

Feast of The Most Holy Trinity     June 4, 2023

Gospel of John Chapter 3 verses 16-18

Homily given by Deacon Tony

We all have our own personal experiences of God. Well on this, the Feast Day of The Most Holy Trinity, I'd like to share with you one priest's personal experience not of God, but WITH GOD! Specifically, the 2<sup>nd</sup> person of The Most Holy Trinity, Jesus Christ himself, and how Our Blessed Mother continually intercedes on our behalf.

The priest's name is Steven Scheier. Ordained a priest in the diocese of Wichita, Kansas in 1973. Sadly, he passed away during the pandemic in April of 2020. His funeral mass was celebrated at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Wichita, Kansas, where Bishop Kemme said at his funeral; "He spent his last days in prayer and praise, offering his own pain, suffering, and distress for the glory of God and for the salvation of souls." The Bishop went on to say, "We cannot calculate the souls he touched by his priestly service."

We pick up the story of Father Scheier 12 years after his ordination. He was involved in a head on collision in which he almost died. October 18, 1985. The trauma so severe he was airlifted from the scene of the accident. Yet amazingly, defying all predictions, A-that he lived, and B-his doctors thought even if he did survive the accident he would be paralyzed and/or on a breathing machine for the rest of his life. Yet defying all predictions he makes a full recovery! And in May of the following year, 7 months later, he is back at his home parish saying mass! It was at one of the masses as Father was reading from the Gospel of Luke, the Parable of The Barren Fig Tree. (Chapter 13 verses 6-9) For those unfamiliar with this passage, it's where the owner of this fig tree instructs his gardener to cut it down because it has not produced fruit in three years. The gardener says let me cultivate the soil and nurture the tree and if after a year it still has bore no fruit, then you can cut it down. Father said as he read this passage the words on the page became enlarged, illuminated, and came off the page toward him! He finished mass, returned back to the rectory, as all the memories came flooding back. Memories of what had happened at the scene of the accident.

He was before the Judgement Seat of Almighty God, Jesus Christ himself. As Our Lord went through his entire life. For sadly by Steven Scheier's own admission, he was more concerned with what his peers thought, he had no devotion to Our Blessed Mother and deep down he knew he was not the priest he should be. So now, standing in the presence of TRUTH, Jesus whom he never saw only heard said,

"Your sentence is Eternal Hell."

Father Scheier responded "Yes Lord"

Then he heard a female voice

"Son, will you please spare his life and his eternal soul"

Jesus said,

"Mother, he has been a priest for 12 years FOR HIMSELF and not for me, let him reap the punishment he deserves"

"But Son, if we give him special graces and strengths and then see if he bears fruit, if not.... your will be done"

Father Scheier said there was a short pause; and then the voice said.

"Mother, He's yours"

Now I share this story with you not to scare you, not to alarm you, why I am not even trying to convince you that what took place with Father Scheier is true. But, But there is no denying Father Scheier's full recovery was nothing short of a miracle. Could he have been given a second chance to deliver a message. And if so is the message exactly what we listened to in today's Gospel.

-Whoever believes in him will not be condemned

- but Whoever does not believe has already been condemned.

-For they have not believed in the NAME of the only Son of God.

My friends, never grow weary of proclaiming Jesus Christ as Lord and know, know with all certainty, that Mary, Our Mother, has found great favor with the Most Holy Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

AMEN