

The Work of the People

The Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

On this Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, we continue our journey through the summer months and through the ministry of Jesus, a ministry and a life to which we hear him call us in the scripture of these weeks.

The first reading for this Sunday is from the first Book of Kings. When God offers to give Solomon whatever he might ask for, the young king does not hesitate: he asks for an understanding heart. We can sense how daunted he is by his task as he contrasts his own youthfulness and inexperience, and the overwhelming numbers and needs of the people over whom he has been placed. God grants his request and makes it clear that this is the best gift Solomon could have asked for.

"All things work for good for those who love God" (Romans 8:28). Paul is not simply being optimistic or ignoring the challenges of life – he certainly experienced his share of those. Rather, he is expressing his profound faith that we are all in God's hands, not only now but from the beginning of time and to the end of time. God's protection and his call are with us even before we are aware of them.

In the Gospel today, Jesus continues to speak about the Kingdom in parables. The Kingdom is incredibly precious – a treasure, a pearl – and if we wish to attain it, we must sacrifice a great deal – perhaps even sell all we have. The parable of the net thrown into the sea, like the parable of the weeds and the wheat we heard last week, reminds us that the kingdom is a messy business. Only at the end of the ages will the good and wicked be separated from each other; until then, everyone is mixed up together. We must resist the temptation to sort ourselves out, to "throw away" some while retaining others. That task is reserved for the end of the age, the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God.

The reflection for this week is from Kathy Coffey who is an award-winning writer, mother of four, and speaker who gives workshops and retreats nationally and internationally. Her most recent book is *When the Saints Came Marching In*.

What is the pearl of great price, the treasure in the field, the fish worth keeping? We all know the right answer: God. To get at the real answer, we might ask ourselves, "What's most important? What do I want so badly it aches?"

The parent might respond with the name of a child, the lover thinks of the beloved, the artist or craftsperson of the next project, the businessperson of a promotion, the naturalist of stream and meadow.

Here's the catch: what if the right answer and the real answer are one and the same? Isn't God big enough to encompass it all? If our loves and longings spring from the deepest, best self, then they are part and parcel of the God-spark, Christ within.

The God-planted joy in it all gives permanence. So if the beloved dies, the children eventually leave home, the career derails, the meadow becomes a parking lot, or the project ends, something vital remains. Through the enduring happiness, memory, or sense of completion, God leaves a lasting mark.

Jesus' genius is communicating these subtle, hard-to-define truths in symbols, not laws or abstractions. The symbol is elastic enough to hold polarities and concrete enough for the youngest to grasp, at least a bit. It sounds like a riddle: what do pearls, fields, and fish have in common? They all get us thinking, questioning, reaching for God whose hidden presence hovers tantalizingly close. Without God, we have nothing. Having God, we have everything. Maybe we're never without.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Jer. 13:1-11/Mt. 13:31-35

Tuesday: Jer. 14:17-22/Mt. 13:36-43

Wednesday: Jer. 15:10, 16-21/Jn. 11:19-27 or Lk. 10:38-42

Thursday: Jer. 18:1-6/Mt. 13:47-53

Friday: Jer. 26:1-9/Mt. 13:54-58

Saturday: Jer. 26:11-16, 24/Mt. 14:1-12

Sunday: Is. 55:1-3/Rom. 8:35, 37-39/Mt. 14:13-21

A FAMILY PERSPECTIVE

The man in today's gospel "sold all he had" for the treasure he found. Family relationships are "treasures" and demand our total personal investment. Invest yourself in the "treasure" of your family.

A MARRIAGE MOMENT

Solomon asked the Lord for an "understanding heart" (1 Kings 3:9) not a long life or riches. Marriage comes with plenty of occasions to complain and be irritated. Think of one criticism you have of your beloved. Imagine how an understanding heart would handle that criticism.

WORSHIP

Monday, July 27
8:00 am + John Auer

Tuesday, July 28
8:00 am + Michael R. Graczyk (Josie Osiecki)

Wednesday, July 29
8:00 am + NO MASS

Thursday, July 30
8:00 am + For Good Health of Samantha Allen
(M/M Nelson Allen)

Friday, July 31
8:00 am + Stella Hale (Joan Rembielak)

Saturday, August 1
4:30 pm + Alice Undereiner (Burdick Fam. & Pat Watson)

Sunday, August 2
8:00 am + AT ST. ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
Phyllis Hofferzman (Friend)
9:30 am + AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
Living & Deceased Parishioners

SAMUEL GROUP A NEW INITIATIVE FOR YOUR ADULTS DISCERNING ANY VOCATION

Just because everyone else seems to think you are prepared for life as an adult doesn't mean you aren't wrestling with the big questions. The Vocations Office and the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry are collaborating on a new initiative called Samuel Group. Are you contemplating marriage? Wondering if you are being called to the priesthood or religious life? Samuel Group may be just what you need. Young adults ages 20 - 30 are encouraged to participate in a seven-month journey that includes monthly gatherings at St. Mark Catholic Center, spiritual direction, prayer, talks, small group discussion and accompaniment. The goal is for each participant to grow in self-knowledge and to hear and respond to God's call with an open heart. Please visit www.eriercd.org/youth/samuelgroup.html for an information video, directions on how to apply and a downloadable flier.

PARISH EVENTS CALENDAR

Tuesday, July 28
After Mass - St. Anthony's Novena

Saturday, August 1
3:30 - 4:15 pm - Confession (in the Daily Mass Chapel)
Please observe healthy social distancing

Sunday, August 2
Before Mass at St. Bernadette Mission
After Mass at St. Anthony of Padua
(In the Daily Mass Chapel)
Confessions may be by appointment as well. Please call the church office

NOTE:
WEARING FACE MASKS IS REQUIRED
FOR THE TIME YOU ARE IN THE CHURCH BUILDING

NOTICE - Friday, July 24 and Saturday, July 25 The Found Lounge in Cambridge Springs will be featuring Cambridge Springs Volunteer Fire Dept. carnival food from 11 am - 9 pm. Menu includes Steak Hoagie (\$6), Sausage Sandwich (\$6), Pulled Pork (\$6), Ox Roast (\$6), Jumbo Dogs (\$4), Small Fresh Cut Fries (\$3), Large Fresh Cut Fries (\$5).

Supports the CSVFD.

ST. BERNADETTE MISSION

Offertory	\$325.00
Candles	20.00
National Needs	45.00
TOTAL	\$390.00

Catholic Services Appeal
Pledged: \$5,365 Paid: \$4,965

NOTICE

Due to Covid-19 virus pandemic St. Anthony of Padua's 2020 annual craft fair will not be held this year.

We anticipate this event will be held in 2021. More information will follow next summer.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to Jordan Leandro who was awarded the 2020 Faith Award by the Holy Cross Fraternity of the Order of Franciscan Seculars last Sunday after the 9:30 am Mass. The purpose of this award is to financially and with faith encourage young Catholic adults of Crawford County to continue Catholic ministry while attending an institution of higher learning.

THANK YOU to those parishioners who have contributed to the Roof Repair Project. With the cost of the project more than originally projected, please, if you can help financially, we would be most grateful.

STEWARDSHIP—ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA

Offertory	\$428.00
Maintenance	282.00
Candles	16.00
National Needs	190.00
Roof Donation	1,440.00
CSA	182.50
TOTAL	\$2,538.50

Catholic Services Appeal
Pledged: \$25,450 Paid: \$22,050

CHURCH NAME: ST. ANTONY OF PADUA

CHURCH NO.:

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:
