

# ST. THOMAS INDIAN MISSION

26th Sunday  
in Ordinary Time, Year B  
September 26, 2021

Fort Yuma, California | P. O. Box 1176, Winterhaven, CA 92283

Website: [www.stthomasindianmission.org](http://www.stthomasindianmission.org)

Email: [saintthomasindianmission@gmail.com](mailto:saintthomasindianmission@gmail.com)

Tel: 760-572-0283

Fr. George "of the desert" Decasa  
Pastor

**Entrance:** — 849  
They'll Know We Are  
Christians.

**Recessional:** — 832  
Here I Am, Lord

## SATURDAYS:

3:15 pm to 4:15 pm – Holy Hour  
3:45 pm to 4:15 pm – Confessions  
4:30 pm – HOLY MASS

## SUNDAYS:

7:15 am to 8:15 am – Holy Hour  
7:45 am to 8:15 am – Confessions  
8:30 am – HOLY MASS

## October — Respect Life Month

Each October, the Church in the United States celebrates *Respect Life Month*, and the first Sunday of October which is next Sunday, is observed as *Respect Life Sunday*.

The prominence of anti-abortion movement leads many people to identify respect for life as simply an abortion issue. The teaching of the U.S. bishops, on the other hand, reminds us that there are a large number of life issues that deserve our attention and our prayer.

As Catholics, we are called to cherish, defend, and protect those who are most vulnerable, from the beginning of life to its end, and at every point in between.

During the month of October, the Church asks us to reflect more deeply on the dignity of every human life and offer particular prayers for, among others, homeless parents, expectant parents, parents of teen mothers, grandparents, children born and unborn, orphans, doctors who perform abortions, inmates on death row, government leaders, those who are lonely or afraid, those in nursing homes, prisoners with no visitors, medical researchers, the sick and especially those with HIV or AIDS or COVID, those of other religions who promote life, those preparing for marriage and those who are dying. For Respect Life Action Guides, Visit: [respectlife.org/celebrate](http://respectlife.org/celebrate)

**An excerpt from Bishop McElroy's message on Sunday, September 12, to launch the seven-week period of Eucharistic Renewal observed in our diocese.**

*"I am speaking to you ... to introduce you to an initiative that is taking place in every parish of our diocese ... to renew our understanding of and love for the Eucharist. The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life. In it we receive the Real Presence of the Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have been redeemed. Yet many faith-filled Catholics have questions or misconceptions about the meaning of Eucharist for us and for our world.*

***For this reason, we will be presenting to you today and on the following two Sundays homilies preached by priests of our diocese on the most important realities of the gift of the Eucharist. This will be followed by three Sundays in which we will highlight and explain each section of the Mass as it is celebrated.***

*It is my deepest hope that these weeks will be for us all a time to grow in our love for and understanding of this most beautiful sacrament, and in doing so come closer to the God who has bestowed upon us every blessing we know in this world."*

## COLLECTIONS:

Sept. 18-19:

\$1,543.00

Via Online, Sept. 16-21:

\$325.00

For Haiti: \$ 256.00



## The three ten-minute homilies on the Eucharist:

Sept 12: "The Eucharist is a personal encounter with Christ."

Sept. 19: "The Eucharist is the sacrificial memorial of Christ's Passion, Death, and Resurrection by which we have been redeemed."

Sept. 26: "The Eucharist is the sacred meal that nurtures us, bonds us together and sends us forth to transform the world."

## The Mystery of Faith:

Save us, Savior of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection, you have set us free.

Visit <https://www.sdcatholic.org/eucharist>

Starting at 12 noon on Sunday, September 26,

to view a taped video of a ten-minute homily on  
*"The Eucharist is the sacred meal that nurtures us, bonds us together and sends us forth to transform the world."*

# THE READINGS. . . SOME REFLECTIONS. . . AND GUIDEPOSTS.

## Introduction to the Liturgy of the Day

We gather together today to listen to God's word and to share in the Eucharist. In today's first reading we hear the story of two of Moses's friends, Eldad and Medad, who missed the gathering when the LORD bestowed the spirit of prophecy on all the elders. Yet the spirit of the Lord came to rest on them as well.

Let us keep in mind all those who are not with us today, for whatever reason, and pray that the Holy Spirit may bear fruit in them as well as all of us.

### **1st Reading – Numbers 11:25-29**

<sup>25</sup>The LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to Moses. Taking some of the spirit that was on Moses, the LORD bestowed it on the seventy elders; and as the spirit came to rest on them, they prophesied.

<sup>26</sup>Now two men, one named Eldad and the other Medad, were not in the gathering but had been left in the camp. They too had been on the list, but had not gone out to the tent; yet the spirit came to rest on them also, and they prophesied in the camp. <sup>27</sup>So, when a young man quickly told Moses, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp," <sup>28</sup>Joshua, son of Nun, who from his youth had been Moses' aide, said, "Moses, my lord, stop them." <sup>29</sup>But Moses answered him, "Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the people of the LORD were prophets! Would that the LORD might bestow his spirit on them all!"

The Word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God.**

### **Responsorial Psalm** (Psalm 19:8, 10, 12-13, and 14)

#### **“(9a) The precepts of the Lord give joy to the heart.”**

<sup>8</sup>The law of the LORD is perfect, refreshing the soul; the decree of the LORD is trustworthy, giving wisdom to the simple.

**R.**

<sup>10</sup>The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever; the ordinances of the LORD are true, all of them just.

**R.**

<sup>12</sup>Though your servant is careful of them, very diligent in keeping them, <sup>13</sup>yet who can detect failings? Cleanse me from my unknown faults!

**R.**

<sup>14</sup>From wanton sin especially, restrain your servant; let it not rule over me. Then shall I be blameless and innocent of serious sin. **R.**

## **2nd Reading – James 5:1-6**

<sup>1</sup>Come now, you rich, weep and wail over your impending miseries. <sup>2</sup>Your wealth has rotted away, your clothes have become moth-eaten, <sup>3</sup>your gold and silver have corroded, and that corrosion will be a testimony against you; it will devour your flesh like a fire. You have stored up treasure for the last days.

<sup>4</sup>Behold, the wages you withheld from the workers who harvested your fields are crying aloud; and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. <sup>5</sup>You have lived on earth in luxury and pleasure; you have fattened your hearts for the day of slaughter. <sup>6</sup>You have condemned; you have murdered the righteous one; he offers you no resistance.

The Word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God.**

### **Alleluia – (Cf. John 17:17b, 17a)**

**Lector:** Alleluia, alleluia. **All:** Alleluia, alleluia.

**Lector:** <sup>17b</sup>Your word, O Lord, is truth; <sup>17b</sup>consecrate us in the truth.

**All:** Alleluia, alleluia.

### **Gospel – Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48**

<sup>38</sup>At that time, John said to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw someone driving out demons in your name, and we tried to prevent him because he does not follow us." <sup>39</sup>Jesus replied, "Do not prevent him. There is no one who performs a mighty deed in my name who can at the same time speak ill of me. <sup>40</sup>For whoever is not against us is for us. <sup>41</sup>Anyone who gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ, amen, I say to you, will surely not lose his reward.

<sup>42</sup>"Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were put around his neck and he were thrown into the sea. <sup>43</sup>If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed than with two hands to go into Gehenna, into the unquenchable fire. <sup>45</sup>And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life crippled than with two feet to be thrown into Gehenna. <sup>47</sup>And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. Better for you to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into Gehenna, <sup>48</sup>where 'their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.'"

The Gospel of the Lord.

**All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

## The Prophetic Vocation

Prophets speak for God calling people back to God's ways. Doing so is never easy, because most of us don't like to be reminded when we are not living up to our best selves, the people God made us to be.

The first reading reminds us that God calls people in different ways to prophesy. Moses declares that he needs help providing for the many needs of God's chosen people. Seventy of the elders received the spirit of prophecy in a ritual gathering. Two others, though, missed the event yet still were filled with the spirit and began to prophesy.

\*\*\*\*\*

Moses's wish that ends the first reading—"Would that the LORD might bestow his spirit on them all!" (Numbers 11:29)—does not go unfulfilled. The Lord has indeed bestowed the Holy Spirit on us all. In baptism we all received the Holy Spirit. We all have the ability to prophesy—to speak the word of God to those we encounter.

**From time to time we need to be reminded of the gift and duty to prophesy. We may carry out that mission in various ways in different situations, but it always calls for speaking the truth, especially when we see injustice and oppression.**

\*\*\*\*\*

Pray to the Holy Spirit for the courage to activate the gift of prophecy in you. You may use as model the following prayer to the Holy Spirit by the great saint and doctor of the Church, St. Augustine:

*Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy. Act in me, O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy. Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit, that I love but what is holy. Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, to defend all that is holy. Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy. Amen.*

May the graces of the Eucharist that we celebrate give us the courage to prophesy and, like St. Paul, exclaim that "it is no longer I but Christ, who lives in me" (cf. Gal. 2:20).

## The Tension in Us.

We are pulled in two directions at the same time – outward toward God and inward toward our selfish selves. A fitting analogy is the rubber band. If you pull it in opposite directions, you create a tension. Once you let go of one end, the tension is gone.

God is trying to draw us to himself, but we are pulling in the opposite direction. That creates tension. In one sense, what life is all about is learning to let go from our end.

One has to honestly admit what it is that is holding him/her back from God. Then he/she must pray for the COURAGE to make the supreme sacrifice to give it up – even if it be something or someone as precious as a hand, a foot, or an eye.

## Sin

Sin is another theme of our readings today. Sin is what St. James is speaking of when he talks about social injustice and lack of concern for those in need. Sin is what our Lord is talking about too, when he tells us to cut off our hand, our foot, or tear out our eye if it is going to lead us from God and into damnation. This is a metaphor, of course. Our Lord doesn't really intend us to go and mutilate ourselves in this way because sin does not find its origin in our hands or feet but in our mind or heart.

\*\*\*\*\*

Sin is a decision to do something God has forbidden or not to do something God has commanded. In telling us this, Jesus is saying that if we want lasting happiness we must hold our relationship with God as more precious than anything else we possess.

Especially he emphasizes this with regard to leading little children away from God, not teaching them right, giving them bad example.

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A priest tells a story of going to a family's home for dinner. At one point the husband left the room to get some refreshments while the wife went to the kitchen to check on the meal. The priest was left in the den with the couple's five-year old son. The boy sat beside the priest and peppered him with questions. Finally, the child asked, "Father, what is an 'arrow grant'?" The priest replied that he had never heard of such a thing.

When the wife returned, the child persisted in wanting to know the answer. "What is it you want to know, Honey?" she asked. The child repeated, "What does 'arrow grant' mean?" The mother asked her son where he got such a word. The boy responded, "Mama, on Sunday you and daddy always say that the Father is so 'arrow grant' (arrogant).

This is a parent's worst nightmare, to have their child parrot something at the worst possible moment. But this is the mirror Jesus wants us to look into.

**What kind of witness do we give?**

An often-cited quotation from Abraham Lincoln relates that during the middle of the Civil War in 1862, one of the Northern leaders asked the president for prayer that God would be on their side. Lincoln responded, "Sir, my concern is not whether God is on our side, my greatest concern is to be on God's side."

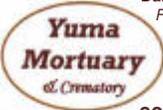
In today's Gospel, the disciples complained that a man was expelling demons in Jesus' name. They were indignant because he was not of their group or part of the mission of Jesus. **But Jesus tells the disciples the man is really on their side because he is doing a good work, the work of God.**

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