

January 27, 2019 – Second Sunday Ordinary Time



*MAY JESUS CHRIST BE PRAISED
NOW AND FOREVER!!!*

SPIRITUAL PONDERINGS

Ten Reasons to Go to Mass

“Know, O Christian, that the Mass is the holiest act of religion. You cannot do anything to glorify God more, nor profit your soul more, than by devoutly assisting at it, and assisting as often as possible.” – St. Peter Julian Eymard

8. Mass helps us know what we are to do with our lives

The idea of world peace often seems like a dream that will never come true. We can find ourselves often wishing someone would have left us a roadmap that would lead to peace or an instruction book on how to build a just society. God has in the context of the Mass. The first thing we need to do for world peace is to let everyone gather. Everyone is invited to Church no matter what your race, social status, or gender (John 12:32). Do you allow others into your life or do you keep a certain section of humanity out because of prejudice?

The second thing we do is admit that we are all sinners and need God’s help. How many of the problems in the world, in our families, and in our very lives would be solved if we simply admitted we made a mistake and we forgave others as God does.

Next, we sing the song of the angels at Christmas, the Gloria, and remind us that God has created us all and loves each of us so much that He became one of us. We should focus on becoming more like God (all loving, all caring, and all merciful) and less on material things.

Ultimately, we realize that we have a mission to accomplish at the end of Mass and that is to bring Christ to all we meet. We are to “go forth and glorify the Lord with all our lives,” in other words we are to be the best and most virtuous person we can be. The Mass ultimately helps us to know God’s will and inspires us to do it. What would Jesus do? The Mass shows, teaches, and demonstrates that to us.

9. Mass is a Foretaste of Heaven

I used to joke with people that I knew what my own personal hell was going to be like when I died. I would wake up in a movie theater that I could not escape from and everyone else in the movie theater would be my oldest younger brother. I hated going to the movies with him when he was younger because he was never quiet. From the opening credits to the closing credits he was constantly asking me questions preventing me from enjoying the moment. I don’t tell that joke much anymore because I think that one of the problems in the world today is that too many people have the wrong idea

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

Sunday

Today, unfortunately, we are misled by a number of misconceptions about prayer and liturgy. Too commonly we accept the following set of axioms as wise: Creativity and variety are always good. Every prayer-celebration should be one of high energy. Longer is better than shorter. Either you should pray with feeling or you shouldn’t pray at all. Ritual is meaningless unless we are emotionally invested in it.

Each of these axioms is overly romantic, ill thought out, anthropologically naïve, and not helpful in sustaining a life of prayer. Prayer is a relationship, a long-term one, and lives by those rules. Relating to anyone long-term has its ups and downs. Nobody can be interesting all the time, sustain high energy all the time, or fully invest himself or herself all time. Never travel with anyone who expects you to be interesting, lively, and emotionally invested all the time. Real life doesn’t work that way. Neither does prayer. What sustains a relationship over the long term is ritual, routine, a regular rhythm that incarnates the commitment. – Ronald Rolheiser

of what heaven and hell are really like. We talk about heaven being like an all you can eat and never get fat ice-cream sundae bar instead of a community of faithful sharing in God's divine love. We can even think of hell as permanently indulging in a particular sin for all eternity and thus hell might even look tempting for a while. Hell, really is about being perpetually frustrated because one is never able to make oneself happy on his own.

God is the creator of heaven and earth and to some extent hell because He allows us the gift of free will. Heaven is being in God's loving presence for all eternity and Hell is the absence of God's presence. St. John teaches us another way of saying this because God is love is "heaven is being in God's presence and knowing we are love" and hell is perpetually trying to earn love only to realize time and time again that love that is earned is not love at all.

Scott Hahn in his book *The Lamb's Last Supper: The Mass as Heaven on Earth* demonstrates beautifully how the Book of Revelation reveals how the earthly liturgy mirrors the heavenly liturgy. By going to Mass, we therefore get a taste of heaven.

I would like to focus on these three simple ways. Everyone is invited to come to Mass. We don't get to choose who comes to Mass or who sits down next to us at Church. The Mass is not a private club. God did not appoint us to be the gatekeeper or the judge of the universe so we will not be able to decide who can come into heaven and who cannot. We can only pray that God will let us in and learn to love everybody on earth because we might be spending eternity with them. The second way is through the Eucharist we give God all that we are symbolized by the bread and wine and in return He gives us His Body and Blood. At Mass we learn to give of ourselves through fully actively and consciously participating and in heaven we will do so with our entire being. Finally, the virtues of love, acceptance, forgiveness, will be of paramount importance in heaven and are so at the Mass.

10. Mass is Unifying/Justice

The great mission of Satan is to tear and rip apart creation. Anytime Satan can draw (or worse yet have us draw) a dividing line Satan gains a small victory. Jesus on the other hand informs us that when He is lifted up, He will bring all people to Himself (John 12:32). When is Jesus lifted up? Yes, two thousand years ago on Calvary but also at each Mass when the priest elevates the Blessed Host and Precious Blood after the consecration. As mentioned, a few times already, we come to Mass no matter what our social status is or what our financial worth is. We come to Mass no matter what color of our skin is or where we were born. Ultimately, we come because we know God desires to bring all his children to Him. Sadly, we hear throughout the Gospel that there were some who turned down God's invitation and thus found themselves on the outside of his peaceful kingdom.

I pray that the next time you think about skipping Mass that you may recall one or two reasons for going to Mass and make your way to Church.

Monday

"Nearly all vices are rooted in the future. Gratitude looks to the past and love to the present; fear, avarice, lust and ambition look ahead." — C.S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*

Tuesday

You can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start where you are and change the ending. - C. S. Lewis

Wednesday

Don't judge a man by where he is, because you don't know how far he has come. -C. S. Lewis

Thursday

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that." — Martin Luther King Jr

Friday

The Christian does not think God will love us because we are good, but that God will make us good because He loves us. - C. S. Lewis

Saturday

We have more in common with a precious chalice than we do with a coffee mug. God's love makes us special.





BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

January 27 2019 Third Sunday in Ordinary Time Lectionary: 69 Gospel LK 1:1-4; 4:14-21

Since many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as those who were eyewitnesses from the beginning and ministers of the word have handed them down to us, I too have decided, after investigating everything accurately anew, to write it down in an orderly sequence for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may realize the certainty of the teachings you have received. Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news of him spread throughout the whole region. He taught in their synagogues and was praised by all. He came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom into the synagogue on the sabbath day. He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written: *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.* Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. He said to them, "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing."

Spiritual Reflections: In her book: *A Contemplative Reading of the Gospel Mathew: The Journey Toward Hope,* Scripture Scholar Elena Bosetti writes the following: "What is emphasized above all in this passage is Jesus' initiative. He freely gets up to task on reading in public (nothing is said of a possible invitation on the part of the president of the synagogue, although it would be logical to assume that such was extended.)"

Spiritual Questions:

1. How does Jesus not waiting to be asked speak to your heart?
2. Why is it important to Luke that Jesus took the initiative?
3. What message did Jesus bring to you?
4. What is your favorite Gospel passage?
5. Why did God let Jesus fail?



A HEALING PRAYER.

O Jesus, Good Shepherd, You heal the sick and assist the needy. I lift up to you those who are suffering from the sin of abortion. You know what it is like to endure pain. Look kindly on those who have had or have assisted in the sin of abortion today and heal them. Restore them to strength of soul and body.

Give Your gift of wisdom to physicians who have performed abortions or desire to do so May they be guided by the Holy Spirit in all they do and thus repent from their evil ways. Bless the nurses who work in the abortion industry so that their hands will become instruments of peace and caring like they were intended to and not instruments of death. Please touch all who work within the abortion industry in a way that allows them to turn away from the culture of death and that allows them to begin to embrace the culture of life.

Bless, the efforts of everyone who strive to promote the dignity of human life. O Jesus, grant our world Your healing grace of love and peace. Amen.



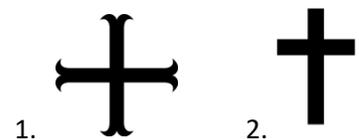
This Week's Trivia

True or False

1. T or F Miriam was Moses's sister.
2. T or F Ruth was Jesse's mother.
3. T or F There are 150 Psalms
4. T or F St. Matthias followed Jesus from the beginning.

Last Week's Answers

Identify the title of the following Cross images.



1.

2.



- 3.
 - A. 3 Celtic Cross
 - B. 4 Maltese/Beatitude
 - C. 1 Greek
 - D. 2 Latin
- 4.

Please join us in praying a special prayer each month for Catholics who have fallen away from their faith.

A SPIRIT TO KNOW YOU

Gracious and Holy Father, please give those who do not know you intellect to understand you, reason to discern you, diligence to seek you, wisdom to find you, a spirit to know you, a heart to meditate upon you, ears to hear you, eyes to see you, a tongue to proclaim you, a way of life pleasing to you, patience to wait for you and perseverance to look for you. Grant all those who are searching for you a perfect end, in your holy presence, a blessed resurrection and life everlasting.

DUC IN ALTUM:



Only read this section if you want to go deeper in your faith



If you are a liturgical minister, you are challenged to take a moment or two after Mass and say a prayer of thanksgiving after Mass for the opportunity to serve in such a special way.

“If the Angels could envy, they would envy us for Holy Communion.” – Pope St. Pius X

CATHOLIC PRAYER:

CHRIST, THE WAY OF CONVERSION COMMUNION, AND SOLIDARITY IN AMERICA

We thank You, Lord Jesus, because the Gospel of the Father's love, with which You came to save the world, has been proclaimed far and wide in America as a gift of the Holy Spirit that fills us with gladness. We thank You for the gift of Your Life, which You have given us by loving us to the end: Your Life makes us children of God, brothers and sisters to each other. Increase, O Lord, our faith and our love for You, present in all the tabernacles of the continent. Grant us to be faithful witnesses to your Resurrection for the younger generation of Americans, so that, in knowing You, they may follow You and find in You their peace and joy. Only then will they know that they are brothers and sisters of all God's children scattered throughout the world. You who, in becoming man, chose to belong to a human family, teach families the virtues which filled with light the family home of Nazareth. May families always be united, as You and the Father are one, and may they be living witnesses to love, justice and solidarity; make them schools of respect, forgiveness and mutual help, so that the world may believe; help them to be the source of vocations to the priesthood and the consecrated life, and all the other forms of firm Christian commitment. Protect Your Church and the Successor of Peter, to whom You, Good Shepherd, have entrusted the task of feeding Your flock. Grant that the Church in America may flourish and grow richer in the fruits of holiness. teach us to love Your Mother, Mary, as you loved her. Give us strength to proclaim Your word with courage in the work of the new evangelization, so that the world may know new hope. Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of America, pray for us!



FRANK AND ERNEST

