

April 28, 2019 - Divine Mercy Sunday



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

Easter Greetings

We no longer look for Jesus among the dead, for Jesus is alive and has become the Lord of life. From the waters of death the Father has raised Jesus and renewed His gift of life within us. May God increase in our minds and in our hearts the risen life we now share with Christ, and may He help us to grow together as His people.



SPIRITUAL PONDERINGS

Stewardship

When I was writing this month's Spiritual Ponderings, I made some sort of mistake and duplicated last week's column. Therefore, I would like to finish the month of April with a small reflection on Stewardship. The following comes from the Archdiocese of St. Louis website.

What Is Stewardship?

It's difficult to teach or practice stewardship, unless we have a clear understanding of exactly what stewardship is. If we wish to embrace stewardship, we must gradually learn to embrace every definition or aspect of stewardship.

Scripture Based All of the teachings of stewardship come directly from the Gospels, the Old Testament and the letters of the New Testament. Stewardship is not a new fad, or environmental word. Stewardship is the way God has expected His people to live since the beginning of time.

Dependence on God Stewardship is recognizing that everything we have is a gift from God. We can take credit for nothing. Everything we have and everything we do is a result of some gift that God has placed into our hands.

Gratitude Stewardship is living a life of gratitude – taking the time every day to recognize the gifts that God has given and to be grateful for them.

Giving Back Stewardship is returning a portion of our gifts to God. The gifts we return are our time, our talent and our treasure. We return these gifts not because God or our Church needs them but because we feel an overwhelming need to show our love and gratitude to God.

Transformative Stewardship is transformative. Once we embrace the stewardship message it changes the way we look at every decision we make. Stewardship becomes a total way of life.

A Love Response Once we allow God to truly take up residence in our hearts we become so overwhelmed by His abundant love for us that we just naturally feel the need to join our lives with Him and dedicate our time, talent and treasure to carrying out God's work here on earth. Our generosity comes from within and not from any external pressure or reward.

Proportionate Giving Stewardship calls us to realize that each of us is called to give as God has given to us. We no longer base our giving on what others are giving. We no longer excuse ourselves from giving because we do not see others giving. Rather we give in proportion to all that God has given to us.

Prayer - Spending Time with God Stewardship involves spending time with God. Recognizing that every day is a gift from God, we strive to spend some of each day with God, through prayer, Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, scripture reading, quiet, meditation and other spiritual activities. During this time we ask God how He wants us to use the gifts He has given to us.

Participation - Sharing Talent Stewardship involves sharing talent. Recognizing that God has given each individual

unique skills and talents so that together we can do the work of Our Lord, we strive to share our own talents **and** to encourage and welcome others to also use their talents to participate in the mission and ministry of the Church.

Generosity - Giving Treasure Stewardship involves giving treasure. Giving time and talent does not excuse us from giving treasure. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus challenged us to give as it has been given to us. Aware of our tremendous financial blessings, we strive to give generously to support the building up of God's kingdom. We recognize the 10% tithe as an important sacrificial goal. Although this level of giving may not be immediately possible, we are aware of what percentage we are giving back. We regularly strive to increase our generosity, taking small incremental steps toward giving a full tithe.

Trust in God Stewardship is trusting God. We believe that our generous God will always provide for us. None of us will ever have all that we want, but we will always have all that we need.

Accountability Stewardship calls us to recognize that just as in the Parable of the Talents, each of us will someday be asked by God to give an accounting of all that we have done with the gifts that have been given to us. Likewise, parish communities that embrace stewardship must be accountable to the community for the way in which the parish uses the gifts entrusted to it.

Thankfulness Stewardship calls us to be ever grateful for the gifts that God has given. Not only are we called to be grateful to God, but we also must be grateful to one another. Just as we thank God every day, a stewardship parish must also show gratitude, recognition and appreciation to those who have given generously to the support of the parish.

Counter-Cultural Stewardship is counter-cultural. While society encourages us to continually strive for more and more, stewardship helps us to recognize that we already have more than enough. In fact, we have enough to share.

Discipleship Stewardship is discipleship. We strive to put God first in all things and to follow where Our Lord might lead.

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

Sunday

Faith is not meant to be lived alone

Monday

God wants us to migrate to heaven and become citizens there.

Tuesday

God come to my assistance. – Lord make haste to help me.

Wednesday

When you arrive at a location, do you look for blessings or for things to complain about?

Thursday

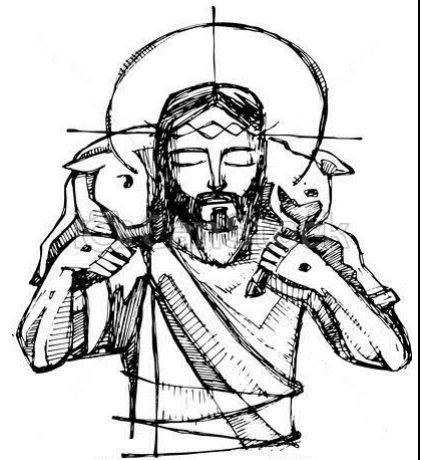
God is trustworthy

Friday

There is no charge for awesomeness – Po from Kungfu Panda.

Saturday

Be not afraid for God is God.



BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

April 28 2019//Second Sunday of Easter//Sunday of Divine Mercy//Lectionary: 45//Gospel JN 20:19-31

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained." Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nailmarks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe." Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.

Spiritual Reflection:

...Christ did not appoint professors, but followers. If Christianity ... is not reduplicated in the life of the person expounding it, then he does not expound Christianity, for Christianity is a message about living and can only be expounded by being realized in men's lives. - Soren Kierkegaard.

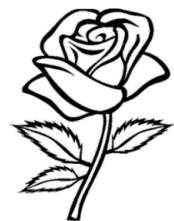
Spiritual Questions:

1. How is Christianity not like passing a test?
2. How do you learn from others?
3. What does discipleship look like for you?
4. How do you recruit disciples for Jesus?
5. Does your life help people experience the Resurrection

 **PRO-LIFE** 

PRAYER FOR RESPECT OF LIFE

Heavenly Father, the beauty and dignity of human life was the crowning of your creation. You further ennobled that life when your Son became one with us in his incarnation. Help us to realize the sacredness of human life and to respect it from the moment of conception until the last moment at death. Give us courage to speak with truth and love and with conviction in defense of life. Help us to extend the gentle hand of mercy and forgiveness to those who do not reverence your gift of life. To all, grant pardon for the times we have failed to be grateful for your precious gift of life or to respect it in others. We ask this in Jesus' Name. Amen.



St. Monica Society

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

THE PRAYER, SPIRITUAL ARMOR OF PRAYER.

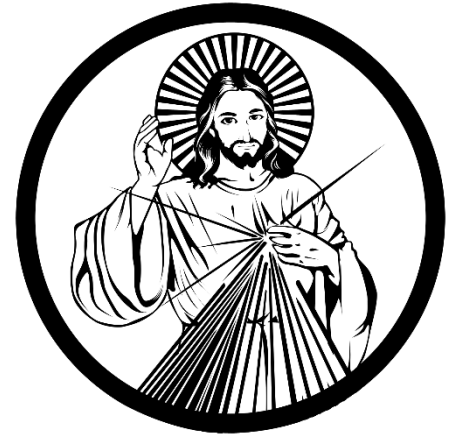
Heavenly Father, we ask bless those who have fallen away and us who have remained of You today for Your truth, As a belt tight around our waists. We put on the zeal, to announce Your good news of peace, As shoes for our feet. We put on Your righteousness, O Christ, as our breastplate. And the hope of salvation, As a helmet for our head. Father we take up faith, as a shield which is able to put out, All the fiery darts of the enemy. And the sword of the Spirit, which is Your Word, O Lord. Father may the love, with which You have loved Jesus, be in us and may Jesus be in us. We ask You for the grace, Of a servant heart. Amen.



CATHOLIC PRAYERS

THE DIVINE MERCY LITANY

Divine Mercy, gushing forth from the bosom of the Father, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, greatest attribute of God, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, incomprehensible mystery, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, fountain gushing forth from the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, unfathomed by any intellect, human or angelic, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, from which wells forth all life and happiness, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, better than the heavens, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, source of miracles and wonders, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, encompassing the whole universe, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, descending to earth in the Person of the Incarnate Word, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, which flowed out from the open wound of the Heart of Jesus, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, enclosed in the Heart of Jesus for us, and especially for sinners, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, unfathomed in the institution of the Sacred Host, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, in the founding of Holy Church, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, in our justification through Jesus Christ, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, accompanying us through our whole life, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, embracing us especially at the hour of death, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, endowing us with immortal life, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, accompanying us every moment of our life, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, shielding us from the fire of hell, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, in the conversion of hardened sinners, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, astonishment for Angels, incomprehensible to Saints, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, unfathomed in all the mysteries of God, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, lifting us out of every misery, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, source of our happiness and joy, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, in calling us forth from nothingness to existence, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, embracing all the works of His hands, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, crown of all of God's handiwork, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, in which we are all immersed, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, sweet relief for anguished hearts, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, only hope of despairing souls, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, repose of hearts, peace amidst fear, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, delight and ecstasy of holy souls, I trust in You.
 Divine Mercy, inspiring hope against all hope, I trust in You.
 Eternal God, in Whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to Your Holy Will, which is Love and Mercy itself. Amen.



Church Mice

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