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Snapchat, a popular app for smartphones that allows people to send photos that soon disappear, has a feature called filters. A filter is something placed on the photo as a type of overlay. It might say the location the photo was taken, or the day of the week, or it might say something funny. On Sundays, one option is a battery with the words, "Sunday recovery." This secular attempt at explaining the Lord's Day of rest strikes me as misguided. More on that later...

Today, we have an option to use a shorter form of the second reading, one that omits the line, "Wives should be subordinate to their husbands as to the Lord." I specifically asked the lector to read the long form, not because I'm actually preaching about the verse. No, this is not that homily. I will note that in context, it speaks of a mutual submitting and love. He is speaking about the sacrament, but the reason we need a shorter form is because that verse has been used by men throughout the centuries to mean something other than what it actually means. Thus, we recoil at it, and when we hear the verse, we associate it with all the ways women have been taken advantage of, or worse abused, by some men who have failed in their role of being a loving bridegroom. However, the failure of some husbands does not negate the good of marriage.

Today, we read in the news of priests and bishops who have failed in their role of being good friends of the Bridegroom, to use one title from the early Church. Their failure does not negate the reality of the priesthood.

We read articles (sometimes sensationalistic) about what happened, how it was dealt with (or failed to be dealt with), and the ongoing repercussions in the lives of victims. I could go in many directions right now. To say everything I want to say would take an hour. For example, in today's Gospel we heard Peter profess, "Master, to whom shall we go?"

You have the words of eternal life.

We have come to believe

and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God." I could speak about how our faith is not in men but in God, and how we should stay in the Church. But this is not that homily.

Online or in newspapers you can read many proposals how to address the crisis or what the problem is. They are not all on the same page, partially because some people proposing solutions hate the Church and want to see her change the teachings she has received from our Lord, but others respond differently because they are responding to different problems in different places. The problems of Honduras are not the problems of Massachusetts are not the problems of Pennsylvania. Each person needs to clean up their heart, where sin, which is the root of all of this, lies. Then they can clean up their little corner, because there is little we can do about Honduras, but if everyone did that, then these problems would be resolved. But this is not that homily.

I could point out that the Church has come a long way, and that these problems are not isolated to the Catholic Church because the root of the problem is sin, and then I could go into what all parents should do to ensure their children are safe at school, at camp, at Church, and elsewhere. But this is not that homily either.

It is not really about any of those things because I cannot address any of them sufficiently here. I will say this: to anyone whose faith has been damaged, to anyone who has been a victim in this, know of my prayerful support for you. If a crime has been committed, yes, go to the police. And if you need help, know that the priests and deacons of this parish are here to support you and help you experience healing. Know that as a priest, as one who offers sacrifice, I will be entering into a period of extra prayer and penance for the cleansing of this filth from the Church, as are many other priests. And know that you and your loved ones are safe here.

What I would like to do with this homily is to focus on a particular line from today's Gospel. Because I'm Catholic, I'm not good at chapter and verse. I do know, however, John 6:66 because 666 is the number of the Antichrist, "As a result of this, many of his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him."

What was it that caused their departure? The teaching on the Eucharist. It is implied in all of this that Judas is one of those who stopped believing at this point. "Jesus knew from the beginning the ones who would not believe and the one who would betray him."

The actions of Judas came from his lack of faith. The betrayal of some priests and bishops, where it was willful cover-up and not just poor decisions, can only come from a lack of faith. They might get away with it in this life, but they would do well to look at the paintings of the wicked cast into the unquenchable fire that adorn many places, like the Sistine Chapel. "The Lord confronts the evildoers, to destroy remembrance of them from the Earth," said the Psalmist today. Strong words. Yes mercy is possible for all, but we must cooperate with grace and repent. God will not be mocked by a double-life.

This is not the only time we see that Judas is struggling with his faith. The other is when he is upset that precious oil is used to anoint Christ. What he wanted was practical: an Earthly Kingdom. Why waste things on worship? He had a worldly mentality. Of course, we know from Scripture that bad worship and bad living go together, as the ones worshipping the golden calf were engaging in all sorts of revelry. The connection between worship, morality, and the whole of the Christian life is intimate. This is why, for example, the Catechism proceeds according to this logic: the Creed that we believe about God and what he has done in history, the liturgy and sacraments, that is, the life of grace he offers us to transform us, the new law we live in Christ by grace, and then, being sanctified and purified, the prayer and union with God we can finally achieve.

Notice in all of this the end goal is union with God. It is not just a pragmatic moral life. In fact, what I just said about the ordering of the Catechism, that divine union is the goal of life and we achieve it by God revealing himself and establishing sacraments of grace, is all laid out in paragraph one of the Catechism. It is why we prayed in the opening prayer today that "amid the uncertainties of this world, our hearts may be fixed on that place where true gladness is found."

So let's return to Snapchat and "Sunday recovery." Sunday is not a day of rest in the sense that we recover so that we can return to work. We do not live to work. It is not about maximizing our output. Sunday is about re-establishing what life is really about: divine union. We cannot say, "Well, if I experience it, I'll make more money" or anything like that. It is the true end for which

all other ends exist. Divine union is not something that can be commodified. It exists for its own sake. It is not practical. Judas would have wanted nothing to do with it. It is wasteful.

And this, what we do here, is about that. This is why so many people think they don't need Mass. "I don't leave feeling closer to God" because nothing can do the hard-work of faith, or, "But I would be more relaxed playing golf and being home to watch the Patriots." I'm sure you would. That's like saying it is more relaxing to watch TV than to train for a marathon. In the same way that someone who loves running might really prefer going for the run, someone who loves God with deep faith will actually delight in and enjoy worship more. "Taste and see the goodness of the Lord."

These other forms of relaxation, whether they be TV, golf, or sleep are gods if they become ends in themselves. They are good, insofar as relaxing helps us in being better recollected for divine worship. We must profess like the people in today's first reading

"Far be it from us to forsake the LORD
for the service of other gods...As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Why do I say all this? The worldliness is the root of the problems we see today. Clericalism, sexual deviancy, careerism, or whatever the other problems, it starts with this lack of faith. It starts with deciding not to serve the Lord. It decides that being all in for Christ is not worth it because the result is something supernatural and otherworldly: divine union. And that, that makes no sense without faith.

Please pray for our Holy Father and bishops really clean things up this time. We cannot go through this every fifteen years or so.

May God bless you.