

## Lesson 3 – Breathing With Both Lungs and Taking the Plunge February 26, 2018

### Additional Notes/Clarifications

I felt that, perhaps, more questions were engendered by our lesson on liturgical diversity and baptism than I answered for you on Monday, February 26. I would like to make some clarifications as well as share answers to good questions that were posed to me directly after class by some of you.

#### LITURGICAL DIVERSITY

First of all, on the handout, p. 2 (about the middle of the page), there was reference to Constantinople becoming the “fifth” great seat of the faith. I spoke of the “four” great seats of the faith as Rome, Antioch, Alexandria and Constantinople. My apologies for any confusion I caused you. When I said “fifth” I was crediting Jerusalem as the first seat or birthplace of our faith (1). Those which remain today are (2) Rome, which replaced Jerusalem as the primary seat of faith, (3) Antioch, (4) Alexandria and finally (5) Constantinople.

When I listed the Churches, I did so using the four “remaining” seats of faith: Rome, Antioch, Alexandria and Constantinople. To be clear, the city of Constantinople is the city of Byzantium renamed by Roman Emperor Constantine. All the church families listed under the seat of Constantinople may be known as the Byzantine churches. For example, the Greek church mentioned under this column is the Greek Byzantine Church. I used the following website for the complete breakdown of the church families:

[https://www.ewtn.com/expert/answers/catholic\\_rites\\_and\\_churches.htm](https://www.ewtn.com/expert/answers/catholic_rites_and_churches.htm)

You may want to read the complete article for more clarification. Too often we, myself included, think in terms of we/they. These terms are used by man and are OF man. They are not God’s way or of God. God wants us to think in terms of and work for a WE.

With regard to the question about all the other 22 church families and how they are known, it was suggested to me that perhaps we should have looked at them as church with a small c and Church with a big C. The one Roman Catholic Church is a collection of the faithful of that reside in church families as listed on the chart. All are members of the One Roman Catholic Church. Maybe the analogy of a parish is apt. Our parishes are one large family which consist of several smaller families or “domestic churches.” (See CCC 1656.)

A question also arose as to the status of those American Episcopalians who came into union with Rome in 2012 – are they a 24<sup>th</sup> church family? The answer to that is no. They were named as an Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of Saint Peter by Pope Benedict XVI. As such, they are members of the Roman Catholic Church family.

NOTE: Monsignor Jeffrey Steenson who was named the first ordinary of that group is now at the Saint Paul Seminary here in Saint Paul. Although he was not ordained a bishop because he was married, he was a voting member of the United States Conference of

Catholic Bishops. He was succeeded by Bishop Steven Lopes in 2015. The Ordinariate IS headquartered in Houston, Texas. (If you want to read more about the Ordinariate see <https://ordinariate.net/>).

## BAPTISM

As for baptism, there were a couple of questions or comments made after class. First of all, you answered correctly that anyone is able to baptize. Although the ordinary minister of baptism is a bishop, priest or deacon, Christ can work through anyone who has the right intention to baptize someone into the faith of Christ Jesus.

That does not mean that we are to appropriate for ourselves the role of minister of baptism. The decision to be baptized is a decision made either by the person him/herself if they have reached an age of reason or by the parents of a child who has not yet reached the age of reason. (The age of reason determined by the United States Bishops is currently determined to be 7.) It was suggested by Brenda, your Class Coordinator, that for those who may wish baptism for their grandchild when their parents do not have the child baptized, we may have a situation where baptism of desire could play a role.

When I quoted you paragraph 1257: “God has bound salvation to the sacrament of Baptism, but he himself is not bound by his sacraments.” I was using this, perhaps too obliquely, to say that there are situations in which a person dies without baptism (perhaps in the death of an infant, especially one in utero). In those situations, God himself takes care of that child. Although we are told that one must be born again or baptized (Jn 3:5), God himself is not *bound* by the requirements he gives us.

This may be hard to understand, but it can also be comforting. When we don’t know how to deal with something, we can trust in God to deal with it for us. He desires all of us to be family with Him. And while He will not impose Himself on us, He does take care of us – especially in our need. We need to live in such a way as to avoid losing trust in the God who love us.

We are called to a faith that is reasonable – one that appeals to our intellects. We are called to believe in a faith which presents and hold to objective truths. We are also called to a faith which is subjective or appeals to our wills – a faith by which we personally believe in, act on and adhere to those truths. These are two aspects of the virtue of faith – the **faith which** you believe and the **faith with which** you believe.

This was clarified for us by Saint Augustine when he spoke about the *fides quae creditur* and the *fides qua creditur*. *Fides quae* is the objective faith – the truths or content of our faith – the **faith which** we believe. *Fides qua* is the subjective aspect of our faith, the faith by or the **faith with which** we believe. It is our free response to the content or truths of the faith (CCC 166). “God willed that external proofs of His Revelation should be joined to the internal helps of the Holy Spirit” (CCC 156).