

St. Joseph Catholic Church
Nome, AK 99762
Pastor: Rev. Tom Kuffel
Email: tkuffel@cbna.org
Parish: 907-443-5527; Cell: 907-434-6117
32nd Sunday Year C 11.6.2016

	St. Joseph	St Francis	St. Anne
Sunday	\$1104.00	\$	\$0.00

**“It is my choice to die
at the hands of men
with the hope God gives
of being raised up by him;
but for you,
there will be no resurrection to life.”**



Martyrdom?

Many people fear suffering and do anything to free themselves from it. We look for ways to escape our pain: physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual.

Yet, “there is nothing intrinsically virtuous about being sick or in pain – it is what we choose to do with our pain that counts. Being honest when we are suffering is vital; this helps us avoid isolating ourselves. We can acknowledge the fact that what we are going through is painful and difficult, but we can also be courageous and turn to Christ. We can choose to not squander this opportunity but instead embrace it” (Cavins, Human Suffering p. 104).

Embracing pain is something our culture denies. We medicate, deny, and bury our pain so that we live the façade of satisfaction and gratification. So many people want to “have fun!” Fun is our focus and if we do not have fun, obviously our efforts were a failure.

The story of the Martyrdom of the Maccabees is anything but fun. The two books are the heroic tragedy of a family that will not submit to the worship of false gods. Instead they willingly, boldly, and bravely die brutal deaths for their God: *A sign of contradiction!*

Suffering for a purpose is contrary to contemporary culture. Instead, we avoid any and all suffering. But if we embrace our sufferings, if we walk through the fire of our suffering, we find out how purifying they are, how healing suffering can be.

Suffering, instead of being avoided and denied, grows and matures us strengthening our commitments and will to endure for we have embraced that which transcends us. We do not suffer for any cause, however significant it may be. We suffer for that which is beautiful, true, good, whole, just, and holy.

Today, many martyrs live dying daily for their faith. The priest martyred in Rouen France a few weeks ago. The systematic destruction of Catholicism and martyrdom of Catholics in the Middle East by Isis and the persecution of Christians in the Holy Land are just a few examples. Priests in America are viciously attacked, even by their own parishioners, because they teach and preach the sanctity of human life, the beauty of biblical marriage, and the sadness of sinful choices.

Living today is living in the time of the Maccabees. *Catholics are to true disciples that is a sign of contradiction.* St. John Paul taught so many years ago:

Man's dignity demands that he act according to a knowing and free choice. Such a choice is personally motivated and prompted from within. It does not result from blind internal impulse nor from mere external pressure. Man achieves such dignity when, emancipating himself from all captivity to passion,

he pursues his goal in a spontaneous choice of what is good, and procures for himself, through effective and skillful action, apt means to that end” (GS, 17).

A human person must follow his conscience and do what he or she believes to be good, true, beautiful, just, and holy. However, each person is given a mind and each person has a personal duty to explore, develop, and inform that mind: *to be a disciple, an apprentice.*

The mind is a terrible thing to waste and so many today waste their intellectual power and conscience on seeking “fun” rather seeking God and his revelation.

The Books of Maccabees inspire us to look at the hard questions and ask ourselves: What values do I live by. Do I live by the values of the culture which seek amusement and pleasure at any cost including the cost of disowning or discarding the dignity of a human person as did the Emperor?

Or do we live by the culture created by Christ and his Church which values the dignity of each person and demands that each person be given the freedom to learn and live his faith without coercion and compulsion.

The story of the Maccabean Martyrdom asks us today: What am I willing to die for? Will you die with Christ and his truth? Or will you sacrifice your faith for “fun”?

Announcements

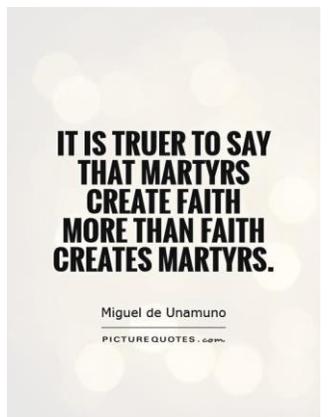
- Nov 2 6:00 PM Parish Council Meeting
- Nov 6: Religious Ed 11:30 – 2:30 PM.
- Nov 6 Youth Group 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
- Nov 7 – 12 Fr. Tom in Anchorage for installation.
- Nov 10 2:00 PM Meeting with Croft Architect in Anchorage to discuss plans for church building.
- Nov 12 – 16 Fr. Tom In Kotz
- Nov 14 Kotz Parish Council
- Nov 15 KIC Meeting Kotz.

1 Maccabees 1 : 54-59
57 and anyone who was caught with a copy of the sacred books or who obeyed the Law was put to death by order of the king.
58 Month after month these wicked people used their power against the Israelites caught in the towns.
59 On the twenty-fifth of the month, these same evil people offered sacrifices on the pagan altar erected on top of the altar in the Temple.

How does this exclusion of the Old Testament differ from the banning of the Bible from Public School?



If you don't live for something; you will fall for anything. What do you live for?



The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.
Tertullian

Weekly Schedule:

Date	MassTime	Place	Feast Day	Lector/Minister	Intention	Activity
Mon Nov 7	8:00 AM	Nome			Rezac Family	
Tue Nov 8		Anc			Rezac Family	
Wed Nov 9		Anc	St. John		Rezac Family	Installation
Thu Nov 10		Anc	St. Leo		Rezac Family	Bible Study
Fri Nov 11		Anc	St. Martin		Rezac Family	
Sat Nov 12		Anc	32 Sunday		Rezac Family	
Sun Nov 13	11:00 AM	Kotz	32 Sunday		St. Francis	



**That the dead will rise
even Moses made known in the passage about the bush,
when he called out 'Lord,'
the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob;
He is not God of the dead,
but of the living,
for to him all are alive."**

Earthly Eternity or Heavenly Eternity?

The Sadducees' chief concern was about money, power, and control, not about religion, worship and truth. Politics and profit were their big concern. Life after death didn't matter much because they didn't believe in sin.

Lots of Sadducees are around today. They are the power brokers in our culture, the pushers of pills, pot and pleasure. They set the standards of what's "cool" and what's not. They are in magazines and talk shows. They are the athletes, artists, and actors. They are the elite.

They set the pace, the standard of what is "in" and what's not. What is sin and what is not! They treat us as pawns in the game of life. They have other motives, too – their profit, to be popular, and powerful. They use anger, blame, and condemnation because they fear their irresponsibility to live by higher, heavenly standards. So they attack others because they fear their vulnerability to be healed, freed from their lies.

Jesus threatens human power. He does not leave anyone alone. He threatens trendy definitions of morality. His definition of sin is real for He does not allow one to wallow in satanic lies. He confronts our desires and purges us of vice – defined by Him – not humans seduced by Satan.

Whipping of moneychangers and throwing around their tables, Jesus is a dangerous fanatic who needs to be stopped. The Sadducees of our time consider people of faith to be "fanatics" too. They make Christians look like fools, marginalizing our truth and moral goodness. They plot to kill for Christians do not believe their earthly message. The media assassinates the faithful as villains with verbal attacks and anger because we threaten their lies with the Truth. Sadly, Christians attack fellow Christians too following in the example of the Sadducees because the faith for some Christians is real and they are healed. Others are still struggling.

This ridiculous story of an unfortunate woman who married and then lost seven husbands was a trap. Many attack the Christians today with traps to deceive. This is sophistry!

Sophists are not concerned with real issues: truth justice, peace; goodness, belief in immortality and consequences of daily decisions in determining our eternal life.

No. they started with an absurd question: They were, no doubt, were laughing before they finished with their crazy question. What a fool they thought Jesus would be trying to answer their clever little question! To whom does she belong? Is she a piece of property? The pornography craze of our world does the exact same thing to a human person.

Jesus wasn't laughing. He overlooked their stupid question and, addressed the real issue. Did they think that God created their forefathers only to blot them out upon their death? Do you really think that all of those faithful heroes were mere cartoons? Was their faith was meaningless?

The worldly put to us many silly questions. Questions that divert our attention and cause us to lose sight of the most fundamental and important questions of all, namely

***"Why do you exist? Why were you brought into being?
What is the meaning of your life?"***

It is absurd to think our desire for love, beauty, goodness, justice, peace and holiness will simply vanish at death.

No decision is small. All decisions have costs. Abraham's decision to sacrifice his son made him the Father of our Faith. Moses chose to lead the people out of Egypt because of Faith. Jacob wrestled with an Angel. Why?

Either we believe Jesus and seek his truth through faith as did Abraham, Moses and Jacob; or we believe the worldly and their lies.

We need to ask WHO AM I? as did Moses at the burning bush. Our character is shaped and formed by the questions we ask and the answers we seek.

Wasn't that one of the main points of Jesus' teaching?

I am the living God, Father of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob!!

What questions do you want to ask God! Are they silly and ridiculous? You hear people around you making God's teachings appear to be absurd, stupid, and futile. Are they full of fallacies that distort the real consequences of sin? Sadducees are alive and well active among us telling us to follow our feelings and desires, emotions, and passions. JUST DO IT! Never consider the consequences! That is the lie. Actions have consequences immediate and eternal. That is why we have to ask the right questions:

Why you were born?

What is your purpose?

What happens when you will die?

The answer: to seek the face of God; Love Him and Him Alone!

The face of God is found in those who hunger for love, goodness, and mercy; those who are imprisoned in addictions and compulsive behaviors; those who are lonely and have no one to love them; those who are sick with self hate – broken!

God has fallen in love with us in our broken humanity. He is in love, for we are his saints. To become saints we fall in love with the people who are broken by the lies of Satan revealing to them the divine dignity that God gives each of us.

We celebrate the Eucharist, so that God's Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity become yours and mine. We only have a glimpse here on earth of what communion, this marriage, is. But it awaits us.

Sadducees have nothing of substance to offer us because they are filled with their own self-interest, but Jesus promotes you. He seeks you and offers you eternal life. The Sadducees have nothing to offer us but death and hell. But God, the God of the living and not of the dead, offers heaven. You choose!