

THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

NOVEMBER 4, 2018

MASS READINGS

MONDAY: PHIL 2:1-5, PS 131, LK 14:12-14
TUESDAY: PHIL 2:5-11, PS 22, LK 14:15-24
WEDNESDAY: LPHIL 2:12-18, PS 27, LK 14:25-33
THURSDAY: PHIL 3:3-8A, PS 105, LK 15:1-10
FRIDAY: EZ 47:1-2,8-9,12, PS 46, I COR 3:8C-11,16-17, JN 2:13-22
SATURDAY: PHIL 4:10-19, PS 112, LK 16:9-15
NEXT SUNDAY: THIRTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME-RDGS: 1 KGS 17:10-16, PS 146, HEB 9:24-28, MK 12:38-44

MASS INTENTIONS

MONDAY: MARIE BERRY
TUESDAY: BONNIE SNOUWAERT
WEDNESDAY: FR. AMBROSE ZEIGLER
THURSDAY: PAUL VELTEN
FRIDAY: POOR SOULS
VIGIL: KATHY LESTER
7:30: DEC. OF ANDERSON FAMILY
10:00: DEC. VETERANS
NOON: FOR THE PARIS

MEMORIAL FLOWERS

for the deceased religious & for the Poor Souls. Francis & Catherine Spitznagle. (Clifford, George, Dora, Barbara & Brian Gause, Virgil & Sarah Miller, Ed & Shirley Bairos, Eileen Hilt, Herman & Fenny Dilport). Charles, Mabel & Jane Clapp families. (Marjorie, Clarence & Clarence, Jr. Slifer). Bob Bohan. Elizabeth Vanderkolk. Bob & Barb Kochert. Karen Fox, Mike & Rosemary Cavanaugh. Kathleen Lester. Marvin Anthrop. (Herm, Jane & Joe Deerr). (Elizabeth Fritts & Joan Helms). Vince FitzSimons.



You are not far from the kingdom of God."

Way back when in Sunday school we were taught to take as many scripture passages as we could find that made us "feel good" and to use them when we weren't doing so well. It seemed like the Christian equivalent of "whistling in the dark". And yet as many years that have passed I still find myself adding to my treasure of "feel good" quotes and use them regularly to lift my spirits and give me that extra something to proceed. Far from whistling in the dark I am actually engaged in dispelling the darkness. The psalmist reminds us that "though we walk through the valley of darkness, we should fear no evil". In this we find that our adherence to the word and its power we are able to fight the foe and to advance in the way of grace and truth. Such a passage may be found quoted above. What a delight to be able to hear from the lips of Our Savior the observation that we are not far from the kingdom of God. And yet sometimes we may feel quite far due to a variety of things. Notice that what prompted this observation was the man's response to the question about salvation. The man knew his "stuff" but the Lord, who knows hearts, also knew that the man possessed more than just "book" knowledge, he possessed "life" knowledge. The difference being that he found that the truth of God did indeed matter and that a life lived according to that truth is life in the kingdom. Using the quote above we may find that on occasion we are not as close to the kingdom as we would like. In such a case we would be wise to seek the guidance of the Spirit to set our minds and hearts back on the right track to that kingdom. Prayer, fasting and works of mercy are the means by which we can be assured, through the virtue of hope that our Lord's words about the kingdom are truly meant for us. A particularly good regimen of prayerful examination of conscience allows us the insight to see if our kingdom sense is spot on and that we have our lives directed along that path which leads to God. Patterning our lives along these lines, by using pertinent scriptures, also gives us the confidence to grow deeper in our love and knowledge of the word which, as we heard last week, cuts through to the heart of the matter to reveal our lives in the light of gospel goodness. Being close to the kingdom of God must then mean that we are far from sin and darkness. This gives us reason to boast, only in the Lord however, in that it is through his mercy and grace and our co-operation with same that we are able to go through this valley preceded by the light that is the light of men. We cannot say enough how prayerful listening brings all our "treasure passages" to life in our lives and we can actually hear the Lord saying these things to us. What a valuable boost to spiritual lives so much in need of consolation, comfort and love.

THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

NOVEMBER 4, 2018



*In Thee, my God and Saviour,
Forevermore the same,
My spirit hath rejoicing,
For holy is Thy name.
My soul doth magnify the `Soul`,
Sing all in glad accord!
Praise `Love` who lifts the lowly,
For faithful is `Love's` word.
I magnify and bless Thee,
For faithful is Thy word.*

*Thou who alone art mighty
Hast done to me great things,
Remembrance of Thy mercy
Sure help to Israel brings.
Thy power, O `Soul`, will I extol,
Who hast redeemed my soul;
I praise Thee, `Soul`, with gladness,
For Thou hast made me whole.
I magnify and bless Thee,
For Thou hast made me whole.*

In today's Gospel from St. Mark, Jesus encounters a sincere scribe. The passage offers us an insight into the Kingdom of God and our own role in spreading its influence:

"One of the scribes came to Jesus and asked him, "Which is the first of all the commandments?" Jesus replied, "The first is this: Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.

The second is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these." The scribe said to him, "Well said, teacher. You are right in saying, He is One and there is no other than he.

And to love him with all your heart, with all your understanding, with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is worth more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."

And when Jesus saw that he answered with understanding, he said to him, "You are not far from the Kingdom of God." And no one dared to ask him any more questions." (Mk. 12:28-34)

The kind of all consuming, single minded, all encompassing love for God offered in the response of the Scribe is what Jesus affirmed. It is also the key which opens the door to living now in the Kingdom of God.

Jesus had compassion for this man of good will. His response to him was "You are not far from the kingdom of God." What popped off the page to me today was that the truth behind the statement was logistical - as well as ontological.

Jesus has inaugurated the Kingdom.

The Catholic Catechism explains "To carry out the will of the Father Christ inaugurated the kingdom of heaven on earth." Now the Father's will is "to raise up men to share in his own divine life". He does this by gathering men around his Son Jesus Christ. This gathering is the Church, "on earth the seed and beginning of that kingdom". (CCC #541)

THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

NOVEMBER 4, 2018

Jesus is the Kingdom.

This Scribe was standing right in front of Him. He was literally and physically not far from the Kingdom. All it took to live in that Kingdom was to embrace the King. The inquiry of this Scribe echoes throughout time as men and women experience the travail unleashed by man's separation from God. The effects are within us and around us. That separation is the result of sin. It can only be healed through a Savior.

The Good News, which is what the word Gospel means, is that the Father has sent just such a Savior! That Savior, Jesus Christ, has inaugurated the Kingdom.

We know that what we witness around us, and experience within us, often does not reflect God's loving plan for the human race. We long for the fullness of His Kingdom. With His response to the scribe Jesus affirms that the Kingdom is a present reality. He instructs us concerning our vocation as disciples to the spread of the kingdom - within us, among us, and in the world.

We can spread the kingdom by living in the heart of the Church for the sake of the world.

There, living in His Body, we continue His redemptive mission and advance the spread and influence of the Kingdom. Our membership in the Church is a participation in the life of God; what the Apostle Peter referred to as a "participation in the Divine nature". (2 Peter 1:4)

It is thereby a participation in the kingdom of which the Church is both a seed and sign. In one of its numerous and rich expositions of the mystery of the kingdom, the Catechism of the Catholic Church explains:

"It was the Son's task to accomplish the Father's plan of salvation in the fullness of time. Its accomplishment was the reason for his being sent. "The Lord Jesus inaugurated his Church by preaching the Good News, that is, the coming of the Reign of God, promised over the ages in the scriptures." To fulfill the Father's will, Christ ushered in the Kingdom of heaven on earth. The Church "is the Reign of Christ already present in mystery." (CCC #763)

Through our Baptism the Church becomes our home, our mother, the place in which we now live our lives in Christ. We are sons and daughters of the Church. In living our lives in her we carry forward in time the continuing redemptive mission of Jesus Christ who is the Head of His Body and make the Kingdom present now.

In its treatment of this mystery of the Church, the Catechism of the Catholic Church states:

"To reunite all his children, scattered and led astray by sin, the Father willed to call the whole of humanity together into his Son's Church. The Church is the place where humanity must rediscover its unity and salvation. The Church is "the world reconciled." She is that bark which "in the full sail of the Lord's cross, by the breath of the Holy Spirit, navigates safely in this world." According to another image dear to the Church Fathers, she is prefigured by Noah's ark, which alone saves from the flood."(CCC #845)

We are called to live in the heart of the Church for the sake of the world. We are on a mission to bring the world, through Christ, into the New World of His Church, the seed and sign of the coming kingdom. Again, the Catechism expresses it wonderfully in passages such as these:

"To carry out the will of the Father Christ inaugurated the kingdom of heaven on earth." Now the Father's will is "to raise up men to share in his own divine life". He does this by gathering men around his Son Jesus Christ. This gathering is the Church, "on earth the seed and beginning of that kingdom".

"Christ stands at the heart of this gathering of men into the "family of God". By his word, through signs that manifest the reign of God, and by sending out his disciples, Jesus calls all people to come together around him. But above all in the great Paschal mystery - his death on the cross and his Resurrection - he would accomplish the coming of his kingdom. "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." Into this union with Christ all men are called. (CCC #541b, 542)

"The kingdom of heaven was inaugurated on earth by Christ. "This kingdom shone out before men in the word, in the works and in the presence of Christ" (LG 5). The Church is the seed and beginning of this kingdom. Its keys are entrusted to Peter. (CCC #567)

"Everyone is called to enter the kingdom. First announced to the children of Israel, this messianic kingdom is intended to accept men of all nations. To enter it, one must first accept Jesus' word: The word of the Lord is compared to a seed which is sown in a field; those who hear it with faith and are numbered among the little flock of Christ have truly received the kingdom. Then, by its own power, the seed sprouts and grows until the harvest." (CCC #543)

THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

NOVEMBER 4, 2018

In Jesus Christ, the Kingdom has been inaugurated. We are members of the Body of Christ which also makes this kingdom present as seed and sign in a world which is in labor. We are a people on mission in a world waiting to be fully liberated from the bondage of sin.

Our mission is to bring all men and women into the Body of the Savior which is the seed of His Kingdom.

As with all seeds, this Church has the entire genetic composition of what it will be within it. The Kingdom will be manifested in its fullness when Jesus returns as King to "make all things new". (Rev. 21:5) Yet, it begins right now as we live our lives in Him as a seed and sign of that Kingdom.

I conclude with another passage from the Catechism: "The whole Church is apostolic, in that she remains, through the successors of St. Peter and the other apostles, in communion of faith and life with her origin: and in that she is "sent out" into the whole world."

"All members of the Church share in this mission, though in various ways. "The Christian vocation is, of its nature, a vocation to the apostolate as well." Indeed, we call an apostolate "every activity of the Mystical Body" that aims "to spread the Kingdom of Christ over all the earth." (CCC#863)

You - and I - are not far from the Kingdom. Jesus is in our midst. The Kingdom has come, is coming, and will come. Let us hasten its advance.

By Deacon Keith Fournier

At the center of Christ's preaching

St. Mark announces to us the beginning of the public life of our Lord in these words: "And after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God and saying: 'The time is completed, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent, and believe in the gospel'" (Mk 1:14).

St. Matthew says somewhat more briefly: "From that time Jesus began to preach and to say: 'Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand'" (Mt 4:17).

St. Matthew sums up the whole of our Lord's teaching in the words: "preaching the gospel of the kingdom" (Mt 4:23), and our Lord himself, according to St. Luke, describes this as the object of his mission: "To other cities also I must preach the kingdom of God: for I am sent for this purpose" (Lk 4:43).

The good news of the kingdom of God was the starting point and the **center** of our Lord's whole public life. He was sent to announce this kingdom, to induce men by means of his miracles to believe in his gospel, and to unite all the faithful in this new kingdom.

The Gospels use the terms "kingdom of God" and "kingdom of heaven" to refer to this kingdom.

A main concept in the Old Testament

Christ's own references to the kingdom of God were not new—the concept was a central, constant part of God's revelation to Israel from the beginning.

Although the specific term "kingdom of God" is rare in the Old Testament, the idea which underlies this term is found everywhere: Yahweh, our God, is eternal King and Lord for ever and ever. We find this especially in the Psalms and the prophets.

(The free eBook [Understanding the Kingdom of God](#) provides a lot of detail about the Old Testament understanding of this concept.)

At the time of Jesus, the Jewish people had a deep conviction about the kingdom of God.

The Old Testament repeatedly emphasized that it was to be regarded and expected as a divine, everlasting, universal, and spiritual kingdom.

Divine in that it would be established by & ruled by God.

Everlasting because both God's reign and this kingdom itself would have no end.

Universal because although it starts with the chosen people of Israel, it must extend to include all the nations of the earth.

Spiritual in that it is more than an earthly kingdom: it is in essence a heavenly kingdom even though it is begun on earth.

THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

NOVEMBER 4, 2018

Ancient Israelites distort the kingdom

But the ancient Jews, desiring earthly things, transformed these characteristics of the kingdom of God more and more—and above all **abandoned** the spiritual nature of the coming kingdom.

By the time of Jesus, the Jewish people had come to expect a Messiah who would usher in an earthly kingdom, rule over all people through the kingdom of Israel, and require all people to first become Israelites in all things and take upon themselves the whole burden of the Jewish law.

And of course, in the observance of this law they emphasized more and more following the letter of the law and the external, ceremonial directions of the time.

The Israelites had **lost** the special significance of the spiritual nature of the kingdom of God.

Many passages of the Gospel also give clear evidence that a similar distorted concept of the kingdom of God was widespread in the time of our Lord (see Mt 18:1; 20:20; Jn 6:15; etc.).

And that kind of distortion is specifically why Jesus spent so much time teaching about the **true** nature of the kingdom of God....

Christ's teaching about the kingdom of God

Our Lord addressed his teachings on the kingdom of God to these Israelites, to those with false earthly ideas of the kingdom.

Jesus came before his people as the Messiah predicted by the prophets. He preached and announced the kingdom as it was known by the **true** meaning of the prophets.

Thus in the first place this kingdom is the realization of God's sovereignty over man. For this purpose, the fulfillment of the **will of God** is above all things necessary: "Not every one that says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that does the will of My Father who is in heaven" (Mt 7:21).

Second, this kingdom isn't simply God's reign over individual people. It was to be established in a true and real kingdom, a **gathering together** of a religious community which would have as its head the only begotten Son of God, and which shall be governed according to the constitution which he has given and in accordance with his laws. This is the kingdom of the Messiah as foretold by the prophets.

The seed & initial gathering of this kingdom is the Church, founded by Christ to preach the gospel of Christ and bring Christ's own means of salvation to the world through the sacraments.

Third, the kingdom of God is a true and actual kingdom **of heaven**—its foundation is in heaven, from which its King and Founder has descended from the bosom of the Father, and it will have its final consummation again in heaven where Jesus Christ will reign for ever with the saints in glory.

Finally, this triumphant final time of the kingdom will be preceded by the preparatory stage of the **time of conflict** in the kingdom of God on earth. This community of the new covenant is founded on earth for man, will embrace all nations, and will last to the end of time. The time of conflict shall be followed by the eternal enjoyment of the reward in the kingdom of glory.

The kingdom of God is one, although it has both these earthly and heavenly parts. Both parts of the kingdom coexist, each is related to the other, and each affects the other.

While our Lord always refers to this one single kingdom of God, at times he teaches more about the time of preparation on earth, and at other times he refers to the final consummation in heaven.

The parables teach about the kingdom

Jesus wished to use **parables** to illustrate his doctrine about the kingdom of God. In many parables we find an introduction such as, "the kingdom of heaven is like...," or similar words. But even where there is no such introduction, the parables all still have at least some reference to the kingdom of God.

In these parables we can see three principal points of view:

- The development of the kingdom, its nature, and its working;
- The members of the kingdom of heaven and their obligations;
- Christ the Head of the kingdom of God and his position among the members.

Jesus addresses these lessons first of all to his disciples, but also (at least partly) to the Jewish people as a whole to teach them the true character of the kingdom of the Messiah.

THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

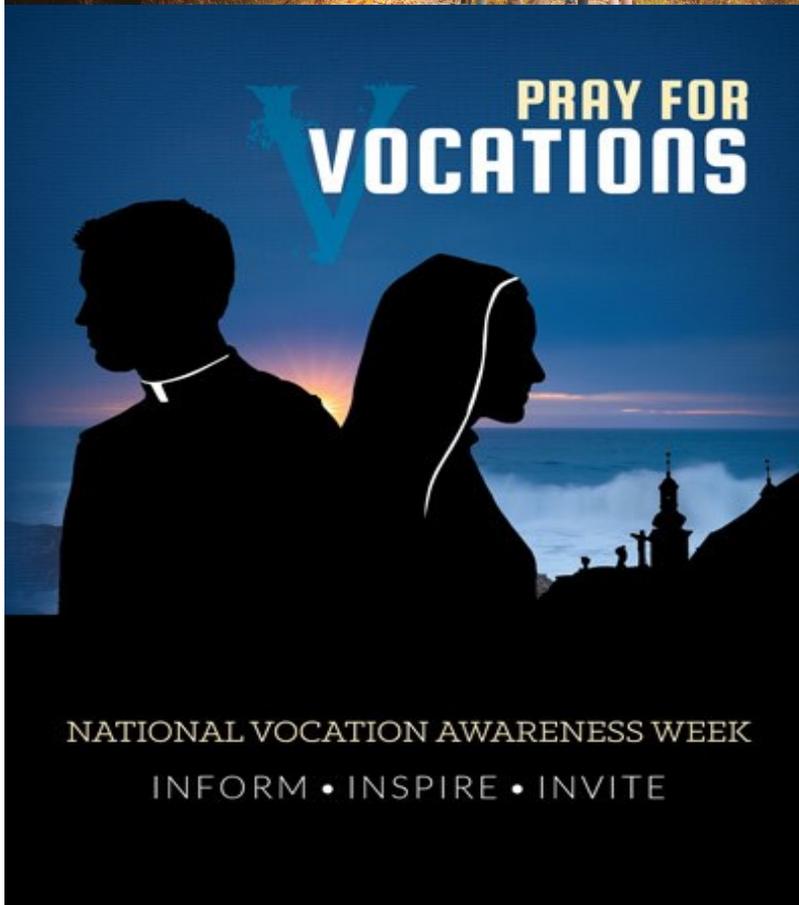
NOVEMBER 4, 2018

Announcements and Upcoming Events

ANNUAL PARISH BAKE SALE

November 17-18 following all Masses.

Sign-up following all Masses on the weekends of November 3-4 and 10-11.



Today's Gospel presents Jesus' teachings on the two greatest commandments. Love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. And, love your neighbor as yourself.

Let's consider these "greatest commandments" as they relate to three aspects of a Christian steward's daily life — the giving of our time, talent and treasure.

The use of time refers primarily to our relationship with the Lord — in other words, our prayer life. Since time is a gift to me from God, I show my love for Him and my gratitude for this gift by giving Him the best portion of my time. Of course it is vital to talk to God throughout the day, but if I really want to love Him with all my heart, soul, mind and strength, shouldn't I make time for God "first" on my agenda each day? Not as an afterthought, but as a time I have intentionally chosen to spend only with Him.

The use of talents refers to the way I offer the abilities, skills, and interests the Lord has given me for the good of those around me. Doing so is a practical way to "love my neighbor as myself." At the same time it is also a way to love the Lord with all that I am and have, since He has told us that whatever we do for others we are also doing for Him.

The use material gifts — or treasure — likewise demonstrates both love of God and of neighbor. When I trustingly offer a sacrificial gift to God through the offertory collection I am showing Him in a very tangible way that He comes before all else in my life and I am putting my material resources at the service of my neighbor in the parish community and beyond.

When we live for God and others, we are living a stewardship way of life. And like the wise scribe in today's Gospel, we are moving closer to the kingdom of God, our ultimate destination.

SUNDAY OFFERING:

\$6735

"FIND OUT HOW MUCH GOD HAS GIVEN YOU, AND FROM IT TAKE WHAT YOU NEED; THE REMAINDER IS NEEDED BY OTHERS"

ST. AUGUSTINE