

## FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

JULY 8, 2018

### MASS READINGS

MONDAY: HOS 2:16,17C-18,21-22, PS 145, MT 9:18-26

TUESDAY: HOS 8:4-7,11-13, PS 115, MT 9:32—38

WEDNESDAY: HOS 10:1-3,7-8, 12, PS 105, MT 10:1-7

THURSDAY: HOS 11:1-4,8E-9, PS 80, MT 10:7-15

FRIDAY: HOS 14:2-10, PS 51, MT 10:16-23

SATURDAY: IS 6:1-8, PS 93, MT 10:24-33

**NEXT SUNDAY: FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY**

**TIME – RDGS: AM 7:12-15, PS 85, 3PH 1:3-14 or 1: 3-10,**

**MK 6:7-13**

### MASS INTENTIONS

MONDAY: ELDA MILLER

TUESDAY: LAURA HARDEN

WEDNESDAY: FR. COLUMBA KELLY, OSB

THURSDAY: ALFRED PANKE

FRIDAY: STANLEY PICKART

VIGIL: ELDA MILLER

7:30: ALFRED PANKE

10:00: FOR THE PARISH

NOON: ANN HUBERTZ

### MEMORIAL FLOWERS

All members of St. Ann's parish, families-living & deceased: Shirley Wagner. Cecil Albrechts. Gary McDaniel. Dorothy Nelson. Marvin Anthrop. Jennifer Holtz. Robert Bennett. Phyllis Memmer. (Cliff Gause & Eileen Hilt). (Daniel Wooly, Greg Yantis, Hildegard Owen & Forest Wann). (Karen Fox, Mike & Rosemary Cavanaugh).

*Where did this man get all this?  
What kind of wisdom has been given him?  
What mighty deeds are wrought by his hands!*

We know that the above in today's gospel refers to Jesus but I wonder sometimes if, rather than associate such wonderful musings about the Lord, we find ourselves referring to ourselves in such a vein. Oh, we might not admit it but our actions certainly betray that, on more than one occasion, we are likely to be rather impressed with our own wit and wisdom and spend a great deal of time wondering why no one else is. In this case the folks in the gospel sought to find an answer to their questions about Jesus by trying to minimize him in their midst. Is he not someone we know via roots, family, label etc. Thus they sought to dismiss him as ordinary and not worth their time. Surely they would be more impressed with someone who suddenly appeared in their midst spouting something new and fanciful to which they might latch on for a day or two until something more interesting comes along. I am reminded about what Jesus said about his generation, they sit in the market places and expect one to dance or mourn according to the "tune of the day". In this case we too run the risk of becoming infatuated to new "fangled" things (I like the commercial where the word "fangled" provokes smirks from the little ones). We feel we already know Jesus, after all we have heard of him for low these many years now, at least our very presence in the church building as afforded us with some familiarity by virtue of having the scriptures read at us. And yet how easy it is to dismiss someone based on even the slightest knowledge and that knowledge itself may be wrong. In the case of Jesus we've heard the stories, listened (a pretended to) the parables etc. Now that we know all of this we can write it off as done and finished and move on to something considerably more exciting and worthwhile. Knowledge is a funny thing. What we think we know has a way of reminding us just exactly what we don't know, that's why so few really want to know anything other than what is conformable with their set preconceptions. It is too frightening to admit we know as little as we do since we have equated knowledge with power. In our life with Jesus we truly know what he wishes us to know and that we arrive at not so much by other people, although blessed are the feet which bring the good news, but truly from our lives of prayer, fasting and works of charity do we being to know the Lord and subsequently ourselves in such a way as to being to find our knowledge of knowledge and power reversing to the point where all fear is dispelled and we don't need to box people in with labels and titles and we don't need to control what we perceive as reality by way of false and fanciful categories. We after all, have the Word within us and that is all we need to know. If we spent more time marveling on the words and works of the Lord and delighting in the surprises he brings instead of trying to make a display out of our meager offerings we might begin to see that real knowledge and real power are rooted in love.

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Sherry Weddell's book **"Forming Intentional Disciples"** (OSV, \$16.95) is, I think, one of the most important Catholic books of this decade.

In it, she addresses the core issue facing the Church in our time: How to foster a culture in which all Catholics consciously see themselves as disciples of Jesus Christ living according to his will and as apostles sent into the world to proclaim him to others.

Weddell also outlines five stages of spiritual growth that typify the experience of conversion.

Conversion is, in the Church's thinking, not simply for "converts" — i.e., non-Catholics joining the Catholic communion — but for everybody. In the Church's thinking, not just Scott Hahn, G.K. Chesterton or Saul of Tarsus experienced conversion.

"Cradle Catholics" like Ignatius of Loyola, Francis of Assisi, Blaise Pascal and Teresa of Avila also had profound conversion experiences that transformed them. So must we.

### Step 1: Initial trust

Where a person is able to have a positive association with Jesus Christ, the Church, a Christian believer or something identifiably Christian. Trust is not the same as active personal faith. Without some kind of bridge of trust in place, people will not move closer to God.

An example of initial trust is shown in the experience of a young garage-band pagan at the University of Washington in the late 1970s. He had almost no grasp of even the most basic aspects of the Gospel and had long ago learned the crucial truth of social life in the already heavily anti-Christian culture of Seattle: Christians are to be treated as social lepers. His perception of them was of fundamentalists obsessed with nutty "end times" theories, creationism and mysterious code words. His exposure to the Gospel consisted of a brief stab at reading Genesis and Revelation, coupled with some anti-Catholic Chick tracts, plus a few pious types he remembered from high school who might as well have spoken Greek for all the sense their lingo made to him. He knew essentially nothing about Christ and did not trust Christians.

I know this guy's story because he is married to my wife. And when I was 20 years old, I went home for Thanksgiving break only to return to my dorm with a case of Martian Stomach Flu so virulent that I found the prospect of a quick death rather appealing for a day or two. In the midst of this, I received a phone call from a friend living on "the Christian floor" of my dorm. I mumbled something about my illness and hung up. About a half an hour later, there was a knock at my door and I heaved myself up from my bed of suffering, my face smeared with drool, and answered it. It was a young woman named Sandy MacKinnon, who I did not know from Eve, but who lived on the Christian floor. She said, "I heard you were sick. I brought you this" and brandished a bottle of Pepto-Bismol.

It's been 35 years, but I have never forgotten that. With that one act of kindness to a stranger, done simply out of generosity, she won my trust. And eventually, by the integrity of their lives as Christians, the rest of the fellowship of Christians on her dorm floor did likewise. Lives lived in joy, generosity and integrity — not for show, but for the glory of Christ — can and do break down walls of distrust and give off a sweet aroma of beauty that people follow.

### Step 2: Spiritual curiosity

When a person is intrigued by or desiring to know more about Jesus or some aspect of the Christian faith. This can range from mere awareness of a new possibility to something quite intense and proactive. Nevertheless, a person at the threshold of curiosity is not yet open to personal change. Curiosity is still essentially passive, but it's more than mere trust.

The spiritually curious, often shyly and in fits and starts, find themselves drawn toward wanting to know more about Jesus, the Church, the Bible and the whole "Catholic thing." This can be a protracted and complicated affair, as the Catholic Faith encompasses the whole universe, and the human person is massively complex and approaches the Faith from all over the map.

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One thing to bear in mind is that such curiosity is not the same as spiritual seeking (that's two steps down the road). It is, as yet, a passive approach. A person who is spiritually curious is interested in learning more.

He or she will not dismiss "God talk" but will not initiate such conversations. They will be quietly "taking it in." They are intrigued and may find themselves surfing the Web furtively to explore something or other about Jesus or the Faith, or wondering about some theological question prompted by anything from a half-remembered Bible verse to a speculation prompted by a science-fiction story they saw on TV.

Interestingly, Jesus' pedagogy with the spiritually curious is often the deeply Jewish method of answering questions with questions or with answers designed to provoke more questions. "Why do you call me good?" (Mk 10:18). "Who do you say that I am?" (Mt 16:15). "What do you want me to do for you?" (Mk 10:51). "Was John's baptism of heavenly or of human origin?" (Lk 20:4). "Whose image is this and whose inscription" is on this coin (Mt 22:20)? All these questions and many more were asked by Jesus in order to force the curious more deeply into their curiosity. This is important for us, as it can be a temptation to accidentally put out the small fire of newly kindled curiosity with a gallon of hasty, pre-processed answers. Sometimes it is better to let the curious work through things themselves for a while and make the answers their own.

In our own lives, it is good to cultivate an attitude of curiosity as well so that we can pass it on to others. Some have foolishly said, "What the mind doesn't understand, it worships or fears." The truth is not that simple. Typically, what the mind doesn't understand it either ignores or wonders about. Those who cultivate spiritual curiosity in themselves and others are on a trajectory, not only to learn more about God, but about everything, because God is the author of everything. But they are not yet worshipping, for they are not yet acting as intentional disciples.

If they make the choice to follow their curiosity, then exploration, not fear and worship, is typically what happens next. Moses at the Burning Bush was not afraid or worshipful, but curious. Worship (and fear) only began when he learned who was there, not when he didn't know who was there. In short, wonder is the common root of all art, philosophy, science — and religious experience.

But it is not the flower.

### Step 3: Spiritual openness

The critical point when a person acknowledges to him or herself and to God that he or she is open to the possibility of personal and spiritual change. This is one of the most difficult transitions for a postmodern nonbeliever as it can feel dangerous, crazy and out of control. Openness is not a commitment to change. People who are open are simply admitting they are open to the possibility of change.

Here we are concerned with the most important form of curiosity: a desire to know more of God. And that desire will, if all goes well, lead to the crisis of spiritual openness.

I call it a crisis because spiritual openness is the stage in the spiritual journey that is most difficult for commitment-averse postmoderns to navigate because it represents the point in the journey where serious choices need to be made. It is the moment when it dawns on us that we are going to have to be active somehow, not merely passive — that God might not merely be an abstract "what" or a "why" we are studying with growing philosophical interest, but a "who" that is calling to us with incalculable demands and desperately beautiful promises. We realize, however dimly, that Jesus Christ and the Church that speaks to us of him may indeed require something of us.

That can be scary in a civilization that is consumer driven, that believes in keeping all its options perpetually open, that fears commitment to all relationships. Because of this jitteriness (and because we ourselves may share it even if we are cradle Catholics), some rules of thumb might be helpful both in helping others and in passing this threshold ourselves.

As we struggle to open ourselves to God's will in Christ, we can practice nonjudgmental truthfulness, speaking plainly of the places in our own lives where we find the Gospel challenging.

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This was, after all, the method of the apostles, who give us a full accounting of their failures of nerve, their inability to understand and even their betrayals of Christ. We do this not with a view to finding excuses for ignoring the Gospel, nor with a view to cudgeling others who are struggling, but with a view to opening ourselves to the leading of Jesus and supporting one another in our struggles.

As mentors to people who are struggling with openness, we can help them connect the dots between their experience and the revelation of the Gospel. Because grace builds on nature, and it is Christ who chooses us first and not we him, there is always a way to arrive at the realization that God is not some remote, far-off object, but has already been at work in us and through us. He has already used us in some way for the good of others, or given us gifts, or helped us down the path we might only now realize we are on. Often, we can help others by using their own words, and connecting them with the Gospel will help them realize God is not a threat to our freedom, but the ground of it, and help them get past the fear of openness.

At this stage, it is often beneficial to frankly and openly encourage those struggling with openness to ask God for a sign to direct them, to encourage them to pray and profess to God their openness to pursuing him, and to encourage them to enter into a life of regular prayer both alone and together with others.

This might be a good time to invite them to Mass or to begin reading the Gospels together. Also, the inquiry phase of RCIA can be helpful here.

### Step 4: Spiritual seeking

The threshold in which a person moves from being essentially passive to being one who actively seeks to know the God who is calling him or her. Seekers are asking, “Are you the one to whom I will give myself?” At this stage, the seeker is engaged in an urgent spiritual quest, seeking to know whether he or she can commit to Christ and his Church.

Once past this crisis of openness, people often find they are no longer able to simply wait for the tide of life to wash events to them. They become active spiritual seekers.

Weddell describes spiritual seekers as “dating with a purpose.” They are no longer merely passive participants in a relationship. And that relationship is not primarily with religion or theology or music or the Bible or a saint or Catholic aesthetics or liturgy or any other mere creature (though those things may well play a vital role and be inextricably bound up with the relationship). Rather, the core relationship is now with God revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. In short, the seeker is seeking Jesus, not a creature or an abstraction.

If you are mentoring somebody who is a seeker, this is the perfect time for them to enter the catechumenate. If you are yourself a seeker who is undergoing a deeper conversion as a Catholic, this is a good time to undertake a closer study of the Faith, specifically with the goal of using the gifts and graces of the Church (especially the sacraments) in order to seek the guidance and the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Ask the Spirit to help you cultivate your gifts and offer them (and yourself) to Christ with greater and greater freedom. At the core of this stage of conversion is the experience of a soul that, like the psalmist “followeth hard after thee” (Ps 63:8) and can no longer be content with passivity or neutrality.

Intensified prayer, a fruitful pursuit of reading the classics of Christian spirituality and a sense of growing hunger for the sacraments can characterize this stage of pre-discipleship, as well as a desire to explore the ways in which the Faith is lived out in the works of mercy, different liturgical expressions and ways in which the virtues can be pursued.

### Step 5: Intentional discipleship

This is the decision to “drop one’s nets,” to make a conscious commitment to follow Jesus in the midst of his Church as an obedient disciple and to re-order one’s life accordingly.

The mention of “pre-discipleship” brings us to our last challenge: namely, the need to finally pass from exploration of Jesus and his Church to full and complete commitment. This is what Weddell calls the “dropping the net” moment. The image comes from the story of St. Peter dropping his nets, leaving behind his former life and livelihood, his social connections, his home and even his family and choosing to follow Jesus Christ wherever he went, come what may (cf. Lk 5:4-10). It is the single most important decision a person can possibly make (which is why Jesus calls us to count the cost). But it is the goal of the Christian life — all Christian lives, not just converts.

It can be as dramatic as St. Paul getting knocked off his horse or as unseen as a quiet resolve arrived at during a sleepy Sunday morning Mass. But however we arrive at it, that resolve to follow Jesus consciously and intentionally with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength is what the whole of the Christian call to discipleship is all about. Once made, that decision will henceforth be the controlling decision that will drive and coordinate everything — absolutely everything — in the life of the disciple of Jesus Christ and, as Paul says, “destroy arguments and every pretension raising itself against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive in obedience to Christ” (2 Cor 10:5). Here begins the New Life. (Taken from OSV.com)

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**MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THE ANNUAL  
CELEBRATION OF THE FEAST OF STs JOACHIM  
& ANN**

**JULY 21-29**

**EVENTS INCLUDE: KICKOFF WITH PARISH  
BREAKFAST SUNDAY, JULY 22<sup>RD</sup> 8:30-11:30**

**MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY & FRIDAY:  
EVENING DEVOTIONS BEGINNING AT 5: 00  
P.M.**

*5:00 EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT  
(CONFESSION AVAILABLE UNTIL 5:30)*

*5:30 EVENSONG WITH BENEDICTION OF THE BLESSED  
SACRAMENT CONCLUDING WITH THE VENERATION OF  
THE RELIC OF ST. ANN*

**THURSDAY, JULY 26 AT 6:00 P.M. ANNUAL NOVENA  
ORGAN CONCERT FEATURING DAVID JARO-  
NOWSKI**

**SATURDAY, JULY 28-PARISH PICNIC AFTER THE 4:30  
MASS.**

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## Announcements and Upcoming Events

### ATTENTION AMAZON SHOPPERS YOU WILL NOW BE ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE TO MATHEW 25 SOUP KITCHEN WHILE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE CONVENIENCE OF SHOPPING AMAZON....

HERE'S WHAT TO DO: AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to shop & support St. Matthew 25 Care & Share Soup Kitchen every time you shop, at no cost to you.

How do I shop at AmazonSmile?



To shop at AmazonSmiles simply go to smile.amazon.com from the web browser on your computer or mobile device. You may also want to add a bookmark to smile.amazon.com to make it even easier to return and start your shopping at AmazonSmile.

Can I use my existing Amazon.com account on AmazonSmile?

Yes, you use the same account on Amazon.com and AmazonSmile. Your shopping cart, Wish List, wedding or baby registry, and other account settings are also the same.

How do I select a charitable organization to support when shopping on AmazonSmile?

On your first visit to AmazonSmiles.com, you need to select a charitable organization to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. We will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.com will result in a donation. Our charitable organization is: St. Matthew 25 Care & Share Soup Kitchen.

The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases quarterly.

We welcome Father Jackson Colon to our Parish this weekend (July 7-8) as part of our mission appeal weekend. He is from Haiti and a representative of the Diocese of Hinche, Haiti, his home diocese. He will preach at the Masses for the annual Co-op Missionary Appeal sharing his faith and the ministry of the church of the diocese of Hinche and soliciting financial support for his home diocese and its seminary system which was destroyed by the earthquake in 2010. We pray that you will reach out with your usual generosity to the people of Haiti in a spirit of support, love and prayer. A second collection will be taken up for this mission

I would like to that each and everyone of you who participated financially in the June Seminarian Appeal. Along with the collection and the breakfast we were able to bring in \$6242.00. Our goal was \$6833.83. Like Fruitful Harvest the parish will make up the remaining amount. Again thanks and lets continue to keep our seminarians in our prayers. *frdom*



The First Reading from the prophet Ezekiel tells of how Ezekiel was called by God. The Lord speaks to him and says, "Hard of face and obstinate of heart are they to whom I am sending you." God knew He was not giving Ezekiel an easy task, but that is part of what being called by the Lord sometimes involves.

Being called is something to which we often make reference, as each of us is called in Baptism. St. Paul once wrote that we are "called to belong to Jesus Christ." The United States Bishops issued a document a few years ago titled Disciples Called to Witness. That is what we are all to do as baptized Catholics.

In that treatise the Bishops say, "To create a culture of witness, we must live explicit lives of discipleship. Being a disciple is a challenge. Fortunately, one does not become a disciple of Christ on his or her own initiative. The work of the Holy Spirit within the Christian community forms the person as a disciple of Christ."

God does not forsake us when we are called, just as He did not abandon Ezekiel. He is with us through the Holy Spirit to strengthen us and assist us. We must allow the Lord to help us. At the same time, we must strive to be disciples of the Lord. We are called to spread the light of the Gospel in everything we do.

### SUNDAY OFFERING:

\$9970

**"FIND OUT HOW MUCH GOD HAS GIVEN YOU, AND FROM IT TAKE WHAT YOU NEED; THE REMAINDER IS NEEDED BY OTHERS"**

**ST. AUGUSTINE**