

BE THE CHURCH

The Church is more than a building that we come to each and every Sunday. The Church is people; believing people, baptized people, confirmed people, surrendered people, people in whom Christ dwells, people who listen to the voice of God, people who abide by the commandments of the Lord, people who have truly committed their lives to Him as Lord, people who have a personal relationship to Him, people who obey His voice.

Bishop Demetrius wrote "the Church is the company of those who have put on Christ by being baptized in Him, sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit in Confirmation, forgiven of their sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and nurtured by the Heavenly Food in the Holy Mystery of His Body and Blood. ... The Church is a divinely instituted unity of people, united by the Catholic Faith, the law of God, the hierarchy and the Holy Sacraments. The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ."

One of the holiest moments of the Eucharistic Liturgy is the moment when the Church - God's people, strengthened by the Word of God and nourished by the Sacrament of the Eucharist, go out the church door into the world to be the Church. We don't just go to church; we are the Church.

A student was telling his parish priest about a conversation he had with a fellow student in the school. The fellow student did not believe in God. The student said to his pastor, "How can I get this fellow to church, so he can get some help?" The pastor replied, "Don't try to get him to come to church. He'll probably refuse anyway. You must be the Church to him where you are ... in the classroom, in the locker room, in the cafeteria, on the soccer field, on the bus. You are the Church to that fellow student."

The reason we come to church every Sunday is to listen to Christ, to praise Him, to receive Him within us that we may go out into the world and be the Church for the rest of the week. This Lent let us be the Church to everyone we meet.

Resources: "A Byzantine Rite. Liturgical Year." Julian J. Katrij, OSBM. Basilian Fathers Publication. Detroit, 1983.
"Daily Vitamins for Spiritual Growth." Anthony M. Coniaris. Light and Life Publishing. Minneapolis Minnesota, 1994.

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