



## SAINT LOUIS ABBEY



### Homily on May 5, 2000 at the School Mass

#### Father Gregory Mohrman, O.S.B.

The Gamaliel reading reminds us that the leading "professor" of the Judaism of Jesus' time made a very wise statement about the young Christian religion. If it was "of man" it would fail -- as so many other movements with charismatic leaders had failed and have subsequently failed. If it were "of God" then nothing that "man" could do would bring about its destruction.

Through the centuries, through two millennia, the Church has survived persecutions from the Romans, down to persecutions from totalitarian regimes like China in our day; and assaults on the Church from outside, from the Sanhedrin of Gamaliel's day to Mao and beyond.

But also it has survived the assault of corruption from within: the corruption of our own sinfulness. Each member of the church is a sinner and this is a great scandal to the unbeliever. John Paul II and his leading cardinals during this Jubilee year, in a first-ever liturgical ceremony, asked for forgiveness for all the ways in which the Church through its members had offended throughout two millennia. How can we hope not to scandalize? How can each of us show forth the true light of Christ, the true face of the Risen Lord to the world?

The Gospel tells of Jesus feeding the 5000 with 5 loaves and 2 fish. Here at the Eucharist, day after day, we may be nourished by Christ the Bread of Life. By the Bread and Wine that is broken and poured out for us we can grow more and more into the likeness of Christ and show his love to the world.

And the boy who provided the 5 loaves and the 2 fish reminds us that EACH PERSON has a role to play in God's great enterprise of bringing men and women each day back to God. The boy had no idea what his gift of the bread and fish would lead to, what miracle would be achieved from his offerings. We may never know what God does with the generous decision that we make to follow Jesus, to do his will whatever the cost to us of discomfort, mockery or persecution. Each of us has gifts that the Lord has chosen to need for his great work of salvation.