

## **Homily – Vigil, Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time – Installation, Fr. Johnson Lê – Blessed Sacrament – November 2, 2024**

Dear friends in Christ; today, as we joyfully welcome Father Johnson as your new Pastor, we do so in the spirit of your parish's profound dedication to the Blessed Sacrament. Your parish family here is called to live as witnesses of the Eucharist, bearing the living presence of Christ to our world. Just yesterday, we commemorated All Souls' Day, entrusting our loved ones who have passed to God's mercy. Their memory reminds us of our connection in Christ and the eternal gift of His love, made visible through the Eucharist we celebrate and adore.

In today's reading from Deuteronomy, we hear Moses' call for Israel to love the Lord with all one's heart, soul, and strength. The commandment to "Hear, O Israel" is one of faithfulness, unity, and singular devotion to God. Through this covenant of love, Israel found identity and strength, a theme renewed in our celebration of Christ, whose priesthood, as the Letter to the Hebrews tells us, surpasses the old priesthood in permanence and power. Jesus, the eternal High Priest – who is at once also the spotless Victim and the worthy Altar – invites us to join Him in offering our lives for others, drawing from His heart the strength to reconcile, forgive, and serve.

In his fourth encyclical, which he published a little over a week ago, Pope Francis reminds us of this mystery, saying, "It is only by starting from the heart that our communities will succeed in uniting and reconciling differing minds and wills." In our encounter with the heart of Christ, we find openness and the gift-of-self. As we unite our hearts with His, we become capable of

working the “social miracle” that brings peace, reconciliation, and love to our world.

Father Johnson comes not just to lead, but to deepen your shared mission of making Christ present in your community. Through the Eucharist, we become one with Christ, and thus we are called to be one with each other, bearing witness to God’s kingdom in acts of love, mercy, and justice. Each Mass we celebrate here at the parish of the Blessed Sacrament is an invitation to recommit ourselves to Christ’s selfless love.

As you move forward together, may you experience the embrace of Our Lady of Guadalupe, enabling you to embrace this calling. Guided by Christ, our eternal High Priest, and empowered by His spirit, you must continue to build a community that reveals God’s love and justice to the world. May the Holy Eucharist transform us, as it transformed the apostles, to go forth and share the Good News with hearts that reflect the love and mercy of Christ to all.