

**SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE TWENTY-FIFTH WEEK IN ORDINARY TIME**  
Our commitment to daily prayer using the weekday Mass readings as our guide

**MONDAY 9/19**

Ezra 1:1-6  
Luke 8:16-18

**TUESDAY 9/20**

Ezra 6:7-8, 12, 14-20  
Luke 8:19-21

**WEDNESDAY 9/21**

Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-13  
Matthew 9:9-13

**THURSDAY 9/22**

Haggai 1:1-8  
Luke 9:7-9

**FRIDAY 9/23**

Haggai 1:15--2:9  
Luke 9:18-22

**SATURDAY 9/24**

Zechariah 2:5-9, 14-15  
Luke 9:43-45

**Feasts, Solemnities, and Memorials This Week:**

Monday, Januarius; Tuesday, Andrew Kim Taegon, Paul Chong Hasang, and companions;  
Wednesday, Matthew

**THE ANNUAL PARISH FINANCIAL REPORT**

We received two questions about the annual financial report that was in last week's bulletin. The first: What's the difference between "operating" and "non-operating" income and expenses? "Operating Income" simply means the regular income, for us basically the Sunday collection. "Operating Expense" is what it costs to run the parish: heat, snow removal, electric, priest's support, etc. "Non-operating" is the extraordinary sources of revenue: the Christmas letter, bequests, restricted gifts; and expense: replacing the heater, fixing the parking lot, fixing the garage roof, etc. The second question was, How have we covered the annual losses shown in the report? For the last several years this has been accomplished by borrowing from the funds to build the parish center. This cannot continue because the parish center funds are restricted and can only be used to build the parish center. So we must work to decrease our expenses and increase our expenses. The pastor is working very hard to address the one, and the people of the parish must work very hard to address the other. Copies of the financial report are available from Fr. Paul. Copies of the complete and detailed financial report are available for the asking.

**PRAYERS**

Our prayers are requested for Bonnie Zwart, Mark & Mary Anne Bewsher, Tina Quan, James Zvetina, Barbara Head, Mark Kirkner, Pat Glynn, Bobbie Engstrom, Ed Power, Diane Evans, Raquel Rodriguez, Dann Corona, John Gracey, Bob Tomko, Jr., Virginia Reyes, Elizabeth Cauzza, Kay Reilly, Johnnee Weddle, Mary Jo Ferreira, Julie Rogers, Josefina Flores, and Evie Moutner.

**DAILY MASS**

Weekday Mass is celebrated Monday through Saturday in St. Joseph's Rectory in Mammoth Lakes beginning at 7 AM. The door is open; just come in; don't ring the bell.  
Please stay after for coffee and fellowship.

**FIRST FRIDAY DEVOTIONS**

Mass is celebrated followed by Eucharistic adoration and benediction every First Friday of the month beginning at 7:00 PM at St. Joseph Church in Mammoth Lakes.



**THE MONO  
COUNTY CATHOLIC**

*Before the mountains were born, the earth  
and the world brought forth, from eternity  
to eternity you are God. Psalm 90:2*

**September 18, 2011**

**Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*When it was evening the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Summon the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and ending with the first.' When those who had started about five o'clock came, each received the usual daily wage. So when the first came, they thought that they would receive more, but each of them also got the usual wage.*

Matthew 20:8-10



**SAINT JOSEPH PARISH, MONO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

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**Rev. Paul Boudreau, Pastor**

**CONFESSIONS**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated at St. Joseph Church from 5:30 to 5:45 PM on Saturdays, 7:30 to 7:45 on Sunday mornings, y en español a las tardes del domingo de 5:00 a 5:15; and upon request before mass at Our Savior of the Mountains and Infant of Prague missions.

**Mammoth Lakes: St. Joseph Church –  
Mass: Sat 6:00 PM, Sun 8:00 AM  
La Misa en Español: Dom 5:30 PM**

**Lee Vining:**

**Our Savior of the Mountains Mission -  
Mass: Sun 10 AM**

**Bridgeport: Infant of Prague Mission -  
Mass: Sun 12 Noon**

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 55:6-9**

*Seek the LORD while he may be found, call him while he is near. Let the scoundrel forsake his way, and the wicked man his thoughts; Let him turn to the LORD for mercy; to our God, who is generous in forgiving.*

Under normal circumstances, the injunction to “seek the Lord” was followed by an invitation to go up to the temple or other holy place. Ancient Israel knew precisely where God was to be found! But in the time of exile, when God’s temple was destroyed and the nation languishing far from the ruins, the quest for God became less certain. Jeremiah was the first prophet to introduce the new rules in his letter to the exiles: “When you call me, when you go to pray to me, I will listen to you. When you look for me, you will find me. Yes, when you seek me with all your heart, you will find me with you, says the Lord.” (Jer. 29:12-14a) God was no longer to be sought in a particular place, but within the heart of those who put their trust in the Lord.

Isaiah capitalizes on this insight. “Seek the Lord,” not simply at the hour of prayer, but while the opportunity exists to find God. “Call to God,” not only in the sanctuary where humans seek to confine the Holy, but while God is near to us. When and where are no longer specific to ritual times and places, but whenever and wherever the need to pray is evident. This liberation of God from the usual rendezvous point has profound significance for the believer. If now is the time, and this is the place, then our relationship to the divine becomes as intimate and as gritty as every moment and circumstance of our lives. God is no longer present only when we are coifed and perfumed and ready, but in our sloppy, sinful,

desolate hours when thoughts of God are far away. So sit up straight and take note: we are now and always in the presence of God.

**SECOND READING:  
Philippians 1:20c-24, 27a**

*Christ will be magnified in my body whether by life or by death. For to me life is Christ, and death is gain. If I go on living in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. And I do not know which I shall choose. I am caught between the two.*

Paul is not being gloomy in this talk of life and death being relatively useful to the Christian. This is personal. Paul’s in jail and whether he is to live or die is uncertain. Along with the usual discomforts of prison, he faces also the knowledge that his usual detractors within the Christian community are taking advantage of his absence to undermine him and to advance their own position (vs. 15-17). We can imagine it is not only piety that motivates him to prefer death and to be with Christ in light of all this!

But as usual, Paul’s pastoral heart catches up with him. What is more necessary for the benefit of the church is Paul’s continued labor in the field he has planted with the gospel. If “life is Christ, and death is gain,” then either side of death is advantageous, and he is content. His whole person (i.e. his body) will glorify Christ whether he presents himself before the assembly once more or is carried out to be buried. Paul speaks philosophically about things that would bring chills to most of us. And he says he cannot choose— that is, prefer— either outcome.

As it turns out, he doesn’t have to. Paul will go to a martyr’s death, but only after a long mission among the Gentiles. And even those of us who will not come near martyrdom do not have to choose between a glorious life of

personal testimony and the joyful gain of a Christian death. We are urged to embrace both, so that we can know the freedom of what Paul knew: that life is Christ, and death is gain.

**GOSPEL: Matthew 20:1-16a**

*My friend, I am not cheating you. Did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what is yours and go. What if I wish to give this last one the same as you? Or am I not free to do as I wish with my own money? Are you envious because I am generous?*

What’s really eating the fellows who worked all day in the parable of the vineyard? It isn’t the money they were paid for their labor. After all, everyone was in agreement on the wage at the start of the day. And it isn’t simply the “injustice” they think they experience when those who worked for one hour are paid at the same rate as they are. What really gets these guys is their own rising expectations of what they will be paid. The last to come are paid first, remember— a typical gospel ploy. Since the latecomers get a day’s wage for their short shift, the full-time workers begin to anticipate a raise. Though they originally agreed upon the amount, they now want and expect more than that, much more! The wage that once satisfied them perfectly has come to seem like a gross insult. It is their shift in perception, and not the money itself, that chaffs at them.

Concupiscence, the desire for more, is the original sin. It’s at the bottom of most other sins: greed, envy, lust, gluttony, you name it. Our rising expectations of our own worth, or of what the world owes us, are a continual temptation that trips us up if we are not careful to diffuse it. How often are we angered or injured over praise that does not come, not because it was promised, but

because we anticipated it? How often do we grow restless, not because we have lost anything that once contented us, but because we have not gained the new thing (or person) that catches our eye? Personal stewardship includes keeping our own ambitions under lock and key, which may sound foreign in a consumer culture. The Christian mantra remains the same: the last will be first, and the first, last.

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One of the keys, perhaps the most important key to reading and understanding the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the “paradox”. A paradox is a seemingly contradictory statement that is nonetheless true. For instance, in today’s gospel, Jesus winds up the story with the paradoxical punch line, “Thus, the last will be first, and the first will be last.” That’s a paradox. The core of the teachings of Jesus is the “parable”, a short phrase or story that illustrates the paradox. The fundamental paradox is the “kingdom of God” (or “heaven”) which co-exists with the world. Jesus starts off today’s parable with, “The kingdom of heaven is like . . .” and then he goes on to tell the story. The stories of the gospels describe how the kingdom of God relates to the world, and vice versa. In the kingdom, the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the dead live, and the virgin conceives. In the Virgin Mary’s *Magnificat*, “the mighty are cast down from their thrones and the lowly are lifted up; the hungry are filled with good things and the rich are sent away empty.” The kingdom is coming and the world is passing away. In today’s first reading it says of God, “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways”. In the second reading Saint Paul writes, “life is Christ, and death is gain”. Okay, so it’s mystical. But if we can accept that the bread is Body, and the wine is Blood, then we can not only believe in the paradox of God’s kingdom, but also choose to live in it. For the Kingdom of God is at hand.