular basis. We must always remember what it means and what it does. It is an absolute privilege and responsibility for us as Christians to take part in the Eucharist. It is our bridge to life. It is never a bridge too far, it is a bridge just far enough to ensure our salvation...

When you partake in the blessed Body of Christ in a few moments, think too of all the Christians who have partaken in this same event over the last two thousand years and think for a moment, of all the Christians who will continue to do so in the years to come...

I wish to conclude my message to you this morning by playing a beautiful song by Simon and Garfunkel, entitled, "Bridge Over Troubled Water." The song is about providing comfort to someone in need.

I wish you a peaceful and blessed Sunday, as you continue to build your bridges.

Much love

Fr Darron.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4G-YQA_bsOU

