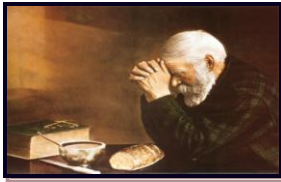


Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time



WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

The Church moves slowly. When it comes to decisions—especially moral and spiritual matters—the Church strives to discern God’s will, to rely on virtues of prudence and balance, and to rely on the wisdom of the past.

When we read the Bible and it speaks to us today, it reminds us that people have dealt with similar challenges in all generations and that people in general are pretty much the same in how they deal with things. The good generally deal with things in good ways. People who are morally weak or even evil deal with things in less desirable, selfish, and even hurtful ways.

There is a saying that the bigger the ship, the harder it is to steer (and the longer it takes to make changes in course or to avoid icebergs and other sources of trouble). The bigger the ship, the more people involved, and the greater the impact of any decision.

Today there are more than 1.2 billion Catholics in the world—by far the biggest group of Christians and the biggest ship. Decisions made at the parish level affect a small portion of the whole. They affect enough people to require careful decision making. Decisions made by the Vatican and the Holy Father affect everyone and require a more careful and deliberate process.

An example is the minimum age for marriage. The Archdiocese of Atlanta has norms based on national norms and the *Code of Canon Law* (which affects all Catholics around the world). Canon Law says: “A man before he has completed his sixteenth year of age and a woman before she has completed her fourteenth year of age cannot enter into a valid marriage.” (*Can. 1083.1*) It then says: “The conference of bishops is free to establish a higher age.” (*Can. 1083.2*)

Different countries and different regions have different realities. We can argue whether a girl anywhere in the world is ready to get married at 14 or 15. In some places, though, it is acceptable culturally, national or local laws allow it, some societies sociologically help young people mature faster, etc. Bishops thus have some flexibility in establishing a local minimum age, but not below the Vatican norm. That is the established minimum for the entire world.

The current ages are from a change made in the 1917 Code based on observation, scientific research, prayer and discernment, and the Church’s experience with the Sacrament of Marriage. “Until 1917, canon law had basically considered anyone above the age of 12 capable of marriage. Thus, when the 1917 Code raised the minimum age for marriage in the church to 14 for girls and 16 for boys, the change was greeted as an improvement.” (*Dr. Edward N. Peters, Too Young to Marry*)

“In Canada, and also in New Zealand, this minimum age has been set to 18 years old for both parties. . . The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has not enacted a higher prohibitive minimum age for marriage.” (*Wikipedia*) In the 1917 Code, males born out of wedlock could not become priests. That was amended in 1983 for very pastoral reasons: “It’s not the fault of the baby.” Developing universal laws is challenging not only because of different societal norms but also because some governments, such as Communist China, are very negative towards the Catholic Church. They do not honor some Church laws and have used other laws against the Church. False charges have been brought up against whole groups of priests because they protested abuses by oppressive governments. In some countries, being Catholic is still considered a serious crime, punishable by death! The Church tries to avoid any unforeseen

consequences when it develops new laws that apply to new situations. This sometimes leads to reactive responses, but that is better than a hasty response that overlooks things. Errors more often happen when we rush decisions. Good decisions require patience, prayer, and looking at everything.

When society puts someone to death, it is a decision that cannot be undone. Other decisions have a long-term impact and need to be seriously thought out. Marriage is supposed to be a permanent decision. If people took just that one decision more seriously, we would not have a 50-58 percent divorce rate in the United States.

The Church makes moral and spiritual decisions that have eternal consequences. Jesus says to St. Peter: “I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” (*Matt 16:19*) St. Peter, the First Pope, has handed those keys to those who have followed him. The Church takes the mission of Christ seriously.



“2010” Weekly Budget	\$5,350.00
Offertory collected July 18 th	\$4,447.14
Difference	-\$ 802.86
Second Collections	
Second collection July 18 th “Mission Cooperative”.....	\$ 760.29
Campaign ‘10 Pledges:	
Total donations made (from pledges) as of 07/04/10.....	\$96,015.00
July 18 th collection.....	\$ 0
New Campaign total donations from pledges.....	\$96,015.00
Next Week’s Second Collection	
Next week’s second collection will be for the St. Clement’s Building Fund.	



Prayer

Prayer is not ordering fast food. We have instant grits and instant coffee, but we do not have an Instant God. In a world of instant results, we rarely should pray expecting instant results. And rarely should pray expecting the result we want.

These are the two “let downs” of those who see prayer as God doing what I want when I want. All of us have prayed at one time or another out of that mindset. Mature prayer involves placing things in God’s hands and then surrendering the outcome. “I want this job, but you know best, I trust you, and I place this in your hands.” “I’m in love with this person and am thinking about marriage, but is this your will?” Prayer involves saying: “Thy will be done.” Whether something happens or not is God’s decision. And things happen on His timetable. When we try to manipulate or “force” God to do something, God does different things. He sometimes allows things to happen to show us the consequences of unwise prayers. Other times He helps us to accept the wisdom of His answer. Other times He does nothing, waiting for us to see a better way.

Sometimes He spiritually smacks us (picture Big Hand from Sky). A lot depends on our relationship with Him. A person who consistently resists God’s will is allowed to become a Prodigal Child and suffer consequences in hopes of repentance. One who is obedient is dealt with differently.

MOVING FURNITURE



One of the reasons we have been moving furniture this week is to allow our Parish Administrator Wendy Sosa to have her own office. Wendy also is our Director of Religious Education and Youth Minister and has a lot of things she needs to focus on. As the Main Office has become busier, it has been a challenge for her. Moving Wendy also will give the Main Office more space and allow better Customer Service and better focus on office functions.

We soon will be announcing Customer Service Hours to better serve walk-ins, registrations, requests, etc.

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

July 25, 2010



When we cause it, usually we can find out what we did and fix it. Usually it is putting something or someone else before God. We must search back and through self-examination find out what

triggered the dryness. When God causes it, the dryness is for spiritual growth. It is to increase our longing for God and to purify our relationship with God. This dryness has times of consolation when God shows us He is still there. The most intense Dark Night is when Satan causes it and there is no consolation and little or no sense of God. Satan can use an event—such as a death or an illness—to trigger one of these periods. Satan also targets the spiritually strong as almost all the saints went through this.

Mother Teresa went through years of spiritual dryness and she said that the main thing that got her through was faithfulness to prayer. In the middle it is hard to believe it will end. The good news is you will find many stories of the fruits of persevering—a closer relationship with Christ, greater self-knowledge, and less reliance on earthly things.

First Reading: Genesis 18:20-32

Let not my Lord grow angry if I speak.

Second Reading: Colossians 2:12-14

God has brought you to life along with Christ, having forgiven us all our transgressions.

Gospel: Luke 11:1-13

Ask and you will receive.

Living the Paschal Mystzry

There is nothing wrong with praying for specific needs; after all, we do it at every Mass at the prayer of the faithful, not to mention our own personal and daily prayers of petition. This gospel challenges us to go beyond specific needs and get the larger picture, to focus on the gifts God offers us always in prayer, and often in surprising and unexpected ways. What inspires confidence in us is not whether God gives us what we specifically ask for in prayer; our confidence comes from the Spirit who dwells within and establishes a most intimate relationship between God and us shared life.

Unlike small children who seem to have a capacity to stay endlessly with some tasks, most of us need to develop a habit of daily prayer. With such busy schedules, this can be difficult. Choosing a specific time and being persistent about honoring that time for prayer helps. ~Living Liturgy

Stewardship Thought

Jesus is describing God's immeasurable generosity when He says in today's Gospel, "Whoever asks, receives; whoever seeks, finds; whoever knocks, is admitted." But it should also be the description of us as Christian stewards—those seeking to follow Christ by using our gifts in service to others.

Saturday July 24, 5:30pm..... Don Walsh (RIP)
 Sunday, July 25, 8:30am..... Our Parish Family
 Sunday, July 25, 10:00am.....(Spanish Mass) Arfiste Zarate (RIP)
 Sunday, June 25, 11:30 am.....Eva L. Miller (RIP)
 Sunday, June 25, 1:00pm..... (Spanish Mass) Our Parish Family
 Sunday, June 25, 7:00pm.....(Spanish Mass) Our Parish Family
 Monday, July 26, 12:15 pm.....Communion Service (TBD)
 Tuesday, July 27, 12:15 pm.....Communion Service (TBD)
 Wednesday, July 28, 12:15pm.....Communion Service (TBD)
 Wednesday, July 28, 6:30 pm.....Rosary
 Thursday, July 29, 12:15 pm.....Communion Service
 Thursday, July 29, 6:00 pm.....Prayer Group/Adoration
 Saturday July 31, 5:30pm.....James Eischen (RIP)
 Sunday, August 1, 8:30am.....Jim & Carolyn Hill (40th Wedding Anniversary)
 Sunday, August 1, 10:00am.....(Spanish Mass) Our Parish Family
 Sunday, August 1, 11:30 am.....Our Parish Family
 Sunday, August 1, 1:00pm.....(Spanish Mass) Our Parish Family
 Sunday, August 1, 7:00pm.....Our Parish Family

Farewell Party



Join us Saturday, July 31st at 6:45 p.m. to say goodbye to our Summer Seminarian. This year St. Clement's was blessed to receive yet another amazing seminarian. Desmond has been an inspiration to us all, and we have every confidence that he will do many great things. May the Lord bless and guide him during the remainder of his theological studies.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

"Dark Night of the Soul" is a spiritual poem written by St. John of the Cross. He describes periods of spiritual struggle, desolation, and dryness when a person feels the absence of God. He explains the difference between when we cause it, when God "causes" it, and when Satan causes it.

Please pray for the people who are suffering:

Donna Thibault - respiratory illness, Barbara Smith- cancer, Marty McKinnon- ovarian cancer, Cayla Johnson-hydrocephalus, Joe



Campbell-follicular lymphoma, Tonya Isham-tumor, Curtis Lunt-ill health, Melissa Silva-health, Juanita Rochester-cancer, Chuck Terry- prostate cancer, June Macejkovic-heart condition, Fr. Denis Kolumber-health, Ernie -leukemia, Maria Farias-breast cancer, Jeanne Walraven-health, Jean Seitz-cancer, Angie Defalco-health, Erna Wyatt-health,

Jim Rorer-special intention, Michael Llop-brain tumor, Erik Bigelow-special intention, Janice Miller-health, Jaden Bates-health, Roy Davies- safety, Chris Wable-health, Jim Wable-lung cancer, Marilyn Clayton-health, Ashlie Warren-health, Jenna Proctor-health, Jeff Elder-health, Serge Kastorsky-cancer, Terry Alan-bladder cancer, Lisa Clark-failed surgery, Betty Maddox-chemo, Donald Hicks-health, Jeff Bigelow-health, Cindy Wilson-health, Audrin King-cancer, Bud Murphy-health, Geri Harper-breast cancer, Joanne Silvers-kidney cancer, Pam Bagley-lung cancer, T.J. Rushing-tumor, Richard Parker Sr.- alzheimer's, Florice Schneider-health, Grace Headley-cancer surgery, Grace Grant Orange-lung cancer, Dana Real-seizures, Sissy Steele-heart-attack, Mathias Roberts-surgery, Christopher Burger-health, Barbra Christian-breast cancer, Janet Shiney-health, Ea Grace Cichran-hydrascephalyiss.



News from our Knights of Columbus

We join the Knight's of Columbus in welcoming two of their newest members, John Muysken and Rodney Orange. May the Lord bless and guide them as they walk with their new brothers.

Archdiocesan News

Has your Marriage "Bloomed" this summer or has it "Wilted" just a little? Are you ready to take a little time off to catch-up with each other and nurture your relationship? Join us for a Romantic & Refreshing Weekend August 20 - 22 at the Atlanta Marriott Norcross. To register or learn other dates go to www.wmeatlanta.org or call Bob & Joy Lambie at 770-587-1506. We also offer Spanish speaking weekends. Call Esteban & Gloria Nolasco at 770-425-1328 for those dates. - **Making Good Marriages Great**

The **BENEDICTINE SISTERS RETREAT CENTER**, Cullman, Ala., will host the 15th annual **HEALING GRIEF RETREAT** Aug. 6-8. The retreat provides a spiritual framework for helping to heal the grief of those who have experienced the death of a loved one and can also be beneficial for those who minister to the grieving. Contact: (256) 734-8302.