

**For The Bulletin Of
July 31, 2016**

**THE 18TH SUNDAY IN
SUMMER'S ORDINARY TIME**

From Father Robert

I grew up with “Peanuts” drawn by Charles Schulz. Linus is one of his characters who is always drawn holding a blanket to the side of his head and sucking his thumb. I, too, had a “blankie” when I was little! Linus is a beloved character who reminds us that we all need a hug, a security blanket once in a while. Borrowing his name and image, Project Linus is a national organization that provides free security blankets for critically ill or traumatized children. Some of the blankets donated are larger, intended for older children. Pain, fear, and insecurity know no age limits.

Whenever we face any life-threatening occasion, we naturally reach out for whatever relieves us, whatever “wraps” us in hugs, love, and security. We can readily identify, then, with the rich man in today’s gospel who has a “bountiful harvest” and doesn’t want to waste a single grain. Although he is rich and probably already has plenty, he portrays what each of us harbors in the depth of our hearts: we can never have enough. We always want to increase whatever we think gives us security in face of life’s inevitable exigencies. How mistaken we are!

The rich man in the gospel thinks building bigger barns to hold an abundance of “grain and other goods” will give him enough security that he can “rest, eat, drink, be merry.” When

his life is “demanded” of him, however, his store of “grain and other goods” proves not to be the ultimate security – an eternal inheritance. He is misguided about the bigger barn he really needs to build. In the end, what “matters to God” is a “barn” full of what only God can give: life, love, holiness, faithfulness, generosity, compassion, Life. No barn can ever be big enough to hold these. No barn we build can hold the security that is God alone. The only security we truly possess is a loving relationship with God – and this is surely what matters most to God. It should matter most to us as well.

Even with all our Christian living and reflection, we still struggle with what God graciously offers us – not more possessions, but fullness of Life. The gospel challenges us to direct all of our work toward a quality of life based on growing in our relationship with God and each other. Even our possessions and how we use them have this end – to bring us into right relationship with God and each other so that ultimately we possess what really counts: God’s eternal Life. God offers us what matters most – fullness of Life and the secure happiness that only God can give. God alone is our sure security blanket.

Living The Paschal Mystery

If most of us take some time to think about the way we live, we would have to admit that the pressures of daily life tend to be our main focus. We are all concerned about calendars and schedules, bills and getting ahead, sickness and health. Our lives tend to be so busy that our immediate goal is simply to get through another day. What would happen if we would truly take some time to think about what we

possess (and where we store it all!) and what possesses us?

It takes conscious effort to ask the question, To whom do *we* belong? IN some sense this is a question about priorities and putting God truly at the center of our lives. The answer must be more than an intellectual commitment to grow in our relationship with God and have God as our center. We must stop building (using) larger storage barns and begin changing the way we live so that our priorities are evident. Practically speaking, this probably means settling for few possessions. But with God at the center, we really gain everything – fullness of Life.

Today’s readings present one of the greatest challenges to our discipleship. How will we/you/me respond?

- I need to build a bigger barn to hold...what my “barn” lacks is...
- If I knew that “this night my life will be demanded of me,” I would...
- For me, being “rich in what matters to God” means...My richness (or poverty) in what matters to God is revealed by...

About Liturgy: Liturgy’s True Focus

Just as with our everyday lives and all the possessions we have, it is also easy to lose sight of the true focus of liturgy itself. Without realizing it we can get so completely caught up in the *doing* of liturgy that subtly we put ourselves at the center. For example, we can be so concerned about hospitality that we forget this isn’t a simple gathering of the folks, but an assembly gathered to hear God’s call to be in divine Presence. Or, we can be so caught up in doing good music that we forget the music’s purpose

is to draw into the ritual action to be transformed into being more perfect members of Christ’s Body, the church. Or, we can be so caught up in our own need for private prayer time that we can easily forget that at liturgy we surrender ourselves and our own personal needs in order to be the church called into God’s Presence.

Each Sunday it would be a good practice if each assembly member examined *why* he or she comes to celebrate liturgy. Ultimately we come to respond to God’s call and to give praise and thanks for God’s tremendous gifts of life and Godself to us. At each liturgy committee meeting it is a good practice to ask, what exactly is the parish’s focus of liturgy? What are the liturgical priorities? Are we filling our liturgical “barns” with all the wrong things? What are the subtle ways we place ourselves and our own needs at the center? How faithful are we to the church’s practice of liturgy that draws us into God’s Presence for transformation?

The Diocesan Missionary Cooperative Appeal

This weekend throughout all the parishes of the Diocese, missionaries are being welcomed to preach and to bring the Good News of their ministry to share with us and to enrich our understanding of missionary service. We welcome **Sr. Rosaline Nguyen of the Sisters of the Holy Cross from Saigon, Viet Nam**, as our guest homilist to share with us the ministry of her congregation. Today’s second collection is an opportunity to respond to Sister’s invitation and challenge and to support their Order and its good work. Thank you for your generosity and prayerful support for Sister Rosaline and her Order.

Thank You Father Jerry Brown

Our sister parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Brentwood is celebrating the ministry and pastorship of **Father Jerry Brown** this weekend as they mark the conclusion of his ministry there. He has done an outstanding job of shepherding this faith community, working with them to enrich existing ministries and to initiate new ones, mentoring young newly-ordained priests as well as supervising seminarians (including our adopted seminarian **Mario Rizzo**). He has provided sacramental and pastoral services and leadership for this faith community of over 6,000 families. In addition, he has also responded to the call of the Diocese and been the Vicar for Clergy Formation and served as the Dean of our Deanery. We join the parishioners of IHM in thanking God for his ministry and presence to them and us for so many years. He is “retiring” but that doesn’t mean he will no longer be involved in ministry: he has been asked by The Bishop to be one of the Vicars for the Clergy and Personnel Board as well as continuing to be the Vicar for On-going Clergy Formation – TWO full-time jobs! May God richly bless him for all he has done and even more, for who he is: truly a Good Shepherd of the Lord.

East County Vigil for Peace

This coming Wednesday evening, August 3rd, at 7:00 p.m., Community Presbyterian Church in Pittsburg will be hosting an East County Vigil for Peace. Rev. Will McGarvey is the Pastor and Executive Director of the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County. We will begin at the Peace Pole in the courtyard and then move into the chapel for a time of prayer, music, reflection, and being together, asking God for that

peace that only He can give. I hope you will join me and our sisters and brothers from East County.

Our Community – Let’s Make A Difference!

Next Saturday, August 6th, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. is the next Neighborhood Cleanup, sponsored by our Volunteers in Police Service. This is a collaborative community effort which involves active participation from the police department, the Crime Prevention Commission, the Neighborhood Watch Program, Volunteers in Police Services (VIPS), community volunteers and the Public Works Department.

Collectively, we, everyone who works and lives in the City of Antioch, can make a difference and improve the quality of life. It’s our community and it’s our chance to make a difference.

The 73rd Neighborhood Cleanup event on August 6th takes place at Gentrytown Park, Monterey Side. We will be cleaning the neighborhoods between Monterey Dr. and Mission Drive, down to Rio Grande Drive and Gentrytown Park.

All volunteers receive instructions and the equipment necessary to accomplish the goal. The targeted area is within walking distance. Remember: cleaning up your/our neighborhood can make life better for all of us, our neighbors, and our community. I hope you will join me. Please see the bulletin/flyer for detailed information.

Fr. Tom Bonacci's 50th Anniversary of Religious Profession in the Passionist Order

I thought you would like to know that Fr. Tom's 50th Anniversary of Religious Vows is this coming Saturday, August 6, 2016.

I invite you to congratulate him when you see him, leave him a message, or send him an email or a card.

If you want to send a card, his address is: 640 Bailey Road #301, Pittsburg, California 94565.

CCISCO Night Walk Against Violence

The next CCISCO Night Walk Against Violence will take place on Friday, August 12th, beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the intersection of L Street and Sycamore Drive. Participants are to meet in the parking lot of the strip mall. The witness begins with prayer, followed by the witness, and then at its conclusion, a de-briefing, and then the closing prayer.

The Deanery Pilgrimage

Now is the time to reserve your space on one of the buses that we have chartered to go to the Cathedral for the Jubilee Year of Mercy Deanery Pilgrimage on Saturday, August 27th. The cost is \$20 per person roundtrip. We will leave the parish at 8:15 a.m. in order to be at the Cathedral by 9:15 a.m. The procession of parishes up the Pilgrim's Path begins at 9:30 a.m., passing through the Holy Year Door of the Cathedral, and a multi-cultural/multi-lingual celebration of Holy Eucharist beginning at 10:00 a.m. We invite you to wear traditional cultural dress to enhance the celebration of the liturgy. Music for the Eucharist is under the direction of our very own **Don Pearson**, with a choir made up of

singers from each of the 8 deanery parishes. This will be the first time in the history of the Deanery that we have come together like this. The clergy of the deanery will concelebrate the liturgy with **Fr. Mark Wiesner** who is one of the Missionaries of Mercy commissioned by Francis, Bishop of Rome, for the Jubilee Year. Please call the parish office to reserve your space on the bus and make your payment.

Thank You

...to all our wonderful volunteer members who do so much each week to help us fulfill our mission as a parish: To those who clean and maintain the church and parish hall: **Jun Bajet, Carole Miller, Mency Osborne, Angela Bueno, Emilia Freking, Rose Salamanca, and Steve Rojek.**

...to those who clean and maintain the bathrooms in the church and parish hall: **Robert Goncalves, Gino Ramos, Mary Ewing, Patricia Britton, Steve Rojek, and Harlan Young.**

...to **Dilcia Aparacio** who washes and irons all the Sacred Linens each week.

...to our Sacristans and Altar Guild who prepare the sanctuary for the celebration of Eucharist each week: **Peter Degl'Innocenti, Pam and Rich Confetti, Vincent Rodriguez, Harlan Young, Rowena Cayaban, Monika Kauer, Cynthia Enrique, Belen Farin, Nancy Santos, and Rose Salamanca.**

...to our **counting teams** who are here every week to count the weekly collections.

...to our volunteers who assisted in the parish office last week: **Harlan Young, Melodye Costanza, Karen Oliver, Alicia Perez, Rowena Cayaban, Joe Fanfa and Bev Iacona.**

...to our St. Vincent de Paul and Mobile Mall volunteers who

transported last week's donations:

Bob Carvalho and Barbara Jackson.
....to our faithful weekly bulletin
assembly team: **Bob Carvalho, Carole
Miller, Judy Quicho, Vangie Parrilla,
Belen Farin and Dilcia Aparicio.**

Project Starfish Update

The Aljanabi family continues to do well. Although a lease has NOT been signed, they have applied for an apartment in Martinez and are hopeful for a positive response. The twins, Hasan and Hanan are actively seeking employment, A TV was delivered last week to assist in ESL sessions,

Please keep the Aljanabi family in your prayers this coming week.

Peace Vigil: For such a time as this . . .

The East County United Clergy is hosting a Peace Vigil in response to the recent killings across the country and the violence around the world.

Wednesday, August 3, 2016

7:30 pm

***At the Peace Pole in the courtyard of Community
Presbyterian/First Congregational Church
200 E. Leland Road, Pittsburg
(South side of the building)***

Clergy and Religious Leaders will gather at 7:00 pm and the community is invited to come for a short ritual at 7:30 pm.

The Camp Stoneman Chapel will be open for light music, for meditation and prayers, including tying prayer clothes to the prayer net. For more information, contact Rev. Will McGarvey at eye4cee@gmail.com or 925.597.9797.