

For August of the Year of the Pandemic 2020

Mass Schedule

Saturday: 4:30 pm

Sunday: 7:00 am, 9:00 am, 11:00 am,
1:00 pm Spanish, 5:00 pm

Mass sign up required for each weekend:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4DA4A82DA0FDCE9-mass1>

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday: 3:00-4:00 pm

Wednesday: 11:00-noon, 7:00-8:00 pm

*Stay tuned for September of the Year
of the Pandemic 2020*



ST JOHN
THE EVANGELIST
CATHOLIC CHURCH

WELCOME TO ST. JOHN

St. John the Evangelist, a Catholic Capuchin Franciscan Parish, welcomes all who are called to be disciples of Jesus Christ and proclaims His Gospel through prayer, worship, His Word, and the sacraments. Members, inspired by the Holy Spirit through faith formation and spiritual renewal, witness to the Gospel in lives of justice and charity, build up families and children through education, hospitality and fellowship, and serve those in need with compassion.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEW OFFICERS OF THE PASTORAL COUNCIL!
ELECTED MONDAY, AUGUST 17, 2020
CHRISTINE WENGER - CHAIRPERSON
SUSAN TABOR - VICE CHAIRPERSON
LISA LEROUX-SMITH - SECRETARY

PARISH STAFF

Pastor.....Fr. John Cousins
Associate Pastor.....Fr. Barnabas Eichor
Principal, St. John School..... Mr. Chris Reffett
Director of Liturgy & Music..... Lisa Roush
Director of Faith Formation.....Shelly Bole
Catecismo en español.....Maria Mota
High School Youth Director..... Anastasia Pine
RCIA.....Michael Podrebarac
Business Manager..... Cris Denning
Assistant Administrator.....Meg Milburn
Parish Coordinator.....Ellen Sickinger
Database.....Patty Guadian
Multimedia Communication Coordinator.....Jacinta Hoyt
Maintenance.....Jeff Jenicke

St. John Catholic School.....Mr. Chris Reffett, Principal
1208 Kentucky St. 785-843-9511
www.sjevangelist.com/school

Catholic Charities.....Abigail Chikanda
1525 W. 6th, Suite A 785-856-2694
achikanda@catholiccharitiesks.org

Rummage House.....Linda Brey
13th & Kentucky lbrey525@gmail.com

Shopping Hours:.....**Open (if staff is available)**
Wednesday - 11:00 am-3:00 pm; Saturday - 8:30am-12:30 pm

Centro Hispano.....Lydia Diebolt
204 W. 13th St. 785-843-2039
centrohispano.lydia@gmail.com

SIMON PARISH CENTER

Mailing Address 1229 Vermont St., Lawrence, KS 66044

Phone.....785-843-0109

Summer Office Hours.....**CLOSED TO PUBLIC, please call**

Monday—Thursday..... 8:30 am—3:00 pm

Friday..... 8:30 am—Noon

Weekend Masses

Saturday..... 4:30 pm

Sunday..... 7:00 am, 9:00 am, 11:00 am,

.....1:00 pm (Spanish), 5:00 pm

Mass sign up required for each weekend:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4DA4A82DA0FDCE9-mass1>

Masses to be livestreamed at: <https://youtu.be/lbl8-GJL4zM>

Sunday..... 11:00 am & 1:00 pm (Spanish)

Weekday Masses

Monday-Friday.....7:30 am

Sacrament of Reconciliation

In the Padre Pio Chapel (inside the north church entrance)

Wednesday.....11:00 am-12:00 pm, 7:00-8:00 pm

Saturday..... 3:00 pm-4:00 pm

.....(and by appointment)

Bulletin Deadline

Submit info by **noon on Thursday** to bulletin@sjevangelist.com

ten (10) days prior to the bulletin you wish info to appear.

Please submit text electronically (via computer/email) as you would like it to appear in the bulletin.

Advertise in the Bulletin

Revenue from ads is what makes the bulletin possible at no cost to our parish. Please support your bulletin advertisers. For information call Doug Wolfe:

800-950-9952 x5833

dwolfe@4LPI.com

Pastoral Council

parishcouncil@sjevangelist.com

Christine Wenger - Chair,

Susan Tabor - Vice Chair,

Lisa Leroux-Smith - Secretary,

Brent Crandon, George Diepenbrock,

Connie Ehrlich, Luis Gonzalez,

Larry Koster, Jason Tanking

Finance Council

Brian Green, David Ehrlich,

Brent Crandon, Jeannette Mercier,

Terry Gunselman, Michael Burrichter

School Council

Mr. Chris Reffett,

Mike McDonald—President

Caroline Bennett—Vice President

Jim McDonald—Secretary

Hanon Misko, Emily Malin

Lisa Leroux-Smith

A PRAYER FOR PROTECTION IN TIME OF PANDEMIC



The ancient fresco of Madonna del Soccorso (Our Lady of Help) in St. Peter's Basilica was restored with the support of the Knights of Columbus to mark the Year of Faith (2012-2013). Photo courtesy of Fabbrica di San Pietro/M. Falcioni.

O Mary,
you always brighten our path
as a sign of salvation and of hope.
We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick,
who, at the Cross, took part in Jesus' pain
while remaining steadfast in faith.

O loving Mother,
you know what we need,
and we are confident you will provide for us
as at Cana in Galilee.

Intercede for us with your Son Jesus,
the Divine Physician,
for those who have fallen ill,
for those who are vulnerable,
and for those who have died.

Intercede also for those charged with
protecting the health and safety of others
and for those who are tending to the sick
and seeking a cure.

Help us, O Mother of Divine Love,
to conform to the will of the Father
and to do as we are told by Jesus,
who took upon himself our
sufferings and carried our sorrows,
so as to lead us, through the Cross,
to the glory of the Resurrection. Amen.

*Under thy protection we seek refuge,
O Holy Mother of God.*

*In our needs, despise not our petitions,
but deliver us always from all dangers,
O glorious and blessed Virgin. Amen.*

Adapted from the prayer of Pope Francis

KNIGHTS OF  COLUMBUS

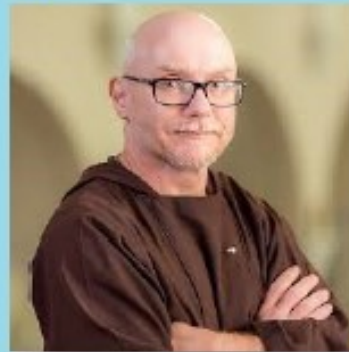
SAINT JOHN SCHOOL

2020 School Year Wish List



As we have been working on our plans for this coming year, the staff has been developing safety protocols and a list of needed materials. Some of the materials on this list are part of our daily routines and some are precautions. I have created a Amazon Wish List if parents or extended family members would like to help the school. Any item you purchase will ship directly to the school to help with coordination. Any help that you may be able to provide would be greatly appreciated. Please feel free to share the link with friends and family if they would also like to help. Here is the link for the Wish List: <https://a.co/1OK4BEi>
God bless,
Mr. Reffett

PARISH NEWS AND EVENTS



Fr. Barnabas



YOU'RE INVITED TO A CARD PARTY FOR FATHER BARNABAS

Due to the Corona virus, it will not be feasible to have a formal going away party for Father Barnabas as he leaves St. John. While we cannot let him leave without some way to honor his time here, we thought having a card party would be a wonderful idea! Parishioners could send him a card with thoughts about his friendship with them, times spent together, or whatever memory you feel like sharing. If possible, please send your card to arrive the week of August 24. Please send the card to Father Barnabas at: 1229 Vermont Street, Lawrence, KS 66044.

Thank you and please continue to stay safe!

STEWARDSHIP OF PRAYER

PARISH PRAYER LIST

The "Prayer List" includes the most recent information that the Simon Parish Center has about a parishioner and/or their family member.

Contact the Center to request someone for the "Prayer List."

Thank you on behalf of the families of those individuals for whom we pray.

Andrew Bouchard
Susan Guenther Brown
Curtis Burns
Donna Callaghan
Ricky Dalton
Hank Desch
Garrett Dreiling
Linda Erp
Joanne Feist
Colette Fisher
Linda Flyer
Janet Fox
Rudy Fritz
Ed Garza
Bonnie Griggs
Tony Guadian
Buddy Hadl
Lonna Hamm
Peggy Harders
Newt Hasson
Christian Heady
Luke Henry
Charles Hermann
Kathy Higley
Bob Holek
Tina Jinkens
Michele Johnson
Allen Kehde
Becky Kuhn
Patty Lyon
Diana Matthews
Leo Mauler
Russ McDonald
Jim McMurray
Ed Medrano

Zackary Messerly
Linden Morgan
Lisa Morrow-Welsh
Augustus Nelson
Danny Nguyen
Theophilus Obiefule
Mike Owens
Josephine Ramirez
Mike Reilly
Eva Ricketts
Joel Rivera
Virginia Romero
Jon Rossillon
James Sandy
Alexander Ramirez Salazar
Jerry Scherer
Greg Schurer
Mary Kay Seidl
Pete Sethatut
Christine Shipley
Gerald Simon
Brett Smith
Linda Snyder
Joseph Soza
Cameron Stupansky
Jack Taylor
Deloris Tharp
Oscar Tharp, Jr.
Amelia Tinio
Enriqueta Valverde
Mary Vannicola
Cindy Vasquez
Leonard Vasquez
Marianne Vietti
Trent Wallace

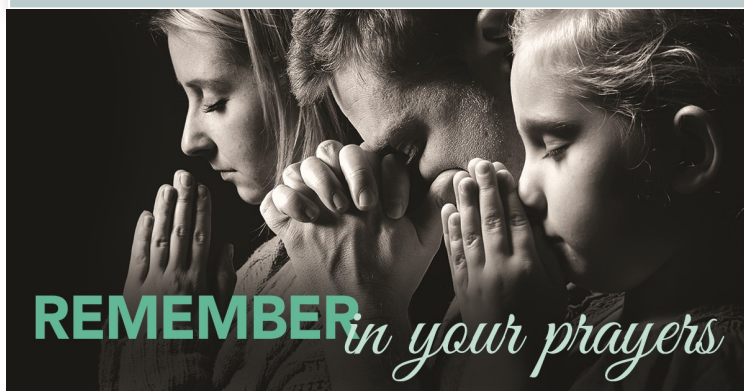
Jeanette Walker
Susan Williams

Nancy Wright
Jon Yarnell

MASS INTENTIONS

AUGUST 24 – AUGUST 30

Mon.: 7:30 amThanksgiving To The Lord
Tues.: 7:30 am.....Cecelia Renyert
Wed.: 7:30 am.....Joseph's Holy Family
Thurs.: 7:30 amAll Saints
Fri.: 7:30 am.....All Souls
Sat.: 4:30 pmLidia & Czeslaw Raczekt
Sun.: 7:00 amEnd To The Pandemic
9:00am.....Daniel Sickingert
11:00 am.....Ronald Foxt
1:00 pm (Sp.).....Blanca, George & Jorge Cisnerost
5:00 pmParishioners of St. Johns



STEWARDSHIP OF GIVING

WEEKLY PARISH GIVING

Our fiscal year is July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021

Information below reflects donations received July 1, 2020 through Aug. 16, 2020.

Budgeted weekly collection amount	\$30,254.80
Average weekly collection amount.....	\$23,978.96
Budgeted collection fiscal YTD.....	\$211,513.60
Actual collection fiscal YTD.....	\$167,852.75
Net Shortage.....	\$43,660.85

Visit: www.sjevangelist.com/giving for more information or to set up and manage your account today!

Contact Cris Denning at: cdenning@sjevangelist.com or by phone at **785-843-0109** if you have any questions.

Photo by: Jay Soldner/The Leaven

Until weekend Masses resume and the parish office reopens, parishioners may send their tithes in the mail.

Or you may sign up for **PushPay** for auto bank withdrawals at: sjevangelist.com

MEDITACIÓN DEL EVANGELIO

“Jesús les preguntó: Y ustedes, ¿quién dicen que soy yo”. Pedro contestó: “Tú eres el Mesías, el Hijo del Dios vivo”. (Mateo 16:15-16). Jesús lanza una pregunta fuera de serie que pone a sus discípulos a pensar en realidad quién es Él. Gracias a esa pregunta, Pedro confirma su fe y se afianza como roca firme de la Iglesia. Desde entonces hasta ahora, el sucesor de Pedro, el Papa en Roma, es piedra, roca firme, que impulsa a la Iglesia a la fidelidad.

Ahora, Cristo podría hacernos la misma pregunta a ti y a mí. ¿Quién es Jesús para ti? Sí, para ti, padre de familia, estudiante de universidad, madre y padre soltero. Por mencionar a algunas personas. Yo creo que las respuestas variarían mucho. Sin embargo, hay que tener cuidado de no hacernos una imagen falsa de Jesús. Pedro, acertó diciendo que Él era el “Mesías, el Hijo del Dios vivo”. Y fue llamado dichoso, feliz por haber sido una revelación de Dios Padre. Algo había aprendido Pedro de las enseñanzas de Jesús en su tiempo de formación al discipulado. Poner atención a la enseñanza es crucial, y el Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica, en el número 100, dice: “El oficio de interpretar auténticamente la Palabra de Dios ha sido encomendado únicamente al Magisterio vivo de la Iglesia, al Papa y a los obispos en comunión con él”. “Y ahora yo te digo: Tú eres Pedro (o sea piedra), y sobre esta piedra edificaré mi Iglesia”. (Mateo 16:18). ¿En tu vida, realmente Jesús es el Mesías? ©LPi



“Y Yo te daré las llaves del Reino de los cielos; todo lo que ates en la tierra quedará atado en el cielo, y todo lo que desates en la tierra quedará desatado en el cielo”. Y les ordenó a sus discípulos que no dijeran a nadie que él era el Mesías. — Mt 16, 19-20

Leccionario II © 1987 Comisión Episcopal de Pastoral Litúrgica de la Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano.

MUSICA, CORO, MUSICA

¿Te gusta cantar? ¿Tocas algún instrumento musical, o te gustaría aprender? Ven a practicar con nosotros, comunícate al **785-304-5509**.

CADA LUNES EN TODO EL AÑO

A las 8 de la noche rezamos el Santo Rosario, para pedir por nuestras necesidades y por los que amamos; también si alguno de sus parientes fallece podemos hacer el novenario, nos vemos los lunes en LA CAPILLA DEL PADRE PIO, frente a las veladoras.

PLATICAS PARA BAUTIZAR

Cada primer sábado del mes de **6:00 a 9:00 de la noche**, sin niños, llamar antes para anotar su asistencia.

RECICLAGE

Trae tus latas de aluminio y ayuda a tu Parróquia, por un mundo mas limpio, déjalas atrás de la oficina y ponle para María Mota. Gracias.

LA FE SE PUEDE ALIMENTAR

Hermano, a veces te sientes triste o con necesidad de Dios, ven yo te puedo acompañar a orar, nos podemos ver en la Iglesia o en la oficina. Estoy para ayudarte. Oro por todos, bendiciones María Mota.

Preparación al matrimonio por la Iglesia Católica, solo para parejas que viven juntos y tienen niños.

Adultos que necesitan los sacramentos de confirmación y primera comunión.

CATECISMO EN ESPAÑOL

Las Inscripciones son en agosto. Por favor para mas información llamar a María Mota.

CONFESIONES

De **1:00 pm a 1:45 pm** Habrá confesiones en español para quien lo necesite, y pueda recibir este sacramento.

LAS LECTURAS DE LA SEMANA DEL 23 DE AGOSTO

Domingo: Is 22, 19-23/Sal 138, 1-2. 2-3. 6. 8 [8]/Rom 11, 33-36/Mt 16, 13-20

Lunes: Ap 21, 9-14/Sal 145, 10-11. 12-13. 17-18 [12]/Jn 1, 45-51

Martes: 2 Tes 2, 1-3. 14-17/Sal 96, 10. 11-12. 13 [13]/Mt 23, 23-26

Miércoles: 2 Tes 3, 6-10. 16-18/Sal 128, 1-2. 4-5 [1]/Mt 23, 27-32

Jueves: 1 Cor 1, 1-9/Sal 145, 2-3. 4-5. 6-7 [1]/Mt 24, 42-51

Viernes: 1 Cor 1, 17-25/Sal 33, 1-2. 4-5. 10-11 [5]/Mt 25, 1-13

Sábado: 1 Cor 1, 26-31/Sal 71, 1-2. 3-4. 5-6. 15 y 17 [cfr. 15]/Mc 6, 17-29

Domingo siguiente: Jr 20, 7-9/Sal 63, 2. 3-4. 5-6. 8-9 [2]/Rom 12, 1-2/Mt 16, 21-2

SOCIAL JUSTICE SOCIAL ACTION

*By Susan Tabor,
Social Concerns for Peace and Justice Committee,
And Pat Lechtenberg, Justice Matters*

This week is the third in a series of columns on justice, as we are working to grow the justice ministry here at St. John's. In this column, I will discuss biblical roots of doing justice.

I must confess to feeling really overwhelmed by this topic, as there are over 2,000 references to justice and poverty in the Bible, according to Sojourners, an interfaith social justice advocacy group. This will provide you with an overview.

Many justice references in the Old Testament are characterized with judgment and retribution. However, there are some exceptions to this, provided by the prophets and by some grassroots action by a prophet. In Micah 6, 8 in which we are called to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God. In the book of Nehemiah, chapters 1, 2 and 5, we see a prophet saddened by the exile of the Israelites from their land; and their wall had been torn down and their property destroyed. Nehemiah went to the king and asked to bring the people back, saying they would rebuild the wall and asking for their property to be restored. The king agreed, and the prophet went to the people who had been demoralized and grief-stricken by what had happened. The people were filled with hope when Nehemiah took them back and they re-built the wall and helped restore their property. This story is an example of prophet leading an example of showing people how they can make change happen; Nehemiah saw the people's sadness, went to the king and advocated, and went back to the people, telling them what he had done and taking them back to their land. The people participated in the re-building of their land, thus learning how to do their own "fishing", and working alongside people who had been their adversaries.

The great news is that when Jesus comes, he introduces mercy into justice, teaching that we are to exercise charity and justice

with mercy. Examples are in Jesus's parables and stories all throughout the Gospel of Luke. His teaching on the topic can be found all throughout the other Gospels. Further interpretations are found in Acts and the letters from the Apostles.

As we see exemplified in the Gospels, justice is about seeking to make permanent change. Jesus' knocking over the tables of the money-changers in the temple was a strong action to bring about permanent change concerning what kinds of monetary transactions that would be allowed in the temple. Jesus in righteous anger demands the fulfillment of what is most important. Matthew 23:23-24 New International Version (NIV) "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel."

Besides the biblical imperatives we should also be aware of and consider the teachings of the Catholic church, our St. John Parish mission statement and don't forget Pope Francis' promotion and encouragement of what he refers to as "popular movements" which include organized justice ministries such as Justice Matters.

In evaluating where to put our resources, time and energy it might be of great benefit to see how our parish affiliation with Justice Matters is an organized way of doing justice and making what we offer really count. As individuals and as a parish we don't have the resources, funds or clout to make significant change in our community and in our world. But together with other faith groups affiliated in an interfaith network we have people power which, if grown and pruned to be strong advocates, can continue to be agents of change by building people power working all together, just like Nehemiah did thousands of years ago. What examples we have in our holy books! What motivation we can have remembering our past to improve our future.!



OUR HOPE LEGACY PLANNING

Have you recently updated your Will, a Trust, or designated your beneficiaries on your retirement or life insurance accounts or other assets from your estate to include a planned gift to St. John Catholic Church or School? If so, you are invited to notify St. John at **785-843-0109** or sromero@saint-johns.net and become a member of the Our Hope Legacy Society for St. John and the Catholic Legacy Society of the Archdiocese of Kansas City in KS. The type of planned gift and the donor name may remain anonymous.

JUSTICE MATTERS

Justice Matters – an interfaith network doing justice

This is the time of year when Justice Matters begins a new 'season' – our season/year beginning in August and ending in July of each year. As a grassroots organization we have a four-part process: listening, research, action and celebration. It is now time to be thinking of the listening part of the process. We sometimes use other terms including house meetings or sacred conversations. House meetings because usually a host household will invite family and friends into the home. Sacred conversation because the stories shared and agreed on by the group present to be held in confidence – often are events, traumas or experiences that are difficult to talk about but many times need to be told.

It isn't a time for a conversation as we usually think of it – not a time to give an opinion, judge, intervene, fix or solve – but to only listen to the responses posed for all to answer such as what is the first injustice you experienced, what keeps you awake at night, what makes you angry, what is happening in this community that you think needs to be changed? This year the questions may be on issues we are already working on but with the focus of racial inequity or maybe with thoughts of the impact of the pandemic.

St. John Parish now has six team leaders who will host a house meeting and a new associate organizer, Sarah Balzer, who has been assigned to our parish. She will be attempting to get

acquainted with a good number of parishioners and hosting four additional meetings with her new acquaintances.



These are the dates of our parish house meetings. If you don't receive an invitation and want to participate on a certain date/time please contact the hostess. Most conversations will be via Zoom. Some may have a choice of a combination of in person and online.

Sarah Balzer - 09/17 @ 6:30 pm
Sarah Balzer - 09/19 @ 10:00 am
Janet Anderson - 09/23 @ 6:30 pm, janetinlawrence@hotmail.com
Nora Murphy - 09/24 @ 6:00 pm, nora7@sbcglobal.net
Jean Drumm - 09/26 @ 3:00 pm, jdrumm077@gmail.com
Ruth Entwistle - 09/29 @ 7:00 pm, raentw@ku.edu
Sarah Balzer - 10/04 @ 1:00 pm
Susan Tabor - 10/10 @ 10:00 am, souljourner@sbcglobal.net
Pat Lechtenberg - 10/11 @ 3:00 pm, plek10berg@aol.com
Sarah Balzer - 10/12 @ 6:30 pm

Please give serious, prayerful consideration of participating in one of the listening sessions. The more input we have the better the opportunity to address those things that most concern the members of our Lawrence and Douglas County community, the better our chance of making a difference, the more support this is for our brothers and sisters who need us to be their voice and ears and hearts and energy.

AREA NEWS AND EVENTS

“COPING WITH LIFE ALONE” PEER-TO-PEER GRIEF SUPPORT NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE!

"Coping with Life Alone" is a Beginning Experience® grief support program that meets each week for eight weeks. The program helps those who have lost a love relationship due to death, divorce or separation, move through the experience of grief and loss into a future with renewed hope.

Upcoming program dates:

Saturdays, September 12 through October 31, from 1:00 to 3:00 pm

This session will be held online using Zoom.

Contact Donna at **816-305-3760**, for more information and required registration by September 1.

NEW: ADAPTED FAITH FORMATION LESSONS

"Since parents have given children their life, they are bound by the most serious obligation to educate their offspring and therefore must be recognized as the primary and the principal educators." **The Declaration on Christian Education from Vatican II**

The NCPD Council on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (CIDD) is dedicated to offering adapted materials to assist families in offering faith formation at home. These resources can be used with children of all ages. Each month you will find lessons on a topic that follows the liturgical calendar. Keeping in mind that children and youth with disabilities have different learning needs, you will find a few 'Tips and Tools' included in each monthly lesson to further help with instruction.

If you have any questions about using these lessons, or if you have prepared materials that you would like to share, please contact us at: ncpd@ncpd.org

We hope that these resources will help you keep Jesus alive in your home!
May God bless you and keep you safe.

“The Leaven” is on Audio Reader Did you know “The Leaven”, the Archdiocesan newspaper, is available through Audio-Reader here in Lawrence. All you need is to be able to have someone certify that you have an impairment that impairs your ability to hold or to read printed material. To receive the service, please call Audio-Reader at 785-864-4600.

KIDS SHARING THE GOSPEL

SHARING THE GOSPEL

God had sent great prophets to his people. Jeremiah, Elijah, and John the Baptist were faithful to God. They told God's people to love each other. But God's people would not listen. That is why God sent his Son Jesus to be your Savior. With Jesus' help, you can turn back to God. Because of Jesus, you can love others. Because of Jesus, you can look forward to heaven.

PRAYER

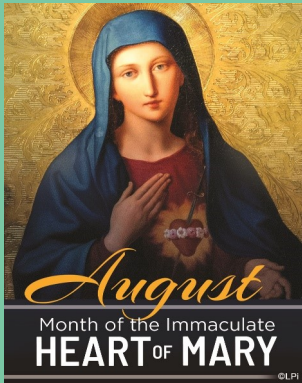
God, I thank you for sending your Son, Jesus to be my Savior.

SOMETHING TO DRAW

Draw a picture of Jesus in heaven, holding out his hand to you.

MISSION FOR THE WEEK

Tell God you are sorry for your sins. Ask God to help you follow Jesus' example.



PUZZLE

Unscramble words from today's Gospel:

Johh
prophets
Peter

Father
blessed
Elijah

Christ
revealed
Jeremiah

Jhno

J o h n

Eilhaj

Jeemirha

prepohts

Preet

Crsith

bsseeld

reevalde

Fearth



MISSION

Tell God you are sorry for your sins. Ask God to help you follow Jesus' example.



21ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



DAILY READINGS

Sunday: Is 22:19-23/Ps 138:1-2, 2-3, 6, 8 [8bc]/Rom 11:33-36/Mt 16:13-20

Monday: Rv 21:9b-14/Ps 145:10-11, 12-13, 17-18 [12]/Jn 1:45-51

Tuesday: 2 Thes 2:1-3a, 14-17/Ps 96:10, 11-12, 13 [13b]/Mt 23:23-26

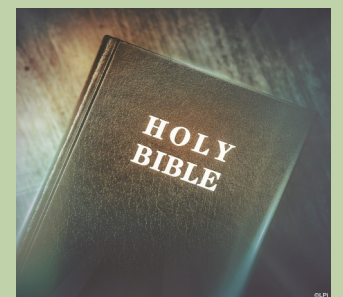
Wednesday: 2 Thes 3:6-10, 16-18/Ps 128:1-2, 4-5 [1]/Mt 23:27-32

Thursday: 1 Cor 1:1-9/Ps 145:2-3, 4-5, 6-7 [1]/Mt 24:42-51

Friday: 1 Cor 1:17-25/Ps 33:1-2, 4-5, 10-11 [5]/Mt 25:1-13

Saturday: 1 Cor 1:26-31/Ps 71:1-2, 3-4a, 5-6ab, 15ab and 17 [cf. 15ab]/Mk 6:17-29

Next Sunday: Jer 20:7-9/Ps 63:2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9 [2b]/Rom 12:1-2/Mt 16:21-27



FOCUS ON THE WORD

UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE

The only way to know God is to love God. Our minds will never fully grasp the mystery of God, but our hearts and souls can learn to love the mystery. Years ago, when life had a more innocent quality to it, we believed what we were told or witnessed, unless there was direct evidence otherwise. This was especially true if the information came from someone in authority. In a sense, we were a bit more gullible on one hand but also more trusting on the other. The latter is an admirable quality that sadly can be eroded when we realize we have been duped. With education and technological advances, we find ourselves more skeptical and less likely to too quickly accept and believe what we see and hear.

For all of the good that social media can do, it can also easily distort reality and truth. Photoshop and a myriad other technological truths can add to, fabricate, and make even the non-existent seem real. It is amazing. How far do we allow this obviously justifiable skepticism to take us? Questioning and doubting are healthy elements of any good relationship as long as we don't allow them to turn us away from a deeper experience of love and encounter. If we cannot get our minds around something or empirically justify or prove it, we tend to declare it a hoax, untrue, or unauthentic and walk away.



The very same trust that can quickly be eroded is exactly what is essential for all of our relationships, especially our relationship with God. With all things and people that make a profound claim on us, we have to trust in the absence of knowledge. Full self-investment involves plunging completely into the unknown!

Simon Peter said to Jesus, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Peter came to this knowledge, which is not "head knowledge" because of the relationship he shared with Jesus and what God was able to reveal in and through that relationship. Peter simply "knew" because of love that this is who Jesus really is. The silent exchange of

love between friends, and not an intellectual exercise of the mind, brought Peter to this place. When we stop and think about it, there are many things in life that we simply know but do not completely understand. When someone sacrifices their own well-being for another, it may not make intellectual sense when examined. But it makes a world of sense when it is carried out. The vastness of reality and an encounter with incomprehensible mystery all lead us to profound silence where we simply know something to be true. Have you trusted enough to allow your relationship with God to bring you to this place or are you still too skeptical? ©LPi

RECOGNIZE GOD IN YOUR ORDINARY MOMENTS

The Choice of Stewardship

What does it mean to be a good steward? Does it mean to be an active parishioner, or something more? Are we better stewards because we give more in terms of our money and time to our parish, or are we called to do even more than that?

The truth is that stewardship is a way of life. We are not simply called to be active parishioners, but instead be

active disciples all the time. In fact, what we learn to do in our parish should serve as preparation for the mission field of the world. What have we really done if we only act like disciples of Jesus Christ while we are assembled with others who claim to be the same?

The choice before us is to give of ourselves in all aspects of our day and life. The call of Jesus will come in our everyday lives with our co-workers, family, and friends more often than it will within our parish community. First, if we can't become good stewards

when we are among those who proclaim Jesus as Lord, how will we be able to do so when we are with those who are non-believers? Second, when our muscles of gratitude, generosity, and graciousness are strengthened within our parish community, we are more able to meet the challenges of this world. However, we do not become good stewards by accident. We must always choose to live this way. What will you choose?

– Tracy Earl Welliver ©LPi

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