

JANUARY 16, 2022

SECOND 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.

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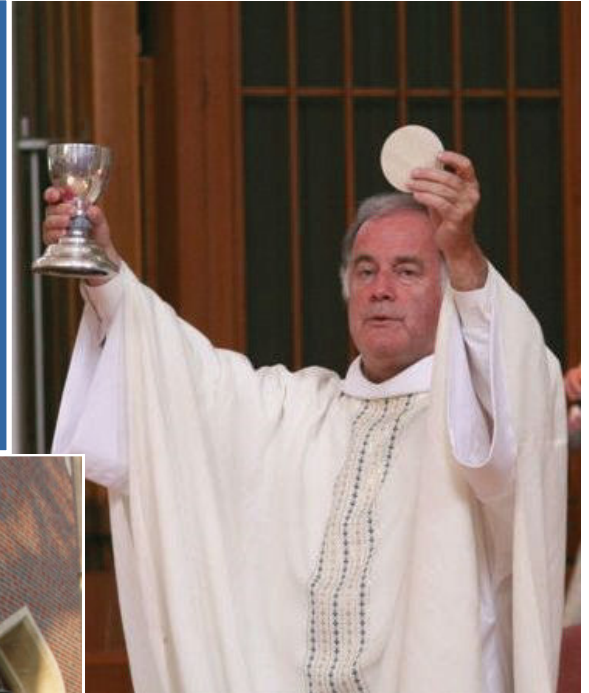
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“There are different kinds
of spiritual gifts,
but the same Spirit;
there are different forms of
service, but the same Lord.
there are different workings
but the same God...”

1 Corinthians 12:4



Say YES to
love and peace.
Amen! Alleluia!



This week at St. Albert's(masses and intentions are in **BOLD** type)**Saturday, January 15****5:00 pm mass Deceased Members of the Carter Family****Sunday, January 16****9:30 am mass Jeff Hoag †**

10:30 am Sunday hospitality in the Social Hall

11:00 am Faith Formation for children and youth

12:00 pm mass Kathy Post †**Monday, January 17****8:15 am Judy Bill †****Tuesday, January 18****8:15 am Lydia Orstad †**

9:30 am Staff meeting

Wednesday, January 19**Thursday, January 20****8:15 am Celebrating Phoebe Moore's 1st Birthday**

12:00 pm Crafts & conversation, Social Hall

Friday, January 21**8:15 am Jeffrey Fridlund †****Saturday, January 22****5:00 pm mass Patrick Carter †****Sunday, January 23****9:30 am mass Jeffrey Fridlund †**

10:30 am Sunday hospitality in the Social Hall

11:00 am Faith Formation for children and youth 1

12:00 pm mass Jeff Hoag †**Readings: week of January 16, 2022****Sunday:** Is 62:1-5/Ps 96:1-2, 2-3, 7-8, 9-10 [3]/1 Cor 12:4-11/Jn 2:1-11**Monday:** 1 Sm 15:16-23/Ps 50:8-9, 16bc-17, 21 and 23/Mk 2:18-22**Tuesday:** 1 Sm 16:1-13/Ps 89:20, 21-22, 27-28/Mk 2:23-28**Wednesday:** 1 Sm 17:32-33, 37, 40-51/Ps 144:1b, 2, 9-10/Mk 3:1-6**Thursday:** 1 Sm 18:6-9; 19:1-7/Ps 56:2-3, 9-10a, 10b-11, 12-13/Mk 3:7-12**Friday:** 1 Sm 24:3-21/Ps 57:2, 3-4, 6 and 11/Mk 3:13-19**Saturday:** 2 Sm 1:1-4, 11-12, 19, 23-27/Ps 80:2-3, 5-7/Mk 3:20-21**Next Sunday:** Neh 8:2-4a, 5-6, 8-10/Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 15/1 Cor 12:12-30 or 12:12-14, 27/ Lk 1:1-4; 4:14-21 or, Is 40:1-5, 9-11/Ps 104:1b-2, 3-4, 24-25, 27-28, 29-30 [1]/Ti 2:11-14; 3:4-7/Lk 3:15-16, 21-22

* **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.

Sunday Hospitality

We're once again offering coffee and light refreshments such as cookies in the Social Hall following the 9:30 am Sunday mass.

Volunteers are needed to keep this popular get-together time going, especially for clean up. Teams are in place for January, except for the last weekend. Please contact Ed Burke if you're interested in covering Jan. 30 or beyond. Teams need not provide anything fancy... all we need is an opportunity to get together with some light refreshments. Ed can be reached at 612-724-3643, ext 103 or e.burke@saintalbertthegreat.org.

“Did Jesus have a drinking problem?”

Given the unusual circumstances at the Wedding Feast of Cana, Jesus performed his first miracle (sign) in the Gospel of John (2:1-12) by turning water into wine. When the wine gave out at the wedding reception, Jesus turned six stone water jars (used for rites of purification,) each holding about one hundred liters of water, into the finest vintage of wine. The *sommelier* (wine steward) was shocked and said to the bridegroom: “Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. Why have you kept the good wine until now?” Given the volume of the six water jars filled “to the brim,” the “miracle wine” amounted to over 120 gallons of wine! There were no follow up reports in the Gospel of John on how long the wedding feast lasted due to the “miracle wine” or whether Jesus received a lot more invitations to weddings.

As Jesus’ ministry became more public, he seemed to “eat and drink” his way through the gospels. In two of the four gospels (Matthew 11:19 and Luke 7:34), Jesus was accused of being “A glutton and a drunkard (a winebibber in the King James Version), a friend of tax collectors and sinners.” The gospels are filled with wonderful stories of Jesus sharing meals with others. The relational richness of Jesus’ ministry eradicated social boundary markers and became a revelation of what the Kingdom of God was like. The joy of these meals, even in uncomfortable settings under the scrutiny of the Pharisees and Scribes, would shatter the religious and social barriers created to maintain exclusivity. Many of these social gatherings would provide the liberating opportunities for Jesus’ healing ministries. Keeping in mind Jesus’ hometown experience in the local synagogue of Nazareth (Luke 4:17), he maintained his faithfulness in honoring the traditional rituals of the Sabbath. In reading from the Prophet Isaiah (61:1-2): “He was sent to heal the broken hearted”, Jesus prefigured a defining pastoral conclusion: the need to break bread with those who were marginalized and in need of salvation. The pastoral question might be asked: Are our places of worship hospitable, especially to the lonely and the broken hearted?

The Wedding Feast of Cana was a “family affair,” and Jesus was expected to be there in the company of his mother, Mary. Faced with the request of his mother to do something to alleviate the wine shortage at the reception, Jesus and Mary got into a bit of an argument: “Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.” In a risky act of obedience, Jesus complied with Mary’s request. Jesus would leave the wedding feast in the company of Mary and his disciples and return to his ordinary life in Capernaum, where he would remain until he set out for Jerusalem. The miracle at the Wedding Feast of Cana is mentioned only in the gospel of John, even-though the miracle remains one of the best-known stories of the New Testament. Highlighting the enormous compassion and generosity of God, the sign (miracle) prefigures the Eucharist and the invitation to celebrate the Lord’s Supper (Passover) with wine and bread.

The adult ministerial life of Jesus is found in the Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary, which were introduced to the world by Pope John Paul II in October of 2002. The five mysteries (The Baptism of Jesus, The Wedding Feast of Cana, The Proclamation of The Kingdom of God, The Transfiguration and The Institution of the Eucharist) would bring out more clearly the Christological depth of Jesus’ public ministry and would provide an adult model for ministry. The Second Mystery, The Wedding Feast of Cana, portrays the social life of Jesus in the company of his mother and his friends. Jewish weddings often lasted for days and the necessity of having enough food and wine was imperative; to be caught short would be a source of embarrassment. Jesus would “save the wedding” and set a precedent for God’s generosity and mercy.

Liturgically speaking, we are entering Ordinary Time and we will take a brief respite from major feasts until Lent begins. Prior to the penitential practices of Lent, this is an enjoyable time to “eat, drink and be merry,” in moderation, of course. I will have a number of weddings in the next few weeks and will attend all the receptions. I have no intention of providing “new wine” for any of these receptions, but I will not refuse any of the ordinary wine of the night. Ordinary Time reflects the extraordinary presence of God in the everyday events of our lives. Baptisms, weddings, and funerals abound in the ordinary days of our lives. All occasions are invitations to celebrate and to discover God, both in the feasts and fasts of life. Celtic spirituality speaks of “thin places” where the hidden spirit of God resides. God is larger than we can imagine and, paradoxically, might be manifested even in the smallest and thinnest of places in our ordinary lives and institutions. In St. Paul’s Letter to the Corinthians (12: 4-11), Paul builds community around with the understanding that there is only one Spirit who endows the community with different gifts. What a lovely image to visualize as people gather around tables, whether in a church, a funeral luncheon hall or in a grand wedding reception and discover the enormity of God’s presence and the largest of God’s miracles (signs) in the tiniest of places.

On closer examination of the gospels, there is no evidence to assert that Jesus had a drinking or eating problem. In comparison to John the Baptist’s austere lifestyle (“John came neither eating bread nor drinking wine”), Jesus did have a lifestyle that did not isolate him from people. However, Jesus did have a problem with those who refused to come to the table out of fear or prejudicial thinking. It would be Jesus’ Institution of the Eucharist (the Fifth Luminous Mystery) that would signal the importance of gathering around the table and enjoying the feast at hand. Eating and drinking were always secondary to discovering a place at the table. Jesus was not interested in erecting walls or barriers to prevent those wishing to find a place at the table. In the simple act of breaking bread with the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-34), Jesus knew that timing was crucial and revelation critical in helping others to believe that he was the Messiah. The extraordinary gift of faith will be found in the ordinariness of life. Despite institutional roadblocks that make it difficult for all to find a place at the table of the Eucharist, we must continue to reflect Jesus’ willingness to eat with “sinners and tax collectors” no matter the consequences.

Seeking serenity in an uncertain world while grappling with an ongoing pandemic, climate change and gridlock in so many of our political and religious institutions, we desperately need the wisdom of Jesus. Not unlike the familiar Serenity Prayer that has become the survival mantra of those seeking peace amid personal and social chaos, we need the courage to accept what we cannot change, the courage to change what we can and the wisdom to know the difference. In this New Year, let us find the courage and wisdom to eat, drink and be merry in the company of one another while searching for peace and respect.

Peace,
Fr. Joe Gillespie, O.P.



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