

**Twenty-fifth Sunday Ordinary Time– Cycle C**

**September 22, 2019**

**Christ the Good Shepherd, ORCC**

**Reflection by Father Charles Blanchard**

First Reading: Amos 8:4-7

Psalm 113:1-2, 4-6, 7-8

Second Reading: 1 Timothy 2:1-8

Gospel: Luke 16:1-13

Welcome to Christ the Good Shepherd! To our enduring parishioners and new found-friends, you are welcome to hear God's word and be nourished at this Table where there is no partiality.

Welcome home!

My sisters and brothers, "**When will the new moon be over,**"? When will the culmination of what good looks like be over?

Today's first reading from the Prophet Amos is **clear, compelling** and **crisp**.

The Gospel seems a little more difficult to understand, but captures the same teaching as the first reading.

In the end, the second reading assures us that God wants us all to be saved.

In understanding these readings and allowing them to form, to teach and to lead us as Christ's followers, you and I can sense very strongly that our Lord wants us **to be honest, to be real, and to be true** both in great things and in small things.

In particular, our Lord does not want us to be oppressors of the poor and the needy.

My sisters and brothers, **oppressing** the poor, **vilifying** the needy and **marginalizing** those less fortunate has all kinds of implications for us who live in developed countries and who often do not think of our actions as oppressing anyone.

For example, you and I might forget that the things purchased today might have effects on others.

Jesus certainly was not preaching about this kind of **indirect** and **unthinking oppression** in which we can be involved without thinking, but about a **very direct** and **clear** oppressions of others.

It is probably difficult for us to imagine ourselves being directly involved in oppressing the poor and the needy and probably we are not.

My sisters and brothers, **the attitudes that lead to such oppression, however, can easily become a part of our lives; can easily become a *patterned-theme* of who we are as people; and can easily pollute the public narrative.**

In the first reading, it is clear that the oppressors are those who want to have money; those who want to have positional influence and authority.

Today, our whole culture seems to tell us that we should have money and power; we should have influence and authority over everything; we should erect walls to protect us.

With such **a *patterned-theme***, we can begin to think in this way and slowly begin to put that value of money as more important than the value of sharing what we have with others.

Today's Gospel speaks about learning how **to use well** whatever we have. There is an admiration for the dishonest steward—not for his dishonesty, but for his ability to figure his way out of a mess which he created; **a way to recognize fault, to evaluate quality options and to move forward.**

What about us?

How able are you and I to figure out the spiritual life and to work; to clear the clutter of our lives and engage actions which move us towards its goals?

Perhaps, at times, we seem able to figure out the spiritual life because it is not all that complicated, my friends. Do we begin to live spiritually then?

Today's readings invite us to know the spiritual life, to know what it means to follow the Lord, and also, to live that knowledge in our lives.

So many people say: "I believe in God" or "I am a Christian" and that is all the further their belief goes.

My sisters and brothers, you and I are invited to reflect on God's work and to allow that word to transform us entirely. The second reading assures us that God is there, willing for us to be saved, eager for us to respond to His love.

Let us ask today, tomorrow and beyond for a deeper knowledge and understanding of our faith and for the gifts of the Holy Spirit to give us strength to live that knowledge and understanding in our lives. May this ***new moon*** never be over!

Gracias de Dios para todos!