

JULY 25, 2021

17TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

The Church of

ST. ALBERT *the* GREAT

*Since 1935, a welcoming, caring Catholic Community of Faith
on E. 29th Street at 32nd Avenue. S. in Minneapolis, Minnesota*

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Office staffed T, W and Th, as we are able.

We continue to offer three masses each week to enable people to attend while maintaining appropriate social distancing. The Sunday 9:30 am mass continues to be live streamed on our Facebook page. We are also offering a Saturday 5:00 pm mass and a Sunday 12:00 pm (noon) mass.

Although state capacity restrictions have been lifted, we must still maintain six feet of physical distancing between groups, which means that our attendance is still limited. The 9:30 mass is the most popular. When your schedule allows, please consider attending one of the other two services.

Attendance at mass is still NOT required. Please make choices that keep you and the community safe.

Fr. Joe and the staff hold you all in our prayers, and ask that you pray for us and for all the essential workers who are striving to keep things running.

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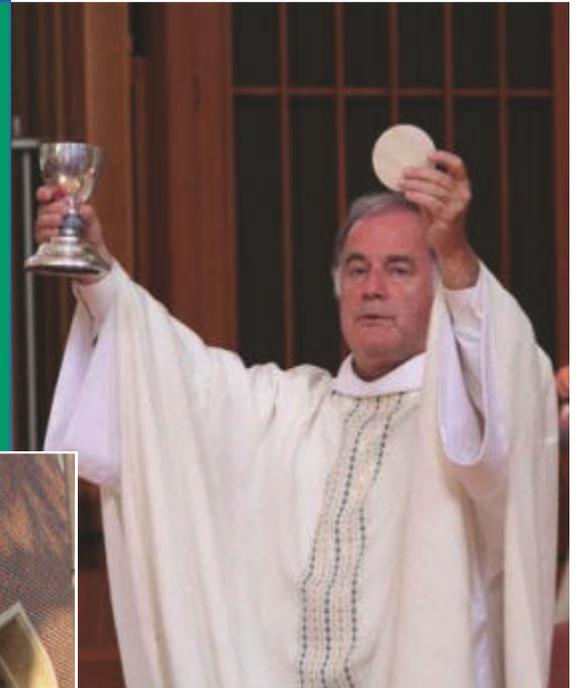
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“...maintain the
unity of the Spirit
in the bond of
peace...”

Paul to the Ephesians



Say YES to
love and peace.
Amen! Alleluia!



This week at St. Albert's(masses and intentions are in **BOLD** type)**Saturday, July 24**5:00 pm mass **Spencer Nelson****Sunday, July 25**9:30 am mass **Shannon Minter †**12:00 pm mass **Kevin Murphy †****Monday, July 26**8:15 am **Robert Boisvert †****Tuesday, July 27**8:15 am **Eddie Magnuson****Wednesday, July 28**5:15 pm **Bingo Bus at Trinity Apartments**6:00 to 9:00 pm **BINGO-RAMA in the Social Hall, including the Bingo Café, open at 5:30 pm****Thursday, July 29**8:15 am mass – **Byron Fokken**12:00 to 3:00 pm **Potluck lunch, crafting and conversation in the Social Hall****Friday, July 30**8:15 am mass **For the needs of the Parish****Saturday, July 31**5:00 pm mass **Marge Nelson****Sunday, August 1**9:30 am mass **Welcome to****Fr. Jude McPeat, O. P. as Associate Pastor**10:30 am **Coffee & cookies outside in front of the church between masses**12:00 pm mass **For Our Parish Family**2:00 pm **Summer Jazz concert with Maud Hixon and Rick Carlson. \$20 at the door.****THE NEW NORMAL**

- * **We will continue to offer three Masses** each weekend for as long as the Sunday noon mass remains popular/practical. We also continue to livestream the 9:30 AM liturgy.
- * **The general dispensation from the Sunday and Holy Day obligation has been lifted.** The dispensation remains available to people at high risk of developing serious illness and for people who care for such individuals. Anyone with symptoms or recent exposure to COVID-19 must still remain at home for the safety of all.
- * **Morning masses in the chapel have resumed at 8:15 am, with the rosary at 8:00 am.** As in the pre-pandemic past, weekday masses will be Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. The East door off the back parking lot will be open for weekday masses, along with the elevator entrance.
- * **Use of the front center church doors continues to be encouraged for weekend masses, along with the elevator entrance.**
- * **There are no seating restrictions.** Please respect the desires of those who wish to maintain some physical separation. Feel free to use the hand sanitizer, which will be available for the foreseeable future.
- * **Masks are no longer required** although of course they are still encouraged for the unvaccinated. We do have disposable masks available.
- * **Full singing resumes on the Feast of St. Dominic, August 7/8.** The hymnals are back in the pews.
- * **Give the Sign of Peace** to those near you in ways others appear comfortable with.

“I am your servant, Lord.”

Would you like deeper involvement in the mass? To understand why Catholics do what we do during the celebration? In September, we'll offer training for the important role of altar server. It's open for 4th graders through adults. (Adults who could be available to serve daytime funerals are especially welcome, and there are a couple of additional tasks for funeral servers.) Give some thought to whether you or your children feel called to help in the liturgy, and watch for the announcement of training dates. If you have questions, contact Janelle or Fr. Joe.

Are you on the “Friday Blast” list?

During the Covid-19 quarantine, the parish began a weekly email on Fridays with attachments of the weekly Bulletin and the weekend's scripture readings. We use it as well for updates on news that may have occurred since the Bulletin's Wednesday printing, as well as poems and other inspirational messages.

We began by using all the email addresses we have on file. If you don't receive “The Blast” and would like to, please email Erin at e.sim@saintalbertthegreat.org. (As with the Bulletin itself, the Blast will remain one of Erin's tasks as she steps back to being part-time at St. Albert's.)

In our prayers

We remember those who need healing, including Michael Callaghan, Ben Wilkie, Bill Bowen, Dick Martin, Mary Iffert, Jessica Arvold Bainbridge, Joan Ellison, Curt Huovie, Marianne Green, Harry Duskin, and Ann-Marie Christiansen.

Please add a prayer for those who have died, including Mary Nelson and Ruth Papasodora.

Due to HIPAA privacy standards, hospitals and care centers cannot notify us of your need for our prayers or visits unless you direct them to call.

If you or someone you know would like to be included in our prayers, or have the Sacrament of the Sick, or communion brought to you, please let the office know at 612-724-3643.

To request that the Eucharist be brought to you at your home, please contact
Fr. Joe at 612-245-3345,
or Jim Curran at 612-483-1546.

Volunteers will mask and safely deliver communion

“Father, would you like a doggie-bag for all leftover food you didn’t eat?”

In what sounded like an announcement over a bullhorn, the waitress alerted the customers in the restaurant that I had not qualified for the Clean Plate Club and needed to take responsibility for my leftover food. I can’t remember when I had last heard the term “doggie-bag” used as metaphor to carry food out of a restaurant, but this sergeant-major like waitress barked out her question with great authority: “Father, would you like a doggie-bag for all the leftover food you didn’t eat?”

I was quick to say “Yes” to her request, even though I really did not like the food I had received, nor did I possess a dog. I was at a wedding reception held in a very fancy restaurant and the entrée that I received was not the “surf and turf” indicated on my place card. When the totally Vegan meal was plopped in front of me, the waitress said rather loudly to my tablemates and me, “We ran out of the other choices, so you guys get to eat healthy tonight.” One woman said, “Beggars can’t be choosy.” Another guest said, “I wonder if there are any starving children in China who might want my meal?” I looked at the curious mixture of broccoli and tofu with tomato and pesto sauces and thought, “Well, at least it’s colorful.” My real source of relief came in knowing the replacement meal was not liver and lima beans.

Growing up in a home with a mother who liked to cook and was very good at it, my family enjoyed a variety of excellent meals. My mother was known as an excellent baker as well, and family and neighbors sought after her recipes for chocolate cherry brownies and banana cream pies. Holiday dinners featured roast beef, turkey, ham and roasted lamb with all the trimmings. In my recollection of comments made about my mother’s table, the best was: “If you left Mary’s table hungry, it was your own damn fault.” There were always “leftovers” that would find their way into small containers for guests to bring home. “For the lunches” would be the explanation given for the bags filled with homemade rolls, brownies and the leftovers. Bones for the dogs, if you had one, would also be included and the “doggie bag” was no metaphor. I have fond memories of one Thanksgiving when our dog Moria managed to wrestle the entire stockpile of leftovers into a private meal for herself! No food “for the lunches” that holiday.

Our first reading and the gospel for this Seventeenth Sunday of Ordinary Time might be deemed scriptural recipes for “leftovers.” In 2 Kings 4:42-44, the prophet Elisha instructed a reluctant servant to “*Feed one hundred people with twenty loaves of barley and the fresh ears of corn in his sack.*” Elisha was adamant about feeding so many with so little food: “*Give it to the people and let them eat. The servant set the food before them, and they ate and there were some leftovers.*”

In the gospel of John 6:1-15, the extravagance of God’s providential care is seen in the multiplication of the loaves and the fish to feed over five thousand people. In both readings, human beings provide small amounts (e.g. twenty loaves of bread, fresh corn, two fish and five barley loaves), but it is the abundance of God’s generosity that awakens us to our own doubts. Discovering God’s extravagant generosity challenges our reluctance to think that God can be trusted to provide us with what we really need, namely the abundant mercy of God. A nice fish sandwich on flat bread would help as well.

The entire sixth chapter of John’s gospel, including the dramatic retelling of the miracle of the loaves and fishes (6:1-15), highlights the messianic identity of Jesus and provides the most theological understanding of Jesus’ teachings about the “Bread of Life.” Helping people to recognize that he really is “*the bread that has come down from heaven*” becomes the test to move beyond the magical capabilities of Jesus’ miracles into an awareness of his providential presence in the Eucharist. In a rather ironic twist regarding the narrative of institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper, John’s gospel is the only one of the four that does not include this dramatic identification of Jesus with bread and wine.

In parallel accounts of the miracle of the multiplication of the bread and fish, all four gospels are in synchronicity. Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:9-17; and John 6:1-15 are identical in their number of “five barley loaves and two fish” and the twelve baskets of “leftovers.” What is unique in John’s portrayal is that Jesus “*took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also, with the fish, as much as they wanted.*” When the thousands were satisfied, Jesus told his disciples, “*Gather up the fragments left over by those who had eaten, so that nothing may be lost.*” In the Synoptic accounts, Jesus took the five loaves and two fish and blessed them and, “*gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd.*” The concept of extended servant hood comes into focus as the disciples are given the job of serving the multitude and gathering up the leftovers. Do you ever wonder what happened to the twelve baskets of leftovers?

Some scriptural scholars have described Jesus as the “ideal table waiter.” Certainly, the Synoptic accounts of the Last Supper (Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; and Luke 22:15-20) have Jesus teaching his disciples how to share the bread and the wine as he instructs them: “*Take and eat: this is my body. Take and drink: this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for you.*” In John’s gospel (13:1-19), the “table waiter” gets more involved and washes the feet of the disciples and then offers them: “*I, your Lord and teacher, have just washed your feet. You, then, should wash one another’s feet. I have set an example for you, so that you will do just what I have done for you.*”

Becoming disciples of Jesus demands that we are instructed on how to care and provide for one another. Learning to be servants of one another is at the heart of discipleship and will be the basis on how we are judged as being worthy of the Kingdom of God. It strikes me as odd that some bishops are restricting the washing of the feet on Holy Thursday for men only. The absurdity of gender profiling in these sacred rituals is, unfortunately, gaining popularity. The net result is the sound of women’s feet leaving the Church.

Dealing with the “leftovers” is critical in caring for the hungry people of the world. No one knows for sure the exact number of those who go hungry and are malnourished, but recent estimates confidently say that 815 million people are undernourished every day, or approximately 11 percent of the world’s population. Most “hungry people” are in developing countries, but the alarming statistics of hungry people in our own midst are reflected in the increasing presence of those who show up at food shelves. Finding ways to multiply what little we have and share it with the multitude of hungry around us is the real miracle of servanthood. Dispensing “doggie bags” provides a stopgap in alleviating hunger pangs temporarily, but the old adage of “teaching a person to fish rather than just giving out fish” becomes a solution worth pursuing.

I remember taking home the Vegan leftovers from the dinner party and looking for a convenient place to dump them on the way. However, arriving home with the “doggie bag” still in tow, I put it in the fridge. It was the next day during lunch that I ventured to try the vegan meal and discovered something magical about the fusion of tastes. Indeed, it was edible and tasty. Perhaps the glass of Italian Pinot Grigio helped.

Maybe we all end up hungering for something we could never have quite imagined, unless of course, some table waiter or waitress brings us what we did not order. Accepting Jesus’ “food for thought” is an invitation to the unexpected. What did you hunger for when you decided to come to church? Even better yet, what are you willing to bring to the table?

Peace, Fr. Joe Gillespie, O.P.

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