



Ordinary Time

20th Sunday in Ordinary Time

St. Mary's Catholic Church

August 16, 2020

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[HTTPS://WWW.PARISHESONLINE.COM/FIND/ST-MARY-
CHURCH-51640](https://www.parishesonline.com/find/st-mary-church-51640)

We gather today, as we do each Sunday, as the Body of Christ. Together we pray, we worship God, and we are nourished with the Word and the Eucharist to strengthen us on our journey to the kingdom. In today's first reading, the LORD says that "my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples." Let us make this home of our faith community, this holy place, a home in which all peoples are welcomed to join us in worship and prayer.



Cycle A -- Reflections on the Readings

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 56:1,6-7; Psalm 67; Romans 11:13-15,29-32;

Matthew 15:21-28

Theme: A Kingdom for All

Today's readings challenge us to widen the boundaries rather than see ourselves as elitist or exclusive.

John Newton's conversion story

John Newton composed the beautiful hymn "Amazing Grace." The life of Newton is very dramatic. When he was seven years old, his mother died. His father remarried and John had a formal education until the age of eleven. At eleven, he left the school and joined his father's ship and became a sailor. By the age of seventeen, he became an expert sailor.

Later, he fought with his father and began his life as an independent sailor. His work was capturing, transporting and selling of slaves as plantation workers to the West Indies and the Americas. As long as he had money, he did not bother as to how he earned or spent it. He had all the vices of a sailor. God was far from his life.

One day, there was a severe storm in the sea. His ship was tossed hither and thither like a toy. He feared that all the men on board would die. That day he did something, which he had not done for a long time: he knelt down and prayed to God, "Lord! Help us to reach the shore safely. And I promise to be your slave all my life." "Miraculously the storm subsided. They reached the shore safely. He kept his promise. He studied for the ministry and became a preacher.

John Newton received the blessings of Jesus because of his faith at the time of his prayer. If we go by the nature of his life-vicious and rebellious, he was not fit to receive any mercy from God. By his nature, he was disqualified to receive God's blessing, but because of his faith he received His protection and blessings. Faith supplied what he lacked by nature.

In today's Gospel, we have the incident of the Syro-Phoenician woman. She was a Gentile, a non-Jewish woman who made a request to Jesus for healing of her daughter.

Faith is Key in belonging to the community of Jesus

The Jews were the chosen race. They had the right to receive the blessings of the Messiah. But if they do not have faith, they would forfeit that privilege. On the other hand, the non-Jewish people, like the Syro-Phoenician woman, who did not belong to the Chosen race of the Jews, will still receive the same blessings because of their faith. One belongs to the community of Jesus by virtue of faith, and not by blood. Faith will supply what we lack by nature.

The readings demonstrate that, qualification for discipleship is not of ethnic origin but a persistent faith in Jesus. God called Abraham not because of his great ancestry or even his good works, rather on account of his faith. May Jesus strengthen our faith in Him and help our resolve to follow Him more closely in our lives.

Motivation for the week——Your priorities matter

“Imagine you had a bank account that deposited \$86,400 each morning. The account carries over no balance from day to day, allows you to keep no cash balance, and every evening cancels whatever part of the amount you had failed to use during the day. What would you do? Draw out every dollar each day!

We all have such a bank. Its name is Time. Every morning, it credits you with 86,400 seconds. Every night it writes off, as lost, whatever time you have failed to use wisely. It carries over no balance from day to day. It allows no overdraft so you can't borrow against yourself or use more time than you have. Each day, the account starts fresh. Each night, it destroys an unused time. If you fail to use the day's deposits, it's your loss and you can't appeal to get it back.

There is never any borrowing time. You can't take a loan out on your time or against someone. The time you have is the time you have and that is that. Time management is yours to decide how you spend the time, just as with money you decide how you spend the money. It is never the case of us not having enough time to do things, but the case of whether we want to do them and where they fall in our priorities.”

THE PRIEST IN THE ERA OF COVID-19

The priest is ordained to minister to the people. Without the flock there is no shepherd. It gladdens my heart when I see people at mass. As I near my twelve anniversary as priest on August 23rd. It never clicks that; a time will come when I wouldn't celebrate mass without congregation. While I am used to celebrating private mass on my day off or other days for special intention for my church members, little did I know that I will be deprived of this special encounter with Sunday congregation.

As governors begin to ease restrictions on opening businesses, the Diocese of Des Moines formed the regathering team. This enable us to start regathering in phases. Though we are able to have mass now by following the precautionary measures, it is clearly visible that things are not the same.

The power of covid-19

The utmost sad experience of my priestly life was during our recent Easter Triduum (Holy Thursday. I couldn't believe that on this special occasion, I have to celebrate mass alone without congregation.

As I gazed into the telescope, the entire world came to a standstill with no church activities, no international travelling, and lockdown, just to mention but few. On the contrary, the roads were extremely quiet, water bodies regain their natural beauty. Fish and other animals were dancing for the freedom from human intervention. The airwaves were filled with news flashes about the crisis. I saw how coronavirus unearth human power and limitation. While we are not giving up in the cause of this period, so many questions linger in our minds.

The question of God in the phase of these events and our faith in trusting God to sail us through was put under the litmus test. I believe in the words of the Psalmist, "Our God never sleeps nor slumber" (Psalm 121:4).

Fostering togetherness amidst pandemic

According to Aristotle, the legendary Greek philosopher, "Man is by nature a social animal; an individual who is unsocial naturally and not accidentally is either beneath our notice or more than human." As a matter of fact, human beings as "**social animals**" naturally seek the companionship of others as part of their well-being. We live in an era of social distancing. I cannot shake hands or hug. We have become extremely conscious in socializing with friends and family. One opportunity that covid-19 has snatched from me is the usual handshake and greetings at the end of mass.

It has become difficult as a priest just to walk into a hospital to visit a church member. In extreme cases, the priest has to wear full PPE. Nursing homes have become careful in protecting their residents. Yes, we can talk on the phone, yes, I can see you through the window but is never the same.

Besides other field of studies in Developmental psychology is the ability to explain how emotional and social development affects the human being. The world needs that affection. Our brothers, sisters and parents at home and nursing homes need that affection. We keep asking ourselves, how long shall we distance ourselves from each other as social beings?

As a church, we made stride in coming together at the early stages through prayer, study and social interaction via zoom. Thanks to all of you for your readiness to help and make things possible and easy for me. It was indeed refreshing seeing and greetings each other.

Covid-19 has thought me to follow precautionary health measures. I did not know how to wear mask but now I know. The Latin phrase, *Mens sana in corpore sano* is usually translated as "a healthy mind in a healthy body". I have tried as part of my challenge to exercise regularly.

This has made me to delve into a new arena of playing golf for fun. Please don't come and watch me for fear the ball hit you. My golf goes to any direction. I cannot count the number of golfs I have lost so far. Maybe I need to get a left-handed golf clubs!

The Priest as “Alter-Christus” (Another Christ)

The priest acts in person of Christ in the liturgy. I do not qualify for this noble task, but God's Grace found me. Priests who were infected with this virus, had their churches closed and members were tested before reopening. That is to say, members cannot receive the sacrament if anything happens to the priest in this *material moment*. While I do my part to keep you safe, do your part to keep me safe. I am not indispensable; however, I wouldn't want to canceled mass or deny anyone the sacrament due to covid-19.

Before I sign-off. I would like to thank you for your prayers and cooperation in keeping our church environment safe. Let us not rest on our oars. Protect yourselves and others out of charity. Pray for those in the frontline who risk their lives for us.

I appreciate your love and financial contribution to our church during this pandemic. God Bless the work of your hands!

#StaysafeSavelives

#LordGivesUsVaccine

(To be continued)

In my next write-up, I will look at my experience as a priest vis-à-vis covid-19 and online evangelization.

Fr. Raphael

Hear the bishop

Bishop William Joensen's weekly radio show airs on Fridays at 9 a.m. on Iowa Catholic Radio and the Spirit Catholic Radio Network. Tune in to hear "Making it Personal With Bishop Joensen."

Christ Our Life expands options for attending

The Christ Our Life Catholic Conference is offering the opportunity for people to attend in person or by livestream. All attendees, volunteers and vendors will be required to wear masks in common areas such as when entering or exiting Wells Fargo Arena, while in adoration or confession and anywhere on the concourse such as visiting exhibitors, restrooms, concession stands, etc. For more information on in-person or livestream tickets, safety precautions and the lineup of speakers, go to christourlifeiowa.com.

"When God laughs, all your senses become one and your whole being radiates joy from the depths of your soul."

MATTHEW KELLY

I Heard God Laugh





August 10, 2020

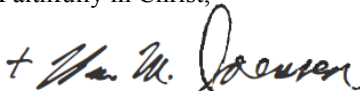
Dear Friends in Christ,

On the weekend of August 22 and 23, we will once again take up our annual special collection for the Solidarity Fund for the Church in Africa. The Catholic Church in Africa has experienced dramatic growth in many areas especially in abundant religious vocations and tremendous energy and enthusiasm among its youth.

In the midst of that growth, there are still obstacles to evangelization including poverty, threats to religious liberty and the constant challenge associated with non-Christian sects. In many African countries, the Church lacks the resources to meet basic pastoral needs in areas like the formation of leaders, youth ministry, catechesis and support for seminarians. Add to these challenges the growing health and economic needs brought on by COVID-19 and it is readily apparent that our support for the Solidarity Fund is even more critical.

As you know, the Diocese of Des Moines has been blessed by the ministry of a significant number of priests for whom one of the African nations is home. Undoubtedly, they could each attest to the needs in their home countries and around the continent. May our support of this collection be a symbol of our gratitude for their ministry among us --- and of our solidarity with our brothers and Sisters served by the Church in Africa.

Faithfully in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "W. M. Joensen".

Most Rev. William M. Joensen, Ph.D.
Bishop of Des Moines

HOLY HUMOR

TOO EARLY FOR SERVICE

In the foyer of a church, a young boy was looking at a plaque with the names of men and women who had died in various wars. He asked the pastor, "Who are these people?" The pastor said, "Those are members from our church who died in the service." The boy asked, "The early service or the second service?"

WATER TO WINE

A trooper pulls over a priest and immediately smells alcohol on his breath. The next thing he notices is an empty wine bottle lying on the passenger seat. "Have you been drinking?" the officer asks. "Just water," says the priest. "Then why do I smell wine?" The priest looks at the bottle and shouts, "Good Lord! He's done it again!"

Another THANK YOU!!

If you haven't noticed, we had some surprise gardeners appear and work on the landscaping outside. It was badly needed!

Thanks to **Henry and Helen Martin**, It looks 100% better!!

Thank You Martins! You are appreciated.

ATTENTION MEMBERS:)

I am going to begin scheduling some ministries again, if you aren't able or not comfortable with your time, please, try and find a replacement. This is a difficult time and we will pray that all will be over soon.

Coming soon.....

*August 16——Sunday Mass@ 8:30 am
celebrated in the church and on Zoom.*

August 19——Weekday mass @ 6pm

*August 23——Sunday Mass@ 8:30 am ——celebrated in the church and on Zoom.
Collection for the Solidarity Fund for the Church of Africa*



RCIA – Adult Faith Formation

Anyone interested in knowing more about the Catholic Faith or joining the Church should kindly call the secretary.

UPCOMING ZOOM PARTICIPATION SERIES ——There will be series of discussion, teaching and interview via zoom sometime in

August under the caption “Thank God is Friday.” The purpose is to bring us together as one family in sharing our stories through this pandemic. It is going to be fun and informative. Watch out for the date!



Readings for the week of 8-16–20

Sunday: Is 56:1, 6-7/Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8 [4]/Rom 11:13-15, 29-32/
Mt 15:21-28

Monday: Ez 24:15-24/Dt 32:18-19, 20, 21 [cf. 18a]/Mt 19:16-22

Tuesday: Ez 28:1-10/Dt 32:26-27ab, 27cd-28, 30, 35cd-36ab [39c]/Mt 19:23-30

Wednesday: Ez 34:1-11/Ps 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6 [1]/Mt 20:1-16

Thursday: Ez 36:23-28/Ps 51:12-13, 14-15, 18-19 [Ez 36:25]/Mt 22:1-14

Friday: Ez 37:1-14/Ps 107:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9 [1]/Mt 22:34-40

Saturday: Ez 43:1-7ab/Ps 85:9ab and 10, 11-12, 13-14 [cf. 10b]/Mt 23:1-12

Next Sunday: Is 22:19-23/Ps 138:1-2, 2-3, 6, 8 [8bc]/Rom 11:33-36/Mt 16:13-20

ST. MARYS HAPPENINGS

PRAY FOR THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY

CHRIS HINES

JOSH SIMMONS

JACOB ANDERSON

DERRICK HUBARD

STEVEN ANDERSON

COLBY MCGINLEY



8-14—Scott Mayberry

8-14—Joe Hirner

8-16—Harold Hendrickson

8-16—Jolene McGinley

8-20—Jim Folkes

8-23—Dave Horejsi

8-23—Marty Maher

8-23—Suzanne Moody

8-24—Kim Laumann



8-5—Pat & Angie Sheldon

8-16—Vince & Susan Hilton

8-30—Mike & Kathy Moody



Greg Andersen

Grady Secht

Reese Kemp

James Dowling

LeRoy Herscheid

Noah Howe

Mary Lou Miller

Dottie Dankof

Isacc Durr

Nancy Dalton

Todd Quick

Verona Mitchell

Joel Loggins

Kenneth Russell

Bill Long

Henry Johnsen

Lawrence DuBois

Pat Sheldon

Joe Kirk

Tim Konecny

Esther McCowan

Shawn Collins

Drake Travis

Martha Gude

Bill & Gloria Green

Larry Dalton

Vickie Graham

Glen Whitehead

Ronda Shirley

Zayne Osborn

Cathy Mason

Anna Weber

Alan Briggs

Chuck Mitchell

Dee Ann Crews

Your Contributions

Aug. 9, 2020

Tithes—\$615.00

Plate—\$1.00

Coffee —\$53.00

Thank You!!

2020	August 16 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time 8:30	August 23 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time 8:30	August 30 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time 8:30	Sept. 6 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time 8:30	Sept. 13 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time 8:30
Lector	Joe Travis	Carolyn Maher	Teresa Jamison	Dave Dowling	Kathleen Lorimor
Mass Setup	Joe	Rosie	Joe	Rosie	Joe
Cantor	Beth Phillips	Kate Roberts	Kim Laumann		
Accompanist	Nicole Zavadi CalePhillips	Nancy Pitts	Nancy Pitts		
Coffee and Donuts		Dave and Kate Roberts	Henry and Helen Martin	Tim & Donna Whelan	Joe & Robbi Travis
Wash Linens	Annie Wakefield	Annie Wakefield	Annie Wakefield	Ruthie Paper	Ruthie Paper
PASTOR		PASTORAL ASSISTANT		BOOKKEEPER	
Fr. Raphael Assamah 712-246-1718 Shen(office) 712-246-8876 (c) e-mail max.assamah@yahoo.com		Cheryl Phillips 712.382.2668 (h) 712-350-0169 (c) cheryljphil@gmail.com		Anne Hendrickson Bookkeeper 712.382.2432 (h) 712.350.0368 (c)	
				DIRECTOR OF FAITH FORMATION	
				Scott Mayberry 712.374.3300(h) 712.370.3247(c)	

