**Liturgy Matters Lesson #16**

**The Homily, the Apostolic Teaching of Jesus**

**By Bishop Chad Zielinski**

This is Bishop Chad Zielinski serving the Diocese of New Ulm. We are in the Tenth Week of Ordinary Time in our liturgical calendar. This coming Friday (June 16, 2023), the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and Saturday (June 17, 2023), the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, several Handmaids of the Heart of Jesus, a religious order located in New Ulm, will be making simple and solemn professions. Please join me in prayer as they prepare for this great day, thanking God for the blessing of the Handmaids in our diocese.

Thank you for joining me in asking the Holy Spirit to guide us as we continue our lessons on "What Happens at Mass."

The homily follows the Gospel, and like the Gospel, the homily is reserved for the ordained. This is not to say that lay people might not be just as insightful about the meaning of the scriptures. What must be understood is that this is not the time for personal insight or for the spinning out of individual theories and stories. This preaching by the ordained is meant to be a guarantee in the assembly that what is heard is the Church's apostolic faith and not merely the private thoughts and experiences of an individual. Once again, we reflect on the direction of the liturgy when we consider the homily. It is the preacher's responsibility to listen with special care to all that is said in the now of today's liturgy by means of the particular texts that have been proclaimed. Based on this careful listening, he will propose to the assembly ways of ensuring that God's word finds its home in our hearts and that we respond to it as we ought. Therefore, if, in one sense, the word is coming into him, in another sense, it is coming out of him. Jesus expressed this pattern precisely when he said, "My teaching is not my own but is from the one who sent me" *(John 7:16).*

After another brief moment of silence when the homily is concluded, we, as the Church, recite the Profession of Faith. The Creed is a summary of the Church's way of reading scriptures and, consequently, a summary of the Church's faith. It is not something in addition to scripture; it is the scripture reduced to a single page. All of our understanding and beliefs concerning the scriptures summed up in the words we speak. The Creed has its origins in the liturgy of Baptism, where, before adults were baptized in the name of the Trinity, they had first to profess faith in the Holy Trinity. Belief in the Holy Trinity is not a belief in an idea about God. It is belief in the persons of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that is, belief in the divine life revealed to us in the death and Resurrection of Jesus, as this is preached and known in the Church that comes from the apostles.

Thank you for joining me as we draw deeper into the Word of God proclaimed at Mass. May the Holy Spirit fill you with a renewed peace, and through the intercession of Mary, Mother of the Church, may we continue to grow closer to her Son through our understanding and participation in the Holy Mass.

I look forward to sharing Lesson #17 with you next week. Let us keep one another in prayer. May God bless you and your families.