

SUNDAY MASS

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

See, I have God for my help. The Lord sustains my soul. I will sacrifice to you with willing heart, and praise your name, O Lord, for it is good.

FIRST READING: Wisdom 12:13, 16-19.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 86.

RESPONSE:

O Lord, you are good and forgiving.

- O Lord, you are good and forgiving, full of mercy to all who call to you. Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer, and attend to my voice in supplication. **R**
- All the nations you have made shall come; they will bow down before you, O Lord, and glorify your name, for you are great and do marvellous deeds, you who alone are God. **R**
- But you, O God, are compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, O Lord, abundant in mercy and fidelity; turn and take pity on me. **R**

SECOND READING: Romans 8:26-27.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, alleluia! Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom. Alleluia.

GOSPEL: Matthew 13:24-43.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:

The Lord, the gracious, the merciful, has made a memorial of his wonders; he gives food to those who fear him.

THE WEEK AHEAD

Live the Word

Mon 20 Jul (St Apollinaris, BM)

Micah 6:1-4.6-8; Psalm 50; Matthew 12:38-42

Micah's words can reveal in many of us a jarring conflict: about what I want, and what God wants of me. Reflect on them, for they are words to live by every day of the year.

Tue 21 Jul (St Lawrence of Brindisi, PrD)

Micah 7:14-15.18-20; Psalm 85; Matthew 12:46-50

If we do God's will, we can then regard ourselves a part of Jesus' extended family – brother, sister, mother. Of course, the Father's will is that we love – God, ourselves, one another. Do we qualify?

Wed 22 Jul ST MARY MAGDALENE

Song of Songs 3:1-4; Psalm 63; John 20:1-2.11-18

Women in Mary Magdalene's time had little status in society, yet Jesus chose to reveal himself first to her, and chose her to bring a message to his followers, earning her the title, "Apostle to the Apostles."

Thu 23 Jul (St Bridget, R)

Jeremiah 2:1-3.7-8.12-13; Psalm 36; Matthew 13:10-17

Through our life experiences God gives each of us personal parables to share – stories about the familiar that teach lessons about God. Be open to recognise God's presence in your life experiences.

Fri 24 Jul (St Sharbel Makhluf, Pr)

Jeremiah 3:14-17; Jer 31:10-13; Matthew 13:18-23

It is up to us to prepare the soil of our souls to receive the seed of God's Word. Only when the ground is willing will the seeds grow into strong and beautiful virtues in our lives. Hear the parable of the sower!

Sat 25 Jul ST JAMES, A

2 Corinthians 4:7-15; Psalm 126; Matthew 20:20-28

Instead of letting them get him down, Paul brags about his sufferings and hardships, rejoicing that they are a part of his life. He says they bring him closer to Jesus, and brings him peace and purpose.

Sun 26 Jul 17TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1 Kings 3:5.7-12; Psalm 119; Matthew 13:44-52

Spend your quiet time today reflecting on how much God has richly blessed your life. May your prayer today be one of quiet gratitude and thankfulness.

(KEY: SOLEMNITY; FEAST; Memorial; (Optional Memorial) B=Bishop; M=Martyr; Pr=Priest; D=Doctor; R=Religious; A=Apostle)

Catholic Link

CHURCH OF THE WORD

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year A
Divine Office: Week IV • 19 July 2020

The Prophets

The popular notion of a "prophet" is one who foretells events. But when we turn to the Bible it is important to appreciate that a biblical prophet is the bearer and interpreter of the Word of God. This means that a prophet has to have some close mystical encounter with God as a result of which the prophet proclaims a message to the people.

The prophet normally uses standard human language to share the message but sometimes the message is communicated by the life or actions of the prophet. Such symbolic actions are not uncommon in the body of literature in the Bible known as "The Prophets".

As is common in the Hebrew Scriptures, prophets make use of many forms of expression. They may write in poetry or in prose, they may use sermons, proverbs, psalms, love songs, laments or any available form of expression.

Some prophets are designated as "major" because of the length of their written works, others are called "minor" because their written work is short. It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of the Prophets in terms of salvation history or in terms of their relevance in the growth of our spiritual lives.

What is of first significance is the message(s) the prophets carry. These messages are addressed to the chosen people, but some are also addressed to all nations. In addition to the messages, the prophets often do predict the future and the verification of their predictions confirms their message.

In our Bible, 18 prophets are listed (6 major and 12 minor). While many specific messages are communicated, it is possible to say that their messages fall into three categories:

Monotheism: The belief in one supreme deity emerges slowly in the history and literature of the chosen people. It is the great message of many of the prophets that Yahweh is not only "One" but infinitely holy (transcendent) and surprisingly close (immanent). God is a God of mystery expressed in Covenant love.

Morality: The prophets deal extensively with sin. In their writings they rage against the infidelities of Israel and expound a religion of the heart. There is no mistaking the holiness of the Law received on Sinai and to be lived in daily life.

Messianism: In some form or other all the prophets look forward to the coming of a Messiah who will bring salvation. Despite the sins of the people, the vision of a kingdom of justice, love and peace is never extinguished even when the kind of Messiah to be expected is refined in surprising ways.

Some of the greatest literature ever written, which is at the same time deeply inspiring, is to be found in the Prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures. In the Prophets too, we find the most challenging texts about social responsibility in the face of rampant oppression of the poor.

The major prophets are Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Baruch, Ezekiel and Daniel; the minor prophets are Amos, Hosea, Micah, Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Obadiah, Joel, and Jonah.

If you have a Bible with introductions to the individual books, it will greatly help your appreciation of the Prophets. The Internet, of course, will also provide useful introductions to the various Prophets. Worth referring to when the first reading at Mass is from one of the Prophets.



Isaiah's lips anointed by fire, by Benjamin Franklin (18th C)

The Prayer Book of Jesus



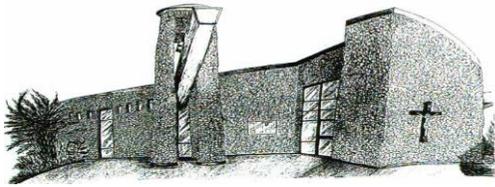
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The Prayer Book of Jesus, the Psalms, has remained throughout Jewish and Christian history as a deep well of inspiration for individuals and communities at prayer. This little introduction is offered as a help to using the very prayers used by Jesus. In the Book of Psalms we are taught how to use the Word of God as our prayer and how to turn to God in any situation. The text is presented in a way that invites us to actually ponder and pray the psalms we are reading about. A must have for anyone who prays the Office daily.



St Francis Xavier Catholic Parish

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*Guided by the Holy Spirit, we strive, as a Parish,
to grow into disciples of Jesus Christ,
reaching out in Faith into a wider Community.*

Prayer Circle:

Contact Jeannette Nicholson
031 467 7658 / 083 524 5619

SICK & HOSPITALISED PARISHIONERS:

Please inform Father Mike on 072 968 3394, or the parish office, of any parishioners in danger of death and requiring Viaticum.

REPOSITORY IS CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE:

See notice on door for contact numbers for items urgently required.

PLEASE PRAY FOR: The seriously sick:

(see list of names on **outside** notice board) and especially Dorothea Johns, Rita De Jager, Anthony Norris, Brian Beard, Brian Fuller, Judy Willman, Scarlett Wright, Patrick Marx and Lyn Rossell.

The Repose of the Souls of: Fr Chris Lockyer, O.M.I., Cecelia Uchee and Marie-Claude Gourel De St Pern.



MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS:

All Intentions booked will be included in the daily Masses celebrated by Fr Mike. Please join in Spiritual Communion with the Church, if you are able to do so.

This Week's Mass Intentions:

Sat 18 Jul

Ivan & Quintin Plowman R.I.P. [Sheila]

Stephen Sutherland's Thanksgiving for Health

Sun 19 Jul

Billy Megraj R.I.P. [Emmanuel Family]

Lewis Family's Thanksgiving

Mon 20 Jul

Beryl McInerney R.I.P. [Kevin & Dianne]

Tue 21 Jul

Shirley Ludewick's Birthday [Family]

Wed 22 Jul

Deacon Malcolm Wright's 30th Anniversary of Ordination

Thu 23 Jul

[Family]

Fr Chris Locker, O.M.I. R.I.P.

Fri 24 Jul

Intentions of All Sisters at St Dominic's [Kevin & Dianne]

Sat 25 Jul & Sun 26 Jul

Les Paul R.I.P. [Thompson Family]

Doreen Pierce R.I.P. [Emmanuel Family]

All Grandparents [Brianna Frankson]

Theres Pottier's Birthday [Buckley Family]

Braden Van Kratenburg's Birthday [Family]

GUIDELINES FOR VISITS TO THE PARISH OFFICE:

- Your temperature will be taken and registered with your name and contact number.
- If your temperature is above 38°C, entry may be denied.
- A face mask must be worn at all times, hands will be sanitized, and a safe distance of 1.5m is to be kept.
- Small items may be dropped into the locked letterbox outside the office door (it will be cleared daily).

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED TWO DAYS A WEEK:

The parish office will be closed each week on Mondays and Tuesdays for the next few weeks.

LIVING FAITH – July to Sept: 9 extra copies available @ R30 each from the parish office, mornings only.

THANKS: Fr Mike, on behalf of the whole parish, wishes to express admiration and gratitude to our catechists for the wonderful service they have rendered in providing online catechism classes, and involving both the young people and their parents in the project. In this way the catechetical syllabus is being covered, and our Catholic faith is being taught and shared in the family. A big thank you to all involved.

FR MIKE'S WEEKLY HOMILY:

There have always been **two views** of the church – one **exclusive**, the other **inclusive**. The exclusive view holds that the church is for good people, for the fully committed. In the inclusive view, the church must be open to all, to saints and sinners.

For some, the presence of sinners in the church is a cause of scandal. This was a big issue for the early church too. So how did they approach it? Some were for weeding sinners out. But others turned to the example of Jesus for guidance.

First of all they had **his practice** to guide them. Not only did he not exclude sinners, he welcomed them. He declared that he had come, not to call the just, but sinners, to repentance. Then they had **his teaching** to guide them. The parable about the field in which the wheat and weeds grow together until the harvest was a response to this very question.

Human beings are complex. They can't be divided into the good and the bad, as though they were two completely separate classes of people. There is no line you can draw which would neatly separate the good from the bad. Any such line would go right through each human heart, for there is good and evil in every heart.

So what should we do? As far as we ourselves are concerned, the best thing we can do is take a good look into our own field. If we find some weeds there, as no doubt we will, there is no law against trying to rid ourselves of them. If we try to do so, we will discover what a painful process this is.

As far as others are concerned, we should try to act towards them as Jesus acted. Isn't it strange that he who had no trace of weed in him, could be so understanding towards those who failed to measure up? Why didn't he weed out Judas? Why didn't he weed out Peter? He saw the weeds in Peter's life, but he saw the wheat too. He knew that with encouragement, the wheat would prevail. And it did.

The church must surely emulate its founder. It has to be big enough and loving enough to hold sinners in the fold. If it does not do so, it will not be the church of Jesus Christ.

Life is difficult for everybody. Everyone is hurting. We don't need to blame someone. We are all beset with the same issues. Understanding and accepting that can help us to forgive each other - and then forgive ourselves – is this not somehow what salvation is all about? Accepting forgiveness and sharing it generously with others?

Last Sunday, Jesus told a parable about a man sowing seed. What the seed produced depended upon where it landed. In explaining the parable, Jesus said that the seed was the word of God. How people accepted that word determined the difference it would make in their lives.

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus tells another parable about a man sowing seed. He plants good seed, but an enemy comes at night and sows bad seed. We might think that as it did last Sunday, the good seed represents the word of God, the message of the Gospel preached by the Church. And the bad seed represents the contrary message spread by the devil and by a society opposed to the values of the Gospel.

However, Jesus gives another meaning to the seed. Jesus explains that "he who sows good seed is the Son of Man, the field is the world, the good seed the children of the kingdom."

We are among that good seed, made so in the sacrament of baptism. There we were recognized as children of God, enlightened by Christ, and filled with the Holy Spirit. Jesus has planted us in the field of this world so that we might help God's kingdom to blossom and that we might leaven society with our acts of mercy and love. The time will come when the Lord will judge if we have done what was expected of good seed. As Jesus tells us, the righteous who have produced good fruit "will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

While those who have done evil and caused others to do the same will be thrown "into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and the grinding of teeth."

May we not disappoint the "Divine Farmer" who has sown us in this world?



16TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
• YEAR A • 19 JULY 2020
DIVINE OFFICE: WEEK IV
DAILY MASS READINGS: YEAR II

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

Psalm 53:6-8

See, I have God for my help. The Lord sustains my soul. I will sacrifice to you with willing heart, and praise your name, O Lord, for it is good.

FIRST READING:

Wisdom 12:16-19

There is no god besides you, whose care is for all men, to whom you should prove that you have not judged unjustly; for your strength is the source of righteousness, and your sovereignty over all causes you to spare all. For you show your strength when men doubt the completeness of your power, and rebuke any insolence among those who know it. You who are sovereign in strength judge with mildness, and with great forbearance you govern us; for you have power to act whenever you choose. Through such works you have taught your people that the righteous man must be kind, and you have filled your sons with good hope, because you give repentance for sins.

The word of the Lord.

PSALM:

Psalm 86:5-6. 9-10. 15-16.

R. O Lord, you are good and forgiving.

O Lord, you are good and forgiving, full of mercy to all who call to you. Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer, and attend to my voice in supplication.

R

All the nations you have made shall come; they will bow down before you, O Lord, and glorify your name, for you are great and do marvellous deeds, you who alone are God. **R**

But you, O God, are compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, O Lord, abundant in mercy and fidelity; turn and take pity on me. **R**



SECOND READING:

Romans 8:18-23

Brethren: The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words. And he who searches the hearts of men knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

The word of the Lord.

ALLELUIA:

R. Alleluia.

Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom.

R. Alleluia.

GOSPEL:

Matthew 13:24-43

At that time: Jesus put another parable before the crowds, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. "And the servants of the householder came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then has it weeds?' He said to them,

'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' But he said, 'No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. Let both grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

The Gospel of the Lord.



COMMUNION ANTIPHON:

Psalm 110:4-5

The Lord, the gracious, the merciful, has made a memorial of his wonders; he gives food to those who fear him.