

Week Four – Marching Orders

Hebrews 5:8-6:3

⁸Although Jesus was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered ⁹and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him ¹⁰and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek. ¹¹We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. ¹²In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! ¹³Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. ¹⁴But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. 6:¹Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, ²instruction about baptism, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. ³And God permitting, we will do so...we are confident of better things in your case— things that accompany salvation.

I. Portrayal of the Problem

- A. ***⁸Although Jesus was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered ⁹and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him ¹⁰and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.***
- B. Are you able to understand what this text is saying?
- C. It's complicated isn't it?
- D. Why? Many of us have been Catholics for decades. Why can't we articulate what it means to say that Christ is a High Priest in the Order of Melchizedek. Why would most have trouble understanding let alone explaining that Jesus had to be "perfected?" What does it mean that he "learned obedience?"
- E. Most life long Catholics do not understand these higher concepts or what they mean and this is problem that is portrayed here.

II. Proclamation of the problem

- A. ***¹¹We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. ¹²In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! ¹³Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. ¹⁴But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.***
- B. The problem is that we are slow and sluggish.
- C. We go to earn advanced degrees in worldly careers and many become experts in their field.
- D. But when it comes to faith, most remain infants and need mother's milk. They are incapable of partaking of solid food.
- E. We seem to be resigned to a kind of arrested development in terms of our faith.

III. Prescribed procession

- A. ***6:¹Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity,***
- B. We must proceed to maturity. We need to commit to a plan to grow in our faith and to prepare to step up and step out.
- C. True maturity is more than intellectual mastery. Adults in our culture are not manifest only by book learning but by leadership and a capacity to speak for themselves. They are engaged in a dynamic way with the world around them and affect it in a (hopefully) positive way.
- D. So it is for us who aspire to maturity in Christ. Our adulthood in the faith is manifest not only by book knowledge but even more by a capacity to speak for ourselves and to engage the world around us and affect it. As adults in the faith we are expected to take leadership in the renewal of the temporal order and in announcing Jesus Christ. We cannot simply leave it to “Father.”

IV. Primitive to Personal

- A. ***not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, ²instruction about baptism, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. ³And God permitting, we will do so...we are confident of better things in your case— things that accompany salvation.***
- B. In other words we should have to keep going over the fundamentals again and again. We ought to have an instinctive grasp of and mastery of basic doctrinal and moral teaching.
- C. We must increasingly be able to live it.
- D. We must also come to personal, first-hand witness of what the Church announces. So that we can say that these teachings are true not only because my mother or my pastor said so....but because I KNOW IT IS TRUE.
- E. The heart of Evangelization is to be able to be a first-hand witness.

V. Process

- A. Msgr. Pope will take a look at the year ahead
- B. Msgr. Pope will take a look at what we plan to begin in Sept. 2010
 - 1. Family Evangelization
 - 2. Friendship Evangelization
 - 3. Neighborhood Outreach

VI. Promises

- A. Msgr. Pope will request a commitment on the part of those present to commit to further preparation for evangelization.