



SAINT LOUIS ABBEY



Homily for Vocations to Monastic Life and Priesthood

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Note the integrity of one who stands up for the truth. Jesus does not hide that although he comes from Galilee, he really comes from God and knows God. As foretold in the first reading, he claims to be the Son of God, to speak for God, to show men their sins, and is not afraid to cry out. This frankness gets in him trouble and costs him his life. Integrity, adhering to the truth when it is not popular, is lonely. But Jesus shows us that clinging to the truth in the face of opposition will eventually win people to the truth. Though it cost him his life, his clear speaking of the truth as he had learned it from his Father won him resurrection from the dead and won for us the power to be faithful to the truth and to rise from the dead with him. Jesus empowered many martyrs down the ages to cling to the truth cheerfully in the face of death. That unquenchable joy is the best proof of the truth of Christianity. No other man has shown such assurance of being one with God, intimate with God, almost equal with God, and proved this friendship with God by his miracles and fearless utterance of truth. In his trial we see a man calmly claiming to be judge of the world. This is treated as quite a joke yet at the same time arouses furious hate. This self-styled son of God has got to be eliminated. All the evidence of Jesus' authenticity, the utter correspondence between what he said and what he did, was blotted out of consciousness. Men do not tolerate holiness in their midst, it is too much of a reproach, too painful, because it exposes our unholiness.

Jesus accepted this mistreatment, this most heinous injustice the world has seen, and by accepting it, destroyed its vicious power, because he rose from the dead never to die again. And what does he do, he offers to us sinners the bread of his body and the wine of his blood to be our food and drink so that we can become one with him. So that we too can become the son of God. We too can have that same assurance he had in the face of hatred and fear. He died for us to make us one with himself. We live with his life. We can have the same integrity he had, not with our own strength but with his strength in us. We don't have to cheat or lie or grab creature comforts to feel good about ourselves. Our God died for us.

Many people do not know they are loved like this. They do not know they are important in their Creator's eyes, and so they frantically look for security in creatures that can never give them what they deep down crave, friendship with their origin. That's why priests are needed. Priests tell people they are loved by their Creator and bring them the life of God. Some of you are probably being invited to give yourself to that work of connecting people with God in Christ. It's a most worthwhile life. Others might be called to spend your life getting to know



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and love this gracious God and sharing his love with others as a monk, not necessarily as a priest.

Jesus Christ as portrayed in our readings and in Passiontide and the approaching Triduum is the best News the world has ever had. Be sure you give him some time and open your heart to him in these days, whether you're on a beach somewhere or at home. Find out where the Holy Week services are. Take an hour or so out of your fun time to get in touch with the one who cares for you with an infinite love, the foundation of your life, the one who makes you strong. And think about how you can bring his love to the world.