

NOTRE DAME PARISH

Fifth Sunday of Easter

"I am the Vine, you are the Branches."



Team player or loner? Inevitably in life, we will play both roles. We will work with others in family, on the job, and in the community. We will put our self-interest aside, so we can work for the common good. There are those rare times we make decisions that place us at odds with others: family, co-workers, the community. We make those choices and we bear

the consequences alone. Sometimes those decisions are selfish. Sometimes they are made based upon conscience. As Christians we might walk the road of conscience disdained by the secular world, but does not mean we are disconnected. Our connection to life is not the world, but someone far greater.

MASS INTENTIONS

- Saturday, May 1 @ 8AM
Joan & Mike King
- Saturday, May 1 @ 4PM
Frank Parkerson
- Sunday, May 2 @ 9:30AM
Sara Beth Rusboldt
Reda Venckus
- Monday, May 3 @ 8AM
Joe & Mary Lou Meell
- Tuesday, May 4 @ 8AM
Greg Alberding
- Wednesday, May 5 @ 8:30AM
Ruth Smith
- Thursday, May 6 @ 8:30AM
Gloria Godfrey
- Friday, May 7 @ 8AM
MaryAnn Merrion
- Saturday, May 8 @ 4PM
Tom, Florence, & young Tom Gately

Let Us Pray

- For the people of India, overtaken by the COVID-19 pandemic
- For our first communicants, for our newly confirmed students
- For those who choose to seek Christ in isolation from Christian communities
- For those who are cut off from families
- For those who bring joy to the spirit through the cultivation of vineyards and production of wine
- For the return of fuller worship and participation as restrictions ease
- For progress in controlling nuclear proliferation and arms sales

Seeking Social Justice Is Essential to Catholic Identity

My introduction to social justice as an essential aspect of Christian faith came in the junior high years at my Catholic school. As an extracurricular, after-school activity, small groups of students would discuss a modern injustice or moral issue, reflect upon it, and propose options to address it. It was the OBSERVE – REFLECT – ACT method. It was the early 1960s and the fruits of Vatican Council II were just beginning to emerge.

From the beginning, Christian communities were noted for their charity – care for the poor, widows, and orphans. Saint Paul often took up collections for needy Christian communities he had founded or visited.

In the absence of advanced medical care, monasteries became hospices for the sick and dying in the fourth century. Many monks and nuns became experts in herbal remedies for illnesses and conditions.

As the Church grew, its appreciation for the dignity of each person as created in God's image increased also. But the application of Christ's teachings has always been a work in progress. Christians have tolerated slavery, racism, ethnic hatred, unjust wars, gender discrimination, persecution of homosexuals, and much more. Often, sadly, the acceptance of these was justified by reference to scripture or Church teaching.

For most of history, Christian charity has been "remedial," not "redemptive." By that I mean that it comforts the afflicted or

soothes the pain, but does not address the cause.

Catholic social justice teaching began to "modernize" or expand during the 19th century Industrial Revolution, when working conditions in large factories became burdensome and inhumane – long hours, low wages, child labor, toxicity, unsafe conditions, and voiceless workers. Many theologians trace the genesis and expansion of Catholic social teaching in Pope Leo XIII's encyclical, *Rerum Novarum* (1891), in which the pontiff addressed the rights and duties of capital and labor.

This was a beginning. Even so, the papal magisterium resisted endorsing the values of democracy until Vatican Council II. Until then, the popes and bishops were generally aligned with monarchies and aristocracies that upheld a state religion, e.g. Catholicism or Evangelicalism. An American Jesuit, John Courtney Murray (1904-1967) was an important influence on Vatican II's Declaration on Religious Freedom, which asserted that all individuals have a right to participate in the faith of their own choice.

At Vatican II, the Church identified itself with "the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties" of people, "especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted (*Gaudium Et Spes*, #1).

I've heard mass-goers say that they do not want to hear politics



from the pulpit. Or, the Church shouldn't be involved in politics. The word "politics" comes from the Greek, meaning "affairs of the cities." Politics is about daily life, and one's faith must penetrate every aspect of life and society.

When someone says the church should avoid politics, I hope they mean "partisanship."

Some Catholic social justice values are non-negotiable: the right to immigrate, the right to life, unjust wars, addressing the needs of the poor, etc. We might differ on how these values are advanced or achieved – strategies of achievement – but a Christian cannot question the goals (See page 5).

To paraphrase Saint Paul, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, **liberal or conservative, Democrat nor Republican**, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Father Keith & Rocco



Log Off and Know that I Am God

By Tish Harrison Warren

If an alien life form visited Earth to learn about the American church and only read so-called Christian Twitter, I'm not sure they would have any idea that we believe in something called the Incarnation, or the Resurrection, or the Ascension. They would, however, know a lot about evangelical voting tendencies, the women's ordination debate, abortion politics, and whatever controversy is currently trending.

Our habitual online discourse often trains us to undervalue the vast mystery of God – with all the wonder and worship it inspires – by immersing ourselves in sociological and theological commentary and debate. These conversations matter, of course. But we are in peril of replacing transcendence with immanence. We miss the deeper things of God for the Christian controversy du jour. There's a term for this temptation that I've only heard among priests: "altar burn." It refers to a particular hazard of our trade. Pastors regularly handle sacred things – chalices and consecrated

bread, but also the Scriptures and the tender moments of people's lives.

There is an inherent danger in this frequent exposure. We come to treat sacred things profanely. We regard holy things too cavalierly. Amid the noise of a mundane workweek, we forget the complete miracle we are proclaiming. Resisting altar burn used to be the special struggle of people who regularly preach, teach, and lead congregations. But now, anyone with a keyboard can speak, teach, or argue about God every day, sunup to sundown.

With this newfound ability, we're all at risk of collective altar burn. The transcendent and utterly overwhelming triune God becomes flattened to a sociological or theological abstraction. Many of us spend far more time on social media than in gathered worship, and that digital space often hinders true repentance, contemplation, or prayer.

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It is harder to approach God as the mysterious creator of the Crab Nebula, sustainer of every minute, and redeemer of the cosmos when we've spent hours reading the words of strangers arguing with other strangers about spiritual things.

Taken up daily, these activities yield a type of God-talk burnout where we lose sight of what is most unspeakable and most powerful about our Creator. Robust notions of truth, beauty, and goodness thin in our imaginations.

So what is the solution to altar burn? It requires us to re-engage the sacredness, the weirdness, the astonishing wonder of God. It requires silence, stillness, worship, and repentance. It requires speaking of God less and seeking God more.

But how? Social media is here to stay. Nonetheless, we have to learn to retreat – not away from discussions of faith but into those older, slower forms of spiritual conversation with real people and with long books. We have to take up practices of solitude, fasting, gathered worship, and the sacraments – those embodied habits that resist being subsumed by technology. And we need whole topologies of spiritual terrain in our life that we never discuss online – parts of ourselves that we keep for God and our embodied communities alone.

Above all, we need to be aware of the trivializing

tendencies of the media we engage with. There is no neutral medium. Technological habits beget our spiritual formation, which beget our devotion and doxology.

“When the door of the steam baths is continually left open, the heat inside rapidly escapes through it,” wrote fifth-century ascetic Diadochus of Photiki. “Likewise the soul, in its desire to say many things, dissipates its remembrance of God through the door of speech.”

Christians now have an opportunity to keep the “door of speech” constantly open. We dissipate our remembrance of God, even as things of faith are ready at our lips – or rather our keyboards.

Although the application is different, the wisdom of Diadochus still stands. He advised believers to “shun verbosity” for “timely silence,” which is “nothing less than the mother of the wisest thoughts.”

Learning “timely silence” is a countercultural act, especially when there are good things to say and an ever-ready medium demanding that we say them. But if we don't resist its demands, our talk of God will slowly replace the worship he alone is due.

Tish Harrison Warren is an Anglican priest. This article appeared in [Christianity Today](#).

2021
CATHOLIC
SERVICES
APPEAL
Notre Dame
Parish Goal:
\$37,796
YTD: \$4,530



Partners in Christ's Work

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

This page outlines ten key principles of Catholic social teaching and describes the way to bring forth in our lives and actions a primary and fundamental response: to desire, seek and protect the good of others.

Principles of Catholic Social Teaching are:

Human Dignity Every human community, every race and culture is equal in dignity and rights. No person should have their dignity or freedom compromised, nor treated as a commodity or mere recipient of aid. Dignity requires equitable access to quality of life and wellbeing.

Preferential option for the poor The needs and rights of the poor and marginalised are given special attention in God's eyes. Caring for the poor is everyone's responsibility.

Political and economic rights All people are obliged to take an active role in the development of socio-economic, political and cultural life and not be passive recipients of other people's decisions.

The common good Every group in society must take into account the rights and aspirations of other groups, and of the wellbeing of the whole human family.

Subsidiarity Responsibility and decision making should be kept as close as possible to the people most affected by a decision or policy. Assistance is offered when individuals or groups are unable to accomplish something on their own. Assistance is given in such a way that it fosters freedom and participation.

Solidarity People are social by nature and can only grow and develop in relationship with others. Solidarity is the capacity to walk with another. It values common prosperity.

Stewardship We have a responsibility to care for the world's goods as stewards and trustees, and not merely, as consumers. Resources are limited and not to be exploited. Stewardship values collaboration above division, and sustainability above short term gain.

Economic justice Every economic decision and institution must be judged on whether it protects or undermines the dignity of the human person. Any economic system is judged by what it does for and to people and by how it permits all to participate in it.

Participation Participation implies a sense of responsibility to influence people, events and circumstances for the better. The Gospel message outlines the need to act with care and concern for one another, and if necessary, to work to correct the wrongs and injustices done to others. Through participation, people can develop the disposition of empathy. Injustice can be overcome through the application of restorative justice principles and processes. These processes promote, reconcile and rebuild right relationships with God and with one another.

Promotion of peace Peace is an outcome of justice and is dependent upon right order among people. Peace is not just the absence of war. Peace involves mutual respect and confidence between peoples and nations. Peace involves collaboration and binding agreements.