

NOVEMBER 7, 2021

32ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

The Church of

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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.

We support the quality, faith-based K-8 education at

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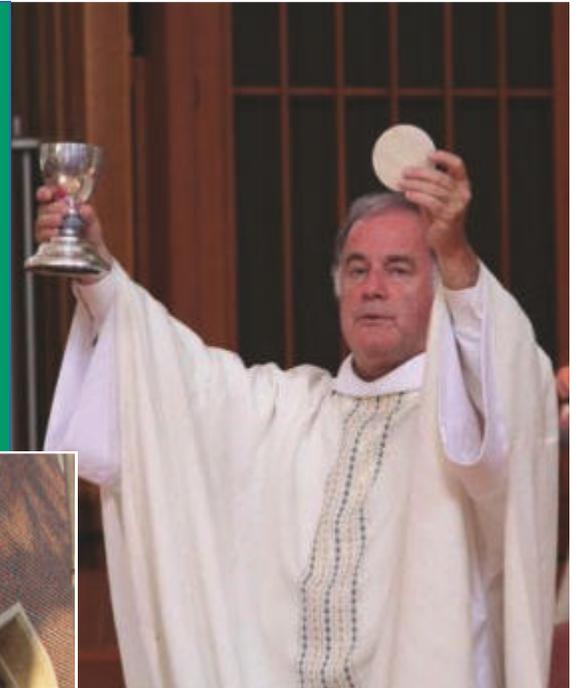
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"Do not
be afraid,
I am with you."
God



Say YES to
love and peace.
Amen! Alleluia!



This week at St. Albert's

(masses and intentions are in **BOLD** type)

Saturday, November 6 – Remembrance Mass
5:00 pm mass Dolores Stanko †, Therese Brown

Sunday, November 7 – Remembrance Masses
9:30 am mass Joe Messenbrink †, Ray Enz †
 10:30 am Treats in the Social Hall
 11:00 am Children/Youth Faith Formation
12:00 pm mass Sr. Avis Allmaras †

Monday, November 8
8:15 am Marion Campion †

Tuesday, November 9
8:15 am Elaine Thielen †
 9:30 am Staff meeting

Wednesday, November 10

Thursday, November 11
8:15 am All Veterans, living and dead
 11:00 am Ring bells for peace on church steps
 12:00 to 2:30 pm Potluck lunch, crafting and conversation in the Social Hall
 6:00 pm

Friday, November 12
8:15 am mass James & Patricia Keavy †

Saturday, November 13
10:00 am visitation, 11:00 am funeral for Marion Campion
5:00 pm mass Chuck Baker †, Edward Bohaty †

Sunday, November 14
9:30 am mass Fr. Robert Keane †
 10:30 am Treats in the Social Hall
 11:00 am Children/Youth Faith Formation

Readings for the week of November 7, 2021

Sunday: 1 Kgs 17:10-16/Ps 146:7, 8-9, 9-10 [1b]/Heb 9:24-28/Mk 12:38-44 or 12:41-44

Monday: Wis 1:1-7/Ps 139:1b-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-10 [24b]/Lk 17:1-6

Tuesday: Ez 47:1-2, 8-9, 12/Ps 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9 [5]/1 Cor 3:9c-11, 16-17/Jn 2:13-22

Wednesday: Wis 6:1-11/Ps 82:3-4, 6-7 [8a]/Lk 17:11-19

Thursday: Wis 7:22b-8:1/Ps 119:89, 90, 91, 130, 135, 175 [89a]/Lk 17:20-25

Friday: Wis 13:1-9/Ps 19:2-3, 4-5ab [2a]/Lk 17:26-37

Saturday: Wis 18:14-16; 19:6-9/Ps 105:2-3, 36-37, 42-43 [5a]/Lk 18:1-8

Next Sunday: Dn 12:1-3/Ps 16:5, 8, 9-10, 11 [1]/Heb 10:11-14, 18/Mk 13:24-32

* **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 is available. The Sunday 12 noon mass offers the most spaced seating.

★ **Masks are strongly encouraged** for all people over the age of two. The CDC recommends that all people wear masks indoors in areas with high transmission rates of covid-19. Currently Hennepin County significantly exceeds the threshold for high transmission. Masks should cover both nose and mouth. We have disposable and cloth masks available near the entrance to the church.

* **We invite you to join us in song.** The hymnals are in the pews.

* **Give the Sign of Peace** to those near you in ways others appear comfortable with.

Armistice Day bells for peace

Parishioners and friends will once again mark Armistice Day (which later became Veteran's Day) by ringing bells for 11 minutes, **starting at 11:00 am on Thursday, November 11**, in front of the church. This worldwide tradition began to mark the date and time that the armistice (the laying down of weapons) ended World War 1 – "the war to end all wars." Unfortunately, it wasn't the end, and we continue to mark the day and pray for peace. Please join us.

Rosary Altar Society meets November 11

Join other parish women (and men) at **6:00 pm** in the Social Hall to discuss the Rosary Altar Society's upcoming events, including the Christmas Boutique and Bake Sale.

“A penny for your thoughts?”

In a book entitled *The Proverbs of John Heywood*, published in 1546, we find the earliest citation of the line, “A penny for your thoughts?” The saying is an English idiom indicating that the speaker is offering to pay to hear the listener’s thoughts. While no payment changes hands, the phrase can be a polite way of giving a person lost in thought or confused about an issue an opportunity to express his or her ideas. While John Heywood did not actually coin (excuse the pun) the phrase, “A penny for your thoughts,” many of us might be willing to offer “our two cents worth” regarding the real origin of the phrase.

In today’s gospel reading, Mark 12:38-44, Jesus is teaching in the temple and getting “his two cents worth” in about the scribes: “Beware of the Scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and demand respect in the marketplaces, and who desire the best seats in synagogues and places of honor at banquets. They devour widows’ houses and, for the sake of appearances, say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation.” Unlike last week’s gospel, Mark 12:28-34, where a polite Scribe had symbolically asked Jesus: “A penny for your thoughts?” Jesus treated him with respect and applauded his genuine faith: “One of the Scribes came near to Jesus and heard the religious authorities disputing with one another, and seeing that Jesus answered them well, asked him: Which commandment is the first of the commandments? Jesus responded that the first is, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and 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.” When Jesus saw that the Scribe understood his answer, Jesus said to him, “You are close to the kingdom of God.”

In a variation on the “good cop, bad cop” method of interrogation, the Scribes were attempting to goad Jesus into revealing himself by acting contrary to the Law. It is important to understand that Scribes, educated and sophisticated in their understanding of the Torah (the Mosaic Law), were suspicious of Jesus and threatened by his popularity among the people. Perhaps more easily described as a combination of pious theologians and civil lawyers, the Scribes were set apart from the Pharisees, but recognized as learned individuals. Historically, however, the role of a Scribe was an honorable profession devoted to the study of the Law and the interpretation of prophecies (Sirach 38:24; 39:1). Because they did not receive a salary for their services, they had to rely on the generosity of others. Jesus was critical of the Scribes who took advantage of their positions and bilked widows and other vulnerable members of the community out of their money and houses. Jesus’ harshness regarding the scheming of the Scribes was not merely an attempt to criticize them, but to teach his disciples what not to do. Jesus’ teachings were the exact opposite of the scribes’ posturing tactics of ingratiating themselves with wealthy individuals and seeking places of honor at the banquets, and grabbing the best seats in the synagogues. Jesus was critical of the Scribes’ penchant for wearing long robes in the marketplace and their conspicu-

ous attempts to advertise their presence and invite deference. The most egregious flaws were their attempts to hoodwink the powerless and marginalized members of society, and profit from the unjust acquisition of money and the “devouring of widows’ houses.”

We must safeguard our own mentalities and institutions from the pomposity of parading about in ecclesial outfits, elaborate jeweled miters and “ecclesial bling.” The contrast between the humility of the widow and the sycophant style of the Scribes ought to jar us into realistic perceptions of the right way to live. The danger inherent in all power positions, political or religious, is the seductive illusions that the “best seats and places of honor” are signs of entitlement and God’s blessing. If we listen closely, we might hear Jesus offering a “penny for your thoughts.”

The first reading for the Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time highlights the plight of a widow as well. However, no Scribes figure into this dramatic confrontation. The Prophet Elijah confronted the widow of Zarephath and demanded that she “Bring me a little water in a vessel, so that I may drink. Also, bring me a morsel of bread.” Telling Elijah of the scarcity of her resources and the need to feed her son first before they starved to death, the Prophet assures her that the Lord will care for her and her son if she does what he asks of her. Assuring her with one of Scripture’s most consistent admonitions: “Do not be afraid.” Elijah encourages her to rely on the absolute providential care of God. In our gospel reading for today (Mark 12:38-44), Jesus highlights another widow’s providential trust in God with the following story: “A poor widow came into the treasury and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.”

Using the examples of two daring women who, powerless and poor, were willing to share what little they possessed, ushers us into the paradoxical thinking of Jesus. The level of courage manifested by the two widows in the face of difficulty draws us into understanding of our faith. While their decisions seemed foolhardy on a human level, both women relinquished their meager possessions in favor of the providential care of God. While their extreme generosity might prove threatening to us, the greater lesson has to do with sharing what we possess with those in need. By contrast to the hypocrisy and overweening pride of the Scribes who safeguarded their ill-gotten gains at the expense of others, the humility of these two widows prompts radical thinking and soul searching on our part.

What pushes us to be kindhearted and generous? What comfort zones are we willing to leave to free ourselves from imaginary scarcity fears? A penny for your thoughts?

Peace, Fr. Joe Gillespie, O.P.

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