



21st Sunday In
Ordinary Time

**St. Mary's
Catholic Church**

August 23, 2020

We are the Church, the universal assembly of believers, the Body of Christ, called to build the kingdom of God. Each of us is part of this institution that can be traced back nearly two thousand years to Saint Peter, the rock on whom we are built. As we celebrate the Eucharist here today, let us reflect on this awesome privilege of being a part of this two-thousand-year-old mission and contemplate what we are called to do to bring it closer to perfection.



Cycle A -- Reflections on the Readings

Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 22:15,19-23; Psalm 138; Romans 11:33-36;
Matthew 16:13-20

Theme: The use of Power

Today's readings remind us that power exists for the good of the powerless.

The first reading contrasts the use and abuse of power. In the eighth century B.C., Isaiah is sent to inform Shebna, the prime minister, of his removal from office. Shebna has been a "disgrace to his master's house" (Isaiah 22:18). The prophet also speaks of Eliakim, one truly worthy of authority. Eliakim will discharge the duties of office as a "father" and will support King Hezekiah and his kingdom by paternal service.

In the Gospel, Matthew combines the scene of Peter's confession with a post-Resurrection appearance of Jesus to Peter. The Lord calls Peter blessed because he perceives that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the living God. Because this faith comes from God, Jesus confers the grace of leadership on Peter. This impetuous disciple will be "Rock", an unshakable foundation for the Church. The keys as also seen in Isaiah suggest power, the power of one who will focus not on self but on community.

Significance of Jesus' authority

Jesus gave authority to Peter, to teach, govern and rule over the universal Church when he said, "You are Peter and on this rock, I will build my Church... I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven" (Mt 16:18). It is the teaching of the Church that the Bishop of Rome, the Pope, is successor to Peter as heir to that office. It also recognizes that every Bishop is true head of the church in his own Diocese, holding authority directly from Christ.

By choosing very weak human beings as instruments of His divine authority, Jesus wanted to teach a lesson also to those who look up to Church leaders for guidance. The lesson is that while we accept fully the divine authority in them, we need also to fully accept their human limitations.

As Christians, we all exercise power in our respective work, home, or community. Are we more of Shebna or Eliakim? Are we intent upon making our power felt or making our power a service? Isaiah, and Matthew agree that to be in charge means to protect our charges. May our power be of service to others. Shalom!

The Stations of the Cross Reopening



The Stations of the Cross at ***The Cloisters on the Platte*** has reopened to the public. Precautions will be taken to implement social distancing and to sanitize audio equipment and indoor areas to prevent spreading COVID-19. Plan to wear a mask for your shuttle ride and gift shop visit.

Experience the 2,500 foot long walking tour of **The Stations of the Cross**, comprised of 14 sculptures depicting Christ's trial through his burial. Visitors are encouraged to donate \$10 or more per person. With each donation, visitors will receive a complimentary audio tour.

The new expanded visiting hours are Monday through Thursday 9am to 4pm; Friday and Saturday 9am to 3pm. Visitors may remain at the Stations of the Cross for up to an hour after closing time. For groups of 20 or more, please contact Darla Koch at darlakoch@cloistersontheplatte.com. Location: 23332 Fishery Road, Gretna, NE 68028. **For more information visit cloistersontheplatte.com.**



RCIA – Adult Faith Formation

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

Thank God is Friday

Our maiden talk show caption “Thank God is Friday” is slated for August 28, 2020 at 7pm via zoom. The discussion is on nurturing relationship and marriage. My guests will be a couple who married at ages 18 and 20 respectively. Took care of their first child while in college and working part-time. Life was not easy but with determination, animated with Love they have been together for 55years and looking like twins. What is the secret? All that glitters is not gold. The Key to someone’s marriage experience can add to your knowledge or open the door to your relationships/marriage. This discussion will also feature a couple who have been married for 2 years. What can we share to keep marriages together amidst the challenges of our time? Watch out for the zoom link and save the date.

Journey songs, Third Edition

- ❖ Every liturgical year, the church changes the books in the pew because of the readings. The good news is that we have another hymn book called “Journey songs, Third Edition.” This is a hard copy and comes with 3-year cycle Readings. Each journey songs book cost approximately \$20 without shipping cost.

I would like to invite you to purchase one or more in memory of a love member of your family or in honor of someone. Your name and that of the person will be embossed in the hymn book.

If you are interested, kindly send check of \$20 or more to St. Mary’s church with description “Journey song.”

Please add your name and the person whose memory/honor you are buying the hymnal. Thanks for your consideration!

Annual Diocesan Appeal (ADA)

- ❖ I wish to express my profound gratitude to you for your generous contributions towards our ADA in this pandemic. In response to recent letters sent, some of you have given a second gift and others first contribution towards our goal. Each step taken financially is a sure way of making our goal and getting 100% participation.

I would like to appeal to all families in humility to prayerfully support our parish goal. Any amount raised over our goal comes back to the parish. Thanks for your prayerful consideration.

Home grown vegetables and fruits

- ❖ The proverbial saying 'You are what you eat' is the notion that to be fit and healthy you need to eat good food. Most often we buy food stuffs without knowing where they come from. When I make my list for vegetables and fruits to buy, then God send His angels to provide for me. I wish to thank all the angels who provides farm/garden produce to ensure I stay healthy and eat well. Thanks a million! Fr. Raphael



THE PRIEST IN THE ERA OF COVID-19

This is a sequel to last week write-up as I reflect on my twelve years ministerial priesthood amidst covid-19.

Ban on Weekend masses

Human by nature is spiritual. Because of this instinct, there is that drive which enable us to search for spiritual fulfillment. Even atheist still believe in something. In the wake of the pandemic, our physical space for worship was taken away from us as preventive measures of containing the virus. The question of faith and prayer took the center stage.

Then I remembered the words of Pope Saint **John Paul II** encyclical **“Faith and reason.”** He opines, **“faith and reason are like two wings** on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth...” While church doors were closed, my prayer channel was still active. Some of my brother priests suggested Facebook live or YouTube live for mass. I was not enthused by this as I wanted to know my audience and being careful what goes on social media.

Idea of Zoom Mass

During one of my private masses with Blaine Maher, a chat with Cheryl Phillips and Lori Goodman unearth the new baby “zoom”. Within few minutes, I downloaded it from google play store while Blaine was patiently trying to figure out what I was doing. Then, we had our first weekday mass via zoom. It was nice and a bit chaotic as all microphones were not muted.

Beginning of zoom mass

When the Lord delivered Israel from bondage, it seems like a dream. Then our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with shouts of joy. Then it was said among the nations, “The LORD has done great things for them” (Psalm 126:1-2). The idea of having zoom mass was put into full gear like a dream come true. Knowing very well I have twins (Shenandoah & Hamburg), there was the need to arrive at conducive time for all.

With a new means of communicating, I needed to learn more and figure out what to do. YouTube was my learning tool to help me navigate through zoom. Just when things were not clear, Professor Lynda Marshall became my resource person.

This enable me to leave the task on the shoulders of Lynda Marshall and Cheryl Phillips. It was a big sigh of relief. Consequently, Dana Wenstrand joined the team as sound technician in ensuring that participants cameras and microphones are muted.

The Joy and challenges of using zoom.

The birth of zoom mass was a unifying tool after being in hibernation for weeks. It was indeed refreshing seeing and greeting each other at the end of mass. The initial stage for zoom mass is likened to airplane brazing turbulent storm. Many could not navigate through and needed tutorial. The team facilitated this challenge by helping members to get on zoom. I am forever grateful to them.

Having mass on zoom enable me to see and know my audience. While I enjoyed seeing members participating, my spirit was elated during the Divine Mercy Novena, Rosary, and teachings. These programs were to foster unity and deepen our prayer life. It was fully participated.

I do not see the need for higher data for my phone plan. Using 3G for the month was enough for me. However, with the birth of zoom mass, I started running out of data pushing me to change my plan. There were instances that calls may slip through while using my phone for zoom. For the most part, I was and still at the mercy of internet signal.

As time progresses, the need for a tripod came into sharp focus. Eventually graduating into wireless microphones. There were challenges however, not insurmountable.

Big up to my indefatigable zoom team who works behind the scene to facilitate our zoom masses and other events. Making power points to engage participants via zoom and ensuring the right slide is shared is not an easy task. Most often, our hosts are tempted to think of how to change slides, share music, mute participant mic or camera while fully participating in the liturgy. Sometime, the computer decides when to change by spinning for few minutes or internet is weak. Evidently, this affect their full participation in the liturgy. Thanks for your resilient.

There were times that the microphone gives up during the liturgy or phone mic goes off without my knowledge. During the liturgy, my attention is divided by looking into the device to ensure everything is alright while making sure the congregation is not disrupted. The temptation of looking into the phone device with the blessed sacrament instead of focusing on the Lord was a challenge.

I am glad this pandemic has taught me a lot to ponder on. To trust God in all circumstances. As a wounded healer, the needs of members were pivotal as I discern which direction the Lord is leading me to help the Church.

The hand of the priest

Unworthy as I am, God continues to use my hand to bless and sanctify. To consecrate ordinary bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. God's grace works through my feeble body and weaknesses.

As we weave in and out of each other's paths in this pandemic, let us all strive to be there for each other. The emphasis is to love before we seek to understand. As human being, people will surprise us beyond our expectation. You will end up disappointed if you think people will do for you as you do for them. Not everyone has the same heart of gold as you. Some will hurt us, and some will heal us. Some paths will challenge us, and some will change us. Without challenges there would never be any growth.

So, remember that when life breaks your heart, it is so love can flood through the cracks. Sometimes courage is the little voice at the end of the day that says I will try again tomorrow. A failure is not always a mistake, it may simply be the best one can do under such circumstances. THE REAL MISTAKE IS TO STOP TRYING. I THINK YOU HAVE TO TRY AND FAIL, BECAUSE FAILURE GETS YOU CLOSER TO WHAT YOU'RE GOOD AT.

COVID-19 IS REAL. Always remember to protect yourself and others. That is the way we can restore, as quickly as possible, the blessings of normalcy for which we all yearn. Pray for those in the frontline who risk their lives for us.

When you pray, remember me your unworthy servant on my Priestly anniversary!

#StaysafeSavelives

#LordGivesUsVaccine

Fr. Raphael



Favorite Hymnals

The Dentist's Hymn: Crown Him With Many Crowns

The Weatherman's Hymn: There Shall Be Showers of Blessings

The Contractor's Hymn: The Church's One Foundation

The Tailor's Hymn: Holy, Holy, Holy

The Golfer's Hymn: There is a Green Hill Far Away

The Politician's Hymn: Standing On The Promises

The Optometrist's Hymn: Open My Eyes That I May See

The IRS Agent's Hymn: I Surrender All

The Gossip's Hymn: Pass It On

The Electrician's Hymn: Send Out Thy Light

The Shopper's Hymn: Sweet By And By

For those of you who drive, if you must speed on the highway, please sing these.....

45 mph: God Will Take Care Of You

55 mph: Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

65 mph: Nearer My God To Thee

75 mph: Nearer Still Nearer

85 mph: This World Is Not My Home

95 mph: Lord, I'm Coming Home

Over 100 mph: Precious Memories

Coming soon.....

August 23—Sunday Mass@ 8:30 am —celebrated in the church and on Zoom.

Collection for the Solidarity Fund for the Church of Africa

August 26—Weekday Mass @ 6pm

August 28 —Our first maiden talk show caption "Thank God it's Friday"

7pm via zoom. The discussion is on nurturing relationship and marriage.

Praying with the Gospel of Matthew – Hope in Daily Life as a Disciple, August 28 – 30, retreat at Saint Benedict Center, Schuyler, with Monsignor Andrew J. Vaccari from Brooklyn, NY, and a team of *Pro Sanctity* members. Learn about the Gospel of St. Matthew and pray with it. Enter more deeply into Jesus' teaching about the mystery of the Kingdom of God. We will explore the Gospel used for the current Liturgical Year (A) and reflect on writings from the saints to deepen our hope coming from the Gospel of Jesus Christ! The weekend includes personal and community prayer, opportunity for individual spiritual direction and the sacrament of reconciliation, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and Mass both Saturday and Sunday. Social distancing will be observed, please bring your mask. Friday, 7:30 p.m. to Sunday after lunch. Register now at www.StBenedictCenter.com or call (402) 352-8819.



Readings for the week of 8-23–20

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

Monday: Rv 21:9b-14/Ps 145:10-11, 12-13, 17-18 [12]/Jn 1:45-51

Tuesday: 2 Thes 2:1-3a, 14-17/Ps 96:10, 11-12, 13 [13b]/Mt 23:23-26

Wednesday: 2 Thes 3:6-10, 16-18/Ps 128:1-2, 4-5 [1]/Mt 23:27-32

Thursday: 1 Cor 1:1-9/Ps 145:2-3, 4-5, 6-7 [1]/Mt 24:42-51

Friday: 1 Cor 1:17-25/Ps 33:1-2, 4-5, 10-11 [5]/Mt 25:1-13

Saturday: 1 Cor 1:26-31/Ps 71:1-2, 3-4a, 5-6ab, 15ab and 17 [cf. 15ab]/Mk 6:17-29

Next Sunday: Jer 20:7-9/Ps 63:2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9 [2b]/Rom 12:1-2/Mt 16:21-27

ST. MARYS HAPPENINGS

PRAY FOR THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY

CHRIS HINES

JOSH SIMMONS

JACOB ANDERSON

DERRICK HUBARD

STEVEN ANDERSON

COLBY MCGINLEY



8-23—Dave Horejsi

8-23—Marty Maher

8-23—Suzanne Moody

8-24—Kim Laumann

8-24—Elijah Hirner

8-25—Thomas Gude

8-26—Aaron Goodman

8-28—Jim Owen

8-28—Ryan Roberts



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. 16, 2020

Tithes—\$1219.10

Plate—\$37.00

Coffee —\$60.00

Thank You!!

2020	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	Sept. 20 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time 8:30
Lector	Carolyn Maher	Teresa Jamison	Dave Dowling	Kathleen Lorimor	Linda Dewhirst
Mass Setup	Rosie	Joe	Rosie	Joe	Rosie
Cantor	Kate Roberts	Kim Laumann			
Accompanist	Nancy Pitts	Nancy Pitts			
Coffee and Donuts	Dave and Kate Roberts	Henry and Helen Martin	Tim & Donna Whelan	Joe & Robbi Travis	Jeff & Lisa Phillips
Wash Linens	Annie Wakefield	Annie Wakefield	Ruthie Paper	Ruthie Paper	Ruthie Paper

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

PASTOR	PASTORAL ASSISTANT	BOOKKEEPER	DIRECTOR OF FAITH FORMATION
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)	Scott Mayberry 712.374.3300(h) 712.370.3247(c)

