



17th Sunday of Ordinary Time for St. Ambrose Parish July 26th, 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

MASS INTENTIONS July 25th 2020 – August 2nd, 2020

Sat. 4pm Parishioners

Sun. 10am Marion Fitzgerald **and** Lillian Charchuck

Wed. 9am Celeste Rodgeron **and** Eleanor Brush

Sat. 4pm Alvina Rodgeron **and** Robert and Elizabeth Trefry

Sun. 10am Parishioners

SUNDAY MISSALS: For those of you that have been to church you may have noticed that there are no missals in the pews. This is one of the protocols we have to follow for a period of time. However, you are permitted to bring your own. In saying this we will not be providing new missals for 2020-2021 this upcoming fall. If you are interested in purchasing one for 2020-2021 please call the office place an order and we'll call you when they arrive for pickup. The cost is \$5.00. Please let us know by July 31st.

MASS SIGNUP: If you would like to attend mass, we ask you to please call the parish office between the hours of 9:30 to 1:00 Monday to Friday to register. With social distancing in place we will be using a lottery system to choose who will attend the mass each weekend. We are asking for your patience and eventually everyone wishing to attend will have a turn. Please note that when you register, your name will remain in the system until you call and remove it or until things can return to normal.

WEDNESDAY MASS: For the time being we are not planning to do a lottery draw for this mass. Protocols will be followed for those who plan to attend. If it becomes necessary to do the lottery then we will implement it at that time.

LIVE MASS WITH FR. HENRY: I (Fr. Henry) do a live mass every Wednesday at 9:00 am and for the next three Sundays at 10:00 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 or go to my YouTube channel 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: You will not be alone if you are with Him. - St. Ignatius of Loyola

SUPPORTING YOUR PARISH FINANCIALLY: We now have **EMAIL TRANSFERS SET UP**, send to 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.stambroseyarmouth.ca/> and scroll down the page to the donate button in red and follow the directions.

OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH: for parishioners who had regularly attended Our Lady of Lourdes, mass will be soon starting up on Sundays. If you haven't received a call, contact Alice at 902-663-2386 or Betty at 902-742-4965.

NEW HOSPITAL CHAPLIN: On July 1st Fr. Wieslaw Papuga was appointed by the diocese as hospital chaplain to Yarmouth Regional Hospital. You will be seeing Fr. Wieslaw at St. Ambrose at mass some since he is also now living in town. Thank you, Father, for taking on this responsibility and I'm looking forward to having you around. Fr. Henry

FOOD BANK: Next weekend, August 1st & 2nd, is our turn to support the Yarmouth Food Bank. Someone will be on hand before the 4:00pm mass Saturday and the 10:00am mass on Sunday to receive monetary donations. Donations may also be dropped off at the parish office. Thank you for your support!



REFLECTION: The Discovery of God

Seventeenth Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year A

“The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field, which a person finds and hides again, and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.” [Matthew 13:44](#)

Here are three things to reflect upon in regard to this passage: 1) The Kingdom of God is like a “treasure;” 2) It’s hidden, waiting to be found; 3) When discovered, it’s worth giving up everything we have to obtain it.

First, it’s helpful to reflect upon the image of the Kingdom of God being like a treasure. The image of a treasure brings with it various lessons. A treasure is often considered enough to make one rich if found. If it were not of such great value it would not be considered a treasure. Thus, the first lesson we should take is that the value of the Kingdom of God is great. In fact, it’s infinite in value. Yet so many people see it as something undesirable and choose many other “treasures” in its place.

Second, it’s hidden. It’s hidden not in the sense that God does not want us to discover it; rather, it’s hidden in the sense that God want us to discover it. It’s waiting for us, waiting to be discovered and rejoiced in when found. This also reveals the great excitement one has in making this authentic discovery of the Kingdom of God in our midst.

Third, when someone discovers the riches of the Kingdom of God and the riches of the life of grace, the experience should be so awe-inspiring that there is little hesitancy in making the choice to give everything up so as to obtain that which was found. What joy there is in coming to an awareness of the life of grace and mercy! It’s a discovery that will change one’s life and lead one to abandon all else in pursuit of the new treasure that has been discovered.

Reflect, today, upon your own experience of discovering the Kingdom of God. Have you allowed yourself to be drawn into amazement at the value of this treasure? If so, have you also allowed the discovery of this life of grace to so deeply attract you that you are ready and willing to give up everything to acquire it? Put your eyes upon this gift of infinite value and allow the Lord to direct you in its pursuit.

Lord, I love You and I thank You for the treasure of the Kingdom that You have prepared for me. Help me to make this hidden discovery each and every day in a more complete and awe-inspiring way. As I discover this

treasure, give me the courage I need to abandon every other selfish endeavor in life so that I may seek this one and only gift. Jesus, I trust in You.

Can You Make a Difference?

Monday of the Seventeenth Week of Ordinary Time

“The Kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a person took and sowed in a field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, yet when full-grown it is the largest of plants. It becomes a large bush, and the birds of the sky come and dwell in its branches.” [Matthew 13:31b-32](#)

Too often we tend to feel as though our lives are not nearly as important as others. We can often look to others who are far more “powerful” and “influential.” We can tend to dream about being like them. What if I had their money? Or if I had their social status? Or if I had their job? Or was as popular as they are? Too often, we fall into the trap of the “what ifs.”

This passage above reveals the absolute fact that God wants to use your life for great things! The smallest seed becomes the largest bush. This begs the question, “Do you feel like the smallest seed at times?”

It’s normal to feel insignificant at times and to wish we were “more.” But this is nothing more than a worldly and erroneous daydream. The truth is that each one of us is capable of making a HUGE difference in our world. No, we may not make the nightly news or receive national awards of greatness, but in God’s eyes we have potential beyond what we could ever daydream about.

Put this in perspective. What is greatness? What does it mean to be transformed by God into the “largest of plants” as the mustard seed is? It means we are given the incredible privilege to fulfill the exact, perfect and glorious plan God has for our lives. It is this plan that will produce the best and most abundant eternal fruit. Sure, we may not get the name recognition here on Earth. But so what?! Does that really matter? When you are in Heaven will you be depressed that the world did not recognize you and your role? Most certainly not. In Heaven all that will matter is how holy you became and how completely you fulfilled the divine plan for your life.

Saint Mother Teresa often said, “We are called to be faithful, not successful.” It is this fidelity to the will of God that matters.

Reflect, today, upon two things. First, reflect upon your “littleness” before the mystery of God. By yourself you are nothing. But in that humility, reflect also upon the fact that when you live in Christ and in His divine will you are great beyond measure. Strive for that greatness and you will be eternally blessed!

Lord, I know that without You I am nothing. Without You my life has no meaning. Help me to embrace Your perfect and glorious plan for my life and, in that plan, to achieve the greatness to which You call me. Jesus, I trust in You.

Final Victory!

Tuesday of the Seventeenth Week in Ordinary Time

“Just as weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his Kingdom all who cause others to sin and all evildoers. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears ought to hear.” [Matthew 13:40-](#)

[43](#)

Imagine that day! Imagine if that day were tomorrow. If Jesus were returning tomorrow and executing all justice upon the world, would you worry about any injustice today? Probably not. Instead, there would be an ability to sit back and be at peace knowing that justice was coming.

Well, that day is coming soon. That’s what Jesus said. Granted, that was said almost 2,000 years ago, but for Him it is still soon. Time, for God, takes on an eternal perspective. Therefore, the end of the world is as real for God today as it is when it actually happens.

This is a good thing to keep in mind when we see evil thrive and injustice grow. It's so very easy to get angry and upset about the daily victories of the evil one. But fear not and worry not. God truly is in control. He knows what He is doing and He will have the final glorious victory over all things.

So, think about that. When Jesus does return in all His glory and sets all things right, will the evil we now endure even matter? In fact, from the eternal perspective, the evil we endure should only serve to give us holy endurance. It has all potential to be used by God to manifest His grace and strength in our lives.

Reflect, today, upon the eternal perspective. If you persevere through all things now, and you strive to do so with patience and grace, you can be certain that all the struggle and all you have to endure will be worth it in the end. In the new glorious Kingdom of God, you will be at peace, and joy will fill your life forever. Every wrong will be made right and God will be victorious. Make sure you have "ears to hear" this truth and hold on to it through all things.

Lord, help me to keep my eyes on You and Your final victory. Help me to patiently await Your final victory and to endure the evil of this world with the grace and strength You give me. May I never forget the final promise that You have spoken to me. Jesus, I trust in You.

The Pearl of Great Price

Wednesday of the Seventeenth Week of Ordinary Time

"Again, the Kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls. When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it." [Matthew 13:45-46](#)

There are many beautiful insights we can take from this passage. Certainly, we can see the Kingdom of Heaven as analogous to that "Pearl of Great Price!" But the passage actually states that the Kingdom of Heaven is analogous to the "merchant searching for fine pearls." This is a revealing fact.

One insight this offers us is that the Kingdom of Heaven is found in our diligent search. We search the mystery of Heaven and it is this search that, in and of itself, presents to us God's Kingdom.

Speaking of the "search for God" is another way of saying that God is a profound Mystery of Faith, a *Mysterium Fidei* as we say in Mass. As a divine "Mystery" it's important to understand that we can never fully "find" God. We certainly can find Him, understand Him, come to know Him and give our lives to Him. But we can never do so fully. The truth is that the more we come to know God, the more we seek Him and the more we seek Him the more we realize we do not fully know Him. But this revelation draws us ever more deeply into the life of God and the acquisition of the Kingdom of Heaven.

The discovery of the beauty, value, mystery, power, and glory of God and His Kingdom is what life must be about. We must spend this life searching, finding, and searching more. This is what we will do in Heaven. Heaven will be a moment of the full revelation of the Kingdom and the inner life of God, but we will discover in this revelation that we will eternally enter more deeply into God and His glorious presence.

Reflect, today, upon the search that you embark on in your life. Is it a diligent search for God? Or do you grow slack in this endeavor? Recommit yourself to a wholehearted search for God and you will find that this search is actually a discovery of the glories of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Lord, I love You and desire to love You all the more. Please fill me with zeal and hope as I seek You. May my wholehearted search for You reveal to me the mystery of Your glorious inner life. As I discover You, help me to seek You all the more. Jesus, I trust in You.

The Justice of God

Thursday of the Seventeenth Week of Ordinary Time

"Thus, it will be at the end of the age. The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth." [Matthew 13:49-50](#)

Not all that inspiring of a statement at first read, is it? But it should be inspiring in the way that it was intended. It was intended to put a certain "holy fear" in us as well as reassure us of God's justice. This is inspiring, just not in the usual way we think of being inspired.

But sometimes we need a little holy fear of God and His justice in our lives. In our day and age sin is becoming continually more accepted and “normal.” Our worldwide culture seems to be growing steadily more secular. Immoral living of many types appears to be on the rise. As a result, it is easy for us to start seeing sin as normal and even acceptable. In fact, when we name sin as sin, our world often calls us judgmental and hateful.

If you find yourself at times feeling pressured to give in to the immorality all around you and just “accept it,” then perhaps the passage above will inspire you to do just the opposite. The absolute truth is that Jesus has named some things as sin and committing those sins brings grave consequences.

It could be the very subtle cultural practice of turning the Lord’s Day (Sunday) into anything but a day of rest. Or it could be grave violations to the sanctity of married and family life through the redefinition of marriage. Each of us will certainly notice various ways in which we feel our faith is challenged and even attacked. If that’s you, then this Scripture is for you. Jesus is serious about sin and the consequences of sin. That should inspire us to not only live holy lives, but also to do all we can to assist those caught up in the disordered cultural tendencies to change their lives.

Reflect, today, on how strongly you are opposed to sin. Sin is evil and destructive. You must always love the person who commits sin, but you ought never offer support or approval for their actions that are contrary to the law of God. Standing strong in the face of cultural opposition is a great act of love and may free some, one day, from the “wailing and grinding of teeth” of which Jesus spoke.

Lord, where sin abounds grace abounds all the more. Your grace is so needed today in our world and in my life. Help me to stay strong in my opposition to evil and sin so as to be among those who are gathered into Your Kingdom. Give me courage to do all I can to help those on the path of destruction. Jesus, I trust in You.

God’s Mightiest Deed

Friday of the Seventeenth Week in Ordinary Time

And he did not work many mighty deeds there because of their lack of faith. [Matthew 13:58](#)

What are “mighty deeds?” What was Jesus limited in doing in His home town because of a lack of faith? The first thing that obviously comes to mind are miracles. He most likely did not do many healings, or raise anyone from the dead, or multiply food so as to feed the multitude. But are these the mighty deeds spoken of?

The right answer would be both “Yes” and “No.” Yes, Jesus was limited in doing miracles and it appears He did very few in His hometown. But there were deeds that Jesus regularly did that were far more “mighty” than physical miracles. What are those? They were the deeds of transforming souls.

What does it matter, in the end, if Jesus does many miracles but souls are not converted? What is more “mighty” as far as lasting and meaningful action? Certainly, the transformation of souls is of the highest of importance! But sadly, the mighty deeds of the transformation of souls could not take place either, due to their lack of faith. The people were clearly obstinate and not open to letting the words and presence of Jesus penetrate their minds and hearts. For that reason, Jesus could not do the mightiest of deeds in His home town.

Reflect, today, on whether or not Jesus is doing mighty deeds in your life. Are you letting Him transform you daily into a new creation? Are you letting Him do great things in your life? If you hesitate in answering this question it is a clear sign that God wants to do much more in your life.

Lord, I pray that my soul be fertile ground for Your most magnificent work. I pray that my soul be transformed by You, Your words and Your presence in my life. Come into my heart and transform me into Your masterpiece of grace. Jesus, I trust in You.

The Sad Fruit of Hate

Saturday of the Seventeenth Week in Ordinary Time

“Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist.” [Matthew 14:8](#)

Ugh, what a bad day to say the least. St. John the Baptist was beheaded at the request of Salome, the daughter of Herodias. John was in prison for speaking the truth to Herod regarding his marriage, and Herodias was filled with hate toward John. So, Herodias had her daughter dance in the presence of Herod and his guests. Herod

was so impressed, he promised Salome up to half of his kingdom. Instead, her request was for the head of John the Baptist.

Even on the surface this is a bizarre request. Salome is promised up to half of the kingdom and, instead, she asks for the death of a good and holy man. In fact, Jesus said of John that no one born of woman was greater than he was. So why all the hate by Herodias and her daughter?

This sad incident illustrates the power of anger in its most extreme form. When anger brews and grows it causes deep passion, so much so that it clouds a person's thinking and reason. Hate and revenge can consume a person and lead to complete foolishness.

Herod is also a witness of extreme irrationality here. He is pressured to do what he does not want to do because he is afraid of doing the right thing. He is overwhelmed by the hate in the heart of Herodias and, as a result, gives in to the execution of John whom he actually appeared to like and enjoyed listening to.

Normally we seek to be inspired by the good example of others. But, in this case, we find we can be "inspired" in a different way. We should use the witness of John's execution as an opportunity to look at any struggles we have with anger, resentment and especially hate. Hate is an ugly passion that can sneak in and cause much destruction in our lives and the lives of others. Even the beginnings of this disordered passion should be confessed and overcome.

Reflect, today, upon whether you see any hate in your heart. Have you held on to some grudge or bitterness that is not going away? Is that passion growing and causing damage to your life and the lives of others? If so, resolve to let go of it and forgive. It's the right thing to do.

Lord, give me the grace I need to look into my heart and see any tendencies of anger, resentment and hatred. Please purify me of these and set me free. Jesus, I trust in You. ~My Catholic Life

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