

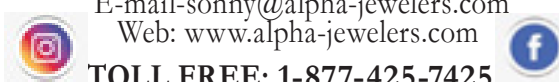


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Special Projects Coordinator

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"And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."
~ Hebrews 13:16



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September 17, 2023

Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

"How often must I forgive my brother if he wrongs me?" (Mt. 18:21)



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Rev. Fr. Marcel Gham
Rev. Fr. Andrew Lesko

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WEEKENDS

Saturday: 7:00AM, 4:30PM (Vigil Mass)
Sunday: 7:00AM, 10:00AM, and 12:15PM (Spanish)

WEEKDAYS

Monday to Friday: 7:00AM
Wednesday: 12:15PM

EUCHARISTIC ADORATION
Wednesday from 7:45AM - 11:45AM

Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Wednesday before Masses

MISSION STATEMENT

To continue the ministry of Jesus Christ by:

Preaching the Good News to a Caribbean community according to the magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church. Furthering the faith of God's people with sound teaching and meaningful liturgies in keeping with the apostolic tradition. Promoting and implementing inclusive strategies to meet the needs of the people of God who worship at Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral.

CONFESSIONS

Wednesday: 11:45AM - 12:10PM
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Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Year A

First Reading: Sirach 27: 03—28: 7
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 103: 1-4, 9-12
Second Reading: Romans 14: 7-9
Gospel: Matthew 18: 21-35

REFLECTION
by: Rev. Fr. Marcel Gham

“How often must I forgive my brother if he wrongs me?”
(Mt. 18:21)

Last Sunday, the Word God invited us to reflect on our meaningful presence to others and our personal responsibility for one another through fraternal correction. Today’s liturgy focuses us on one of the most difficult Christian challenges: FORGIVENESS. How difficult it is for us to forgive! Within our hearts we cultivate resentments, we spend many hours thinking over the problems that arise in our family and social relationships. When people treat us unjustly, everything inside us screams for revenge. Once a father whose son had been murdered, came to me and expressed his anger and his desire to throttle the perpetrator by saying, “Father, sorry, I can never forgive them”. Like this man, many people today think that it is their right to return evil for evil; if they cannot, they feel they have lost their freedom. In fact, revenge is settled anger and the desire to revenge against someone who has injured us lies deep in the human heart.

Consequently, like Peter in the gospel, many people today still ask: “How often must I forgive my brother if he wrongs me? As often as seven times?” Asked in another way, what do we do if a brother asks for forgiveness in repentance, but then sins again, and this not once, but repeatedly? In the Hebrew mentality, the number seven signified totality, that which is complete, finished, and perfect. That is why Peter asks if forgiveness is limited to “seven times”. In other words, does forgiveness have a limit or not?

Among the teachers of the Law, it was a matter of debate on what should be the legal number for forgiving those who relapsed into sin. Generally, it was considered that up to four times. For they believed that forgiveness should have a limit, that is, a number. Thus, by proposing up to “seven times” Peter had imagined forgiveness for Jesus to mean complete and perfect, that is, without limits. Accordingly, to put have put any number other than the seven, could have been to limit forgiveness for Jesus, and turn it into an imperfect act.

However, the Lord’s answer, not only “seven times,” but “seventy times seven”, indicates that forgiveness is unlimited. That is to say, that forgiveness has to be absolute; that coming from the experience God’s infinite mercy, the experience of having been forgiven by God himself, forgiveness has to be expressed not only in the unlimited number of times that the repentant sinner is forgiven, but also in the interior attitude of totally forgiving each sin. Therefore, in forgiveness, we are not supposed to be keeping pending accounts, or saying that “I forgive, but I am counting them in order to get them in your face at some point”. It is like saying to a repentant brother: “OK, I forgive you, but be careful, I am keeping score and there is a limit to forgiveness”. In the end, it is not an absolute forgiveness, but forgiveness that is conditioned to amendment, with the possibility that by reoffending the sinner could be definitively excluded from forgiveness, despite his new repentance.

Reflection(continued)

The forgiveness that the Lord asks of his disciples must be as perfect as the forgiveness that God offers to the sinner who repents, a forgiveness that instead of counting the sins or the enormity of the debt, seeks always and above all to recover the sinner, the son, the daughter.

Given the importance of this teaching, the Lord immediately proposes a parable or comparison, to insist on the need to forgive one’s brother in order to attain God’s forgiveness even when the debt is exorbitant. That is to say that forgiveness for a Christian cannot be an occasional act but a permanent attitude. Therefore, unforgiveness is self-destructive, because it breaks the bridge over which we must all pass ourselves, since everyone is in need of forgiveness: “And that is how my heavenly Father will deal with you unless you each forgive each other from the heart” (Mt. 18:25). Hence, a mean and revengeful disposition shuts out God’s forgiveness. And from common sense Ben Sira in the First Reading asks rhetorically: “Can one refuse mercy to a sinner like oneself, yet seek pardon for one own sins?” (Eccl. 28:9).

Underneath this idea of forgiveness is the teaching that within his plan of salvation, God does not want forgiveness to remain within the individual who benefits from it, but rather to radiate it out to others. That is why in the Lord’s Prayer, we see this dynamic of forgiveness beautifully expressed in the following words: “Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us”. Above all, let us keep in mind that to err is human but to forgive is divine.

The Tabernacle Light in the Cathedral is lit this week in Memory of the late Foundress of the Virgin Islands Catholic Islander Deceased Mary Conway
Requested by Lillia E. King

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if you were already there, and I unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen
(Saint Alphonsus Liguori)

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Pray without ceasing
1 Thessalonians 5:17

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JUBILEE YEAR PRAYER
In preparation for the 250th Anniversary
of presence in this territory

Eternal Father, In this, the Jubilee Year of Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral, we praise you for all blessings we have received over the past 250 years of our existence. We bless you for the lives of all those who, throughout the centuries, have helped build this vibrant community of love and service. May they rest eternally in Your divine and merciful presence. We give you thanks for all the people who gather in this Cathedral to worship you, striving to turn away from sin and follow the teachings of the faithful disciples of your Son Jesus-Christ. May Your Holy Spirit continue to lead us on the path of faith, hope, and charity, so that in every aspect of our lives, and inspired by the example of our patron saints Peter and Paul, we may always be joyous witnesses of Jesus Christ in the world. Amen

PASTORAL SERVICES
FOR THE COMMUNITY

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM:
Baptisms are generally held on the last Sunday of the month. Requests for a different date and time will be honored to the extent possible. Parents and sponsors who have not yet received the required baptismal instruction are expected to do so by attending our baptismal preparation program. Call the parish office well in advance so that class arrangements can be made.

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE:
Anyone wishing to have his or her wedding celebrated at Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral must contact the parish office 9-12 months prior to the celebration and talk to a priest for pre-wedding counseling. Please visit our website www.cathedralvi.org or call us at 340-774-0201. The Sacrament of Marriage is generally celebrated on a Saturday between the hours of 11:00AM and 2:00PM. Please contact the parish priest if you would like a different time for your wedding. (Note that Saturday mornings are reserved for cleaning and decorating the cathedral.)

VISITING AND ANNOINTING THE SICK:
If anyone in your family is sick or shut-in, please inform the parish office so that we can pray for them and arrange to visit them. Please note that the hospital does not notify us when Catholics are in the hospital. Please call the parish office to inform us of a Catholic in the hospital who needs to have a priest visit. Thank you!

FUNERAL MASSES:
Funeral Masses at Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral are held on the designated day at 9:30AM. Please make arrangements with the Church office before the funeral home to assure availability of the date requested. The Funeral Program should read “**Christian Burial**” on the cover. If you would like a different time, please contact the parish priest. Viewings will not take place inside the cathedral. Funerals generally are not held on weekends (Saturday or Sunday). Thank you for your cooperation.



DAILY READINGS
TWENTY-FOURTH WEEK IN ORDINARY TIME

Monday, September 18, 2023
First Reading: 1 Timothy 2: 1-8
Gospel: Luke 7: 1-10

Tuesday, September 19, 2023
Saint Januarius, Bishop, Martyr
First Reading: 1 Timothy 3: 1-13
Gospel: Luke 7: 11-17

Wednesday, September 20, 2023
Saints Andrew Kim Tae-gon, Priest, & Paul Chong Ha-sang, and Companions, Martyrs
First Reading: 1 Timothy 3: 14-16
Gospel: Luke 9: 23-26

Thursday, September 21, 2023
St. Matthem, Apostle & Evangelist
First Reading: Ephesians 4: 1-17, 11-13
Gospel: Matthew 9: 9-13

Friday, September 22, 2023
First Reading: 1 Timothy 6: 2c-12
Gospel: Luke 8: 1-3

Saturday, September 23, 2023
Saint Pius of Pietrelcina, Priest
First Reading: 1 Timothy 6: 13-16
Gospel: Luke 8: 4-15

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

- Please be aware that during the COVID-19 pandemic, we recommend the following practices:
1. Wear a face covering in the cathedral.
 2. Sanitize your hands.
 3. Attempt to maintain a social distance of six feet.
 4. Consider receiving Holy Communion in hand.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CCD REGISTRATION:
Parents, please register your children for the CCD classes, which began on September 10, 2023. The registration forms can be picked up at the church office or online at www.cathedralvi.org. Please include a copy of your child’s birth certificate for new students. Also, please include a copy of the certificate of the last sacrament received for all students new and returning.

WOMEN’S RETREAT:
St. Anne’s Chapel in Frenchtown is hosting a Women’s Retreat on Saturday, September 23, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. with confessions beginning at 9:30 a.m.

PRIVATE VIEWING OF THE NEW MOVIE “SOUND OF FREEDOM:
Don’t miss the re-showing of the “Sound of Freedom” movie viewing hosted by the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women. Join us in St. Croix on Sunday, September 17, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. and in St. Thomas on Sunday, September 24, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. at the Caribbean Cinemas. Tickets cost \$10.00 at the parish offices and the chancery office. Please consider donating to support the event. An inspiring film about rescuing trafficked children. Let’s unite as Catholics to protect God’s children. Call 340-774-3166 (O) or 340-642-7052 (M).

MONTH OF THE BIBLE:
September is recognized as the month of the bible, any parishioner who wishes to have their bibles blessed, or enthroned at home, please contact the church office. We encourage everyone to read the bible as nourishment of the word of God.

STS. PETER & PAUL ALUMNI:
Save the dates : March 16th & 17th, 2024 for: **JAGUARS ALUMNI REUNION** events. (more information will be sent to you) Please email your class graduation year, name - first, maiden, last and email address to: stspeterpaulalumni@gmail.com. If an email address is not available, write the requested information plus your mailing address on paper and drop in the collection basket at the Masses.

MAGNIFICAT:
There are some September issues of the Magnificat availbale for sale in the Church office.

MASS INTENTIONS

SATURDAY, September 16, 2023
7:00AM † Teddy Larsen - Rb. Pearla Larsen & family

4:30PM - † Sir Knolly Beazer - Rb. J.C. Lynch & family

† David Canton - Rb. godchildren J. Lynch & K. Stridiron

SUNDAY, September 17, 2023
7:00AM † Viola & Thomas R. Blake - Rb. a friend

10:00AM † Susanna Brin - Rb. Cynthia Smith & family

† Olman Connell - Rb. the Connell family

12:15PM

MONDAY, September 18, 2023
7:00AM Brian Mills -Rb. his mother, Yvonne Woods-Mills

TUESDAY, September 19, 2023
7:00AM

WEDNESDAY, September 20, 2023
7:00AM † Cecilia A. Quetel - Rb. Leo and Joyce Gibs & family

12:15PM Sandra Eusebe to the Holy Spirit -
Rb. Mary Pemberton

THURSDAY, September 21, 2023
7:00AM

FRIDAY, September 22, 2023
7:00AM Humphrey, Hendricks, & Larsen family -
Rb. Pearla Larsen & family

SATURDAY, September 23, 2023
7:00 AM † Cecilia A. Quetel - Rb. Leo and Joyce Gibs & family

4:30 PM In Honor of St. Jude for protection & Kimo St. Luce - Rb. by his mother

Hurricane Prayer

God, All-powerful Father, Christ, Our Savior, Spirit of Love, You reveal yourself in the depths of our being, drawing us to share in Your life and love. Be near to the people formed in Your image, close to the world Your love brings to life.

Save us from all harm, draw us ever closer to You as we confidently seek Your protection from the destructive force of all storms which frighten us. Let every hurricane or natural threat of disaster serve only to blow us ever more securely into Your loving, merciful embrace.

We ask this, Father, with the intercession of the Virgin Mother, Mary, Lady of all Nations, through your Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen

Vigésimo Cuarto Domingo del Tiempo Ordinario Año A
Primera lectura: Eclesiástico 27:03-28:7
Salmo responsorial: Salmo 103: 1-4, 9-12
Segunda lectura: Romanos 14:7-9
Evangelio: Mateo 18: 21-35

REFLEXIÓN
por: Rev. P. Marcel Gham

“¿Con qué frecuencia debo perdonar a mi hermano si me hace daño?” (Mateo 18:21)

El domingo pasado, la Palabra de Dios nos invitó a reflexionar sobre nuestra presencia significativa ante los demás y nuestra responsabilidad personal unos por otros a través de la corrección fraterna. La liturgia de hoy nos centra en uno de los desafíos cristianos más difíciles: EL PERDON. ¡Qué difícil nos resulta perdonar! Dentro de nuestro corazón cultivamos resentimientos, pasamos muchas horas pensando en los problemas que surgen en nuestras relaciones familiares y sociales. Cuando la gente nos trata injustamente, todo dentro de nosotros clama venganza. Una vez, un padre cuyo hijo había sido asesinado vino a verme y expresó su enojo y su deseo de estrangular al perpetrador diciendo: “Padre, lo siento, nunca podré perdonarlos”. Como este hombre, muchas personas hoy piensan que tienen derecho a devolver mal por mal; si no pueden, sienten que han perdido su libertad. De hecho, la venganza es ira contenida y el deseo de vengarse de alguien que nos ha herido está en lo más profundo del corazón humano.

Por eso, como Pedro en el evangelio, mucha gente todavía hoy se pregunta: “¿Cuántas veces debo perdonar a mi hermano si me hace daño? ¿Hasta siete veces? Preguntado de otra manera; ¿Qué hacemos si un hermano pide perdón arrepentido, pero luego vuelve a pecar, y esto no una vez, sino repetidamente? En la mentalidad hebrea, el número siete significaba la totalidad, lo que es completo, acabado y perfecto. Por eso Pedro pregunta si el perdón se limita a “siete veces”. En otras palabras, ¿el perdón tiene un límite o no?

Entre los maestros de la Ley se debatía cuál debía ser el número legal para perdonar a quienes recaían en el pecado. Generalmente se consideró que hasta cuatro veces. Porque creían que el perdón debía tener un límite, es decir, un número. Así, al proponer hasta “siete veces”, Pedro había imaginado que el perdón para Jesús significaba completo y perfecto, es decir, sin límites. Por lo tanto, poner cualquier número distinto del siete podría haber sido limitar el perdón a Jesús y convertirlo en un acto imperfecto.

Sin embargo, la respuesta del Señor, no sólo “siete veces”, sino “setenta veces siete”, indica que el perdón es ilimitado. Es decir, que el perdón tiene que ser absoluto; que proveniente de la experiencia de la infinita misericordia de Dios, de la experiencia de Habiendo sido perdonados por el mismo Dios, el perdón tiene que expresarse no sólo en las ilimitadas veces que el pecador arrepentido es perdonado, sino también en la actitud interior de perdonar totalmente cada pecado, por lo que en el perdón no debemos ser llevar cuentas pendientes, o decir que “te perdono, pero las estoy contando para en algún momento te las tengo en cara”, es como decirle a un hermano arrepentido: “Vale, te perdono, pero ten cuidado, te Estoy llevando la cuenta y el perdón tiene un límite”. Al final, no se trata de un perdón absoluto, sino de un perdón condicionado a la enmienda, con la posibilidad de que reincidiendo el pecador quede definitivamente excluido del perdón, a pesar de su nuevo arrepentimiento.

NUESTRA IGLESIA Y NUESTRA ESCUELA SON AMBIENTES SEGUROS:
Todos estamos comprometidos con la protección de los niños en nuestras instituciones.
Si nota algún comportamiento nocivo hacia nuestros hijos, no dude en ponerse en contacto con nosotros lo antes posible.
gracias.

REFLEXIÓN continuado

El perdón que el Señor pide a sus discípulos debe ser tan perfecto como el perdón que Dios ofrece al pecador que se arrepiente, un perdón que en lugar de contar los pecados o la enormidad de la deuda, busque siempre y sobre todo recuperar al pecador, el hijo, la hija.

Dada la importancia de esta enseñanza, el Señor propone inmediatamente una parábola o comparación, para insistir en la necesidad de perdonar al hermano para alcanzar el perdón de Dios incluso cuando la deuda es exorbitante. Es decir que el perdón para un cristiano no puede ser un acto ocasional sino una actitud permanente. Por lo tanto, la falta de perdón es autodestructiva, porque rompe el puente por el que todos debemos pasar, ya que todos tenemos necesidad de perdón: “Y así hará con vosotros mi Padre celestial, a menos que cada uno de vosotros os perdonéis de corazón”. ” (Mt. 18:25). Por lo tanto, una disposición mezquina y vengativa excluye el perdón de Dios. Y desde el sentido común, Ben Sira en la Primera Lectura pregunta retóricamente: “¿Se puede negar la misericordia a un pecador como uno y, sin embargo, buscar el perdón de los propios pecados?” (Eclesiastés 28:9).

Detrás de esta idea del perdón está la enseñanza de que dentro de su plan de salvación, Dios no quiere que el perdón permanezca dentro del individuo que se beneficia de él, sino que lo irradie a otros. Por eso, en el Padre Nuestro vemos esta dinámica del perdón bellamente expresada en las siguientes palabras: “Perdónanos nuestras ofensas, como nosotros perdonamos a los que nos ofenden”. Sobre todo, tengamos presente que errar es humano pero perdonar es divino.

ANUNCIOS

EX ALUMNOS DE SAN PEDRO Y SAN PABLO:

Reserve las fechas: 16 y 17 de marzo de 2024 para: eventos JAGUARS ALUMNI REUNION . (se le enviará más información)
Envíe un correo electrónico a su año de graduación de clase, nombre: primero, soltera, último y dirección de correo electrónico a: stspeterpaulalumni@gmail.com. Si una dirección de correo electrónico no está disponible, escriba la información solicitada más su dirección postal en papel y coloque en la canasta de recolección en las Misas.

VISIONADO PRIVADO DE LA NUEVA PELÍCULA “SOUND OF FREEDOM:

No se pierda la repetición de la película “Sound of Freedom” organizada por el Consejo Diocesano de Mujeres Católicas. Únase a nosotros en St. Croix el domingo 17 de septiembre de 2023 a las 3:00 p.m. y en St. Thomas el domingo 24 de septiembre de 2023 a las 3:00 p.m. en Caribbean Cinemas. Los boletos cuestan \$10.00 en las oficinas parroquiales y en la oficina de la cancillería. Por favor considere donar para apoyar el evento. Una película inspiradora sobre el rescate de niños víctimas de la trata. Unámonos como católicos para proteger a los hijos de Dios. Llame al 340-774-3166 (O) o al 340-642-7052 (M).

MES DE LA BIBLIA:

Septiembre es reconocido como el mes de la Biblia, cualquier feligrés que desee que sus biblias sean bendecidas o entronizadas en casa, comuníquese con la oficina de la iglesia. Animamos a todos a leer la Biblia como alimento de la palabra de Dios.

OUR CHURCH AND OUR SCHOOL ARE SAFE ENVIRONMENTS:

We are all committed to the protection of the children in our institutions. **If you notice any harmful behavior toward our children, do not hesitate to contact us as soon as possible.** Thank you.

**SECOND COLLECTION
WILL BE TAKEN AS FOLLOWS:**

Sepetmber 17 - **Cathedral Maintenance & Enhancement**
September 24 - **Priest Retirement**



**OFFERTORY / OFERTORIO
LAST WEEK'S OFFERTORY AMOUNTED TO:
LA OFRENDA DE LA SEMANA PASADA SUMÓ**

SEPTEMBER 10, 2023

4:30PM	\$ 663.00	\$ 166.00
7:00AM	\$ 1605.00	\$ 735.55
10:00AM	\$ 1658.36	\$ 679.01
12:15PM	\$ 405.99	\$ 170.00
TOTAL	\$ 4,332.35	\$ 1,750.56

*Thank you
for your
donation!*

*Gracias por
su donación.*

September 6- Wednesday 7:00AM \$57.00 12:15PM \$87.00

E-GIVING:

Please fill out the E-Giving Enrollment Form at the parish office, if you prefer to send your offertory donations using automatic payments from:
* your Checking/Saving account. * your PayPal account.
* your Credit or Debit card. * a Bank-to-Bank transfer.

KEEP OUR SICK & SHUT-INS IN PRAYER

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE FOLLOWING PARISHIONERS:

**HOME OR
NURSING HOME**

LENO ABRAHAM
JENVILLE ANDREWS
ORDETTE ANDREWS
EDWIN ARROYO
MONICA BIRKLEY
EDRIS CALLWOOD
DELITA DELAGARDE
PRISCA DAVIS
RITA DUNCAN
DARIEL EVANS
MICHAEL FARRINGTON
JOKATA GARCIA
MERCEDES GARCÍA
WILFRED GARDIER
ALFREDO GASKIN
ETLA V. GASKIN
ERIC GRAF
MARIA GRIFFIN
ESONIA HASSELL
MILDRED HODGE
KEITH JAMES
ROSE MARIE JOSEPH
EDITH LEBLANC
BERECIA LEWIS
GRACIELA MILLIN
HUGO MOULON
JOSEPH MORRELL
ARACELY NICHOLSON
LEIDA PIZARRO
SONIA PIZARRO
WALTON RAVARIERE
PHYLLIS RODNEY
CYRUS SAMPSON
RAFAELA SANES
PETRONA STANISLAUS
CECILIA HILL-THOMAS
LESTEL TURBE
CHARLES VANTERPOOL
JOHN H. VENZEN
RUTH WALCOTT

**ROY SCHNEIDER
HOSPITAL**

The hospital does not notify us when Catholics are in the hospital. Please call the parish office to inform us of a Catholic in the hospital who needs to have a priest visit. Thank you!



OFF-ISLAND

BISHOP HERBERT A. BEVARD
FR. SIMON PETER OPIRA
FR. JOHN SOLOMON
JANET BENSON
RENEL BREDY
JOYCE CORREA
CELESTINE DAVIS
AUSSSELITA DE FREITAS
LAVERNE FRANCIS
DELTA GEORGE
LOUISE HASSELL ARMSTRONG
JOSEPH HODGE
WINIFRED HODGE
RITA KING
STEPHANY LOUZAN
GWYNNETH MOOLEAAR
JOSEPHINE NOCH
FELIX O'NEAL
RAMÓN ORTIZ
MIRIAM GARCIA RIJO
ROSE ROBERTS
VENIA SAKHRANI
CARLOS SÁNCHEZ
CÉSAR JULIO TIRADO
LIAN VÁZQUEZ
ULRICA VIALET

CATECHESIS

By: Rev. Fr. Marcel Gham



The importance of Regularly Reading the Bible during this month

At the start of this month of September, we were reminded that being the month of the Bible, we should set aside some special time to do personal reading and study of the Bible. Thus, at this mid-point of the month, it would be necessary for us to remind ourselves of the importance of doing a regular reading of the Bible.

Edwin Louis Cole in his Book, *Manhood 101: How to Be a Man of Courage and Integrity in a World of Compromise* highlighted a very painful truth for many: “Everyman is limited by three things: The knowledge in his mind. The strength of his character. The principles upon which he is building his life.” The Bible removes these limitations because it brings the knowledge of the Truth that changes human character, and it establishes principles for the temporal and the eternal life.

The Bible presents us with the history of decisions made by individuals and nations regarding the will of God. Christians today can and must learn from the successes, the mistakes and the failures of those men and women. It is especially worthwhile to consider the consequences of every decision, both good and bad, and the consequences of avoiding timely decision making.

The Bible instructs every person to consider his or her personal way of life: “Be very careful, then, how you live – not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is” (Eph 5:15-17). Every person, especially Christians, on the basis of this text, can easily see in which group he or she belongs: in the group of the wise or the unwise, because the group of the foolish attracts the unwise, while the group of the wise attracts those who understand what the will of God is. While teaching Timothy, his co-worker in the cause of the gospel, the Apostle Paul wrote: “But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim:14-17).

From this and similar parts of the Scriptures, we receive an answer to the question regarding the regular reading and study of the Bible. Thus, it is impossible to be a Christian without at least a partial knowledge and doing of the will of God (Mt 4:4). God’s Word is milk for spiritual babies (1 Pe 2:2; Heb 5:12-13), and solid food for every person (Jn 6:51). It is a light for our path (Ps 119:105), the Truth we can follow (Jn 17:17) and a mirror we can reflect in (Jas 1:23-25). God’s Word is a cleansing water that washes us (Eph 5:25-27) and the spring of living water welling up to eternal life (Jn 4:14). It is the seed (1 Pe 1:23), the sword of the Spirit (Heb 4:12; Eph 6:17) and a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces (Jer 23:29). Our reading of the Bible plays an important part to help us discern the will of God.