



## 12th Sunday of Ordinary Time for St. Ambrose Parish June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020

**Pastor:** Fr. Henry Smolenaars

**Parish Deacon:** Rev. Mr. Stephen Bourque

**Fr. Henry email:** frhenrys@gmail.com

**Office hours:** Monday to Friday from 9:30 am to 1:00 pm

**Church email:** stambrosemail@gmail.com

**Bulletin email:** stambrosebulletin1@gmail.com

**Tabitha Centre:** 902-742-8960

**Reconciliation/confession** Please email Fr. Henry if you can or call the office to make an appointment.

**Office telephone:** 902-742-7151

**GOOD NEWS ... Churches are Opening Soon with 50 People:** We have been given the go ahead to start reopening churches. We are currently waiting for the guidelines to be sent out to the parishes and once we receive them, we will then put a plan in place for re-opening. We will be allowed up to 50 people as long as we can keep our social distancing of 6 feet. This may take a bit of time so we are asking for your patience. We hope to have everything ready for the first weekend in July.

**NEW PROTOCOLS FOR SACREMENTS:** The following link is a letter from Archbishop Anthony Mancini in regards to new protocols that the churches are following at this time.

[https://www.halifaxymouth.org/images/websections/chancery/2020\\_06\\_01\\_New\\_Protocols\\_for\\_Sacraments.pdf](https://www.halifaxymouth.org/images/websections/chancery/2020_06_01_New_Protocols_for_Sacraments.pdf)

**LIVE MASS WITH FR. HENRY:** I (Fr. Henry) do a live mass every Wednesday and Sunday at 9:00 am (unless there are technical difficulties and then it will be put on after it has been recorded.). The next live mass is this Sunday, streamed live from St. Ambrose Church. If you want to watch, go to our web site at [www.stambroseymouth.ca](http://www.stambroseymouth.ca) or go to my YouTube channel [www.youtube.com/channel/UC1CwQV-c8xpu57fbCsu0fLg/videos?view=57&flow=grid](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1CwQV-c8xpu57fbCsu0fLg/videos?view=57&flow=grid)

(Copy and paste this link into your web browser if you would like to follow along.)



**QUOTE OF THE WEEK:** Only in eternity shall we see the beauty of the soul, and only then shall realize what great things were accomplished by interior suffering. -Mother Angelica

**SUPPORTING YOUR PARISH FINANCIALLY:** During this difficult time, I ask that you continue to support our Parish financially. If you want you can drop donations off at the office during office hours. Please knock on the door to be served. We now have **EMAIL TRANSFERS SET UP**, send to [stambrosemail@gmail.com](mailto:stambrosemail@gmail.com) please add your envelope number in the message box if you have one or a mailing address for an income tax receipt. We still have an account on line to which you can donate to. Simply go to <http://www.stambroseymouth.ca/> and scroll down the page to the donate button in red and follow the directions.

**REFLECTION:** The Perfect Love and Knowledge of God

## **Twelfth Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year A**

Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin? Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father's knowledge. Even all the hairs of your head are counted. So, do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows." [Matthew 10:29-31](#)

It's comforting to know that the All-Powerful God of the Universe knows every detail about our lives and is deeply concerned about every single detail. He knows us infinitely better than we know ourselves and He loves each one of us more deeply than we could ever love ourselves. These facts should give us much peace.

Imagine the truth contained in this Scripture above. God even knows how many hairs we have on our head! This is stated as a way of emphasizing the depth of intimacy by which God knows us.

When we can come to the realization of the Father's perfect knowledge of us AND His perfect love of us, we will be in a position to put our complete trust in Him. Trust in God is only possible when we understand who we are trusting. And when we do begin to more completely understand who God is and how much He cares about every detail of our lives, we will more easily entrust to Him those details, allowing Him to take control of all.

Reflect, today, upon these basic truths of God's perfect knowledge of us and His perfect love. Sit with those truths and ponder them. As you do, allow them to become the basis of an invitation from God to let go of your own control of life in favor of His control. Try to make an act of total surrender to Him and you will begin to discover the freedom that comes with this surrender.

*Father in Heaven, I thank You for Your perfect knowledge of every detail of my life. I thank You, also, for Your perfect love. Help me to trust in this love and to trust in Your daily invitation to surrender all. I do surrender my life to You, dear Lord. Help me to surrender more fully this day. Jesus, I trust in You.*

## **Are You Judgmental?**

### **Monday of the Twelfth Week of Ordinary Time**

"Stop judging, that you may not be judged. For as you judge, so will you be judged, and the measure with which you measure will be measured out to you." [Matthew 7:1-2](#)

Being judgmental can be a difficult thing to shake. Once someone falls into the habit of regularly thinking and speaking in a harsh and critical way, it's very difficult for them to change. In fact, once someone starts down the road of being critical and judgmental, chances are that they will continue down that road becoming more critical and more judgmental.

This is one of the reasons Jesus addresses this tendency in such a strong way. After the passage above Jesus states, "You hypocrite, remove the wooden beam from your eye first..." These words and Jesus' strong condemnation of being judgmental is not so much because Jesus is angry or harsh toward the judgmental person. Rather, He wants to redirect them from the road they are heading down and help to free them of this heavy burden. So, an important question to ponder is this: "Is Jesus talking to me? Do I struggle with being judgmental?"

If the answer is "Yes," fear not and do not get discouraged. Seeing this tendency and admitting it is very important and is the first step toward the virtue which is opposite of being judgmental. The virtue is mercy. And mercy is one of the most important virtues we can have today.

It seems that the times we live in demand mercy more than ever. Perhaps one of the reasons for that is the extreme tendency, as a world culture, to be harsh and critical of others. All you need to do is read a newspaper, browse social media, or watch the nightly news programs to see that our world culture is one that is continually growing in the tendency to analyze and criticize. This is a real problem.

The good thing about mercy is that God uses either our judgmentalness or our mercy (depending upon which is more manifest) as the measuring rod of how He treats us. He will act with great mercy and forgiveness toward us when we show that virtue. But He will also show His justice and judgment when this is the path we take with others. It's up to us!

Reflect, today, on mercy and judgmentalness in your life. Which one is greater? What is your primary tendency? Remind yourself that mercy is always far more rewarding and satisfying than being judgmental. It

produces joy, peace and freedom. Put mercy in your mind and, especially during this coming Year of Mercy, commit yourself to seeing the blessed rewards of this precious gift.

*Lord, please do fill my heart with mercy. Help me to set aside all critical thinking and harsh words and replace them with Your love. Jesus, I trust in You.*

### **Do to Others...**

#### ***Tuesday of the Twelfth Week of Ordinary Time***

“Do to others whatever you would have them do to you. This is the Law and the Prophets.” [Matthew 7:12](#)  
This familiar phrase was a command from God established in the Old Testament. It’s a good rule of thumb by which to live.

What would you have others “do to you?” Think about that and try to be honest. If we are honest, we must admit that we want others to do a lot for us. We want to be respected, to be treated with dignity, to be treated fairly, etc. But on an even deeper level, we want to be loved, understood, known and cared for.

Deep down, we should all try to recognize the natural longing that God gave us to share in a loving relationship with others, and to be loved by God. This desire goes to the heart of what it means to be human. We as humans are made for that love. This Scripture passage above reveals that we must be ready and willing to offer to others that which we desire to receive. If we can recognize within us the natural desires for love, we should also strive to foster a desire to love. We should foster a desire to love to the same extent that we seek it for ourselves.

This is harder than it sounds. Our selfish tendency is to demand and expect love and mercy from others while at the same time we hold ourselves to a much lower standard regarding how much we offer. The key is to put our attention on our duty first. We must strive to see what we are called to do and how we are called to love. As we see this as our first duty and as we strive to live it, we will discover that we find much greater satisfaction in giving than in seeking to receive. We will find that “doing onto others,” regardless of what they “do to us,” is what we actually find fulfillment in.

Reflect, today, on the natural desire you have in your heart for the love and respect of others. Then, make this the focus of how you treat those around you.

*Lord, help me to do to others what I desire they do to me. Help me to use the desire in my own heart for love as the motivation for my love of others. In giving of myself, help me find fulfillment and satisfaction in that gift. Jesus, I trust in You.*

### **Bearing Good Fruit**

#### ***Wednesday of the Twelfth Week of Ordinary Time***

“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but underneath are ravenous wolves. By their fruits you will know them. Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles?” [Matthew 7:15-16](#)

The obvious answer to this question of Jesus is “No, people do not pick grapes from thorn bushes.” In other words, an evil person cannot bear good fruit.

This statement from our Lord can give us much guidance in the area of discernment. First of all, it’s important to be aware of the very simple fact that “false prophets” do exist. This can be understood as anyone who actively misleads another under the guise of doing good. Some may do this unknowingly, but normally the one who acts as a wolf in sheep’s clothing does so out of the intention of some form of selfish gain. The selfish gain by which they are motivated could be many things, but the basic principle of selfishness usually applies.

By way of a secular example, take a used car salesman who deceptively tells a potential car buyer that a particular car is wonderful, when the salesman actually knows the car has serious mechanical problems. His goal is the sale of the car for a selfish profit with little care about the harm done to the unexpectant buyer.

Similarly, many of us may be tempted to “sweet talk” people or say what we think others want to hear in order to get them to do what we want. This is deceptive and misleading.

When it comes to discernment, the key Jesus gives us is to look at the fruit of what someone says or does. Inevitably, when something comes from the Heart of our Lord and is in accord with His will, the fruit will

be good. But when it is deceptive or misleading, cloaked in superficial “goodness,” the end result, the fruit that is born, is at most only sour grapes.

Reflect, today, upon anything in your life you are striving to decide or discern. If you truly want to know the Lord’s will in your daily decisions, try to look beyond the immediate choice to the effects that this choice will have down the road. If you sincerely see goodness as a result of certain choices, know that this is a good sign that it is good and from the Lord. If you see negative effects of certain decisions, producing bad fruit, then it is a good sign that the decision you are contemplating is not from God. Choose the good fruit and you will be choosing the will of God.

*Lord, give me the grace of discerning Your holy will in my life. Help me, especially, to see the good fruit that comes as a result of following You always. As You bear good fruit in my life, dear Lord, help me to continue down that holy path toward an abundance of every good gift. Jesus, I trust in You.*

## **Strength**

### ***Thursday of the Twelfth Week of Ordinary Time***

“Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. But it did not collapse; it had been set solidly on rock.” [Matthew 7:24-25](#)

This passage above is followed by the contrast of one who built his house on sand. The wind and rains came and the house collapsed. It’s a clear contrast that leads anyone to conclude that having your house built on solid rock is much better.

The house is your life. And the question it raises is simply, how strong am I? How strong am I to face the storms, hardships and crosses that will inevitably come my way?

When life is easy and all goes smoothly, we do not necessarily need great inner strength. When money is plentiful, we have many friends, we have our health and our family all gets along, life can be good. And, in that case, life can even be easy. But there are few who can go through life without facing some storm. When that happens, our inner strength is tested and the strength of our inner convictions is required.

In this story from Jesus, the rain, floods and wind that buffeted the house are actually a good thing. Why? Because they allow the foundation of the house to manifest its stability. So, it is with us. The foundation of our lives must be our fidelity to the Word of God. Do you believe the Word of God? Have you pondered it, studied it, internalized it and allowed God’s Word to become the foundation of your life? Jesus makes it clear that we will have a solid foundation only when we listen to His words and act on them.

Reflect, today, upon how deeply you believe all that Jesus says. Do you trust in every word He has spoken? Do you believe Him enough to rely upon His promises even in the midst of life’s greatest challenges? If you are not sure, then this is a good day to recommit yourself to the prayerful reading of His Word. All He says in Scripture is true and those truths are what we need to create a firm foundation for the rest of our lives.

*Lord, help me to listen to Your words and to act on them. Help me to believe in Your promises and to trust You even when the storms of life seem fierce. Jesus, I trust in You.*

## **Our Motivation for Love**

### ***Friday of the Twelfth Week of Ordinary Time***

His leprosy was cleansed immediately. Then Jesus said to him, “See that you tell no one, but go show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them.” [Matthew 8:3b-4](#)

An amazing miracle takes place and Jesus simply tells the one healed to “tell no one.” Why does Jesus say this? First, we should start by reflecting upon what Jesus did. By cleansing this leper, He restored this man’s entire life to him. He was living as an outcast, separated from the community; his leprosy, in a sense, took everything from him. But he had faith in Jesus and presented himself to the care and mercy of God. The result was that he was made whole and restored to full health.

Jesus often would tell those who were healed to tell no one. One reason for this was that Jesus' acts of love and mercy were not done for His own benefit, rather, they were done out of love. Jesus loved this leper and wanted to offer Him this precious gift of healing. He did it out of compassion and, in return, only wanted the man's gratitude. He did not need to make this a public spectacle; He only wanted the man to be grateful. The same is true with us. We need to know that God loves us so much that He wants to lift our heavy burdens and heal our weaknesses simply because He loves us. He doesn't do it first because it will benefit Him, rather, He does it out of love for us.

One lesson we can learn from this has to do with our own acts of love and mercy towards others. When we go out of our way to show love and compassion, are we OK with no one knowing? Too often we want to be noticed and praised. But the nature of an act of love and compassion is such that it should be done simply out of love. In fact, doing something loving and compassionate that is not noticed by anyone helps us grow in love and compassion. It purifies our intentions and enables us to love for love's sake.

Reflect, today, on your motivation for the acts of kindness you do. Pray that you also can desire to act in hidden ways in imitation of our divine Lord.

*Lord, may I grow in love of others and express that love in a pure way. May I never be motivated by a desire for vain praise. Jesus, I trust in You.*

### **Lord, I Am Not Worthy**

#### ***Saturday of the Twelfth Week of Ordinary Time***

"Lord, I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof; only say the word and my servant will be healed." [Matthew 8:8](#)

This familiar phrase is repeated every time we prepare to go to Holy Communion. It's a statement of great humility and trust from the Roman Centurion who asked Jesus to heal his servant from a distance.

Jesus is impressed with this man's faith stating that "in no one in Israel have I found such faith." This man's faith is worth pondering as a model for our own faith.

First, let's look at his humility. The centurion acknowledges that he is "not worthy" to have Jesus come to his home. This is true. None of us are worthy of such a great grace. The home that this spiritually refers to is our soul. We are not worthy of Jesus coming to our souls so as to make His dwelling there. At first this may be hard to accept. Are we really not worthy of this? Well, no, we are not. That's just the fact.

It's important to know this to be the case so that, in this humble realization, we can also acknowledge that Jesus chooses to come to us anyway. Recognizing our unworthiness should do nothing other than fill us with great gratitude at the fact that Jesus comes to us in this humble state. This man was justified in the sense that God poured His grace on him for his humility.

He also had great trust in Jesus. And the fact that the centurion knew he was unworthy of such a grace makes his trust all the more sacred. It's sacred in that he knew he was unworthy but he also knew that Jesus loved him anyway and desired to come to him and heal his servant.

This shows us that our trust in Jesus must not be based on whether or not we have a right to His presence in our lives, rather, it shows us that our trust is based on our knowledge of His infinite mercy and compassion. When we see that mercy and compassion, we will be in a position to seek it out. Again, we do this not because we have a right to it; rather, we do it because that's what Jesus wants. He wants us to seek out His mercy despite our unworthiness.

Reflect, today, on your own humility and trust. Can you pray this prayer with the same faith as the centurion? Let him be a model for you especially every time you prepare to receive Jesus "under your roof" in Holy Communion.

*Lord, I am not worthy of You. I am especially not worthy of receiving You in Holy Communion. Help me to humbly recognize this fact and, in that humility, help me to also recognize the fact that You desire to come to me anyway. Jesus, I trust in You.*

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