

February 19, 2017

"Lord, I Have Chosen to Love Everyone"

Last week, I had invited all of you to meditate on the beautiful verse 173 of Psalm 119: "Lord, I have chosen to do Your will; may Your hand be always there to strengthen me." One of you commented to me that it is hard to know what is God's will.

Yes, to discern God's will is indeed challenging. St. Ignatius of Loyola has written extensively about ways of **discerning** God's will before making important choices in our lives, and has recommended a specific approach through the Spiritual Exercises, typically done through a 30-day silent retreat. I have never been able to find the time for such a 30-day retreat, but was able to do the same exercises over a period of 30 consecutive weeks (meeting a spiritual director once a week, as opposed to every day for 30 consecutive days). Last week, as every year, I was able to attend a six-day silent retreat for diocesan priests, where we have a Retreat Master helping our daily meditations and prayers through a series of daily talks. The silent retreat helped me to meditate on God's will and ask Him: "Lord, can you help me to discover what you want me to do for you?"

Our Retreat Master was very helpful in making us think about our parish ministry as priests. At the young age of 84, and having been an ordained priest for over 57 years, he had an amazing experience of assignments as a 20-year missionary to Africa, then pastor of several parishes in Florida, and currently spiritual advisor at one large seminary in southern Florida. One of the key messages for me was that the spirituality of a parish priest is lived through his personal relationship with the people of God at the parish level, and that a parish priest should always strive to **love everyone** without exception. The commandment of **love everyone** applies not only to priests, but to all members of the Church.

St. Therese of Lisieux, Little Flower, had been meditating on God's will from the day she entered the Carmelite Convent as a teenager: "God, help me to find out what my mission in life is"... and one day, she heard loud and clear God telling her: "Your mission on earth is **to love!**" It is the same for all of us since our baptism; we are called to holiness and to obey God's commandments. The readings of this weekend point us in that direction. In the first reading, the Lord tells all of us through Moses: "Be holy, for I, the Lord, your God, am holy. You shall not bear hatred for your brother or sister in your heart...you shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Leviticus 19: 1-2,17-18). In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5: 38-48), Jesus continues to teach all of us, his disciples, how to live a truly Christian life, he emphasizes that love does not simply apply to people who love us, but that it applies to everyone, including our enemies: "**Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you...be perfect**, just as your Heavenly Father is perfect."

Heavenly Father, help me to discern what you want me to do for you **today!** Help me to strive for holiness! Help me to forgive those who have hurt me! Help me to get rid of the grudges that are filling my heart! Help me to recognize

Mass Intention

- Friday, Feb. 17, 9:00 AM: Evelyn Losano +
- Saturday, Feb. 18, 9:00 AM: Segundina Padinit +
- Saturday, Feb. 18, 5:00 PM: Dorothy Baker +
- Sunday, Feb. 19, 8:30 AM: Mary Anne Murry +
- Sunday, Feb. 19, 10:00 AM: Elijah Williams +
- Sunday, Feb. 19, 11:30 AM: OLHOC Parishioners
- Tuesday, Feb. 21, 9:00 AM: Karotko Family (Deceased) +
- Wednesday, Feb. 22, 9:00 AM: Theresa Catalani +
- Friday, Feb. 24, 9:00 AM: John Proctor, Jr. & Regina Proctor +

Prayer Requests

We are asked to pray for: Theresa Beinert, Mike Connolly, Mae Hawkins, Jessica Curry Miller, LaShay Barnes, Robin Dwars, Julieta Bool, James Knapp, Wilbur Etbauer, Fr. Thomas Crowley, Zach White, Lisa Rullo, Susan Walker, Doris Conover, Jordan Hamacek, Elijah Larson, Sunni Park, Mireille Obas, Joan Etbauer, Joseph Cheseldine, Sr., Consuela Velasquez, John Lohman, Wilhelmina Franck, Robbie Atchinson, Tabitha Barton, Isabel Smith, Michael Sofield Jr., Elinore Fortney, Patricia Moffat, Errol Randall, Dorothea Johnson, Vanessa Barrett, Jean Erick Joassaint, Graham Baldwin, Jane Watson, Caroline Buoy, Ollie Johnson, Kathy Baumgaertner, Baby Kaden, Dennis Archible Jr. Emiliano Hilario, Phillip Green, Doris Chesley, Patricia & James Robey, Dick White, Ada Johnson, James Thompson, Sean Guido, Marcus Williams, and all our military and civilians serving in harm's way.

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Mass Readings for February 26, 2017

Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading- Isaiah 49: vs. 14-15

Second Reading- 1 Corinthians 4: vs. 1-5

Gospel-Matthew 6: vs. 24-34

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Save The Date

Our OLHOC Youth will be sponsoring and serving at a **Shrove Tuesday/Fat Tuesday Pancake Dinner on Tuesday, Feb. 28, 2017, from 5:30-7:30 pm.** Included are delicious pancakes, sausage, bacon, fruit and beverages. Tickets are **\$5 each (under 2 eat free)** and will be on sale after all Masses and in the office during the week. All proceeds will benefit the Youth Pilgrimage Fund.

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(cont.) my weaknesses! **Help me to choose to love everyone!**

*One in Christ,
Fr. Alain*

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

CCD Class Schedule

Our Lady Help of Christians 2016-2017 CCD Registration is open online: www.olhoc.org.

Feb. 19/20- No CCD (Presidents' Day)

Feb. 26/27- CCD

Mar. 4- Spirit Day- Conf. Yr. 2

Mar. 5/6- CCD

Contact **Therese Thiedeman** at 301-645-7112 or dre@olhoc.org

Parish Youth Night !

Life Teen: high school youth ministry (Sun., 5-6:30 pm, Mar .5, 12, 26; Apr. 2, 9, 30; May 7)

Edge: middle school youth ministry (meets monthly)

FIAT: elementary school Faith in Action Team (meets monthly)

Attention Families!!

The next **All-Youth Night** (FIAT, Edge and Life Teen) will be **February 26** and will begin with **4:00 PM Mass** followed by **pizza, fellowship** and **FIAT, Edge, and Life Teen meetings**. **Bring your friends ! See the website at: olhoc.org/ym.**

Steubenville Youth Conference

Steubenville is a weekend (Fri-Sat) Catholic Youth Conference for students currently in 8th-12th grade, that is similar to a retreat experience. This amazing weekend (June 23-25, 2017) features a series of talks from popular motivational speakers from across the country, Adoration, confession, Mass and more. For more details and to register visit www.olhoc.org/ym and click on Life Teen. Don't delay, limited spots available!

Upcoming Child Protection Classes

Go to VIRTUS.org to register. Call Nieda or Therese with questions at 301-645-7112.

OLHOC Reminders

- Scripture Prayer Gathering- Every Tuesday, following 9:00 AM Mass.
- Adoration (6 pm) and Mass (7 pm)- Every Wednesday evening.
- Parish Family Movie Night- 2nd Friday of each month.
- Adoration (8 am), Rosary (8:30 am), Mass (9 am), Adoration (9:45 am) - Mon.-Sat.
- "Unlocking the Mystery of the Bible"- Every Sunday, 9:30 am and 11:15 am.
- Latin Mass- every First Friday, 8 pm.
- French Mass- every second Sunday, 1 pm.

OUR LADY'S LITTLE CHRISTIANS

<http://www.olhoc.org/preschool.html>

- Fall registration begins next Friday, **Feb. 17, 2017**, for all new students.
- Please call 301-645-7112 or email preschool@olhoc.org for information.

Community Outreach

All are welcome! The next **Shepherds' Table Dinner** will be held on **Thursday, March 17, 2017** at Good Shepherd Church. Due to Ash Wednesday, the **March meeting** will be held on **Thursday, March 2** at 7 pm.

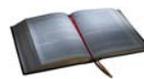
Volunteers go to: www.olhoc.org and click on the Community Outreach link. or sign-up at: www.SignUpGenius.com/go/60B044FABAD2DAA8-olhc

Sharing Sunday

All non-perishable donations may be placed in the marked box in the Social Hall. The items are donated to the local food pantry for those in need and given out to people who come to the office looking for food.

Supporting Families with Special Needs

Join us for a special day of reflection led by the **Archdiocese of Washington Department of Special Needs Ministries** on **March 11, 2017 from 9 a.m. 1 p.m. here at OLHOC**. Let us gather together to pray, reflect, and continue to learn about supporting our families with special needs in faith formation and beyond. All are welcome to attend. Catechists and parents of children with special needs are especially encouraged to attend. Childcare and lunch will be provided. **Registration is required: 301-459-7464.**



All Are Welcome

You are invited to **join us** for a Sunday morning Bible Study at **both 9:30 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.** in the Social Hall, as we "**Unlock the Mystery of the Bible**".

Experience the Holy Land Near Home

Experience Gethsemane, Calvary, Christ's burial and the Resurrection at the **Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land**. All these and outdoor Stations of the Cross. Free tours daily. For information, call 202-526-6800 or go to: myfranciscan.org. Student and parish groups welcome.