

SEPT 27, 2015

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time



Our Lady of Lourdes

Catholic Church

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coming to know
the kingdom of God
by being Christ
to the world.



At that time, John said to Jesus, “Teacher, we saw someone driving out demons in your name, and we tried to prevent him because he does not follow us.” Jesus replied, “Do not prevent him. There is no one who performs a mighty deed in my name who can at the same time speak ill of me.” - Mk 9:38-39

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

3722 S. 58th Street | Milwaukee, WI 53220-2053 | (414) 545-4316

EUCCHARIST:

SAT 5:00 PM

SUN 8:00 AM/10:30 AM/6:00 PM

MON 8:00 AM

WED 9:30 AM

THU 8:00 AM

PRIEST

FR. BILL BURKERT

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Home: (414) 645-8053

DEACON

JOHN MONDAY

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FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

Parish Support - Month September 7-13, 2015

Stewardship Offering (Envelopes/Electronic)	\$8,893.00
Offertory	\$1,115.45

Budget Updates Fiscal Year: July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016

Contributions Received.....	\$136,565.67
Contribution Budget.....	\$142,500.00
Difference as of 9/13/15	(\$5,934.33)
Operating Income	\$237,731.82
Operating Expenses.....	\$184,866.40
Balance as of 8/31/15	\$52,865.42

Improvement Fund Updates

Beginning Balance.....	\$97,733.99
Donations	\$7,584.50
Expenses.....	(\$450.00)
Balance as of 9/13/15	\$104,868.49

Keep Our Vision Growing Campaign Capital Appeal

Pledges Received (378 households).....	\$563,685.88
Pledge Payments Received.....	\$553,309.37
Expenses to Date.....	\$455,352.50
Current KOVG Cash Balance	\$97,956.87
<i>Music Ministry Platform Renovation (Spring 2016).....</i>	<i>Estimate = \$197,000.00</i>

CALENDAR RAFFLE 2015

<u>Date</u>	<u>Prize</u>	<u>Ticket</u>	<u>Winner</u>
9/13.....	\$50.00	0296	Reno Fechtner
9/14.....	\$100.00.....	0622	Greg Orłowski
9/15.....	\$20.00	1149	Dotty Posto
9/16.....	\$20.00	0137	Harold Miller
9/17.....	\$20.00	0340	Elizabeth Dulude
9/18.....	\$20.00	0161	Daniel Jakubowski
9/19.....	\$20.00	0449	Maxine Stypa

COMMUNITY LIFE

Our Condolences

...to the families and loved ones of Beatrice Skonecki, Luciano Benavides and all others who have died.

Please keep them in your prayers.

Christian Women Social

The October Christian Women Social will be on Thursday morning, October 1, at 9:30 am. There will be a prayer service and a social followed by dessert and coffee. You do not have to be a member to attend. Everyone is welcome.

Wednesday Morning Faith Group

Join us for an early celebration of our 40th birthday next year with a visit from Fr. Bill Stanfield. Father Stanfield will say mass and join us for our social. Thirty-nine years ago, he put the suggestion to Marge Berendt, Janet Grafwaller, and Reggie Schmidt for a 9:30 am Mass and social. The three brave women took it from there, and we're still going strong.

If you don't regularly come to the Wednesday morning liturgy and social and would like to join us for this special event, call JoAnn Godkin (414) 828-7172 for reservations.

SUN 27

Oktoberfest Sign-Up
Community Weekend Reception
8:00 am Liturgy Church
10:30 am Liturgy Church
6:00 pm Liturgy Church

MON 28

8:00 am Communion Service Rm 9
6:30 pm Centering Prayer Rm 9

TUE 29

8:00 am Communion Service Rm 9
6:30 pm The Dignity of Work Hall C
6:45 pm Boy Scouts - Tr. 612 Hall AB
7:00 pm Adult Choir Reh. Church
7:00 pm SVDP Rm 3
7:00 pm GIFT Core Team Rm 2

JOY DOES NOT SIMPLY
HAPPEN TO US.

WE HAVE TO CHOOSE

JOY

AND KEEP CHOOSING IT
EVERY DAY

-Henri J. M. Nouwen

FORMATION

Monday Nights at the Movies

Who doesn't enjoy a good movie and popcorn? Come join us for the first of seven great movies to be shown on Monday nights in October through May. Each month's film will resonate with one of the Corporal or Spiritual Works of Mercy. Our first flick is *Philadelphia* and will be shown on Monday, October 26, in our Parish Hall A. All you need do is come and watch. We supply the popcorn! BTW...this is a **free** event, so bring a friend!



The Year of Choices Has Begun

Our next GIFT session takes place Sunday, October 4, or Monday, October 5. This is an extremely timely and important session for all people as it deals with choices that harm. A panel of experts on various addictive behaviors (drugs, alcohol, gambling, body concerns, and women's concerns) will convene to help us sort through the chaos of harmful choices, the positive actions we can take, and the hope of God's love that can surface in these choices. Please contact Jenni in the Parish Office to register (414) 545-4316).



VIRTUE OF THE WEEK

RELIABILITY

Reliability is being dependable. We genuinely care about keeping our commitments. We avoid taking on too much, so we can give fully to what we choose to do. We finish on time. We are promise-keepers.

Who relies on you? Whom do you rely on? How is it going?

Peace Walk

Violence has infiltrated so much of our daily lives. October brings with it a month of awareness of one particular form of violence—domestic violence. Throughout October, watch for weekly awareness articles in the bulletin, some new pamphlets and posters in our building, and some Facebook blurbs on how to respond in prayer and action. One action you can take is to join us in a walk for peace on Saturday, October 31, at 10:00 am. We will gather in the Lobby and process with signs (please feel free to bring one) through our neighborhood. A prayer service and reception will follow.



Questions? Please contact Nancie Chmielewski at (414) 545-4316 or at chmielewski@archmil.org.

WED 30

THU 1

FRI 2

9:30 am Liturgy Church
10:15 am Faith Group Social Hall C
6:30 pm Art Guild Mtg. Rm 4
7:00 pm MOMS Spirituality Rm 6

8:00 am Liturgy Rm 9
9:15 am MOMS Spirituality Rm 3
9:30 am Christian Women Hall C
6:30 pm Human Concerns Rm 7
7:00 pm Christian Ministry & the Ministry of Jesus Hall A

8:00 am Communion Service Rm 9
12:00 pm Beatrice Skonecki Memorial Service Church

WORSHIP

Blessing of Animals

In commemoration of the Feast of St. Francis, we will hold our annual Blessing of Animals. Anyone with pets is invited to bring them to OLOL for this special blessing. Please mark your calendars for Saturday, October 3, at 11:00 am by the Labyrinth. In the event of rain, we will meet in the Parish Hall. We welcome members of St. Gregory the Great who will join us this year.



Lectors & Servers

We will be preparing a new schedule for November through February. If you are a Lector or a Server or would like to become involved in these ministries, please fill out an Availability Form and turn it in by Sunday, October 11.

Forms are available on our website

Lectors – <http://ow.ly/S3gF9>

Servers – <http://ow.ly/S3gAJ>

or in the Ministry Room located off the side hallway into church (near the organ). You can also contact Chris Deily at (414) 545-4316, Ext. 16 or deilyc@archmil.org.

Requirements for **lectors** include being at ease reading in front of the assembly, as well as a willingness to read and reflect on the scriptures ahead of time so that you can communicate the heart of your reading with the assembly.

Requirements for **servers** include having received First Eucharist. Servers should be at ease in front of the assembly, able to focus on your duties assisting the priest, and be models of prayer for the assembly. Teens, young adults, and adults are all welcome to be a part of this ministry.

Training is provided for all new ministers and you will be scheduled according to your availability.

All are welcome!

*Be sure that
you first
preach
by the way
you live.*

— St. Charles Borromeo



OUTREACH

From St. Vincent de Paul

In today's gospel, Jesus tells his disciples, "Anyone who gives you a drink of water because you belong to Christ will not, I assure you, go without his reward."

As you donate to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul's ministries or poor box, know that you are serving Christ's poor ones.

Sharing Weekend

Next weekend, October 3 & 4, is our Food Pantry Sharing Weekend. The current needs are peanut butter, jelly, pasta, spaghetti sauce, canned pasta, bottled fruit juice (no tomato), and condensed soup. Please watch expiration dates.

Please know that all donations are appreciated and can be dropped off any day during regular office hours. You can also make monetary donations through our website: <http://ow.ly/RiHrF>

Common Ground of Grief

Haiku: Grief Expression in Seventeen Syllables

By Patrick Dean, Grief Counselor

Tuesday, October 6

11:00 am - 12:30 pm

repeated 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

San Camillo, 10200 W.

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Cost: Free and open to everyone

For further information, visit

www.cemeteries.org

or contact 414-438-4420, ext. 302

or patrickdean@griefwork.com

SAT 3

SUN 4

Oktoberfest Sign-Up
Boy Scout Popcorn Sale
5:00 pm Liturgy

Church

Oktoberfest Sign-Up
Boy Scout Popcorn Sale
8:00 am Liturgy
10:30 am Liturgy
11:30 am GIFT
6:00 pm Liturgy

Church
Church
Hall ABC
Church

Oktoberfest

October 9-10-11

What's New on the Website

Over the last two and a half years, our website has expanded greatly. In fact, we have added so much that the navigation menu and some of the landing pages needed an overhaul.

We are limited to the number of pages allowed on the navigation bar. As the site has grown, we moved past this threshold. You will now see a streamlined menu. Almost all tertiary menu items are gone. They can now be accessed through links on the secondary pages. For example, if you wanted to find the current Food Pantry needs, you would hover over the Outreach tab and click on Human Concerns. From there, just click on the Food Pantry link.

Be sure to check out all the updates and new pages posted over this past summer!

You hand someone a pretty package wrapped in beautiful paper and creative ribbons. You are so excited that she is excited. Does she tear the wrapping off or does she pick around the edges slowly? Either way, you cannot wait till she peels back the tissue paper. You were strolling through Oktoberfest and spotted this one of a kind handmade present and immediately thought of the intended recipient.

Oktoberfest has plenty of original unique artworks including jewelry, painting, pottery, fiber arts, handbags, wooden boxes, glass work, soap, and note cards. Prices start under \$5 and move upwards to reflect the artist's time, talent and investment. Speak with the artists and commission the perfect piece for your wardrobe or home. Jewelry can be sized just for you. Pottery can be ordered in a special color.

Our Lady of Lourdes is proud to support local business people. We bring together the artist and the buyer minus the middleman. Please set aside some of your gift-giving budget to shop at Oktoberfest Artisan Fair.

Thank you!

Tanya Gross (414) 546-6225, Kris Strnad (414) 744-5542 and Barb Webber (414) 377-9177.

CONNECT! WITH THE WORD

MESSAGE FOR THE WEEK - MARK 9:38-43, 45, 47-48

In today's Gospel, Jesus is making a dramatic contrast between "life" (heaven) and Gehenna (hell). He emphasizes that no sacrifice is too great to keep oneself out of the miseries of hell. His images are shocking. Cutting off hands and feet? Plucking out eyes? Ouch! Is hell really so bad that we'd rather go to heaven maimed than go to hell in one piece? Apparently so. The point is clear: we need to do whatever it takes to avoid sin and ultimately to avoid hell. The catechism defines this state of eternal misery as "definitive self-exclusion from communion with God" (§1033). Yes, self-exclusion. God doesn't "send" anyone to hell. Rather, someone chooses hell when he or she freely chooses something over God and won't repent. The choice is ours: cut out the source of the sin—painful though it may be—or stubbornly march with our beloved sins straight into Gehenna. Realistically, what we choose "over" God are not so much our physical body parts as things like a high-paying job that isn't ethical, a favorite pastime that isn't morally upright, or a relationship that isn't chaste. Jesus tells us clearly today, whatever it is that "causes you to sin, cut it off." Period.

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SUNDAY READINGS

Numbers 11:25-29:

What do you think of Moses' advice to Joshua?

James 5:1-6:

What lures you to wealth and riches?

Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48:

How does your faith community deal with jealousy?



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15% off all orders before 4pm every day



“Accorde-moi ton amitié et j'affronterai vents et marées”

September 16, 2015

Dear all,

Partners & Friends of MAEC who, we believe, can help us, through prayers and positive thoughts, win this battle against what we would call the strength of the evil.

We were fighting against a group of thieves, an armed gang – well known, who were taking all land not fenced around us. Last Tuesday, they came on MAEC's property and started to search the ground to extract the rock and set up walls. They stopped the teenagers who were ploughing the ground and the children panicked after following shot. Since then, every day they are on the land working quickly. They don't have any rights and any papers to give them the right to do so.

We notify again the authorities concerned and address a request to the Petion-Ville Mayor, for the protection of the children and staff, and we will continue to knock on doors but time is short because these bandits quickly proceed and operate with complete impunity. They sell land, set up houses within two to three months.

We have worked relentlessly to implement income generating activities over the last 12 months with the breeding and agriculture programs to assure the future of the foster home.

Thanks to the parish of St-John, Guilford, Ct. that facilitate the connection between MAEC and a new program supported by USAID for sustainable agriculture initiatives, and also thanks to Cross Catholic Outreach who is funding a well, we were invited last Friday to present a project for the implementation and technical support of intensive farming in greenhouse, a unit of conditioning and packaging, etc... for marketing.

Such program enables the youth who can't go to school to learn new skills, give them job and avoid the circle of poverty which lead to unscrupulous groups such as the group we are confronting right now.

We are asking you if you can pray and sensitize your parish and/or staff and if you can dedicate a mass or a daily time to MAEC's issues. We believe in the strength of the prayers to overcome the strengths of the darkness.

Thanks to all,

Unite in prayers,

Danielle R Pénette,
Director



Connect!

Uniting Word & World



Studying God's Word

- Numbers 11:25-29
- James 5:1-6
- Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48 [137B]

The readings for the Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time speak to issues of unity and exclusivity that have affected faith communities throughout the ages. Scripture teaches us to be open to God's radical nature of inclusivity.

The first reading is taken from the Book of Numbers. This fourth book of the Old Testament picks up Israel's journey beginning at the base of Mount Sinai and continues until Israel's arrival at the plains of Moab, a territory on the southeastern border of the Promised Land. Today's reading is an excerpt from Numbers 11:1-35 and presents some of the challenges in the early days of Israel's long desert journey. Burdened by the complaints of the overwhelming number of Israelites, literally numbering in the hundreds of thousands (see Nm 11:21), God arranged to have seventy elders assist Moses in the day-to-day operations of the Israelite desert community. Certain as to how God's Spirit works within the community, Joshua (Moses' top aide and general to his army), objected when some members of the community (Eldad and Medad) prophesied in the camp. Moses' reaction taught the young Joshua an important lesson: "Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all people of the LORD were prophets! Would that the LORD might bestow his spirit on them all!"

The second reading is the final reading from the Letter of James. Today's reading is part of the closing remarks of this letter. Here James

issues a final caution to the rich, especially those who have exploited the poor to achieve wealth. He warns that the "cries" of the poor ("the harvesters") have "reached the ears of the Lord of hosts" (5:4). For James, this serves as a warning against material possessions, since in James' view, material wealth created division and exclusivity, which, in turn, worked against the building-up of true Christian community.

In the Gospel reading for today, we hear that John (one of Jesus' disciples), is disturbed by an unexpected development: someone outside the circle of the disciples is successfully driving out demons in Jesus' name. Like Moses with Joshua, Jesus teaches John an important lesson: "Do not prevent him. There is no one who performs a mighty deed in my name who can at the same time speak ill of me. For whoever is not against us is for us." Jesus teaches John that God works through others outside the view of our limited human vision.

The Gospel reading concludes with Jesus issuing a warning to the disciples: do not interfere with God's work of salvation. Using dramatic metaphors of cutting off a hand or a foot, as well as plucking out an eye, Jesus warns those who would cause "one of these little ones ... to sin." Jesus advises that it is better for someone enter the kingdom of God lame or half-blind than "to be thrown into Gehenna." (*Gehenna* is the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew word *gê-hinnôm*—Valley of Hinnom—and is a reference to the place where children were offered as sacrifices in idolatrous cult worship during Israel's Monarchy period in the tenth century BC.) This explains Jesus' pointed reference here to the "little ones." Jesus' intense and violent imagery

is used to emphasize his point: Whereas human behavior and inclination is often to exclude, God's nature is to include, constantly seeking ways to save all people.

The tension between unity and exclusivity is part of the human condition that defines and shapes our communities of faith. Scripture teaches us to rise above the desire to exclude and seek first the ways of God.

Dr. Daniel J. Scholz

Inspiring Your Homily

Few of us, if any, can say that we have never been jealous. It is a normal reaction, but it becomes problematic when it persists. Jealousy is a cleverly disguised need for power and control that can lead to dominance and insensitivity to others. It is a powerful force in our lives, and we need God's help to overcome and deal with it. Jealousy easily happens when we see others who are more fortunate than ourselves. Social media enables us to see inside other people's lives, which helps us to spiral down in our spiritual lives because we are controlled by our desires. The more we focus on ourselves, the less we focus on God.

We heard today how God sent his Spirit upon the elders who wanted to assist Moses, which gave rise to jealousy and suspicion. Even Joshua, the future leader of the Israelites, fell into the trap. He told Moses to stop Eldad and Medad from speaking out, but Moses responded that he wished everyone was a prophet.

Jealousy is one of the deadly sins, which can be traced back to the Cain and Abel story. God accepted what Abel offered him but not Cain's offering. Cain became jealous, which was so overpowering an emotion that he killed his brother. Saul became jealous of David because "Saul has slain his thousands, David his tens of thousands" (1 Sm 18:7). Saul ends his own life by falling on his sword.

St. Thomas Aquinas maintained that jealousy is the only sin that does not give us pleasure. It leads to competitiveness, because if we lose at

any game, we consider ourselves worthless. We place unrealistic expectations on ourselves and those around us, and we feel things should be easier and faster for us. If nothing happens, we become upset about our shortcomings.

We begrudge people who are more talented, who have more material possessions and money. We feel jealous about others' successes, strengths, and relationships. Someone else's life looks much easier than ours, or they have closer friendships. Social networking like Facebook enables us to compare ourselves to others. We wish that we had the nice things that others possess, so we continue to harp or complain when we don't have them, which leads us to berate ourselves. The green-eyed monster that Shakespeare wrote about raises its ugly head and controls us. We need the self-control that St. Paul writes about to the Ephesians (5:23), and his attitude, "I know indeed how to live in humble circumstances; I know also how to live with abundance" (Phil 4:12).

We can easily overextend ourselves to keep up with the Joneses, as the saying goes. We like to impress others with our home, our car, our clothes. The worst part is we become what Dorothy Sayers, a novelist, calls "levelers," cutting people down to our size. It is comparable to tripping our competitor before the finish line, or hoping the person pulls a hamstring along the route.

Jesus had to deal with jealousy because some of his apostles wanted to stop a man from casting out demons. Maybe the added reason was because they failed in their exorcism of a demon. They might have considered themselves insiders or protective of their turf, as happens in some parishes. So he had to reprimand them as Moses did. Don't you ever wonder if the apostles learned from this event in their lives? We might be jealous every time someone plays the piano, and we wish we could do that. Rather than wallow in jealousy that can consume us, why not take piano lessons?

Most of us have an ingrained attitude that entitles us to certain things. Some young adults



who leave home believe that their standard of living should be better than their parents, even though their parents have worked hard and long to accomplish what they have. Some people strapped with financial problems feel “entitled” to buy things on credit, despite knowing they will go into debt and that it is a lousy idea. Having nice things, however, is more important to them than getting out of debt.

Jealousy means we are not satisfied with the gifts God has given us. In Hebrews we read, “Be content with what you have” (13:5). That becomes a challenge for many because they see the nice things others have, but it does not stop them from complaining that they are not as blessed. They end up being hard on themselves for what they don’t have, instead of being grateful for what they have.

Trying to counteract our jealous feelings is difficult and it can be comparable to attempting to control our car skidding on ice. It is most challenging, but we need to avoid the hazard by finding out what is triggering the jealousy. We must admit and confess it the next time we avail ourselves of the sacrament of reconciliation.

A story is told about two men in a hospital room. One of them had his bed near the window and each day he would vividly describe what he saw outside. The other man became very jealous. One night the man near the window had a heart attack, but he could not reach his call button. The other man refused to call the nurse, which resulted in the man dying in his hospital bed. As soon as his body was removed, the other man insisted the next morning that he obtain the bed near the window, which he did. When he looked out the window, however, all he saw was a blank wall.

Jealousy has its own punishment. St. James tells us that “where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every foul practice” (3:16). St. Paul gives the best advice, that “[love] is not jealous” (1 Cor 13:4). Love can conquer any jealousy.

Rev. Richard Hart, OFM Cap

Quoting from Tradition

The measure of love is, to stop nowhere; “that your love,” says he, “may abound yet more and more.” Consider the character of the expression, “that it may abound yet more and more,” he says, “in knowledge and all discernment.” He does not extol friendship merely, nor love merely, but such as comes of knowledge; that is, Ye should not apply the same love to all: for this comes not of love, but from want of feeling. What means he by “in knowledge”? He means, with judgment, with reason, with discrimination. There are who love without reason, simply and any how, whence it comes that such friendships are weak. He says, “in knowledge and all discernment, that ye may approve the things that are excellent,” that is, the things that are profitable. This I say not for my own sake, says he, but for yours, for there is danger lest any one be spoiled by the love of the heretics; for all this he hints at, and see how he brings it in. Not for my own sake, says he, do I say this, but that ye may be sincere, that is, that ye receive no spurious doctrine under the pretense of love. How then, says he, “If it be possible, live peaceably with all men”? “Live peaceably” (Rom. xii. 18), he says, not, Love so as to be harmed by that friendship; for he says, “if thy right eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; that ye may be sincere” (Matt. V. 29), that is, before God, “and without offence,” that is, before men, for many men’s friendships are often a hurt to them. Even though it hurts thee not, says he, still another may stumble thereat. “Unto the day of Christ”; i.e. that ye may then be found pure, having caused no one to stumble.

John Chrysostom, Homily II, Homilies on Philipians. Translation from A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church. Series II. Volume 13. Edited by P. Schaff et al. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, reprint 1978–1983. Research by Jay Martin

Building Your Liturgy

September 27, 2015

Our entrance antiphon speaks of God having true judgment as we are sinners who do not obey the commands, but the Collect appeals to God for pardon and mercy, “and make those hastening to attain your promises heirs to the treasures of heaven.”

There is so much to unpack in this prayer. We frequently talk of living the commands and doing God’s will, but one questions if it is something we do naturally or begrudgingly. The Collect’s use of “hastening” provides a sense of urgency, a sense of purpose and intentionality. Are we actively working toward the kingdom?

Some Protestant faiths ask the question, “Are you saved?” and relate it in a “one and done” manner with their baptisms or altar calls. Our reality is that we are baptized and confirmed, but we frequently receive the sacraments of Communion and confession. We know God is good and has infinite mercy, but we don’t just rest on our laurels. We must actively seek to be better people and to strive for good. We cannot get caught up in the petty bickering.

It is easy for me to read the Gospel and say, “Those silly guys. I wouldn’t do that!” But the reality is, I may not bicker with coworkers, but I am guilty of passing judgments, or being jealous if someone gets more attention from the pastor or more support for their programs. It is easy to get caught comparing salaries or offices or judging how many hours another puts in, especially in church ministry where the hours are often fluid depending on the events of the week.

Would that we all had the spirit of the psalmist, being thankful for the law of the Lord and its guidance. God’s guidance is not something negative to hem us in but a gift that he offers to rein us in, protecting us from ourselves!

For a fresh sound, try Ed Bolduc’s version of Psalm 19. The refrain is translated as “Lord, You have the words of everlasting life”; it begins bare-bones but then adds layers.

Sunday Preface 6 puts it all in perspective: “For in you we live and move and have our being...”

Consider the Irish prayer “Christ Be beside Me” in one of its sung forms or “Sent Forth by God’s Blessing.” Tom Booth’s “Cry the Gospel” or Angotti’s “I Send You Out” also would fit well.

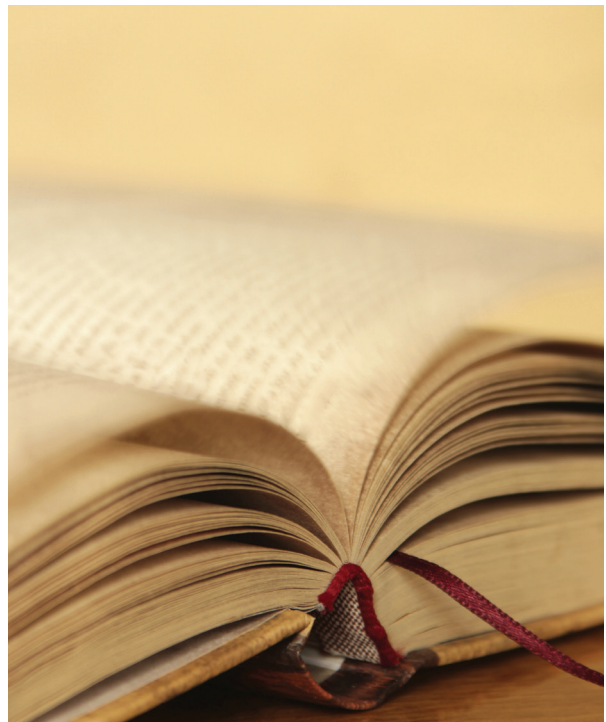
Planning Your Week

Tuesday is the feast of Sts. Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, the archangels. Note that there are two options for the first reading. There is a Gloria, and the day has its own preface. Expose your congregation to the “Hymn of the Angels” from *Hansel and Gretel*.

Wednesday is the memorial of St. Jerome, who was one of the first doctors of the church, who translated much of the Bible into Latin for the Vulgate translation. Tuesday is the memorial of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, the Little Flower, who is one of four female doctors of the church. She did not do great scholarly things like Jerome but had a simple way to perfection.

Friday is the memorial of the Holy Guardian Angels.

Jill Maria Murdy



Raising Your Prayers

Introductions

For the Mass of the Day (to use after the Greeting).
The action of God's spirit cannot be limited. We are misled if we believe that it can only be found in this place or that or in a particular person or group. Any action of service, especially to those who are most weak and vulnerable, is God's work and a testimony to faith. We must caution ourselves, however, and guard against becoming too absorbed in worldly things as they can distract us from what is most important.

Penitential Act

Realizing that God's precepts are not meant to be burdens but vehicles to joy, we ask God to cleanse us, especially from faults that are unknown, so that we can live God's law more perfectly.
(Pause for silent reflection.)

Your ordinances are true and all of them are just.
Lord, have mercy.

Your decree is trustworthy and gives wisdom to the simple.
Christ, have mercy.

Your law is perfect and refreshes our souls.
Lord, have mercy.



Prayer of the Faithful

Heavenly Father,
we offer our prayers today,
seeking to live more perfectly
the law you place before us
and to be more sensitive to your guidance.

For all leaders and ministers in the church,
especially those who proclaim the Gospel
in difficult circumstances,
that they may see their ministry of presence
as a presence of love and the very work of God.
We pray to the Lord.

For the grace of being able to realize
that sharing brings a greater joy than coveting.
We pray to the Lord.

For newly married couples
and those preparing for marriage,
that they may see that God is trustworthy
and that his laws are perfect,
so that a strong relationship with him
will be the foundation of the love they share.
We pray to the Lord.

For those willing to risk
and be voices for those who are oppressed,
witnesses to the challenges
and priorities of living the Gospel,
and for advocates for peace,
that, although they are often ridiculed
and put in harm's way,
they may persevere and not lose heart.
We pray to the Lord.

For those who have died and now rest in God,
that the joy that being fulfilled brings
will allow their souls to soar in peace
as they discover the love eternity brings.
We pray to the Lord.

Gentle and compassionate God,
may these prayers, petitions of our love for you,
lead us to a greater desire for
and awareness of your presence!
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Rev. Mark Suslenko



Engaging Your Parishioners

Reflections to use for your bulletins, website, social media, and more.

Message of the Week

Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48

In today's Gospel, Jesus is making a dramatic contrast between "life" (heaven) and Gehenna (hell). He emphasizes that no sacrifice is too great to keep oneself out of the miseries of hell. His images are shocking. Cutting off hands and feet? Plucking out eyes? Ouch! Is hell really so bad that we'd rather go to heaven maimed than go to hell in one piece? Apparently so. The point is clear: we need to do whatever it takes to avoid sin and ultimately to avoid hell.

The catechism defines this state of eternal misery as "definitive self-exclusion from communion with God" (§1033). Yes, *self*-exclusion. God doesn't "send" anyone to hell. Rather, someone chooses hell when he or she freely chooses something over God and won't repent. The choice is ours: cut out the source of the sin—painful though it may be—or stubbornly march with our beloved sins straight into Gehenna. Realistically, what we choose "over" God are not so much our physical body parts as things like a high-paying job that isn't ethical, a favorite pastime that isn't morally upright, or a relationship that isn't chaste. Jesus tells us clearly today, whatever it is that "causes you to sin, cut it off." Period.

Questions of the Week

Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48:

How does your faith community deal with jealousy?

Numbers 11:25-29:

What do you think of Moses' advice to Joshua?

James 5:1-6:

What lures you to wealth and riches?



Everyday Stewardship

You can't guess how many times the phrase has been heard in my family, "It's time to start eating healthy." You can't guess because I can't even guess, and it's my family! When that intense awareness arrives that we have as a collective unit all fallen too far off the bandwagon, we begin to devise a plan. Exercise, more water, lower carbs, more water, leafy greens, and more water: you get the picture. Also, every time, we must remove all bad foods from the house and make a commitment never to buy such items again. These delicious snacks will lead us down the path to ruin. They must be eliminated.

Of course, no cookie ever made me eat it. But I have chosen to eat many cookies. My will at times is just too weak to resist eating it. So, it actually is a good move not to have it in the pantry. There is no reason to unnecessarily tempt oneself.

In Mark's Gospel, Jesus goes to extremes to make this very point. He suggests that even if a body part causes us to sin, cut it off. Of course, my hand, eye, or foot has never forced me to do anything. However, the point is well taken that we cannot allow ourselves to fall back into the same patterns of sin, again and again.

When applying this theme to stewardship, we cannot allow ourselves to come up against the same obstacles to mature discipleship, again and again. If something tempts us to spend our money unwisely, or waste our time, or squander our talents and gifts, changes need to be made. Since we are not perfect, we will always find new obstacles along the way. When we realize we have fallen again, we need to make a change, and empty our spiritual pantries of all those bad cookies. Then we will be on the path again to good stewardship health.

Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS