

OCTOBER 3, 2021

27TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

The Church of

ST. ALBERT *the* GREAT

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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 and masks are not currently required, we encourage everyone to participate in ways that are safe and appropriate for them. If you wish to maintain physical distancing, the noon mass has the lightest attendance. We are gradually returning elements that have been missing during the pandemic. We recently reinstated congregational singing and ushers and are working towards the return of lectors and servers.

Fr. Joe, Fr. Jude 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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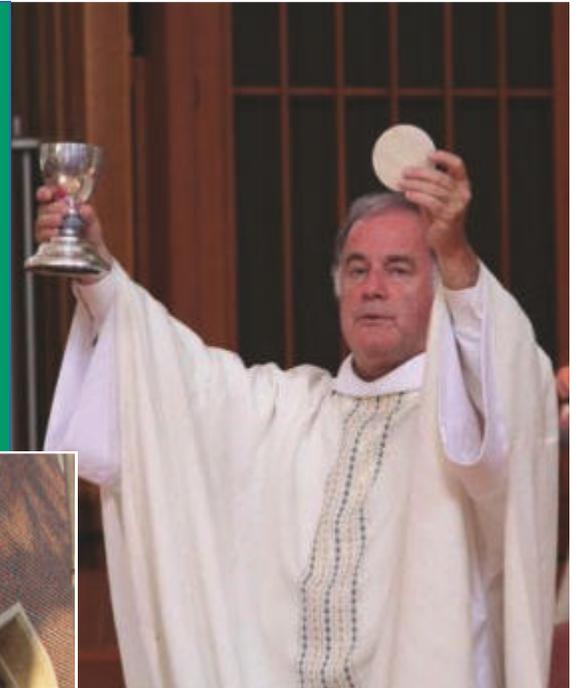
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*“Let the little children
come to me... for it is
to such as these that
the Kingdom of God
belongs.”*

the Gospel of Mark



*Say YES to
love and peace.
Amen! Alleluia!*



This week at St. Albert's(masses and intentions are in **BOLD** type)**Saturday, October 2****5:00 pm mass** For the parish women on retreat this weekend**Sunday, October 3****9:30 am mass** Nancy Bielinski †

11:00 am Synod Discussion sessions #2

12:00 pm mass For our Parish Family

3:00 pm Animal Blessing in front of church

Monday, October 4**8:15 am** Nancy Bielinski †**Tuesday, October 5****8:15 am** Anne-Marie Christensen †

9:30 am Staff meeting

Wednesday, October 6**Thursday, October 7 – Our Lady of the Rosary****8:15 am mass** – Members of St. Albert's Rosary Altar Society

12:00 to 3:00 pm Potluck lunch, crafting and conversation in the Social Hall

Friday, October 8**8:15 am mass** Emily Ott †**Saturday, October 9**

10:00 am Roll silver & set tables for Beef Dinner

5:00 pm mass Marilyn Peters †**Sunday, October 10****9:30 am mass** Fr. Robert Keane †**12:00 pm mass** For our Parish Family

2:00 to 5:00 pm BINGO in the gym

4 to 5:15 and 5:30 to 7 pm Roast Beef Dinner

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. Hand sanitizer will be available for the foreseeable future.
- * **Masks are no longer required** although of course they are still encouraged for the unvaccinated and anyone with precarious health. The CDC recommends that all people regardless of vaccination status wear masks indoors in counties with substantial viral transmission, which currently includes Hennepin County. We do have disposable masks available.
- * **We invite you to join us in song.** The hymnals are back in the pews, and the hymn numbers are posted on the boards up near the organ. To sing is to pray TWICE!
- * **Give the Sign of Peace** to those near you in ways others appear comfortable with.

In our prayers

We remember those who need healing, including Michael Callaghan, Ben Wilkie, Joan Ellison, Jo and Dennis Neal, and Mary Gustafson.

Please add a prayer for those who have died, including Joy Hodgson, Ann-Marie Christiansen, and for the hundreds of thousands around the world who are victims of natural and man-made disasters.

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. Call Fr. Joe at 612-245-3345 or Jim Curran at 612-483-1546 if you would like the Eucharist brought safely to you at home.

Financial Support**Week of September 26, 2021**

Weekly & Feast Day Stewardship envelopes	\$3,322
Loose cash	304
Legacy envelopes	55
Risen Christ envelopes	40
"We Care" Outreach Ministry envelopes	140
Donation to Hospitality/ Prayer Shawl Ministry	30
Memorials	100
Donation to Roast Beef Dinner	1,175
Donation to church projects	500
Gazebo donations	37

Thanks for your many forms of support!

Visit the home page of our website for a giving form where you can make one-time or recurring donations.

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“What will it take to heal the wounds of a planet torn apart by hatred,
greed, poverty, pollution, violence and war?”

Lest you think I am talking about a sequel to Mission Impossible, the challenge to heal the wounds of the planet was issued by Pope Francis to lawmakers of the United States Congress when he visited in 2015. The Pope issued a vigorous call to Congressional Representatives and Senators to put aside their differences and create agendas that truly reflect a mutual interest in preserving the planet. Emphasizing the need for a common bond of hope, Francis confronted lawmakers to reconsider partisan agendas that have stalemated the political process over the years.

Like Jesus calling forth Lazarus from the tomb, Francis called forth Congress to awaken to a call to life: “What will it take to heal the wounds of a planet torn apart by hatred, greed, poverty, pollution, violence and war”? Resurrecting an agenda of hope amid a history of deadly grudges, Francis’ call to jettison argumentative, conniving and hard-hearted behavior was, perhaps, both inspirational and naive. With Francis’ departure back to the “Eternal City”, only time will tell when and if his clarion call to sanity takes root in the hearts and minds of American political leaders. Don’t hold your breath.

Today we are celebrating both the Twenty-Seventh Sunday of Ordinary Time and the feast Day of Saint Francis of Assisi. Harkening back to a revolutionary time during the Thirteenth Century, another man named Francis challenged the existing political and religious climates that surrounded him. Abandoning a life of luxury in favor of embracing poverty and detachment, St. Francis (1181-1226) would devote his life to rebuilding an institutional church that had become mired in opulence, corruption, and immorality. Recognizing the indifference of an institutional church to the cry of the poor, Francis became the voice of the poor and an advocate for the defenseless.

Echoing the voice of Jesus in today’s gospel (Mark 10:2-16), St. Francis would become the guardian of the powerless (children) and a fierce opponent of those who so easily exploited their human rights: “*Let the little children come to me; do not stop them: for it is to these that the Kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, will never enter the Kingdom.*” Building upon a section of Mark’s gospel (Mark 9:45), Jesus was quite clear in his advocacy of the “little ones”: “*If any one of you put a stumbling block in front of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck, and you were thrown into the sea.*”

Hours after meeting with sexual abuse victims during his visit to Philadelphia, Pope Francis strongly condemned those who molested children and those who covered up their behavior. Short of issuing a call for the manufacturing of millstones, Pope Francis was clear in his demand for accountability and appropriate legal censures for religious officials who took great pains to cover up the scandal. In his refreshingly candid way, Pope Francis, like St. Francis of Assisi, continues to tenaciously cling to the need for transparency and accountability in religious and political institutions. Like the early challenge given to St. Francis of Assisi to “rebuild the Church”, Pope Francis continues to advocate not only for “the little ones”, but for the “big ones” who are struggling with convoluted annulment procedures, marginalizing of gay rights, suppression of women’s voices, exploitation of workers and the blocking of migrants searching for safe homes.

This Sunday’s readings provide a hodgepodge of invitations in the extraordinary wake of Pope Francis’ visits to Cuba and the United States. Our first reading from the Book of Genesis (2:18-24) offers an idyllic account of life in the Garden of Eden. With the creation of Adam and Eve served as a model for an ideal relationship, the high standard proved untenable. Maintaining the ideal is a noble pursuit, but Adam and Eve’s getting booted out of the Garden of Eden opened the way to recognizing failure and wrong choices as a reality of life. Hence, the on-going need for redemption.

Our gospel reading (Mark 10:2-16) finds Jesus in a dispute with the Pharisees regarding marriage and divorce. While upholding the ideal of marriage (“*What God has joined together, let no one separate*”), Jesus recognized the human condition and the “hardness of hearts.” Helping individuals to acknowledge their personal failures allows them the hope of pursuing, once again, the human ideal. While Adam and Eve “hung in there” despite their dysfunctional choices and catastrophic family problems (Cain, Able and Seth would challenge the best of child psychiatrists), not all couples can bear the burden of dysfunctional relationships that have become life threatening and destructive to themselves and “the little ones.”

With great admiration and courage, Pope Francis has instituted a reexamination of the annulment process and offered the hope of regularizing Catholic couples who have divorced and who are now seeking entrance, once again, into the “Garden of Eden.” Welcoming couples who had experienced the anathema of a failed marriages, Francis has now provided hope for countless thousands Catholics who have needlessly been excluded from the sacraments and opportunities to contribute to the vitality of the Church. The need to protect the “sacredness of the bond” in marriage remains essential, but it is best understood through the lens of forgiveness. Our reading from the Letter to the Hebrews (2:9-11) offers the recurring hope that in the midst of suffering and imperfection there is salvation. Embracing the limitations of humanity (divorce among them), the invitation to salvation is clearing the result of Jesus’ compassionate, forgiving and joyful preaching.

Through the continued leadership of Pope Francis, Christians, Muslims, Jews and non-believers alike are offered time to reflect on the absolute need for compassion, transparency, courage and forgiveness. Healing the open wounds of a planet torn apart by hatred, greed, poverty, pollution, war and violence will take time. Both Jesus and St. Francis intuitively understood this human reality and, most certainly, Pope Francis has resurrected a message of hope that all things are possible with the grace of God. While the Garden of Eden remains a mythic ideal, and, as we approach the Season of Advent, we are reminded that the fullness of the Kingdom of God is near but not yet. Dare we hold our breath?

Peace, Fr. Joe Gillespie, O.P.

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