

July 10, 2016
15th Sunday in Ordinary
Time

Saint John Catholic Church

Mission Statement: *"We envision a process of transforming all baptized Christian, clergy, and lay into maturing persons knowing themselves in community, growing in their relationship to God, lived in individual and shared ministry responses to their baptismal call."*

Parish Contact Information

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Pastor

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Deacon

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Dear Parishioners,

This weekend we find a question we all ought to ponder ourselves and with our children: "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus answers with a question, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?" Of course we are to love God with all our heart, with all our being, with all our strength, with all our mind, and love our neighbor as ourselves. Jesus replied, "Do this and you will live." Then we are given the example of the Good Samaritan story.

In our culture, do you, your children, or young adults ponder the question: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" or, are we convinced that what others say: I don't need to do anything else because Jesus did it all for me. Certainly, there is something we must do. It is stated, not only in the Law, but reinforced by Jesus' reply to "do this and you will live."

What does it mean to love with our "whole being"? It is clear that it is not simply an intellectual exercise, but something that is lived out. If we do not fully understand what it means to love our neighbor, perhaps we need to start with loving ourselves so that we can love our neighbors.

We have a responsibility to not only care for our exterior life and that of others, but also to provide food, shelter, clothing, affection, and so on. However, in our culture, we are lacking greatly in taking care of our inner selves. Yes, we are responsible for the wellbeing of others and need to be responsible in basic needs. But, we neglect the interior life which can affect those around us, essentially we could end up "walking past" or ignoring those around us—like the man found along the roadside.

We are responsible to our souls. We need to pay attention to our spiritual selves, not just our material selves. So many people in their older years realize that they spent so much of their lives working and building up their financial securities so their family could have things. Yet, as we focus on the "stuff", folks end up missing their children's youth and miss out on their spouse's closeness and companionship. As Fr. Charles Irvin (senior priest of the Diocese of Lansing) put it, "Like the man in the ditch in today's gospel account their (spouses) and children were on the side of the road and passed by. Many fail to give adequate attention to their families and to their relationship with God, wishing at the end of their lives that they had been more responsive to both."

Proper relationships can lead to a broader awareness of those around us. Solid prayerful relationship with God and experiencing His love and our responding to that love is paramount—that is the "Law of the Heart" between us and God. This love which fills us is to flow from our inner life out to those persons we love and ought to love. That is when we know we are loved by God and when we allow ourselves to be touched by that love, we begin to truly engage, relate, and care for those around us and not the other way around. The improper way is where if I think if I just work hard enough and save up enough, then my family will love me and God will love me.

Fr. Charles Irvin commented, "the Good Samaritan didn't simply give the innkeeper money and move on. He told the innkeeper he would be back and give further attention to the neglected man". Simply giving money is only superficial concern and gives me permission not to get involved. Our time and our attention are more important than our money. Staying in touch with our friends is important not only to them but to us, to our sense of well-being. Friendships require time and effort. The same is true in our friendship with God. We can't simply throw a few crumbs of our time and care for God and then move on.

What, then, do we give to God? However busy and preoccupied we may be, we need to put times of reflection into our lives. Those times of reflection and thought must be intentional and deliberate; they won't just happen by default. Our ability to respond is learned and cultivated in our families, in our homes, in those with whom we interact daily. Our ability to respond in caring love isn't just a gift that automatically drops down from the sky. It's a gift God has planted deep within our hearts and souls, a gift that needs to be nurtured, a habitual state of mind that needs to be developed. Without times of prayer, without times of reflective awareness in God's presence we will remain spiritual children, immature and self-centered. Caring involves a change in our attitudes. We fear changes and are comfortable in living in our same old ways. We need a change in how we see things. Worries of what might happen beset us. Mark Twain once said, "I have known many troubles in my life, most of which never happened." Fear can immobilize us. But while this is so we need to also realize that God is a God of surprises, surprises that can change us in good ways.

Have a great week.

Parish News & Events

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Mass Schedule

Sunday 7/10 8:00am For Mercedes Diccio
Wednesday 7/13 8:30am For Christine Hanley
Thursday 7/14 6:30pm For the Ordination of
Deacon Tyler Mattson
Sunday 7/17 8:00am For Kenneth Ludwig Jr.

*If you would like to have a Mass said for someone,
please contact Rita in the Church Office at 515-523-1943.*

Financial Report for the week of July 3rd

Regular Tithes \$898.00
Children \$27.00
Building Fund \$0.00

Repair Fund Balance 6/29: \$3,730.67

ADA Balance Due: \$373.90

Birthdays

7/11: Jason Elgin
7/15: Rich Bachman

Anniversaries

Cleon & Kaye Klemish
7/13/1963
Rich & Barbara Bachman
7/17/1976

Liturgical Ministers July 17

Cross Bearer: Cody Moreland

Greeters: Jeanne Richter,
Phyllis O'Brien

Lector: Rich Kennedy

Host: Rich Kennedy

Cup: Les Elgin, Elizabeth
Moreland

Servers: Paxton Schneider,
Belle Fagan

Traveling Chalice: Les &
Theresa Elgin

4 Keys to the Joy of Love

The Joy of Love, or in Latin, *Amoris Laetitia* is an Apostolic Exhortation. Pope Francis wrote this document to summarize the conversations that bishops from around the world had at two consecutive meetings, discussing the mission of marriage and family life. As an exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia* is meant to be read by all Catholics, and it hopes to inspire a greater response to God's invitation in us all!

Themes of *Amoris Laetitia*

The Messiness of Love: Perhaps Pope Francis' greatest contribution is his recognition that in family life "the Holy Spirit sows in the midst of human weakness"(308). This is not meant to water down "God's plan in all its grandeur"(307) but instead Pope Francis reminds us that no family is perfect, and that God's grace is active in all our lives and in all circumstances. He challenges all of us to "find possible ways of responding to God and growing in the midst of limits"(305) and to lovingly accompany those who find the Church's teaching on marriage and family life challenging.

Next week: *Grace in the Ordinary*

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Catholic Websites

www.catholicscripturestudyinc.org

www.magnificat.net

www.usccb.org

www.wau.org

www.catholicculture.org

www.catholicnewsagency.com

www.ewtnnews.com

www.ignatiusinsight.com

www.ncregister.com

www.osv.com

www.zenit.org

Holy Father's Prayer Intentions

Universal: That political responsibility may be lived at all levels as a high form of charity.

Evangelization: That, amid social inequalities, Latin American Christians may bear witness to love for the poor and contribute to a more fraternal society.