

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time – Jan. 13/14, 2018 – Reflection

“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been purchased at a price. Therefore glorify God in your body.”

At the end of the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday each year, the priest and the people of God walk in solemn procession with the Holy Eucharist, the Body of Christ leading us to the Altar of Reposition where, all through the night, adoring eyes will watch and pray. During the procession, voices are raised in an ancient melody, “Pange lingua gloriosi corporis mysterium.” Sing my tongue the glorious mystery of this precious Body. Our tongues, these parts of our physical bodies are meant to sing the praises of God, like a choir in a great cathedral.

At the birth of the Church, when the Holy Spirit filled the bodies and souls of those quivering, quaking disciples with life-breath and fiery zeal, apostles' tongues were loosed so that they might go forth into the world and proclaim to all the peoples of the earth in all the languages spoken by man the glories of the Lord.

At our Baptism, our new birth in Christ, our tongues are touched with the salt of the earth as the priest prays with the words Jesus prayed over the mute: “Ephatha ... Be Opened!”

St. Paul reminds us that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, sacred vessels of the holy. If the whole is sacred and consecrated to God's service, so it would stand to reason that each part of the whole is sacred as well and to be used "Ad maiorem Dei gloriam ... To the Greater Glory of God!"

Many of us have allowed our tongues to form crass and lewd words that have become an all-too-regular part of our daily vocabulary. Many of us have allowed our tongues to tell stories, true or otherwise, that tear down reputations and spread rumor and gossip. Many of us have allowed our tongues to become preachers of hate and bigotry, sarcasm and belittling.

These are the same tongues that receive the Body of Christ in Holy Communion. These are the same lips that promise to love and cherish, in good times and bad, in sickness and health till death do us part. This is the same mouth that bestows a kiss on the forehead of the sleeping child or in grateful and heartbroken farewell to a dying parent or Grandma. These are the tongues that speak of dreams ... "I have a dream" ... that never seem to come true because the flesh is so so weak.

Swearing, trash talk, potty mouth, hate speech ... it's all become accepted and few worry that it has any consequence. But you were made by God, given life and breath by God, fearfully, wonderfully created to echo the praises of the Lord in the sacred temple of your body. You have been called, anointed to be better than that.

Use your lips, your tongue, your voice, these gifts of God, to join in the symphony of creation: "The heavens are telling the glory of God, and all

Creation is shouting for joy ... sing, sing to the glory of the Lord!" ... and stop being a noisy gong or a cymbal clanging