

A Short Story – Holy Faces

Written on request for deacon newsletter *Deacon Dispatch*.

By Anonymous

Ordination Orientation

In our ordination we are called to the three-fold ministry of Charity, Word, and Liturgy. In the Acts of the Apostles (ch 6) the calling of the deacons was first the work of Charity (distribution of food).

During our ordination we hear a command from the Bishop: “Receive the Word of God, whose herald you have become. Believe what you read, teach what you believe, practice what you teach.”

In preparation of serving the Altar in Liturgy, we learn the things to do and how to do them.

Integration of Ministry

The actions assigned to deacons are prescribed specifically in the GIRM. For a deacon though, integration of the three ministries is his responsibility alone, reinforcing one in the other. His Charity is informed by Word and Liturgy, Word by Charity and Liturgy, and Liturgy informed by Word and Charity.

Charity in Liturgy

I think the highest moment of a deacon serving the Altar is in the Communion. Here the role is not turned toward the Altar but to the people of faith. It is the perfect charity of the divine himself to be shared among the people.

Holy Faces

How we serve in this function is critical. We are turning toward the Holy People of God. Here we see them face to face, as Moses and the Lord, friends, face to face. Do we see each as a friend would look upon a friend? Do we look face to face, like friends? Can you see, as I see, the Holy Face of God?

Holy Hands

Here the hands or tongue are reaching out to receive what is offered. Are we not offering ourselves as well? Can we smile? Can we speak with a calm voice and determined soul to share the divine? Do they appear fragile needing a small accommodation? Do they seem fearful and need reassurance? Can you see, as I see, the Holy Hands of Jesus?

Miracle Reception – optional – not something many can receive.

Be attentive to the Lord. Do you see the Eucharist stand on edge? Do you see images in the Host as people receive? Can you sense the Lord’s imperatives for each person who comes forward? You are transmitting the Holy in the Host and in yourself. You are receiving insights for your ministry of Charity.

Feedback

I love that you look into the face of each and every one of us at Holy Communion. So special!

Do people divert from your line because the Priest gives a better Jesus? Who do they see when you are there? Let your Charity inform your Liturgy and all will be fine.

References

<https://sjvdenver.edu/deacons/diaconate/>

<https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/the-mass/the-deacon-at-mass>