



## 24<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time for St. Ambrose Parish

September 13, 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 September 12-20, 2020

**Sat. 4pm** Allan Boudreau **and** Catherine Jackson

**Sun. 10am** Parishioners

**Wed. 9am** Terese Muise **and** Anne Pennell

**Sat. 4pm** Parishioners

**Sun. 10am** Intentions of Sister Evangeline Poirier **and** Stanley Comeau

**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 Saturday at 4:00pm and the following Sunday at 9:00am (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.stambroseymouth.ca](http://www.stambroseymouth.ca) or go to my YouTube channel [www.youtube.com/channel/UC1CwQV-c8xpu57fbCsu0fLg/videos?view=57&flow=grid](https://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.)

**EMAIL TRANSFERS:** are now available please 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.

**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 note there will be no Mass on Sunday September 20<sup>th</sup>.

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS NEWS: Monthly Meeting:** Tuesday September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020 all members invited

6:00pm executive meeting and 7:00pm general meeting. Please note there will be no supper at this time.



**FOOD BANK:** This weekend, September 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>, is our turn to support the Yarmouth Food Bank. Non-perishable goods and monetary donations are appreciated. There will be someone there to receive goods prior to the 4pm mass on Saturday and the 10am mass Sunday morning.



**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.

**QUOTE OF THE WEEK:** One is truly humble of heart if one knows oneself thoroughly and knows God. May the Lord Grant this grace to all people! ~ St. Paul of the Cross



### **REFLECTION: Forgiveness**

#### ***Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A***

“Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?” Jesus answered, “I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times.” [Matthew 18:21-22](#)

This question, posed by Peter to Jesus, was asked in such a way that Peter thought he was being quite generous in his forgiveness. But to his surprise, Jesus adds to Peter’s generosity in forgiveness in an exponential way. For many of us, this sounds good in theory. It is inspiring and encouraging to ponder the depths of forgiveness that we are called to offer another. But when it comes to daily practice, this may be much harder to embrace. By calling us to forgive not only seven times but seventy-seven times, Jesus is telling us that there is no limit to the depth and breadth of mercy and forgiveness that we must offer another. No limit!

This spiritual truth must become far more than a theory or ideal we strive for. It must become a practical reality which we embrace with all our might. We must daily seek to rid ourselves of any tendency we have, no matter how small, to hold a grudge and remain in anger. We must seek to free ourselves from every form of bitterness and allow mercy to heal every hurt.

Reflect, today, upon that person or persons you need to forgive the most. Forgiveness may not make perfect sense to you right away and you may find that your feelings do not fall in line with the choice you are trying to make. Do not give up! Continue to make the choice to forgive, regardless of how you feel or how hard it is. In the end, mercy and forgiveness will always triumph, heal and give you the peace of Christ.

*Lord, give me a heart of true mercy and forgiveness. Help me to let go of all bitterness and pain I feel. In place of these, give me true love and help me to offer that love to others without reserve. I love You, dear Lord. Help me to love all people as You love them. Jesus, I trust in You.*

### **Unleashing God’s Mercy**

#### ***Monday of the Twenty-Fourth Week in Ordinary Time***

“Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof.” [Luke 7:6b](#)

These words are spoken by a wealthy Roman centurion. His servant was ill and messengers were sent to Jesus to ask that He come heal the servant. However, this centurion deeply sensed his unworthiness before Jesus. As Jesus was arriving, the centurion sent his friends to humbly greet Jesus, profess his unworthiness, and profess his faith that Jesus could heal his servant from a distance. Jesus does just that after stating publicly, “I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith” ([Luke 7:9](#)). One profound truth this passage reveals is that humility, faith and mercy are intertwined. The centurion knew the humble truth of Jesus’ greatness and his own unworthiness. The humble profession of that truth was an act of great faith on his part. The result was that mercy was sent forth upon the centurion and his servant.

The example set for us by this centurion is a powerful one. Too often in our life of prayer we pray as if we have a right to God’s grace. This is a profound mistake. We must seek to follow this centurion’s example by

understanding that we do not have a right to anything from our Lord. This humble acknowledgment is the necessary foundation for the reception of the abundant mercy of God. Mercy is a gift, not a right. But the good news is that God's heart burns with a desire to pour forth that gift. Acknowledging mercy as an absolute gift, to which we have no right, unleashes its power in our lives. Understanding this humble truth is a profession of faith in God's mercy and delights His heart abundantly.

Reflect, today, upon those inspiring words of the centurion. "Lord, I am not worthy..." Say them over and over and allow them to become the foundation of your relationship with our Lord. In this humility, you will be richly blessed.

*Lord, I am not worthy that You would come to me. I am not worthy of the precious gift of Holy Communion or of Your mercy in my life. Please Lord, help me to continually see that all You give is a gift of Your unlimited mercy. I thank You, dear Lord. Jesus, I trust in You.*

## **The Power of the Word of the Lord**

### ***Tuesday of the Twenty-Fourth Week in Ordinary Time***

"Young man, I tell you, arise!" The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. [Luke 7:14b-15](#)

These words were spoken by our Lord over the coffin of a man who had died days earlier. His mother was grieving. He was the only son of this mother and she was a widow. Imagine her joy as she heard Jesus speak these words and as she watched as her dead son came back to life. It would have been a moment that she would never forget and for which she would be eternally grateful.

These words are packed with meaning. First and foremost, they are words that effected a miraculous event. Jesus spoke and what He spoke came to be. The dead came back to life at His command.

But these words also reveal a deep spiritual truth. Jesus may not bring our loved ones back to life, in a literal way, but He does speak powerful words to us in many other ways. When our faith is strong and we turn to Him with hope, trust and surrender, He will speak to us words that lift us out of our misery and pain.

What is it that you need to bring to our Lord? What is it that leaves you feeling dead and alone in your life? What suffering, sin, hurt, or frustration do you need to bring to our Lord?

Reflect, today, upon the power of the words of our Lord. Reflect, especially, upon what our Lord may command to happen in your life. Offer Him, this day, your sins and all that weighs you down and listen for Him to speak to you. Let Him say to you, "I tell you, arise!" Arise from your sin, hurt, anger and pain. Let His words sink in and transform your life bringing what seems to be dead back to life.

*Lord, I surrender to You all that I am and all that weighs me down in life. I entrust to You my sin, hurt, anger and all that appears to be an obstacle to the newness of life to which You are calling me. May I surrender all to You, dear Lord, and hear You call me from my despair to newness of life. Jesus, I trust in You.*

## **The Music for Life**

### ***Wednesday of the Twenty-Fourth Week in Ordinary Time***

Jesus said to the crowds: "To what shall I compare the people of this generation? What are they like? They are like children who sit in the marketplace and call to one another, 'We played the flute for you, but you did not dance. We sang a dirge, but you did not weep.'" [Luke 7:31-32](#)

So, what does this story tell us? First of all, the story means that children are ignoring the "songs" of each other. Some children sing a song of sorrow and that song is rejected by others. Some sang joyful songs for dancing, and others did not enter into the dance. In other words, the appropriate response was not given to the offer of their music.

This is a clear reference to the fact that so many of the prophets who came before Jesus "sang songs" (meaning preached) inviting people to have sorrow for sin as well as to rejoice in the truth. But despite the fact that the prophets poured out their hearts, so many people ignored them.

Jesus gives a strong condemnation of the people of that time for their refusal to listen to the words of the prophets. He goes on to point out that many called John the Baptist one who was "possessed" and they called

Jesus a “glutton and drunkard.” The condemnation of the people by Jesus especially focuses upon one particular sin: Obstinacy. This stubborn refusal to listen to the voice of God and change is a grave sin. In fact, it is traditionally referred to as one of the sins against the Holy Spirit. Do not let yourself become guilty of this sin. Do not be obstinate and refuse to listen to the voice of God.

The positive message of this Gospel is that when God speaks to us, we must listen! Do you? Do you listen attentively and respond wholeheartedly? You should read it as an invitation to turn your full attention to God and listen to the beautiful “music” He sends forth.

Reflect, today, upon your willingness to listen. Jesus strongly condemned those who did not listen and refused to hear Him. Do not be counted among their number.

*Lord, may I listen, hear, understand and respond to Your sacred voice. May it be the refreshment and nourishment of my soul. Jesus, I trust in You.*

## **Begging for Mercy**

### ***Thursday of the Twenty-Fourth Week in Ordinary Time***

A certain Pharisee invited Jesus to dine with him, and he entered the Pharisee’s house and reclined at table. Now there was a sinful woman in the city who learned that he was at table in the house of the Pharisee. Bringing an alabaster flask of ointment, she stood behind him at his feet weeping and began to bathe his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them, and anointed them with the ointment. [Luke 7:36-38](#)

In part, this Gospel is about the Pharisee. If we read on in this passage, we see the Pharisee becoming quite judgmental and condemning of this woman and Jesus. Jesus rebuked Him just as He has done so many times before with the Pharisees. But this passage is much more than a rebuke of the Pharisees. At its heart, it’s a story of love.

The love is that love in the heart of this sinful woman. It’s a love manifested in sorrow for sin and deep humility. Her sin was great and, as a result, so was her humility and love. Let’s look at that humility first. It is seen in her actions as she came to Jesus.

First, “she stood behind Him...”

Second, she fell down “at His feet...”

Third, she was “weeping...”

Fourth, she washed His feet “with her tears...”

Fifth, she dried His feet “with her hair...”

Sixth, she “kissed” His feet.

Seventh, she “anointed” His feet with her costly perfume.

Stop for a moment and try to imagine this scene. Try to see this sinful woman humbling herself in love before Jesus. If this full action is not an act of deep sorrow, repentance and humility then it’s hard to know what else it is. It’s an action that is not planned out, not calculated, not manipulative. Rather, it’s deeply humble, sincere and total. In this act, she cries out for mercy and compassion from Jesus and she doesn’t even have to say a word.

Reflect, today, upon your own sin. Unless you know your sin, you cannot manifest this type of humble sorrow. Do you know your sin? From there, consider getting down on the ground, on your knees, bowing your head to the ground before Jesus and sincerely begging for His compassion and mercy. Try literally doing that. Make it real and total. The result is that Jesus will treat you in the same merciful way He did this sinful woman.

*Lord, I beg for Your mercy. I am a sinner and I deserve damnation. I acknowledge my sin. I beg, in Your mercy, to forgive my sin and pour forth Your infinite compassion upon me. Jesus, I trust in You.*

## **Following Jesus**

### ***Friday of the Twenty-Fourth Week in Ordinary Time***

Jesus journeyed from one town and village to another, preaching and proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom of God. Accompanying him were the Twelve and some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities... [Luke 8:1-2](#)

Jesus was on a mission. His mission was to preach to town after town tirelessly. But He did not do this alone. This passage points out that He was accompanied by the Apostles and several women who had been healed and forgiven by Him.

There is much this passage tells us. One thing it tells us is that when we allow Jesus to touch our lives, heal us, forgive us and transform us, we want to follow Him wherever He goes.

The desire to follow Jesus was not only an emotional one. Certainly, there were emotions involved. There was incredible gratitude and, as a result, a deep emotional bond. But the bond went so much deeper. It was a bond created by the gift of grace and salvation. These followers of Jesus experienced a greater level of freedom from sin than they had ever experienced before. Grace changed their lives and, as a result, they were ready and willing to make Jesus the center of their lives following Him wherever He went.

Reflect, today, upon two things. First, have you allowed Jesus to pour forth an abundance of grace into your life? Have you allowed Him to touch you, change you, forgive you and heal you? If so, have you then repaid this grace by making the absolute choice to follow Him? Following Jesus, wherever He goes, is not just something these Apostles and holy women did long ago. It's something that we are all called to do daily. Reflect upon these two questions and recommit yourself where you see a lacking.

*Lord, please do come and forgive me, heal me and transform me. Help me to know Your saving power in my life. When I receive this grace, help me to return to You in gratitude everything that I am and to follow You wherever You lead. Jesus, I trust in You.*

## Listening

### ***Saturday of the Twenty-Fourth Week in Ordinary Time***

"Those on the path are the ones who have heard, but the Devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts that they may not believe and be saved." [Luke 8:12](#)

This familiar story identifies four possible ways in which we hear the Word of God. Some are like a trodden path, some like rocky ground, others like a bed of thorns and some are like rich soil.

In each one of these images, there is a possibility of growth with the Word of God. The rich soil is when the Word is received and bears fruit. The seed among thorns is when the Word grows but the fruit is choked off by daily troubles and temptations. The seed sown in the rocky ground results in the Word growing, but ultimately dies off when life gets hard. The first image of seed falling on the path, however, is the least desirable of all. In this case, the seed does not even grow. The earth is so hardened that it can't sink in. The path itself provides no nourishment whatsoever and, as the passage reveals above, the Devil steals the Word away before it can grow.

Sadly, this "path" is becoming more and more prevalent in our day and age. In fact, many struggle with actually listening. We may hear, but hearing is not the same as actually listening. We often have much to do, places to go and things to occupy our attention. As a result, it can be difficult for many people to actually receive the Word of God into their hearts where it can grow.

Reflect, today, on the many ways that the Devil can come and steal the Word of God away from you. It may be as simple as keeping you so occupied that you are too distracted to soak it in. Or it may be that you allow the constant noise of the world to contradict what you hear before it sinks in. Whatever the case may be, it is essential that you seek to take, at very least, the first step of listening and understanding. Once that first step is accomplished, you can then work to remove the "rocks" and "thorns" from the soil of your soul.

*Lord, help me to hear Your Word, to listen to it, to understand it and to believe it. Help my heart to ultimately become rich soil that You enter so as to bear an abundance of good fruit. Jesus, I trust in You. ~My Catholic Life*





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