

**The Bells of St. Mary's
The Church of the Immaculate Conception**

Twenty – Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

September 15 2019

From the Desk of Rev. Fr. Anthony C. Ekanem, MSP:

The Parables of the Lost

Today, we hear Jesus inviting us to think about salvation. We are asked to believe in a loving, patient, merciful, forgiving God. This central message is the Good News Jesus was preaching that God is not a cruel, judging, or a punishing God. He is our loving and forgiving Heavenly Father who waits to save everyone through His Son Jesus Christ. He is always in search of His lost and straying children, as Jesus explains in the three parables of today's Gospel from Luke 15:1-14.

In the First Reading, taken from the Book of Exodus 32:7-11, 13-14, Moses is imploring a forgiving God to have mercy on the sinful people who have abandoned Him and turned to idol - worship. He reminds God of His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

In our Responsorial Psalm, (Ps 51) a song of a sinful man returning to God to seek His mercy is heard.

In the Second Reading, Saint Paul tells Timothy that although he, Paul, had been the greatest of sinners as the former persecutor of the Church, God has shown mercy towards him.

This Gospel reading of Saint Luke has been called "the Gospel within the Gospel," because it is the distilled essence of the Good News about our forgiving Heavenly Father. The whole chapter is essentially one distinct parable, "the Parable of the Lost and Found," with three illustrations: The story of the lost sheep, the story of the lost coin, and the story of the Lost Son.

These parables remind us that we have a God who welcomes sinners and forgives their sins, whenever they return to Him with genuine repentance and resolution.

This classic human failure in the life of the people of Israel and the personal experience of Saint Paul help us to discover how faithful God is to His vows. "Come let us settle the matter, even though your sins are as red as crimson, and you shall be as white as snow." (Is. 1,18-19)

Today's readings demonstrate that God's love, mercy surpasses His anger and judgment. As a merciful and compassionate Father, God heard the prayers of Moses on behalf of His people. In the Gospel, Jesus is being accused of welcoming sinners. His action and parables demonstrate how merciful and compassionate He is towards us. In spite of our sins and stubbornness, Jesus is willing to welcome us back to Himself. But what human beings might or might not "deserve" does not control the mercy and compassion of God.

Remember the reaction of the older brother. He thought his younger sibling deserved a cruel treatment. This parable introduces the character of the older brother, who acted angrily seeing his father re-instating his brother symbolically to full status as a son with: The robe, standing for honor, the ring for authority and the signet ring gave a person the power of attorney the shoes for the son's place as a member of the family (slave did not wear shoes)

The elder brother represents the self - righteous Pharisees who would rather see a sinner destroyed than saved. He reflects the Pharisees' attitude that obedience to Mosaic law is a duty, not a loving service. Like the Pharisees, the elder brother lacks sympathy for his sibling and levels accusation against him. As a self - righteous person, he refuses to forgive. His grudge becomes a sin in itself; resulting in his self - exclusion from the banquet of his father's love. Precisely here is what we do when we sin. We exclude ourselves from the feast of God's love.

Here too, we can see how our attitude can make it very difficult to come to terms with the vision of God for every one. Here again is another reason why this story is seen as "the greatest short story in the world." It speaks about the severe effects of sin, and the infinite mercy of God. This is a great story of love, of conflict of deep heartbreak, and ecstatic joy.

Hence, Jesus fulfilled His promise: "If my people who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pay... I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin ..." (2 Chronicle 7-14).

Stewardship

Tithing - God's Plan for Giving on Sunday For 09/08/19 our Offering was \$3,704.00

Last week we collected \$ 1,209.00 for the Organ Renovation.

Today's second collection is for St. Joseph's Seminary and Cathedral Prep.

Last week the celebration of Our Lady of Charity/Nuestra Señora Caridad del Cobre raised \$3,033.00 and donated it to the Parish.

THANK YOU

I wish to sincerely thank the group led by Ms. Maria Neto who organized a wonderful and beautiful celebration for us last Sunday in honor of our Blessed Mother, Mary - Our Lady of Charity, patroness of Cuba. Our Parish Hall and Church were well - decorated for the celebration. It was just what our parish family needed especially since our Church is also named after our Blessed Mother, Mary. The group donated \$3,033.00 to the church that was raised at the door. Thank you again for a well done job! God bless!!

THERE WILL BE A PARISH COUNCIL MEETING THIS COMING WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, AT 7:00 PM IN THE PARISH RECTORY.

All are welcome to our Up Coming Events

1. Next Sunday, Sept 22, at 10:30 am, CVS will be here to offer flu shot to all those who have not received theirs yet.
2. "Ignorance of the Scripture is Ignorance of Christ!" St Jerome, 5th Century Plan to join us in Bible studies beginning in the month of October every Monday in the Parish Hall both in Spanish and English language at 7:00 pm.
3. Church Family Directory It is now time to make your arrangements with your family to take your photograph with LIFE TOUCH

Religious Education

September 2019:

21st Religious Education Classes

28th Religious Education Classes

October 2019:

5th **No** Religious Education Classes

12th Religious Education Classes~

19th Religious Education Classes ~ **Holy Communion 1st meeting in the school cafeteria 11:30am**

26th Religious Education **1st Confirmation meeting in the school cafeteria 11:30am**

Sundays Readings:

First Reading: Exodus 32: 7-11, 13-14 p. 34

The people of Israel forgot God's goodness and turned to idols. Moses pleaded with God for mercy, and the Lord God showed kindness to them.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 51: 3-4, 12-13, 17, 19 p. 35 I will rise and go to my father.

Second Reading: 1 Timothy 1: 12-17 p. 35 The apostle Paul, described to Timothy why he gave thanks to the Lord.

Despite Paul's sin, Christ Jesus treated him mercifully and strengthened him.

Gospel: Luke 15: 1-32 p. 36 Jesus taught God loves a sinner as a loving father receives back a wayward son. Repentance leads to joy, celebration, music, dancing, gifts, and food.

FOR CATHOLICS

As Catholics, we fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist when we receive Holy Communion. We are encouraged to receive Communion devoutly and frequently. In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, participants should not be conscious of grave sin and normally should have fasted for one hour. A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord without prior sacramental confession except for a grave reason where there is no opportunity for confession. In this case, the person is to be mindful of the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition, including the intention of confessing as soon as possible (canon 916). A frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance is encouraged for all.

FOR OUR FELLOW CHRISTIANS

We welcome our fellow Christians to this celebration of the Eucharist as our brothers and sisters. We pray that our common baptism and the action of the Holy Spirit in this Eucharist will draw us closer to one another and begin to dispel the sad divisions which separate us. We pray that these will lessen and finally disappear, in keeping with Christ's prayer for us "that they may all be one" (John 17:21).

Because Catholics believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is a sign of the reality of the oneness of faith, life, and worship, members of those churches with whom we are not yet fully united are ordinarily not admitted to Holy Communion. Eucharistic sharing in exceptional circumstances by other Christians requires permission according to the directives of the diocesan bishop and the provisions of canon law (canon 844 §4). Members of the Orthodox Churches, the Assyrian Church of the East, and the Polish National Catholic Church are urged to respect the discipline of their own Churches. According to Roman Catholic discipline, the Code of Canon Law does not object to the reception of Communion by Christians of these Churches (canon 844 §3).

FOR THOSE NOT RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION

All who are not receiving Holy Communion are encouraged to express in their hearts a prayerful desire for unity with the Lord Jesus and with one another.

FOR NON-CHRISTIANS

We also welcome to this celebration those who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ. While we cannot admit them to Holy Communion, we ask them to offer their prayers for the peace and the unity of the human family.

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Mass Schedule for the week of September 14, to September 21, 2019 Special Intentions for this week

Saturday, September 14, 2019:

9:00 am— Guadalupe Reyes Perez,
Former CCD Catechist+ 12:05 pm - Available/Disponibile
5:00pm - Mary & Stella Mustazza +*John Prato & Family
7:30pm - Sixto Manuel Montano + * Wilfredo Montano

Sunday, September 15, 2019:

7:30 am – For the Parishioners
9:00 am – Oscar Flores Chavez * Rosa Flores
11:00 am - Linu Patteril George+ * Mrs. Cuadra

Monday, September 16, 2019:

8:15am - Diana Flower +*Carlos & Lillian Salvador
12:05 pm - Baby Rory Rodden (Health) * Winifred & John O'Flaherty

Tuesday September 17, 2019

8:15am - Available/Disponibile
12:05pm - Linu Patteril George+ * Tony Felicissimo

Wednesday, September 18, 2019

8:15am - Available/Disponibile
12:05 pm - Linu Patteril George+ * Tony Felicissimo

Thursday, September 19, 2019:

8:15 am - Available/Disponibile
12:05 pm—Mary E. Kalsky + *Madeline & Lana Como
7:00 pm - Ada Perez + * Carmen Sarate

Friday, September 20, 2019:

8:15 am - Available/Disponibile
12:05 pm - Patricia Zamborsky * William Zamborsky

Saturday, September 21, 2019:

12:00 pm - Frank Valentin + * Carlos & Lillian Salvador
5:00pm - Regina & Samuel David + *Mr. & Mrs. Anthony
7:30pm - Leonardo F. Beltran + * El Apostolado Del Sagrado Corazon

*+Indicates deceased * Indicates the person (s) who requested the Mass.*

Security Camera

The security cameras are now in place inside and outside our Church.
24 Hour Surveillance Both Video & Audio

Changing Station

Check out our newest addition, a Baby changing station, located in the Bathroom.