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## WELCOME TO THE CATHEDRAL COMMUNITY !

### OUR PARISH ONLINE NEWSLETTER

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Many people still have not yet returned to Mass during these strange days of the corona virus. Such concerns and cautions are understandable. We all pray for the day when we can all feel safe and comfortable in church, when we can experience the Eucharist as an action in which we participate and not just something to be observed on a screen. It is important that we gather, celebrate and consume what we hope to become. And becoming Jesus propels us to share the gift of abundant life that he came to bring.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem, translated as “the house of bread.” Jesus left this world telling us to be bread for others, wine poured out in loving service to all. We hear Jesus say that whoever eats his flesh and drinks his blood remains in him and he in us.



To remain in Jesus is to accept his challenge: not just to receive him, but also to see the world through his eyes, to engage the world with his passion, and to feed the world with his generosity. This is what it means to be a member of the Body of Christ. Thus, how can we receive Christ in the Eucharist and not give Christ in the household of God to the world?

Moses reminded the people that the manna was not just food for their stomachs but also food for their journey through the desert. The manna was a reminder of God’s covenant to his people to care for them and to be with them always. Jesus becomes manna for God’s people, fulfilling the law and the prophets. It is this bread that will feed the whole world, and not just Israel. This is why Jesus warns the people that they should not go after the bread that perishes and spoils like the manna in the Exodus. Rather, they should seek what he now gives them as food that will endure to eternal life. God grant us soon the gift of presence, all gathered together once more at the Table of the Lord.

Christ’s Peace...  
Father Kevin

#### CATHOLIC CONSCIENCE AND CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY: Sources for Forming Christian Conscience

Father Bob Kennedy

Forming a Christian conscience is hard work and a lifelong project. We will never come to the point where we can say we have a fully formed conscience. New situations and developments challenge us to apply the moral values and virtues of our faith in ways we didn’t expect (for example, end-of-life issues or care for our planet).

What are the resources that feed the formation and maturing of Christian conscience?

First and always, there are the Scriptures. Here we find the great story of God’s saving will and activity throughout salvation history, the values and lifestyle preached by Jesus and the writers of the New Testament, and particular “theologies” to guide us (for example, a theology of creation, of discipleship, of reconciliation and justice). Specific passages may also be helpful guides, but rarely are they the full and final answers.

A second essential source is the Tradition of the Church. This includes the official teachings of the Church, the theological and spiritual writings of so many over the centuries and in our own time, the values imbedded in the sacraments of the Church, and the inspiring witness of the saints. This is an enormously rich and complex resource, and no one person can draw on the whole of it. But at the very least we must ask: what does the Church value and teach about the particular issue at hand? (For guidance during this election season, see the US Bishops’ statement, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship* at [usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship](https://usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship)).

Third, our consciences are always addressed by the many voices speaking (shouting?) in our world. Here we have to get beneath – as best we can – the headlines, opinion surveys, social media theories, and endless commentary on any and every issue. This too is very hard work, but it doesn’t require a degree to seek out the best of human wisdom for promoting the common good. What are the human sciences saying, what is the experience of the praying, believing Church, what would people of good will think is the best wisdom? Remember the touchstones I wrote of last week: is this human wisdom something God would find wise, and does it honor my neighbor as myself?

We have to access and apply these resources as we are making conscience decisions (for example, how to vote). To do so we engage Scripture, Tradition and human wisdom prayerfully, honestly, with openness to all pertinent information, and prudently. Yes, it’s hard work, but in the end, it is only what is asked of us as Christians in the world.

Next week: Themes That Shape Catholic Moral Discernment

#### REFLECTION FOR SUNDAY

Father Bob Kennedy

For many reasons Psalm 23 (“The Lord Is My Shepherd”) is the favorite of all 150 psalms. Praying it brings comfort in times of sorrow, peace in times of turmoil, confidence in times of uncertainty. However, it is used this Sunday to highlight the generosity of God since the first reading (Isaiah 26:6-10b) speaks of God’s providing “a feast of rich food and choice wine” for his weary people; it also anticipates the gospel parable of the wedding feast to which all are invited. Psalm 23 praises God who “spreads the table before me in the sight of all my foes.”

Many of us are still “fasting” from the rich banquet of the Eucharist as we ride out this pandemic, but the generosity of God continues to feed and shepherd us in many other ways. So we fear no evil!