



Mt. Hope Catholic Community

Saint Francis of Assisi / Saint Dominic

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2020

WEEKEND MASS SCHEDULE— until further notice

St. Dominic Church-Sunday at 9:30am

St. Francis of Assisi-Sunday at 11:00am

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED!

call or email the office before Thursday.

Contact:

Saint Dominic Church

P.O. Box 205, Swansea, MA 02777 or

1277 G.A.R. Highway, Swansea, MA 02777

Parish Office: 508-675-7206

Parish fax: 508-672-4716

Email: saintdominicparish@comcast.net

Religious Ed Grades 1-4: 508-675-7002

Faith Formation Coordinator: Barbara Domingue

Email: stdominic1277@gmail.com

Religious Ed Grades 5-7: 508-674-0024

Faith Formation Coordinator: Debra Fontaine

Religionseducation@saintfrancisw Swansea.com

Confirmation 1 & 2 Coordinator: 508-674-0024

Coordinators: Joy and Joe Viveiros

Email: joyann56@comcast.net

Baptism: Please call the rectory to register.

Marriage: Call at least 8 months before date of wedding

First Communion: After completing a two year program for First and Second Grade.

Communion to the Homebound: Please call the rectory regarding communion at home.

PARISH STAFF:

Pastor: Rev. Philip N. Hamel

Deacon: Rev. Mr. Gary M. John

Custodian: Peter Urban

Office Manager/Bulletin: Louise Guglielmo

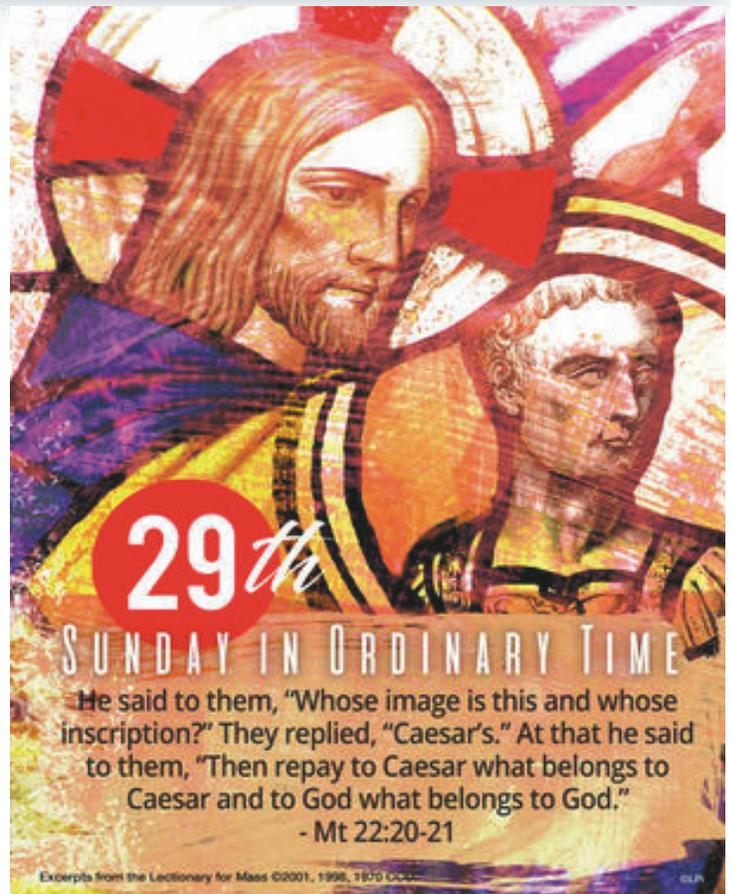
PARISH WEBSITE: www.stdominicswansea.org

PARISH BULLETIN ONLINE:

<https://www.parishesonline.com/find/st-dominic->

FACEBOOK ONLINE:

<https://www.facebook.com/St-Dominic-Parish-Swansea-193026010775744/>



October 18, 2020 – Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Living the Pascal Mystery

In the modern, rather individualistic world in which we live, there is a temptation to believe that what we have, we have earned. My possessions are mine, a result of my own hard work or that of others, such as family. But today's gospel is a good reminder that all we have is from God. As such, we should not and cannot be hoarders of God's good gifts. Even money itself should not be thought of as ours.

Jesus calls us to an entirely new way of thinking. We return to be fed at the table of his word and at the table of his Eucharist so often in part because we need to be reminded of this way of thinking when we are so immersed in the world with its ways.

Any resources we have are truly not our own. Even what we acquired through our own labor and efforts cannot be taken with us when we pass on from this life. Let us die to the notion of possessions-what is mine versus yours-and let us instead engage in a lifestyle of discipleship, which shares what we have with the least among us. In that way we will be living the paschal mystery.

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Once again this week we hear from the Old Testament prophet Isaiah. He refers to Cyrus as being the Lord's anointed to whom the Lord is speaking. This Cyrus is King Cyrus II, often referred to as Cyrus the Great, the founder of the first Persian (modern day Iran) Empire. As some background, many of the Old Testament Jews were forcibly removed from their homeland during the reign of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. In fact, Nebuchadnezzar forcibly relocated citizens of Israel three times during his reign, bringing them all to Babylon. When bringing captives to Babylon, mostly the upper class and craftsmen/smiths, he also took with him costly and precious items from the Temple of Jerusalem, or if you will, the Temple of Solomon: gold vessels, lamps, lamp stands and the like.

It would appear that Nebuchadnezzar, and perhaps too his predecessors, would often force the elite of conquered lands to come to serve him in his capital. While some may have been treated kindly during the extended exile, for example Daniel who could interpret dreams, they were nonetheless a conquered people in a foreign land. For the Jews especially, this would have been a particular burden since Jerusalem is the place where the God of Israel is to be worshiped, and the fact that Israel was a land given to their forefathers by God himself.

When Cyrus conquered Babylon and establish his own Persian imperial dynasty, one of his greatest acts was to allow foreign peoples to leave Babylon and return to their own homelands. Many returned home with the statues of their own gods who had accompanied them to Babylon since their own temples had likewise been looted. Since the Jews do not represent God in images, much like the Muslims, what was returned to them for a return to Jerusalem were the many gold and precious items that had been forcibly taken. But not only did Cyrus allow them to take back what was theirs, he also gave them money to rebuild the temple upon their return. It is for this reason that Cyrus, a non Jew and conqueror of Israel since Israel belonged to the Babylonians when Cyrus conquered them, he is considered the "Lord's anointed".

It is rare in the Jewish text to have such a foreigner praised as the "Lord's anointed". Kings of Israel were anointed! Prophets of the God of Israel were anointed! It is unusual for one who is not of the Jewish faith, not a citizen of Israel, not a worshipper of the one true God to be seen in this particular light. But Isaiah recognizes him as such because one who is "anointed" is one who is "set apart".

Pagans were almost always seen as enemies of God by the prophets and priests of Israel, if not always by their kings. The kings of Israel often made treaties with foreign pagan kings and often these treaties involved arranged marriages to unite "royal" houses. As a result, the kings often erected pagan temples to appease their foreign born wives, to the peril of king and country. These treaties however did not always assure peaceful coexistence and the kings with whom the treaties were made were seldom benevolent neighbors. Ancient treaties for Israel were often no more than a toss of the dice, hoping to avoid invasion.

Cyrus of course is different. He is the Lord's "anointed" in the sense that he has been "set apart" from other rulers, and in particular from Nebuchadnezzar who first deported so many of the Jews. Because of Cyrus' style of rule, and perhaps even because of his own religious views, he allowed the Jewish elite who had been relocated (as well as the elite of other nations) to return home with their possessions and families who had been born in Babylon. The "Lord's anointed" in this sense reminds the people of Israel that the Lord can work through Jews and non Jews alike. Ancient people often believed that their gods were local and therefore lived locally and thereby their authority and power did not extend beyond the borders. That is why some of the ancient people who were deported to Babylon brought statues of their gods with them. If the image of the god was close by, then his/her power must be as well. But the Jews believed in only one God who is God of all. The Lord's anointing of Cyrus therefore reminds them that God can work wherever he pleases and through whomever he pleases. While none of the ancient Jews who were allowed to leave Babylon would have reason for anything but gratitude toward Cyrus, it would still have seen peculiar that God would exercise his authority and power through one who had no allegiance to the one true God. And yet he did just that through the person of King Cyrus the Great.

In the gospel passage, again from St. Matthew, the Pharisees and the Herodians approach Jesus with the famous question about paying the tax to the Romans. Knowing that they're trying to catch him in a slip up that will put him in a bad light with the Roman authorities, he naturally frustrates them by saying that they should render to Caesar what belongs to him, and to God what belongs to God. It's a reminder to us that faithful citizenship and faithful discipleship are not of necessity opposed to each other. Jesus, like most of the Jews of his day, was not enamored of the Romans. As a faithful first century Jew, Jesus would have held the Roman occupiers, their brutal tactics, their oppressive taxes and their worship of false gods in disdain. Nonetheless, Jesus always observed the laws of his day. The authority that he sometimes challenged was not the civil authority, but the religious authority who often put the law over the good of the people, especially if doing this was to the benefit of those in authority.

Throughout history, disciples have lived under just about every kind of political system imaginable: some benevolent, others brutal, most somewhere in between. God can work his plan through those who we may not see as obvious choices to be "the Lord's anointed." And while Cyrus was seen as such by the Prophet Isaiah, I doubt seriously that those whose lands were conquered by Cyrus through force saw him in the same light. It is, to be honest, easier to see the "hand of God" through actions that benefit us or in which we find value, ease or pleasure, be they the actions of civil authorities or religious authorities. Nonetheless, God works through both without our knowing it and most often without revealing it to us. It becomes incumbent upon us therefore to work at remaining faithful citizens by first and foremost working diligently to remain and grow in faithful discipleship. We want to render to Caesar what is his. However Caesar is not a god. God however is! Therefore it is imperative that we render to God what is God's by faithful discipleship which is rooted in the obedience of faith. Rendering to God what is simply Caesars, or what is socially acceptable and not in accord with Jesus' teaching, just doesn't cut it. And as always, love of God, with all that it implies, remain the first and greatest commandment, and our ticket to heaven. What belongs to Caesar won't do it! Jesus is God's anointed above all others!

**MASS INTENTIONS
OCTOBER 18—25**

Saturday October 17 Arthur LeMay (Birth.) and
Dorothy LeMay
Sunday October 18 Cory Brescia
Jose and Maria Pimentel
All Souls in Purgatory
Carl Lopes
Saturday October 24 Available
Sunday October 25 Edward Olson (2nd Anniv.)
Walter Loberge (5th Anniv.)
Horacio & Irma DeBrum

**SHARE THE WARMTH
AND PROVIDE A WARMER HOLIDAY SEASON
FOR CHILDREN!**

The Knights of Columbus Chapter #3669 along with our Saint Vincent de Paul Society are holding their annual COATS FOR KIDS campaign from October 1—November 15. As in every situation, COVID-19 has impacted this campaign as well. We can no longer accept used coats. We are asking for monetary donations in order to purchase new coats for all the children.

Should you decide to donate a new coat, please be sure that the tags are attached and drop them off at St. Dominic Church.

You may drop your monetary donations at St. Dominic Church /or mail them to us c/o St. Dominic Church, 1277 GAR Hwy., Swansea, MA 02777. Thank you and God Bless

**SAINT DOMINIC'S WOMEN'S GUILD
WILL BE HOSTING THEIR
ANNUAL MEAT PIE SUPPER
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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14TH
FROM 4-6 PM**

**TICKETS ARE \$10 AND CAN BE PURCHASED
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**SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL
ANNUAL THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE**

**BECAUSE OF THE PANDEMIC, we cannot
accept actual food donation this year.**

**In place of that we are asking for monetary or gift
card donation instead. You may drop
them off at St. Dominic Church or you
may mail them to St. Dominic Church with
Attn: St. Vincent de Paul. Thank you and**



**ST. DOMINIC CHURCH
4TH DEGREE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
JANUARY SURPRISE CALENDAR -2021**

**DONATIONS \$10
WEEKDAY PRIZES \$25
WEEKEND PRIZES \$50
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4TH DEGREE KNIGHTS AND
AT ST. DOMINIC RECTORY**



**THIS SUNDAY
OCTOBER 18, 2020
THREE MORE OF OUR
FIRST COMMUNION CANDIDATES
WILL BE CELEBRATING THEIR
FIRST HOLY COMMUNION.
PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYERFUL
BLESSINGS FOR THE CHILDREN.**

YOU'RE CHURCH NEEDS YOU



This COVID Pandemic has had such negative effect on our lives, on our Schools, on employment, on our health, on our family life and on unfortunately on our churches.

Though Mass space is limited on Sundays due to CDC Regulations on social distancing, please know that you are all in our prayers.

Your continued support is needed during these trying times and we are thankful for the contributions received. You may drop off your contributions to the Rectory or mail them directly to the Church.

PRAYER BEFORE AN ELECTION

As we look to our upcoming national elections, the Catholic bishops of the United States ask us to offer this prayer:

Lord God, as the election approaches,
We seek to better understand the issues and concerns that confront our city/state/country, and how the Gospel compels us to respond as faithful citizens of our community.

We ask for eyes that are free from blindness so that we might see each other as brothers and sisters, one and equal in dignity, especially those who are victims of abuse, violence, deceit and poverty.

We ask for ears that will hear the cries of the children unborn and those abandoned, and of men and women oppressed because of race, creed, religion or gender.

We ask for minds and hearts that are open to hearing the voices of leaders who will bring us closer to your Kingdom.

We pray for discernment so that we may choose leaders who hear your Word, live your love, and keep in the ways of your truth as they follow in the steps of Jesus and his Apostles and guide us to your Kingdom of justice and peace.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



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