

14th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - JULY 8, 2018

SUNDAY'S READINGS - EXCERPTS TO PLACE IN YOUR COMMUNICATIONS

First Reading:

They shall know that a prophet has been among them. (Ez 2:5b)

Psalm:

Our eyes are fixed on the Lord, pleading for his mercy. (Ps 123)

Second Reading:

But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you,
for power is made perfect in weakness." (2 Cor 12:9a)

Gospel:

When the sabbath came he began to teach in the synagogue,
and many who heard him were astonished.

They said, "Where did this man get all this?

What kind of wisdom has been given him?

What mighty deeds are wrought by his hands!" (Mk 6:2)

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WEEKLY READINGS AND OBSERVANCES - ENGAGE PARISHIONERS IN DAILY MASS AND PRAYER

Readings for the Week of July 8, 2018

Sunday: Ez 2:2-5/Ps 123:1-2, 2, 3-4 [2cd]/2 Cor 12:7-10/Mk 6:1-6a

Monday: Hos 2:16, 17b-18, 21-22/Ps 145:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9 [8a]/Mt 9:18-26

Tuesday: Hos 8:4-7, 11-13/Ps 115:3-4, 5-6, 7ab-8, 9-10 [9a]/Mt 9:32-38

Wednesday: Hos 10:1-3, 7-8, 12/Ps 105:2-3, 4-5, 6-7 [4b]/Mt 10:1-7

Thursday: Hos 11:1-4, 8e-9/Ps 80:2ac and 3b, 15-16 [4b]/Mt 10:7-15

Friday: Hos 14:2-10/Ps 51:3-4, 8-9, 12-13, 14 and 17 [17b]/Mt 10:16-23

Saturday: Is 6:1-8/Ps 93:1ab, 1cd-2, 5 [1a]/Mt 10:24-33

Next Sunday: Am 7:12-15/Ps 85:9-10, 11-12, 13-14 [8]/Eph 1:3-14 or 1:3-10/Mk 6:7-13

Observances for the Week of July 8, 2018

Domingo: 14o Domingo del Tiempo Ordinario

Lunes: San Agustín Zhao Rong y compañeros, mártires

Martes: - - -

Miércoles: San Benedicto, abad

Jueves: - - -

Viernes: San Enrique

Sábado: Santa Kateri Tekakwitha, virgen

Domingo siguiente: 15o Domingo del Tiempo Ordinario

GOSPEL MEDITATION - ENCOURAGE DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE

July 8, 2018 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

If you have been closely following the Sunday readings, today's Gospel could sound a bit like a broken record. Four weeks ago, the Gospel told of Jesus visiting his home of Nazareth and being poorly received by his family members. Jesus had attracted a large crowd as he preached, and his concerned relatives came to bring him home. Jesus, they thought, was out of his league. Today Jesus takes things further. He returns to Nazareth. Rather than preaching from his house, he enters the synagogue. He speaks eloquently. The listeners acknowledge that "wisdom has been given him" and recognize the "mighty deeds wrought by his hands," but it is too much for them to bear. "Is he not the carpenter, the son of Mary?" The listeners know his whole clan, his male and female relatives. Jesus as carpenter was acceptable. Even Jesus as fringe preacher was interesting enough to draw a crowd. But Jesus as authoritative teacher is too much. "They took offense at him."

As Christians, we have known the truth of Jesus' identity since we were first introduced to him. He is fully human and fully divine. He is the second person of the Trinity. It could be easy to look down on these 1st century listeners for their lack of faith. But where do we expect to learn our own lessons? The more we age, the easier it is to believe we understand the world and how it works. We have experience with people, with the Church, with politics, and with the affairs of daily living. We have developed criteria for first impressions. We categorize. Today we remember that the Christian life requires humility. Jesus' listeners have an expectation of how things should be, and their lack of faith causes doubt in others. "He was not able to perform any mighty deeds there." Do your assumptions limit your perspective? Who can you learn from that you did not expect?

LIVE THE LITURGY - INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

It seems that Jesus is always facing some kind of opposition. Today, those from his native place amaze him because of their lack of faith. We oppose Jesus as well. It is not easy to be challenged and realize our great need to change. We grow comfortable with ourselves and our surroundings and resist change. We become defensive when the wisdom Jesus utters asks us to leave ourselves and our concerns and think more about others. We lack faith in God, faith in ourselves, and faith in one another. We are asked to keep our eyes fixed on the Lord and allow ourselves to be stretched. Jesus knows what he is talking about. Do we really believe this?

EVERYDAY STEWARDSHIP - RECOGNIZE GOD IN YOUR ORDINARY MOMENTS

Sometimes we need a dose of healthy skepticism. Do you see some of the claims on the Internet, in social media, or even on the cover of supermarket tabloids? If we are not careful, we can easily be led astray.

However, when we find ourselves skeptical all the time, unable to trust anyone or anything, we have a problem. Trust is essential in a conversion process, and we all are in a continual process of turning toward and moving closer to God. If we find it hard to trust the promises of God, then we will find ourselves lost and bewildered.

Sometimes the biggest obstacle to a stewardship way of life is lack of trust. This is true for individuals as well as parish communities. Do we believe that God will provide for our needs? Do we believe that if we give it all away we will receive even more in abundance? Do we believe that there is true freedom in complete surrender?

Many will say that the principles of a stewardship way of life sound good spirituality and are inspiring. But when really faced with the tough decisions, they will fall back on placing trust in themselves, material goods, or money. Are we true disciples and good stewards as we claim? Where do you place your trust? Have you chosen a path where you are all in or are you still keeping something for yourself because you just aren't sure all this talk of "consider the lilies" is real or just pretty words on a page?

-Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - INVITE PARISHIONERS TO REFLECT AND RESPOND TO SCRIPTURE

First Reading

Today, we hear the call of the priest Ezekiel to be a "prophet" for God to the "rebellious" Israelites in captivity in Babylon. What does this tell us about the mercy of God?

Second Reading

Paul speaks of a "thorn in his flesh" that was given as a divine directive to keep him humble and focused on Christ. How do you practice humility in your faith?

Gospel Reading

What do you find most astonishing about Mark's account of Jesus' rejection at Nazareth?

CATHOLIC QUOTES - WORDS TO INSPIRE THE FAITHFUL

Christ has illumined you with wisdom and the fires of His presence ... let it blaze!

-Caryll Houselander

WHY DO WE DO THAT? - CATHOLIC TRADITIONS EXPLAINED

Question:

We are considering homeschooling our children. Does this present a problem when it is time for them to receive the sacraments? What must we do?

Answer: Homeschooling is legal in all 50 states, and like other types of education, has its advantages and its drawbacks. There are many factors to consider, and each family has to decide what the best way to educate its children is. With religious education, many dioceses have a formal policy that outlines procedures and expectations, some of which include more than just academic information. Call the religious education office to find out what they are for your area.

In general, though, an appointment with your parish priest to discuss your situation is the best first step. An opportunity to discuss what is available, what the expectations are for each sacrament, and how you can best prepare your child helps make your time of preparation more effective. The priest can direct you to good catechetical materials, parent information classes, and other choices and possibilities for your child. All parents need to be part of their child's religious education, taking a lead in instilling the values and beliefs of their faith. Communication and information helps us all to teach and preach the Gospel as Jesus did.