



**September 17<sup>th</sup> 2023**  
**24<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary**  
**Time**

**Pastor:** Fr. Henry Smolenaars  
**Fr. Henry Email:** frhenrys@gmail.com  
**Hospital Chaplain:** Fr. Wieslaw Papuga  
**Priest on Call:** 902-746-8233 (Emergencies)  
**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** is held on Wednesday  
 after mass from 7:00-8:00

**MASS INTENTIONS – September 16<sup>th</sup>– 24<sup>th</sup> 2023**

**St. Ambrose Co-Cathedral (Yarmouth):**

**Sat. 4 pm Parishioners**  
**Sun. 9am Bob MacPherson**  
**Sun. 11:15 am Donald MacKinnon**  
**Tues. 6:30 pm Jeanne Doucette**  
**Wed. 6:30 pm Julia Deveau**  
**Thurs: 9 am Anniv. Gladys Cottreau**  
**Fri. 9 am Nicholas Clegg**  
**Sat. 4 pm Gary Allen**  
**Sun. 9 am Parishioners**  
**Sun. 11:15 am Anniv. Wally Hubbard**

**Our Lady of Lourdes (Melbourne):**

**Sun. 10 am September 17** Anniv. Adam Surette  
**Sun. 10 am September 24** Melissa Holly LeBlanc

**REFLECTION: The Torment of Unforgiveness** “You wicked servant! I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to. Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?” Then in anger his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt. So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives your brother from your heart.” [Matthew 18:32–35](#)



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Love, kindness, gentleness, mercy...these and many like qualities are easy to think about. They inspire us to be holy by growing in virtue. But sometimes we need more. Sometimes pondering the beauty of the virtues and fruits of the Spirit do not suffice to help us embrace a life of holiness. This is one of the reasons for our parable today.

The *Spiritual Exercises* of Saint Ignatius of Loyola present us with a structure by which a spiritual director may lead a retreatant through a thirty-day private retreat. Ignatius outlines thirty days worth of meditations. Interestingly, Ignatius does not begin by inviting a person to ponder the beautiful virtues to which they are called. Instead, for the first week, he has the retreatant ponder the horror of sin and the devastating effects that sin has upon a soul. By doing this, the person’s eyes are more fully opened to their own sin so that, in the subsequent three weeks, they will be more properly disposed to reflect upon the inspiring life of Christ and His many virtues. In a sense, our Gospel today is an ideal Gospel to ponder during that first week of an Ignatian retreat. And for that reason, it is an ideal Gospel to ponder anytime we want to get our spiritual lives in order. It is very easy to become complacent in our Christian walk. It is easy to become lukewarm in our prayer and even in our moral life. If that is you to any degree, then this Gospel is worth your careful and thorough attention. The sin that Jesus addresses in this passage is the sin of unforgiveness. It clearly depicts the wrath of God that will be inflicted upon those who refuse to forgive others. The “wicked servant” to whom this is addressed was a man who was forgiven a “huge amount” by God. This is all of us. Every one of us has been forgiven by God an amount that cost Jesus His very life. The consequence of our sins was the death of the Son of God. Each of us deserves the penalty of death. But death has now been transformed into the very means of new life through the forgiveness of sins. And if we want to receive the forgiveness of sins and the new life that awaits us, we must fully share in God’s forgiveness. Not only must we receive His forgiveness, we must also forgive those who have sinned against us. Completely. Totally. Without reserve. In this parable, the wicked servant failed to forgive his servant’s small debt. In fact, every sin committed against us, no matter how grave in the

eyes of God, is a small debt compared to the debt we owe God. For that reason, we must never hesitate to forgive. Never. If this is difficult, and if reflecting upon God’s mercy, kindness, compassion and love do not compel you to completely forgive everyone to the fullest extent, then spend time with this parable. “You wicked servant! I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to. Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?” These are words directed at us when we fail to forgive completely from the depths of our hearts. They are merciful words from Jesus to help us wake up to what we need to do.

In a commentary on this passage from St. Thomas Aquinas, the “torturers” spoken of, to whom we will be handed over if we do not forgive, are the demons. They will torment us when we lack forgiveness toward others. The torture, for now, will come in the form of obsessing over our wounds, dwelling upon thoughts of revenge, holding grudges, and lacking interior peace. This is the work of the demons, and they will torment us this way until we forgive. Reflect, today, upon the absolute requirement of the Christian life to forgive. Mercy can seem unfair. From the perspective of strict justice, it is. But from the perspective of freedom and the virtues of Heaven, mercy makes perfect sense. Do not hesitate to forgive, for if you can do so from the bottom of your heart, God will lavish upon you the riches of the Kingdom of Heaven. -My Catholic Life

**THE SEARCH: Are you ready for *The Search*?**



All of us know people who would benefit from encountering God and the Church, and from experiencing the peace, joy, and purpose that a relationship with Jesus brings. Invite them to come to *The Search*. *The Search* is an innovative video series that tackles the key questions of every human heart. In seven beautifully filmed episodes, experts from multiple fields of science, medicine, psychology, art, and religion examine our place in the larger story of existence. *The Search* tackles questions such as “What do you Seek”, “Why a God?”, “Who is Jesus”, “Why a Church?”. Whether they are a practiced inquirer or a jaded skeptic, *The Search* will speak to them. They may be reassured by some parts, and

challenged by others. Either way, they will find a lot here to think about. And when all is said and done, life’s questions demand to be answered. You can watch the trailer at <https://youtu.be/QOwZFL5Wpj8> or google “The Search Trailer”. Thursday evenings from October 5 to November 30, - 7:00 to 8:45 pm in the Parish Centre. No cost to attend. Registration required at 902 742-7151 or [search.stambrose@gmail.com](mailto:search.stambrose@gmail.com) Questions can be sent to the above email or leave a message with the office and someone will get back to you.

**ROSARY GROUP:** Will continue to gather Thursday mornings, come join me in the Jubilee Room after 9 am mass to say the rosary. Intentions for loved ones and conversion of hearts. Come and grow closer to God through the Blessed Virgin Mary. If any questions please call or text Sarah Hubbard at 902 740-2191

**SUNDY SCHOOL REGISTRATION:** The registration for catechism classes for grades primary to eight will be October 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> in the Parish Centre between the 10:00am and 11:00 am.

**KNIGHT OF COLUMBUS NEWS: Monthly Meeting:**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Degree** Tuesday September 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm  
**Community Breakfast:** September 24<sup>th</sup> 9:00 to 12:00 cost is \$10.00 Adults and 12 and under \$7.00

**COFFEE SCIOALS:** The coffee socials being held after  all the masses this weekend have been cancelled, we’ll see you next month.

**CONFIRMATION: Sacrament of Confirmation**  
**Grade 9 Students/Parents.** Registration and Information session, for the Sacrament of Confirmation for youth in Grade 9 will take place on **Sunday, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 5:15 pm** at the Parish Centre. There will be a meeting for parents and students and registration and it is important to attend. The first class will commence immediately after the meeting, at 6:00 pm and end at 8:30 pm. Any questions please call Debbie Muise at 902-774-0373.

