

For The Bulletin Of February 19, 2017



Love your enemies
and pray for those
who persecute you
Jesus

THE SEVENTH SUNDAY IN WINTER'S ORDINARY TIME

From Father Robert

He would give someone the shirt off his back. She would go the extra mile for anyone. They are “off-the-wall” generous. We often hear stories of people who give of themselves way beyond expectation, who help another at personal expense, who spend holidays feeding the hungry. We have so many ways of saying and doing today’s gospel. Although we know people who are takers rather than givers, who are stingy and selfish, who are minimalists when it comes to relating to others, our first impulse is to believe in the goodness and generosity of people. Although we don’t always do what Jesus says in the gospel – turn from retaliation, give more than what is asked, love beyond what is easy – we do have a sense that what Jesus is asking of us is how we would want the community in which we live to be characterized.

In our treatment of one another – even those who are our enemies – Jesus (as Moses in the first reading) challenges us to go beyond what is expected, beyond what we might think is reasonable or even achievable. We are to go beyond

what is human to what is divine: “be holy” as God is holy, “be perfect” as God is perfect. On our own, this is impossible! Only because of God’s love for us expressed in the life of Jesus Who teaches us rightly, is this possible. Only when we experience God’s love for us first, is this possible.

Jesus commands us to keep the law in a radically different way. We are duty-bound as “children of the heavenly Father” to do more than simply what is mandated. We are to go beyond our natural expectation about keeping laws to embrace the divine excess with which God treats us. Acting toward others as God acts toward us transforms us to be “perfect” as God. This radical living of the law makes divine blessings, grace, and holiness to be real, visible, and at hand for us.

Living The Paschal Mystery

Acting toward others as God acts toward us takes quite a bit of readjusting in our thinking and doing. We must squelch our first impulses to strike out with hand and word. Rather than negatively judging another who doesn’t do as we think he or she should, we must look beyond our narrow perception of things and give the other the benefit of the doubt. However, just as with the early disciples, this readjustment does not happen overnight, nor does it happen automatically.

“Well, that will have to do for now.” How often in daily tasks isn’t this our cry? We have only a little bit of time to clean the house, so what we do will just have to do. We must write a sympathy card and can’t seem to find the right words for a young widow with children, and so we do our best and say that will

just have to do. A “that will just have to do” attitude is hardly the way of living to which today’s gospel challenges us. On the other hand, the gospel examples seem way out of proportion to our ordinary responses, and to the ordinary demands daily living places upon us. Jesus is not asking us, however, to go looking for folks without coats (although there are plenty in our neighborhoods and cities), or for those who need us to go the extra mile for them (there are plenty who need such help), or to give our money away willy-nilly. What Jesus is asking us to do is look upon every other persons, whether friend or foe, family member or stranger, as the beloved of God. Acting in this manner is being holy and perfect as God, and is done not in dramatic ways but in simple everyday gestures of love, respect, and care for others.

Some questions for further reflection and meditation:

- Realizing I am a child of the “heavenly Father” draws me to...demands of me...
- While striving to be perfect as the “heavenly Father,” I need...
- I struggle with the thought that I am holy because...with the thought that I am perfect as God in heaven because...

About Liturgy: Matthew’s Sermon On The Mount

One of the great advantages of the revised Lectionary is its three year cycle of readings by which we hear much more of Sacred Scripture. One of the great advantages of Ordinary Time is that in each respective year of the cycle we read semi-continuously from one of the Synoptic Gospels. This means that

important sections of the gospel are heard over consecutive Sundays. For just two examples, during Year B we hear most of John 6, the Bread of Life discourse, on the seventeenth to twenty-first Sundays in Ordinary Time; in Year A (this year) we hear almost all of the Sermon on the Mount from the third to ninth Sundays in Ordinary Time (we miss the gospel for the Ninth Sunday in ordinary Time this year). One of the most complete, challenging, and beautiful codes of conduct we could hear and reflect on, unfortunately we only hear Matthew’s Sermon on the Mount every three years, and most years (depending on the moveable date of Easter) we only hear part of it. It is always a challenge for homilists to link these Sundays together so the assembly has some sense of the whole.

Unlike Luke, where Jesus preaches while on a plain, Matthew has Jesus going up a mountain before He sits down to teach (a common posture at that time for a teacher). The mountain is not named, but it surely has a parallel with Mount Sinai. Moses climbed Mount Sinai to encounter the Lord and receive the Decalogue. Jesus climbs a mountain and teaches a new commandment that will lead to the fulfillment of the first. More than a teaching about simply keeping laws, the Sermon on the Mount is a lengthy exhortation about ways we ought to be in relationship with each other beyond the expected relationships of the law. The relationships Jesus teaches are modeled by His own way of living, and are a sign of how God relates to us. More than simply setting high standards for ethical behavior, Jesus is teaching us what God’s kingdom looks like and how its citizens behave toward one another here and now.



Please Return Your Dried Palms

Each year we invite you to return your dried palms from the previous Palm Sunday to be burned and become the ashes which we take upon ourselves on Ash Wednesday. Ashes are to be returned to the receptacle provided in the narthex next Sunday, February 26th. The palms will be solemnly burned in the brazier in the Gathering Plaza at the conclusion of the Liturgy on Tuesday morning, February 28th.



*Remember man
that you are
dust and into
dust you shall
return.*

Lent begins this year on Wednesday, March 1, with Ash Wednesday. Our schedule of liturgies that day are as follows:

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist with the Blessing and Imposition of Ashes

12:00 Noon Liturgy of the Word with the Blessing and Imposition of Ashes

5:30 p.m. Liturgy of the Word with the Blessing and Imposition of Ashes

7:30 p.m. Sung Evening Prayer with the Blessing and Imposition of Ashes



Beginning Friday, March 3rd, the First Friday of Lent, our **Knights of Columbus** will once again be offering their Lenten Fish Fry from 4:30 to 7:00 p.m. Bingo will also be offered as a part of the evening. Dinners may be eaten in or taken out. Beer and Wine are offered when dining in at a nominal cost and delicious desserts are available without charge for those who dine in. The Lenten Fish Fry will continue on all the Fridays of Lent with the last dinner being held on Friday, April 7th. Bring your family and friends! All are welcome and invited. All proceeds benefit the charitable programs of our Knights of Columbus.



Congratulations To Our Newly-Confirmed

The Sacrament of Adult Confirmation was celebrated at The Cathedral by The

Bishop yesterday morning. Our congratulations to: **Dustin Ditmars, Arnaldo Rajo, Ashley Rodrigues, Nicole Rodriguez and Kyle Trevarthen.**



An Invitation From St. John's Lutheran

Next Sunday, February 26th, you are invited to join with me at St. John's Lutheran Church for a program to begin the 500th Anniversary Celebration of the Reformation. It begins at 4:30 p.m. and goes until 6:00 p.m. A film will be shown on the Reformation and there will be a time for questions and discussion. Also, please reserve Sunday, October 29th, for the major East County Celebration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation here at St. Ignatius of Antioch at 4:00 p.m. when we will host area churches for a liturgy at which the Lutheran Bishop along with **Pastor Will McGarvey, Executive Director of the Contra Costa Interfaith Council and Pastor of Community Presbyterian Church in Pittsburg, Pastor Linda Vogelgesang of St. John's Lutheran, Father Tom Bonacci of the Interfaith Peace Center, myself, and other area clergy will join with our congregations to mark this historic event.** Please watch the bulletin and my insert for more information as the date draws near.



...to our wonderful volunteer parishioners who came early last Saturday morning to clean and prepare the church and parish hall for the weekend: **Jun Bajet, Rose Salamanca, Carole Miller, Mency Osborne, Cathy Romeo, Steve Rojek, and Angela Bueno.**

...to our volunteer parishioners who clean and maintain both the bathrooms in the church as well as the parish hall: **Robert Goncalves, Mary Ewing, Patricia Britton, Steve Rojek, Virginia Noack, and Harlan Young.**

...to **Dilcia Aparacio** who does such an excellent job of washing, ironing, and caring for the Sacred Linens.

...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: **Jeannine Ford, Sofie Zimmerman, Melodye Costanza, Harlan Young, Karen Oliver, 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, Judy Quicho, Vangie Parrilla and Dilcia Aparicio.**

From the Going Concern Committee

Thank you to everyone who attended one of the Town Hall Meetings last week. Your feedback was greatly appreciated. The committee's purpose was to provide recommendations that would help the parish continue the important work of providing meaningful and relevant liturgies while recognizing the other important aspects of parish life including our first class sacred music program, our wonderful adult education and faith formation program, our hospitality and fellowship events and our outreach efforts to the wider community. We are blessed with a dedicated staff (both volunteer and paid) and a unique and dynamic parish community.

From the Pastoral Office Staff

After many years of dedicated service to our parish, the office staff said farewell to Karen Oliver as she takes a sabbatical from her office duties. Karen was a fixture every Wednesday for a number of years, assisting with telephones, front desk duties and many other tasks. The staff is going to miss Karen; however, she has promised to make herself available for "special assignments." Thank you Karen.

Parishioner Donates Handmade scarves and hats to Winter Nights

Kenny Lane, along with his family, is a longtime member of St. Ignatius of Antioch parish. Kenny recently donated two large bags of his crocheted scarves and hats to the Winter Nights Shelter. Kenny is an active member of our Knights of Columbus and a charter

member of the SPRED Ministry in our parish. Thank you Kenny for this personal outreach effort to provide some warm comfort during these cold months to the shelter residents.

