

## A SPECIAL HOMILY FOR THE COMMUNITY OF ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO LAETARE SUNDAY ✕ MARCH 25<sup>TH</sup> & 26<sup>TH</sup>, 2017

As I read and listened to the unfolding drama in today's Gospel and thought about this homily with you, the community of St. Charles that I have grown to love so deeply, I sensed that what I wanted and needed to share with you was what I want each of you to "see." After all, I think this story is actually all about what Jesus wants all of us to see.

First and most wondrous of all I want, even ache, for you to increasingly discover God's Presence...not as an idea to ponder or a thought to explore but as this powerful Presence Who in profound love for you is doing to you what He did in that mysterious, long ago moment of Genesis. In this very instant He quite simply wants you to "be!"

And I want you to really see yourselves as you truly are; the supreme wonder of God's creation treating yourselves with the dignity that such a creation truly deserves. I want you to see yourselves as He sees you...created in His own mysterious creative image!

And I want you to see the splendor of all creation in every minute detail and its mind stunning and heart stirring immensity...from an ever so tiny, little gnat to the wonder and expanse of a galaxy. And as you do, I want you to be humbled even as you are filled with both joy and gratitude.

I want you to see Jesus as he speaks of himself as "the way, the truth and the life. I want you to see him as the true way-of-things; that makes us and what we do true; that is life-giving, life-fulfilling for you and for everything and everyone you touch.

I want you to see the things that Jesus does and be stirred by a desire to see what it is he believes so deeply that it causes him to do these things. And then I want you to long to see the experiences in his own life that gave rise to those beliefs that are made so tangible in his words and deeds. As you finally see those experiences that are the root of all that he said and did, then please see the same experiences waiting for you to discover in your own life to become the root of your own believing and the power that drives the deeds you do and the words that you speak.

I want you to see this gathering called St. Charles Church as a community committed to seeing and committed to enabling each other to see deeply. And as you see, be committed to always sharing the wonder, beauty, insight and strength of what you as individuals and as a community see.

I want you to see each and every Liturgy as the most important work you do that enables **all** your work "out there" to be meaningful, powerful and good...even holy. I want you to see these holy words of Scripture in the full truth of what they want and

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need. They seek to take shape in your mind and then in your heart and lastly, fulfilled in the living of your life.

And at this table, I want you to see Jesus giving you a piece of bread to begin the opening of yourself so that you can then open yourself enough to receive him, and then to fully open yourselves to receive everything God wishes to give you. I want each of you to be nothing less than passionate about this work we call the Liturgy!

I want you to really see the one who suffers, whether that's a person whose life is oppressed in some fashion or it's some aspect of Creation suffering from our abuse or neglect. As you see such suffering, please be moved by compassion and a desire to understand the implications of this suffering and then realize you have the power to reach out and do something to that is just. Bring such suffering to an end!

I want you to see sin...really see it for what it is. In other words, see our waywardness and see how destructive it is; how disappointing it is; how unfulfilling it is not only for each of us who go wayward but also for those we're in relationship with...which is everything!

I want you to see how deeply the world is in need; to see what a gift you are to this world and to history; to see that you are to bear this gift into the world so that it can be restored to what God continues, even to this very day, this very moment, to desire with His entire Being!

I want you to see the place in any given human being's heart and in the world around you where the life-changing gift of forgiveness can be applied by you.

I want you to see yourselves, as individuals and as a sacred community, capable of a kind of love that could only be called divine...a love that you apply liberally to every aspect of our world thereby healing and creating after the pattern of God Himself.

I want you to see, as Jesus wisely pointed out, that the Kingdom of God is not somewhere else or in some other time but "here," in "this" & in every, absolutely every, "here" & "this".

Jesus said in perhaps the most beautiful and promising beatitude of them all: "Blessed are the pure of heart for they shall see God!" So I want each of you to experience true purity of heart so you can see God and experience how that changes absolutely everything. I want each of you to be committed to, dedicated to achieving a pure heart. This is the deepest and truest spirituality.

Lastly, I want you to simply and always and everywhere see clear and true!

- fr. Ray Chase