

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

The gospel for Trinity Sunday (next Sunday) shows Jesus talking to the apostles. He explains that when the Holy Spirit comes, he will infuse the Church with everything Jesus has, even over and above what he gave to the disciples during his life on earth. That's a wealth of information – superimposed on a basic kernel of faith!

Even for people who pride themselves on being “good” Catholics, the superstructure can be pretty weak. The basic kernel still exists – but how easy it is to fall into the “cafeteria Catholic” category Pope John Paul II talked about so frequently. Could that happen to us who are members of the Order of Malta? Is it possible that we might be “cafeteria Catholics?” Let's not say “no” too quickly.

There are many people who pride themselves on being good Catholics, who will talk about receiving the “wine” at Mass! Does that betray an underlying belief or a lack of understanding? Look at the number of people who don't see abortion as a cut and dried issue. Or think about the number of people who don't see attendance at Mass every Sunday as anything major; or for whom the “small” sins are no big deal – like gossip, or impatience, or road rage. So what's the answer?

We hear about the “new evangelization.” The idea is speaking the gospel anew to those who “used to be Catholic” or who are “more or less” Catholic. But if we think about that as the starting point, then we've probably missed an important first step – looking inside ourselves. Do you remember Jesus talking about taking the plank out of our own eye before trying to remove the speck from our brother's eye? Is it possible that maybe he was giving us a hint? “Tutio fidei” could well mean answering that question with a “yes”, and then doing something about it before we set out on the path of reforming others. -**Msgr. Edward Dillon**, *Magistral Chaplain, Atlanta, GA*