

23. WE RETURN HOME

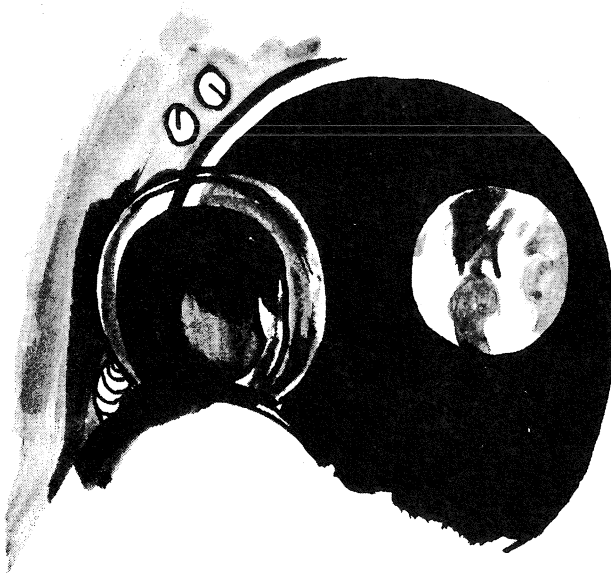
Our **return** from the Kingdom after seeing and tasting the new life is one of the most important parts of the Eucharist. After receiving God's gifts, we sing:

"We have seen the true light! We have received the heavenly Spirit! We have found the true faith."

and we worship God in the Holy Trinity who has saved us.

But now, can we simply leave the Liturgy, leave our meeting with God, leave His wonderful Kingdom and forget about it as we go home to our daily life?

All of us today have watched with great excitement the wonderful things that are happening on our journeys into space. We are thrilled when we see a rocket blast off and lift successfully up into another atmosphere where there is no gravity—where the world itself looks different when the astronaut views it from his new surroundings. The astronaut himself sees a new kind of world, and he is able to look at our world with a new kind of vision. Even the same sunrises and sunsets that we see look different to



him. And when he goes outside of his space capsule and floats through space at terrific speeds that he does not even feel, he gets a new idea and feeling of what life in another world is like.



But the most important time for the astronaut is the period of his **re-entry** back to earth. Not only is the re-entry through the atmosphere a dangerous part of his journey, but his real return to us is of greatest importance. Only his first hand witness and account of what he saw and did in space can give us a good picture of what life in space is like. All of the scientific data from the computers and instruments connected to the spacecraft give us important information about life in space, but without the witness of a real man like ourselves, we cannot have a complete picture of **life** in outer space.

Our return or re-entry into the life of this world—to our home, our families, friends and neighbors—from the Feast of the Kingdom is also very important. Like the astronaut, we really never left this world completely, for we took ourselves and the things

of the world with us. But something happened to us while we were in Church. We saw and tasted and felt something different. Like the astronaut, we saw a new kind of world. We saw a vision of God's Kingdom; we became a part of God's love and life when we received His food of new life. Perhaps, we even began to look at our world in a different way. Perhaps, we began to see it as God wants us to see it — as a wonderful gift of His love.

But now, as we return to our homes, we must tell others of our experience. We must help other people to understand what it means to live in a new way, as brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ. We must show them by our own lives how to live as good sons of God. We must help others to see the new life of God's Kingdom.

As the Divine Liturgy draws to a close, the priest blesses us with the Chalice. He repeats Christ's promise to be with us "Always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages." Find Jesus' words in the Gospel of St. Matthew 28:20 and write them here

We praise and thank God for letting us partake of His "*holy, divine, immortal, and life-creating*" gifts. We ask God: "*Keep us in Your Holiness*" that we may know how to live a good life. As our prayers of thanks continue, the priest says:

*Make straight our path;
Strengthen us all in Thy fear,
Guard our life;
Make firm our steps . . . ;*

*For thou art our Sanctification
And unto Thee we ascribe glory: to the
Father
and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.*

As we return home, we ask God to be with us in all our life. We pray:

*"Let us depart in peace . . . in the name
of the Lord."*

And now we ask God to bless those who bless Him and put their trust in Him.

Here is the final prayer that the priest reads:

*O Lord, who blessest those who bless Thee
And sanctifiest those who trust in Thee:
Save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.
Preserve the fullness of Thy Church.
Sanctify those who love the beauty of Thy
House;
Glorify them in return by Thy divine power,
And forsake us not who put our hope in
Thee.
Give peace to Thy world, to Thy churches,
to Thy priests, to all those in civil authority,
and to all Thy people.
For every good gift and every perfect gift is
from above, coming down from Thee the
Father of Lights,
And unto Thee we ascribe glory, thanks-
giving and worship:
To the Father, and to the Son, and to the
Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages
of ages, Amen.*

As we leave the Church, we carry with us the blessing and peace and strength of Jesus Christ. We go back to our daily lives as witnesses of God's Kingdom. We go back, not as the same people that we were when we came, but as new people — the people of God. Jesus Christ now sends us as He sent His disciples, saying:



Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.

(Matthew 28:19-20)

The work of Jesus Christ in the world now continues through us. We are now the Body

of Christ. We have the gift of new life. We know what it means to see and to use God's gifts in the world in a good way. Through us, the world itself can be made new, as long as we live in Jesus Christ. Through us, men can come to see the Kingdom of God. Read carefully the prayer of Jesus to His Father as He prepared to send His disciples to carry on His work of making the world new through Him:

**“As thou didst send me into the world,
so I have sent them into the world.”**

(John 17:18)

**“I do not pray for these only, but also for
those who are to believe in me through
their word, that they may all be one . . . ;
even as we are one, I in them and thou in
me . . . so that the world may know that
thou hast sent me and hast loved them
even as thou hast loved me.”**

(John 17:20-23)

1. In the first passage, underline the words that say that Jesus wants His disciples to carry on His work.
2. In the second passage, underline the reason why God sends us to other men.

Read the words of Jesus to His disciples as He spoke to them about their mission:

**“You did not choose me, but I chose you
and appointed you that you should go
and bear fruit and that your fruit will
abide, so whatever you ask the Father in
my name, he may give it to you. This I
command you, to love one another.”**

(John 15:16-17)

Underline the important phrases. How can we carry out this work in the world?

Activity

Make a large poster out of pictures from magazines to show how we should behave or how we can help others.

