



20th Sunday of Ordinary Time for St. Ambrose Parish August 16th, 2020

Pastor: Fr. Henry Smolenaars

Parish Deacon: Rev. Mr. Stephen Bourque

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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 August 8th – 16th, 2020

Sat. 4pm Lorraine Brown and Special Intentions

Sun. 10am Parishioners

Wed. 9am J. Donald Surette and Sharon Rodgerson

Sat. 4pm Parishioners

Sun. 10am Raymond Andrew Doucette and Andrea Marie Doucette

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. Wednesday masses will be a first come first served for the time being, 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 this Sunday at 10:00am and the following Saturday at 4pm (unless there are technical difficulties and then it will be put on after it has been recorded.). The masses will be streamed live from St. Ambrose Church. If you want to watch, go to our web site at www.stambroseyarmouth.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: Life passes so quickly that we ought to think more of how to die than how to live. ~St. Teresa of Avila



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 started up on Sundays. If you haven't received a call, contact Alice at 902-663-2386 or Betty at 902-742-4965.



Please welcome into our Christian community Jennifer Kate Axworthy and Jack Auston Duke who were baptised on Sunday August 9th, 2020.

Please keep Jennifer and Jack and their families in your prayers.



Our sympathy is extended to the family and friends of
Adeline Bridget Cook and Daniel Ernest Robichaud
Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them.

WANT TO BECOME CATHOLIC? *Are you a non-Catholic interested in inquiring about the Catholic faith? Are you a Catholic adult who has never celebrated 1st Communion and/or Confirmation? Are you a Catholic wishing to update your faith?*



If you answered “yes” to any one of these questions, then maybe RCIA is for you. Interested in finding out more? Phone the Parish Office at 902-742-7151.

REFLECTION: The Silence of God

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

And behold, a Canaanite woman of that district came and called out, “Have pity on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is tormented by a demon.” But Jesus did not say a word in answer to her. Jesus’ disciples came and asked him, “Send her away, for she keeps calling out after us.” [Matthew 15:22-23](#)

This is one of those fascinating stories in which Jesus’ actions could be easily misunderstood. As the story unfolds, Jesus replies to this woman’s desire for help by stating, “It is not right to take the food of the children and throw it to the dogs.” Ouch! This initially sounds rude. But of course, it wasn’t since Jesus was never rude. Jesus’ initial silence toward this woman and His seemingly rude words are actions through which Jesus is able to not only purify this woman’s faith, but also give her the opportunity to manifest her faith for all to see. In the end, Jesus cries out, “O woman, great is your faith!”

If you desire to walk down the road of holiness, this story is for you. It’s a story by which we come to understand that great faith comes as a result of purification and unwavering trust. This woman states to Jesus, “Please, Lord, for even the dogs eat the scraps that fall from the table of their masters.” In other words, she begged for mercy despite her unworthiness.

It's essential to understand that at times God appears to be silent. This is an act of deep love on His part because it is actually an invitation to turn to Him on a very deep level. God's silence allows us to move from a faith fed by accolades and emotion to a faith fostered by pure trust in His mercy.

Reflect, today, upon those moments in life when you feel as though God is silent. Know that those moments are actually moments of invitation to trust on a new and deeper level. Make an act of trust and allow your faith to become more fully purified so that God can do great things in you and through you!

Lord, I acknowledge that I am unworthy of Your grace and mercy in my life in every way. But I also acknowledge that You are merciful beyond comprehension and that Your mercy is so great that You desire to pour it forth upon me, a poor and unworthy sinner. I beg for that mercy, dear Lord, and I place my complete trust in You. Jesus, I do trust in You.

Do You Want to be Rich?

Monday of the Twentieth Week in Ordinary Time

“If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” When the young man heard this statement, he went away sad, for he had many possessions. [Matthew 19:21-22](#)

Thank goodness that Jesus did not say this to you or me! Right? Or did He? Does this apply to all of us if we wish to be perfect? The answer may surprise you.

True, Jesus does call some people to literally sell all their possessions and give them away. For those who answer this call, they discover great freedom in their detachment from all material belongings. Their vocation is a sign to all of us of the radical interior calling we each have been given. But what about the rest of us? What is that radical interior calling given to us by our Lord? It's a calling to spiritual poverty. By “spiritual poverty” we mean that each and every one of us is called to detach from the things of this world to the same extent as those called to literal poverty. The only difference is that one calling is both interior and exterior, and the other calling is only interior. But it must be just as radical.

What does interior poverty look like? It is a Beatitude. “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” as St. Matthew says, and “Blessed are the poor,” as St. Luke says. Spiritual poverty means we discover the blessing of spiritual riches in our detachment from the material enticements of this age. No, material “things” are not evil. That's why it's fine to have personal possessions. But it is quite common for us to also have a strong attachment to the things of this world. Too often we want more and more and fall into the trap of thinking that more “things” will make us happy. It's not true and we know that deep down, but we still fall right into the trap of acting as if more money and possessions will satisfy. As an old Roman catechism puts it, “He who has money never has money enough.”

Reflect, today, upon the clear calling you have received to live in this world without becoming attached to the things of this world. Possessions are only a means to the end of living a holy life and fulfilling your purpose in life. That will mean you have what you need, but it will also mean that you strive to avoid excess and, especially, avoid interior attachment to worldly possessions.

Lord, I freely renounce all I have and own. I give it to You as a spiritual sacrifice. Receive all I have and help me to use it only in the way You so desire. In that detachment may I discover the true riches You have for me. Jesus, I trust in You.

Being First!

Tuesday of the Twentieth Week in Ordinary Time

“But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.” [Matthew 19:30](#)

This little line, tucked in at the end of today's Gospel, reveals much. It reveals a contradiction between worldly success and eternal success. So often we seek out worldly success and fail to seek the riches that last for eternity.

Let's start with the “many who are first.” Who are these people? To understand this, we must understand the difference between the “world” and the “Kingdom of God.” The world refers to a purely vain popularity within any given culture. Success, prestige, vainglory, and the like accompany worldly popularity and success. The evil

one is the lord of this world and will often seek to raise up those who serve his unholy will. But in so doing, many of us are enticed by and drawn to this form of notoriety. This is a problem, especially when we begin to take our identity in the opinions of others.

The “many who are first” are those whom the world elevates as icons and models of this popular success. This is a general statement that certainly does not apply to every particular situation and person. But the general tendency should be acknowledged. And according to this Scripture, those who get drawn into this life will be “last” in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Contrast this with those who are “first” in the Kingdom of God. These holy souls may or may not be honored in this world. Some may see their goodness and honor them (like Saint Mother Teresa was honored), but very often they are put down and considered undesirable in a worldly way.

What’s more important? What do you honestly prefer for all eternity? Do you prefer to be well thought of in this life, even if it means compromising values and the truth? Or are your eyes fixed on the truth and eternal rewards?

Reflect, today, upon the goal of building up treasure in Heaven and the eternal reward promised to those who live lives of fidelity. There is nothing wrong with being well thought of by others in this world, but you must never allow such a desire to dominate you or dissuade you from keeping your eyes on that which is eternal. Reflect upon how well you do this and seek to make the rewards of Heaven your exclusive goal.

Lord, please help me to seek You and Your Kingdom above all else. May pleasing You and serving Your most holy will be my one and only desire in life. Help me to shed the unhealthy concerns of worldly notoriety and popularity, concerning myself only with what You think. I give to You, dear Lord, my whole being. Jesus, I trust in You.

Gratitude Conquers Envy

Wednesday of the Twentieth Week of Ordinary Time

“Are you envious because I am generous?” [Matthew 20:15b](#)

This line comes from the parable of the landowner who hired workers at five different times during the day. The first were hired at dawn, the second at 9 a.m., the others at noon, 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. Those hired at dawn worked about twelve hours and those hired at 5 p.m. worked only an hour. The “problem” was that the owner paid all the workers the same amount as if they all worked a full twelve-hour day.

At first, this experience would tempt anyone to envy. Envy is a sort of sadness or anger at the good fortune of others. Perhaps we can all understand the envy of those who put in a full day. They worked for the full twelve hours and received their full pay. But they were envious because those who worked only an hour were treated by the landowner with much generosity receiving a full day’s wage.

Try to put yourself into this parable and reflect upon how you would experience this generous action of the landowner toward others. Would you see his generosity and rejoice for those treated so well? Would you be grateful for them because they were given this special gift? Or would you, too, find yourself envious and upset. In all honesty, most of us would struggle with envy in this situation.

But that realization is a grace. It’s a grace to become aware of that ugly sin of envy. Even if we are not actually put into the position of acting upon our envy, it’s a grace to see that it’s there within.

Reflect, today, upon whether you see any traces of envy within your heart. Can you sincerely rejoice and be filled with much gratitude at the success of others? Can you sincerely be grateful to God when others are blessed with the unexpected and unwarranted generosity of others? If this is a struggle, then at least thank God that you are made aware of this. Envy is a sin, and it’s a sin that leaves us dissatisfied and sad. You should be grateful you see it because that is the first step in overcoming it.

Lord, I do sin and I honestly admit I have some envy in my heart. Thank you for helping me to see this and help me to now surrender that over. Please replace it with a sincere gratitude for the abundant grace and mercy You bestow on others. Jesus, I trust in You.

Without Charity...

Thursday of the Twentieth Week in Ordinary Time

“The servants went out into the streets and gathered all they found, bad and good alike, and the hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to meet the guests, he saw a man there not dressed in a wedding garment. He said to him, ‘My friend, how is it that you came in here without a wedding garment?’ But he was reduced to silence. Then the king said to his attendants, ‘Bind his hands and feet, and cast him into the darkness outside, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.’ Many are invited, but few are chosen.” [Matthew 22:10-14](#)

This may be quite shocking at first. In this parable the king invited many to the wedding feast of his son. Many rejected the invitation. He then sent his servants out to gather anyone who would come and the hall was filled. But when the king came in, there was one not dressed in a wedding garment and we can see what happens to him in the passage above.

Again, at first read this may be a bit shocking. Did this man really deserve to be bound hand and foot and thrown outside into the darkness where there is wailing and grinding of teeth, just because he didn’t have the right clothing on? Certainly not.

Understanding this parable requires we understand the symbolism of the wedding garment. This garment is a symbol of one who is clothed in Christ and, specifically, one who is therefore filled with charity. There is a very interesting lesson to learn from this passage.

First, the fact that this man was at the wedding feast means he responded to the invitation. This is an indication of faith. Therefore, this man does symbolize one who has faith. Second, the lack of a wedding garment means that he is one who has faith and believes all that God says, but has not allowed that faith to permeate his heart and soul to the point of producing true conversion and, therefore, true charity. It is the lacking of charity in the young man that condemns him.

The interesting point is that it is possible for us to have faith, but to lack charity. Faith is believing what God reveals to us. But even the demons believe! Charity requires we embrace that will interiorly and let it transform our lives. This is an important point to understand because sometimes we can struggle with this same situation. At times we can find we believe on the level of faith, but are not living it. Both are required for a life of authentic holiness.

Reflect, today, upon both your faith in all that God has spoken, and the charity that this hopefully produces in your life. Being a Christian means you let your faith sink from your head down to your heart and will.

Lord, may I have deep faith in You and in all that You have spoken. May that faith sink into my heart producing love of You and others. Jesus, I trust in You.

Being All In!

Friday of the Twentieth Week in Ordinary Time

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a scholar of the law, tested him by asking, “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” He said to him, “You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” [Matthew 22:34-37](#)

“With your heart, with your soul, and with your mind.” In other words, with your whole being!

What does this depth of love look like practically speaking? It’s easy for this to become a lofty thought or sermon of words, but it’s challenging to let this thought or sermon become a testimony of our actions. Do you love God with your whole being? With every part of who you are? What does that mean exactly?

Perhaps this depth of love will manifest itself in many ways, here are a few qualities of this love that will be present:

1) Entrustment: Entrustment of our lives to God is a requirement of love. God is perfect and, therefore, loving Him requires that we see His perfection, understand this perfection, and act in accordance with it. When we see and understand who God is, the effect is that we must trust Him completely and without reserve. God is all-powerful and all-loving. An all-powerful and all-loving God must be trusted to an unlimited extent.

2) Interior fire: Entrustment of ourselves will set our hearts on fire! This means that we will see the Holy Spirit do amazing things within our souls. We will see God acting and transforming us. It will be more than what we could ever do to ourselves. God will take charge and do great things in us, transforming our lives, just as a blazing fire becomes all consuming.

3) Actions beyond your ability: The effect of a blazing fire of the Holy Spirit within us is that God will do great things in the lives of those around us through us. We will witness God at work and be amazed at what He does. We will witness first hand His amazing power and transforming love and it will happen through us. What a gift!

Reflect, today, upon your total love of God. Are you all in? Are you completely committed to serving our Lord and His holy will? Don't hesitate. It's worth it!

Lord, help me to love You with my whole heart, mind, soul and strength. Help me to love You with my whole being. In that love, I pray You transform me into Your instrument of grace. Jesus, I trust in You!

Our Blessed Mother

Saturday of the Twentieth Week in Ordinary Time

“The scribes and the Pharisees have taken their seat on the chair of Moses. Therefore, do and observe all things whatsoever they tell you, but do not follow their example. For they preach but they do not practice. They tie up heavy burdens hard to carry and lay them on people's shoulders, but they will not lift a finger to move them. All their works are performed to be seen. They widen their phylacteries and lengthen their tassels. They love places of honor at banquets, seats of honor in synagogues, greetings in marketplaces, and the salutation ‘Rabbi.’” [Matthew 23:2-7](#)

Saturdays are traditionally dedicated to the honor of our Blessed Mother. What a contrast there is between the Pharisees and our Blessed Mother, Queen of Heaven and Earth!

First, we start with the Pharisees. They were continually condemned by Jesus for their pride and self-righteousness. They spoke prayers to themselves, sought out places of honor, demanded the respect of others and were completely self-consumed. Jesus' continual condemnation of them was an act of mercy on His part. It was a way of trying to break them out of their pride, helping them to see the light of truth.

Second, we contrast this with our Blessed Mother. She was humble beyond imagination. She is the Immaculate Conception...perfect in every way. She carried every virtue within her soul. She is the New Eve, the new Mother of all the Living. And she is honored eternally as Queen of Heaven and Earth.

The stark contrast is seen in the way she lived. It's seen in the fact that she had every right to exalt herself and to expect honor and respect throughout her life. But, in her humility, she claimed no such right. She allowed herself to remain hidden and even ridiculed for becoming pregnant out of wedlock. She was unlike the Pharisees in every way.

But now, for all eternity, God has raised her up. She will eternally be seen as Queen and will be honored and loved by all. All her virtue will perpetually shine forth as she has been rewarded and exalted for all to see.

Reflect, today, upon who you are more like. Are you more like the Pharisees who seek to exalt themselves? Or are you more like our Blessed Mother who humbled herself. Choose to imitate our Blessed Mother and God will eternally reward you, too!

Lord, may I see the beauty and magnificence of Your mother's soul. May I love her and honor her. And in that love and honor, may I imitate her in every way. Jesus, I trust in You.

~My Catholic Life

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