



Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Peace

Cathedral of the Honolulu Diocese • Founded 1843 • National Historic Register

Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time

September 1, 2024

Beloved Disciples of Christ,

Greetings of peace, love, and joy!

“Worshiping the Lord with Sincerity!”

After reflecting for five Sundays on the Bread of Life Discourse of Jesus, we are back to the Gospel of Mark. I hope that the Discourses on the Bread of Life of Jesus bring us to a deeper appreciation of our Catholic Faith as it is celebrated in the Eucharist and Jesus’ presence in the Blessed Sacrament.

Eating the Body of Christ and drinking His blood in the Eucharist are acts of receiving the Lord in our lives. To indeed receive Him, we also need to reflect our disposition. Our disposition entails how we carry our faith, religion, commitment, and love for the Lord. Whenever we receive Christ, do we intend that Christ will clean our soul, or should we not make ourselves clean first to receive the Lord wholeheartedly? Purification of the soul makes us appreciate the wonder and power of the Eucharist. To realize how to purify our minds and hearts, we need to observe the precepts of the Lord.

The Gospel that we read and hear this Sunday tells us that the teachers of the law in Israel had twisted the commandments of God. They severely regard the law on external purification to be observed. But merely observing these external purification laws makes a person defiled, corrupt, and unworthy of eternal life. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees and Scribes about their sense of purification. The observance of purification that Jesus admonished His adversaries and their complete understanding of what gives honor and worship to God. Jesus clarified to them that what defiles is from within and not from the outside.

Jesus calls us to understand that what we have to do is purify our hearts. We need to amend our wrongdoings and live rightly and justly. We need to set our relationships right. We need to respond to His teachings. It helps us guide our ways to be true to whatever we do, say, and think. Abiding by it will truly honor God. Jesus teaches us to watch our inner dispositions, especially if we receive Him in our lives and the Eucharist. This is why He instituted the Sacrament of Confession so that our souls are washed clean through sorrow, confession, and remuneration of our sins. Through God’s grace, we can live righteously and give authentic and meaningful worship.

Your friend in Jesus,

Fr. Pascual