

22nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - SEPTEMBER 2, 2018

SUNDAY'S READINGS - EXCERPTS TO PLACE IN YOUR COMMUNICATIONS

First Reading:

In your observance of the commandments of the LORD, your God,
which I enjoin upon you,
you shall not add to what I command you nor subtract from it. (Dt 4:2)

Psalm:

The one who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord. (Ps 15)

Second Reading:

All good giving and every perfect gift is from above,
coming down from the Father of lights (Jas: 1:17a)

Gospel:

So the Pharisees and scribes questioned him,
"Why do your disciples not follow the tradition of the elders
but instead eat a meal with unclean hands?" (Mk 7:5)

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

Readings for the Week of September 2, 2018

Sunday: Dt 4:1-2, 6-8/Ps 15:2-3, 3-4, 4-5 [1a]/Jas 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27/
Mk 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Monday: 1 Cor 2:1-5/Ps 119:97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102 [97]/Lk 4:16-30

Tuesday: 1 Cor 2:10b-16/Ps 145:8-9, 10-11, 12-13ab, 13cd-14 [17]/Lk 4:31-37

Wednesday: 1 Cor 3:1-9/Ps 33:12-13, 14-15, 20-21 [12]/Lk 4:38-44

Thursday: 1 Cor 3:18-23/Ps 24:1bc-2, 3-4ab, 5-6 [1]/Lk 5:1-11

Friday: 1 Cor 4:1-5/Ps 37:3-4, 5-6, 27-28, 39-40 [39a]/Lk 5:33-39

Saturday: Mi 5:1-4a or Rom 8:28-30/Ps 13:6ab, 6c [Is 61:10]/Mt 1:1-16, 18-23 or 1:18-23

Next Sunday: Is 35:4-7a/Ps 146:7, 8-9, 9-10 [1b]/Jas 2:1-5/Mk 7:31-37

Observances for the Week of September 2, 2018

Sunday: 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Monday: St. Gregory the Great, Pope & Doctor of the Church

Tuesday: ---

Wednesday: St. Teresa of Calcutta

Thursday: ---

Friday: ---

Saturday: The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary; Our Lady of Charity (Cuba)

Next Sunday: 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

GOSPEL MEDITATION - ENCOURAGE DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE

September 2, 2018 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Judgment tends to have a bad reputation. We often associate it with condemnation, and in the Gospels, we associate it with the Pharisees. Today's Gospel features the Pharisees doing exactly what we expect. "They observed that some of his disciples ate their meals with unclean, that is, unwashed, hands." The Jewish people had strict purification laws that applied to all areas of life. The Pharisees attempt to accuse Jesus of not following the ancestral traditions. Jesus doesn't take offense at their judgments per se. He instead points out the hypocrisy of their words. "You hypocrites ? this people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me."

From there, Jesus turns his attention to the concerns of the heart. "The things that come from within are what defile." He lists off a number of sins, including some the Pharisees were likely struggling with, including evil thoughts, envy, and arrogance. When we examine the list, perhaps we're reminded of our own trips to the confessional! As we strive to follow Jesus and live with integrity, we must be aware of our hearts. We must judge our own actions. Are they leading us closer to God or away from Him? Are we growing in love of our neighbor, or are we becoming more closed in on ourselves?

As we move into this week, consider the state of our own heart. Perhaps you are overly scrupulous in less important areas. Perhaps there are large areas of overlooked sin that you've excused for too long. Whatever it is, the judgment of God need not cripple us. He offers us a share in His mercy as soon as we turn to Him. This week, allow your heart to be transformed!

LIVE THE LITURGY - INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

In response to how the Pharisees and scribes lived their faith, Jesus said, "This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me." Both good and evil impulses come from our hearts. Which one has the upper hand depends on how well a person has taken on the mind and heart of God. How well we live our faith is determined by the same. As Pope Francis tells us, Jesus is present in all of our brothers and sisters, especially those who endure suffering like his own. Our world is full of tragedy, conflict, and suffering: slave labor, diseases, wars, terrorism, exploitation, famine, human trafficking. We cannot simply pay lip service to the evils of the world ? we must act!

EVERYDAY STEWARDSHIP - RECOGNIZE GOD IN YOUR ORDINARY MOMENTS

Justice is a concept under attack in today's world. When I watch the news, I see so many distortions of justice. One person's notion of fairness is sometimes far from another's understanding of justice. Perhaps the issue is that human justice often becomes corrupted by selfishness and greed. Justice for one's self always seems more important than justice for another. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are called to use what we have been given not only to fight for human justice alone, but also to offer a more benevolent justice that can only come from God.

We are called to offer all we have to God for His greater intentions. Our gifts cannot only level the playing field for some but can serve as instruments of grace for those who, in the eyes of the world, do not even deserve it. In God's framework of justice, second chances and overflowing generosity are commonplace. Everyone created in the image of God deserves love regardless of their state in life or the actions they have taken against another. The world will never understand this type of justice. Humans have a hard enough time figuring out the simple concepts of equity or fair play. For those who do not believe in Jesus, his justice seems even more difficult to comprehend. In fact, it can appear downright crazy.

--Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

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

First Reading

The Book of Deuteronomy contains a series of speeches that Moses delivered to the Israelites prior to their entry into the Promised Land. In today's speech, Moses emphasizes the importance of carefully observing the Lord's commandments as key to being a great nation. Why do you think believers often fall short of following God's laws?

Second Reading

The letter of James is a prime example of early Christian wisdom literature. What advice does James offer in regard to practicing one's faith?

Gospel Reading

The Pharisees and scribes, concerned about Jewish purity laws, learn a lesson today from Jesus about where defilement resides -- within people's hearts. How do you work at being clean of heart?

CATHOLIC QUOTES - WORDS TO INSPIRE THE FAITHFUL

What do they not see, who see Him in all things?

--St. Gregory the Great

WHY DO WE DO THAT? - CATHOLIC LIFE EXPLAINED

Question:

As we celebrate Labor Day, can you tell me about Catholic teaching regarding labor?

Answer: One of the most important principles of Catholic social teaching is the dignity of work and the rights of workers. Four encyclicals address this foundational social teaching: Rerum Novarum (1891) by Leo XIII, Quadragesimo Anno (1931) by Pius XI, Laborem Exercens (1981), and Centesimus Annus (1991) by John Paul II. They address both the theology and dignity of work. In Genesis, God takes the initiative in creating the world, calling forth human beings to be faithful stewards of creation. We are thus formed to share in God's continuing creative activity by partnering with God in finishing the world and helping bring it to completion and fulfillment. From this perspective, work can be spiritually understood in terms of sharing in God's ongoing activity to build, create, and transform the world. Human beings are co-creators with God. This vocation demands self-discipline.

Besides an exercise in self-discipline, work is also the means by which we develop and fulfill ourselves. In work, we shape the world and our environment. Through work, we also shape ourselves. Pope John Paul II summarized this point in Laborem Exercens #6, "the value of work is not primarily the kind of work being done, but the fact that the one who is doing it is a person."

Labor Day offers an excellent opportunity to reflect on how we view work in light of our Catholic social teaching.