



August 18, 2011

“Do This in Memory of Me.”
(Lk. 22:19)

Dear Father,

This year, the Church will celebrate Catechetical Sunday on the weekend of September 18, the Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time. *“Do This in Memory of Me”* (Lk. 22:19) is the theme for Catechetical Sunday 2011. The general focus is on faith formation and sacramental practice regarding the Holy Eucharist. If we are to experience a greater appreciation of the Eucharist, having a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and restoring Sunday as the Lord’s Day are essential components of our faith formation.

Jesus is central to our Christian faith and life. Blessed Pope John Paul II reminded us, “At the heart of catechesis we find, in essence, a Person, the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, the only Son from the Father” (*Catechesis in Our Times*, #5). All of us responsible for the ministry of catechesis bear the responsibility to draw personally ever closer to Christ and to assist others in their efforts to be in communion, in intimacy with Jesus Christ.

The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Church’s life. At every Eucharist, we recall, remember, live, and celebrate Christ’s Paschal Mystery: His Passion, Death, Resurrection and Ascension. From this wellspring, we receive the grace to live our own paschal mystery. “Through the Eucharist, the People of God come to know the Paschal Mystery ever more intimately and experientially. They come not simply to the knowledge of God – they come to know the living God” (*National Directory of Catechesis*, #33).

By reflecting on this year’s theme, we are also preparing to receive the Third Typical Edition of the *Roman Missal*. As I noted in my recent pastoral letter on the Eucharist, clergy, religious, parish music, catechetical and pastoral leaders have participated in several workshops held throughout the diocese that helped prepare us for the successful implementation of the new translation of the Roman Missal. Catechetical Sunday is one more opportunity for us to reflect on the Eucharist and to open our minds and hearts to the beauty and wonder of this great mystery of our faith.

Catechetical Sunday is a once-a-year event that celebrates the ongoing witness and dedication of catechists and the support and participation of the entire community. It provides you with the opportunity to acknowledge the numerous ways in which the catechetical ministry is exercised in your parish and to recognize catechetical leaders and catechists who assist you in the important work of catechesis.

As in the past, a variety of materials has been prepared to assist parishes in celebrating Catechetical Sunday in September as well as throughout the 2011-12 year. These materials are available on line at www.usccb.org and are downloadable at no cost.

The Sunday celebration of the Lord’s Day and His Eucharist is at the heart of the Church’s life. It is my hope that the observance of Catechetical Sunday will lead all of us to a renewed appreciation of Sunday as a special day for the Lord. May we never become satisfied with our faith life or complacent about our responsibility to hand on our faith in its full integrity.

With much gratitude for your faith-filled pastoral leadership, I am

Fraternally yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg