Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time - August 16, 2020

The first day at Holy Souls School for the 2020-2021 school year will begin at 8am on Monday, August 16.

Our Lady of the Holy Souls Catholic School is dedicated to providing an education that is built on the Gospel message. Students are helped to build a foundation of faith, hope, love and respect to support all areas of their lives. Students are instructed to strive for academic excellence and self-discipline. Students are encouraged to use their gifts of time, talent, and treasure in service of Christ.

We wish our Principal Nancy Handloser, and Assistant Principal Amber Bagby, all our students, and teachers a successful, safe, and happy school year!

Due to the COVID-19 regulations at this time, all School Masses will attended by school children and staff only. One class be able to attend each week while the other classes will watch Mass online.
Reflection on This Sunday’s Readings

**FIRST READING:** Isaiah 56: 1, 6-7

“A Place of Welcome”

People different from us can really make us uncomfortable. It is like we do not share the same language or rely on the same experiences. We have different circles of friends and different sources of trust. For many of us, the best way to deal with people different from us is to avoid them.

Tolerance is good, but sometimes even tolerance masks prejudice. We tolerate those who are different as long as they act like we do. If they observe our customs, do not hang out in packs of their own kind, and visit our places with respect, we may accept them.

More challenging is to let those who are different from us change our own way of thinking—to let them open our minds to other possibilities and allow us to grow.

God spoke a message of openness through the mouth of the prophet Isaiah. The God known as the originator of the covenant with the Israelites, the God who made them a special possession, offers a different view in this prophecy. God will bring foreigners to the holy mountain and make them joyful in its place of prayer. “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.”

Is your place of worship a place of welcome for those who are different?


**SECOND READING:** Romans 11:13-15, 29-32

“Mercy Beyond Adversity”

God can use adversity to bring blessing. No one wants adversity. We pray for bad times to go away. We envision a world with less pain and suffering, and we ask God to accept this vision.

God does not always answer those prayers. Sometimes the adversity we seek to avoid comes in spite of our prayer. The weather turns bad. Property is destroyed. Illness is not cured. Death comes to a good friend. If adversity comes in spite of our prayer, we may begin to doubt. We doubt the goodness of God, or we doubt the skill of our prayer.

God looks at things differently. Sometimes adversity brings new hope and promise. People rely less on themselves and more on the Spirit. They accept illness and death and live with less selfishness. They realize what matters in life and they thank God for the blessings that abound.

St. Paul rehearses for the Romans how God brought good out of adversity for them. God called everyone to salvation, but not everyone has accepted. Paul tells the Gentiles about the Israelites: “Just as you once disobeyed God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, so they have now disobeyed in order that, by virtue of the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy.”

When the Gentiles rejected the covenant, God gave it to the Israelites. When the Israelites rejected it, God offered it to the Gentiles in Christ. God still looks beyond our adversity and offers mercy.


**GOSPEL:** Matthew 15: 21-28

“Why Pray”

The “foreigners” as Isaiah calls them, the “Gentiles” as Paul calls them, or the “Canaanites” as Matthew calls them, are called to worship the one true God in prayer. As we listen to today’s readings, perhaps we are tempted to ask: Why pray? The question is rhetorical; it is tantamount to asking why should friends talk to one another or people in love kiss one another. Prayer is a way of relating to God, a way of talking to God. The apostles had the opportunity to talk to Jesus in the flesh. We have the opportunity to talk to Jesus Christ in prayer. Our relationship with him must be enthusiastic; it cannot be faint-hearted. John Donne, a fifteenth-century poet, knew what the qualities of good prayer were. Donne asks God to treat him differently from most Christians. The poet does not want God to merely “knock, breathe, shine, and seek to mend,” but also to “break, blow, burn, and make me new” (Holy Sonnets, XIV).

It takes a dynamic faith on our part to come to God in prayer. As Jesus once said, “Knock and the door will be opened to you” (Matthew 7:7). It may take pounding the door down, but if we are as persistent as the woman in today’s Gospel, the results will follow.

Responding to the Word This Week

The persistent woman will accept no excuse from Jesus about why he will not heal her daughter.

For what am I continually asking Jesus in my prayers?

Jesus, today I ask you . . .

*To reflect on this Sunday’s readings online, go to www.usccb.org/bible/readings/081620.cfm
These days are challenging and testing. COVID-19 has had a global impact, influencing societies and individuals everywhere, threatening our lives, in sickness and death, making us rethink the ways we live and interact. Shaking up the foundations of how we live, it is causing us to question the reasonableness and security of how we walk through life.

The wind which is COVID-19 is still blowing strong, and we remain in a cautious and careful situation. I am not sure if we have hit the first wave yet; they say there will be a second wave. And now we make preparations to return to school with all the COVID-19 precautions. It makes us fearful, and perhaps doubtful; perhaps it is making us give way to despair, either because of the enduring threat to our physical health, or mental health, or jobs, or education. What are we to do?

If we are feeling this way, this Sunday’s Gospel is a good one for us who love the Lord. We can find hope in dealing with this or any other crisis. It will provide a deeper faith and surer hope, and the resilience to help us keep walking through this difficult, uncertain, and shifting situation. We are called to walk on water.

We have heard this Gospel many times, and I am sure that we all relate to the disciples in the boat. Storms are scary and being on water intensifies the storm even more. Think about those disciples, who first experienced that wind, the storm at night. They genuinely did not know it was Jesus who came towards them on the water. Matthew indicates Jesus is on land praying in the hills and then he switches his focus to the boat, which is getting pushed further and further across the lake. Someone is seen walking towards them – Matthew does not say who it is at this point, only identifying the figure as Jesus much later in his account. Yes, it could be a ghost, as they exclaim in fear, because fear makes us see many things that are not real.

But the words spoken by this ghostly figure, reveal it is Jesus who says: Get a hold of yourselves. It is I. Do not be afraid. It seems that Peter has some faith in God that God is greater than all nature, that God can walk on water and has power over this most unruly of forces. Willing to believe in Jesus, at least at first, he now has a decision. Peter dares to believe that it is truly Jesus before him on the stormy water. So in an attempt of faith, brave Peter takes a step toward walking on the water. So, in faith onto the water he goes, into great uncertainty. Isn’t this the way it is with God many times in our life when stepping out into uncertainties? God, working through and with his faith, enables Peter to do the impossible. Remember from last week that nothing is impossible with God. This is a great manifestation of God for the purposes of helping people. God has manifested himself upon the water, and is now blessing Peter giving him power to live this faith filled life.

As long as Peter kept his eyes on Jesus he could walk on water. As soon as he turns away and senses the presence of the storm, wind and waves, then his faith falters, the sea begins to swallow him and he cries out: “Lord, save me!” He cries to God, and Jesus, who truly is the Lord, stretches out his hand and answers his prayer. This passage is a very important one in the Gospel of Matthew. It is a major step in the development of the faith of Peter and those with him. It is also given to help our faith.

We are asked, faced with this wind which is this current storm of COVID-19 and the ensuing rough sea, to believe God, working through Jesus is present and can help us through any storm. God is present to each of us – even if normal sacramental encounters are not available to us. Jesus promises to be with us to the end of days. God speaks in the storms of our lives to help us keep walking in faith, love and hope, and so experience calm, no matter what blows in our direction. Then we are asked to be witnesses, pointing out his presence and words to others so that they too may have faith and walk on the water. ‘Have courage! It is I. Do not fear!’

Our faith overcomes our fears. Fear is like this virus that attacks the roots of our belief in God. We do have reason to fear, given the situations and circumstances that face us. Many are even afraid to come to places of worship, to come to Mass.

Yes, our fears are real, but so is our faith. The disciples of Jesus had to face real fear; the boat was being tossed around in the middle of the sea. It was dark, and now they see this figure walking on water. Yes, we know it is Jesus. And Jesus speaks, It is I, the I am, courage! Do not be afraid.

Jesus continues to speak to us, by asking us not to be afraid. He is here; He is with us: whatever storm we might be facing, whenever we feel like we are sinking, He is always there, to reach out and lift us up and place us back into safety and in peace.

I believe in Jesus’ words and in His presence here with us now. Peter’s faith kept him walking on the water. We know the moment he took his eyes off of Jesus is when he was overcome by his fears and sank. Jesus was there to pick him up and put him safely back in the boat. The lesson for Peter and the lesson for us is to keep our eyes on Jesus, not our problems.

Question I ask myself, and invite you to do the same: What would happen if in the storm (I) we did keep our eyes on Jesus? We could walk on water, and we can overcome all things in Christ, not our problems.

The storm was Peter’s opportunity and the rest of the disciples to believe and to put their faith in action. We notice it is only Peter who takes a leap of faith here. Where are the others who are still in the boat? Where is their faith? This is an invitation to us all to live our faith in such a way that we can overcome all things in Christ.

Our storm(s) are opportunities to believe in Jesus, for us to take a leap of faith into our uncertainties, and walk towards the Lord. Remember by keeping our eyes on Jesus we can overcome anything. Once faith is in action, it gives witness for others to also believe in the power and strength of God. So as we receive the Lord, He says to us, “Get a hold of yourselves, it is I. Do not be afraid.”
**Collections/Stewardship Update**

**Mass attendance, August 1 & 2**  191  
**Mass attendance, August 8 & 9**  210  

**Weekend Collections –**  
August 1 & 2  $8,994  
August 8 & 9  $27,907  
**Total August Collections**  $36,901  
**Total Aug. Budgeted Collections**  $100,000  

Actual Collections (7/1/20 - 7/31/20)  $107,150  
Budgeted (7/1/20 - 7/31/20)  $90,000  
Amount in excess of Budget  $17,150  
Maintenance Fund  $761  

Thank you for supporting our church.

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**Walking with Purpose**

Join us for the next season of Walking With Purpose as we discover women of the Old and New Testament and how they were as flawed and broken as we can be, yet the power of God Worked in their lives. Through their stories recorded in Scripture, women of the Bible reach out to touch our “present” in a tender, honest and loving way — woman to woman — with ancient wisdom, sage advice and insights from sorrowful failures and emotional wounds. Learn from their experiences in Discovering Our Dignity: A Study of Women of the Bible, a 22-lesson Bible study. All meetings will start virtually. We are all fairly new to virtual meetings, so the first meeting on September 9th (Wednesday groups) or September 10th (Thursday group) will be an opportunity to walk you through the process. We will have breaks throughout the year and the season will wrap up in the middle of March.

Zoom time slots available are:
- Wednesday Lunch: 12:15 to 1:00pm
- Wednesday Evenings: 6:15 to 7pm
- Thursday Mornings: 9:00 to 9:45am

There is a $40 registration fee which covers the price of the study guide. Scholarships are available. The study is open to women of all faiths. Register at www.holysouls.org. For more information about Walking With Purpose go to www.walkingwithpurpose.com or contact us at WWP@holysouls.org. Registration closes on Sunday, August 30th.

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**Online Giving**

Thank you for using Online Giving. Parishioners who use the service are pleased with how easy it is to set up and manage. If you have not yet signed up for Online Giving, please consider this option. This is the perfect time to begin donating online due to the Coronavirus. Holy Souls Parish needs your continued support! Visit our parish website at www.holysouls.org.

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**FR. MARAIAH & MARY**

**Invite you to pray the Rosary**

Starting in August  
**WEDNESDAYS at 9:00 A.M.**  
In the Courtyard (Bring an outdoor chair)

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The Catholic Diocese of Little Rock is committed to protecting children and young people. If you are aware of abuse or have been abused by Clerics, Church volunteers, or Church workers, please contact the State of Arkansas Hotline for Crimes against Children at 1-800-482-5964 and the Chancellor for Canonical Affairs, Dcn. Matthew A. Glover, (501) 664-0340 ext. 361. For pastoral assistance please contact the Victim Assistance Coordinator for the Diocese of Little Rock: Laura Gosponer, (501) 664-0340, ext. 425. Diocese of Little Rock, 2500 N. Tyler St., Little Rock, AR 72207.

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**LIVE STREAMED MASSES**

If staying home is a better option, the 4pm Mass is live streamed on Saturdays. You may watch it live at 4pm or anytime after the end of the recording (after 5pm). Go to www.Facebook.com/OLHSAR - click on Videos.
I suspect all of us at one time or another have lost something: our keys, eyeglasses, cell phone, money. The search for such things can be extremely frustrating. We may also lose face, reputation, respect, or our own good name. The quest to regain these can be infinitely more painful and more elusive than the hunt for material possessions. And then there is the losing of which Jesus speaks. What does it actually mean to lose one’s very life for his sake? If we look around our world, we may see a hint of this kind of losing in those who have given over their lives and loving service to others, who have surrendered their own desire for personal fulfillment to the common good and the needs of the Kingdom.  

An excerpt from Living With Christ

Losing ourselves in loving service to others is something else entirely. There are many doing just that as this virus continues to strike wherever it wants. Nurses, doctors, healthcare workers of all types, and all those who work in hospitals risk their health so that they can care for others. Of course, there are many others risking their health working in grocery stores, and other necessary places of business. That is the loving service that Jesus calls us to do for others. We can do our part by wearing our masks or face-coverings, washing our hands, practicing physical distance and not taking unnecessary risks. We need to do our part so that we can contain this virus and, we must pray for our good God to help us. Encounter Jesus, Serve Others

Baptisms

Please welcome the following newly baptized children of God into our church community:

Carson Ann Wyerick   
daugther of  
Patrick & Laura (Collins) Wyerick

Elizabeth Jane Briggler  
daugther of  
Andrew & Mary Helen (Sick) Briggler

Pope Francis’ Intentions:

We pray for all those who work and live from the sea, among them sailors, fishermen and their families.
The readings for this week speak of God’s saving presence among His people, our need for trusting faith in our loving and providing God who always keeps us company, and our need for prayer in storms of life.

The first reading tells us of how Elijah the prophet who had defeated the 450 false priests of Baal with the help of just such a trusting faith in the power of Yahweh, fled to the Lord God for help and strength on Mt. Horeb, and encountered Him there in His mercy.

In the second reading, Paul laments and mourns over the Jews who, having lost their faith in Yahweh and His prophets, had rejected their promised Messiah, Jesus. Paul tells us later (11:7-24), that God’s plan allowed the Jews to reject Jesus so that a few believers, like Paul, would be free to carry the Good News outside Judaism, evangelizing the Gentiles.

The Gospel episode occurred during an unexpected storm on the Sea of Galilee in the early morning hours. As Jesus approached the apostles, miraculously walking on water, he allayed their fears by telling them, “It is I.” The Gospel episode also explains how Peter lost his trusting faith in Jesus for a few seconds, failed his attempt to walk on water, but was rescued when he called on Jesus for help.

Messages for Life:

1) We all need to call Jesus in the storms facing us in the Church and in our lives. Let us approach Jesus with strong faith in his ability and willing availability to calm the storms in the life of the Church and in our own lives. Church history shows us how Jesus saved his Church from the storms in the life of the Church and in our own lives. Church history shows us how Jesus saved his Church from the storms of persecution in the first three centuries, from the storms of heresies in the 5th and 6th centuries, from the storms of moral degradation and the Protestant reformation movement (later resulting in hundreds of denominations).

2) We need to imitate the short prayer of sinking Peter. We are expected to pray to God every day with trusting faith for strengthening our personal relationship with Him and for acknowledging our dependence on Him. But when we have no time or mental energy for formal prayers, let us use the short prayers in the Gospels like Peter’s prayer: “Lord, save me!” or the prayer of the mother of the possessed girl: “Lord, help me!” or the blind man’s prayer: “Son of David, have mercy on me!” or the repentant sinner’s prayer: “Lord, have mercy on me a sinner!” We get plenty of time during our travels to say the short prayers like the “Our Father”, “Hail Mary” and “Glory be...” We may begin every day offering all our day’s activities to God and asking for His grace to do His will; then we may conclude every day before we go to sleep, by asking God’s pardon and forgiveness for our sins. Keeping a Bible on our table will encourage us to read at least a few words of the Bible and thus listen to what God is telling us to do.

OUR PARISHIONERS -- Sherry Wortsmit; Becky Price; Robert Carter; Joe & Pat Kirchner; Lillian Henriquez; Mary Adney; Rob Mondy; Bob Skarda; Rosie Stare; Jessica Remsing; Kate Evans; Benjamin Stuart; Charlie Baker; Micki Fitzpatrick; Judy Caldarera; Glennabel McCumpey; Kay Loss; Tina Pinter; Henry Schulite; Janet Davis; Dorothy Ehrlebracht; Andy Gentry; Nick Kirchner; Annette Wahlgreen; George Loss; Alice Hentry; Pearl Gentry; David Smith; Annabelle Giardina; Sally Place; Judy Sims; Pat Kirchner; Phil Marks; Pat King; Coleman Liles; Andrew Marra; Don Jones; Gary Flynn; Leann Hatley; and Richard Peek.

THOSE WHO HAVE DIED -- Pat Keogh, husband of Becky Keogh, son of Mary Keogh, and brother of Ruth Keogh; and Robert Romanoli, uncle of Fr. John Marconi.

OUR SEMINARIANS -- especially Quinn Thomas and Christopher Elser.

In order to keep our bulletin prayer list up-to-date for the sick, names will remain on the list for four weeks. Then their name will be written in the Book of Intercession where they will be remembered during every Mass. To continue for another four weeks, please call the church office.

REGISTRATION FOR NEW MEMBERS
Registration for new members is completed in the church office or online by visiting our webpage, www.holysouls.org. Please contact the church office or go online at www.holysouls.org if you have moved, changed your telephone number, moved from your parent’s home or graduated from college.

RCIA
If you are interested in becoming Catholic, please contact Susej Thompson at 501-683-8632 or sthompson@holysouls.org.

RETURNING CATHOLICS
If you are interested in returning to the Catholic Church, please contact Susej Thompson at 663-8632 or sthompson@holysouls.org.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION
Satndays from 2:30 to 3:30pm and Wednesdays from 4:00 to 5:00pm or call the church office for an appointment.

CHURCH VISITS
The Church is open for private prayer time on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday from 7:30am-3pm; time; and on Wednesday from 7:30am -5:15pm. Please enter through the chapel door or handicapped door.

BAPTISM
Baptisms are scheduled on an individual basis. Please call the church office for more information.

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE
Contact the church office a minimum of six months in advance.
To read the daily reading online, go to www.usccb.org/nab/today.shtml

Monday, August 17
No Mass

Tuesday, August 18
7:00 a.m. Mass
Racquel Stokes by Roberta Cagle

Wednesday, August 19
5:30 p.m. Mass
Ellen & Dalton Dailey by Kathy & Ray Hightower

Thursday, August 20
7:00 a.m. Mass
Fran Jansen by Mary Heferle

Friday, August 21
7:00 a.m. Mass
Jessie Thomisee by Anne Thomisee

Saturday, August 22
4:00 p.m. Vigil Mass
Joseph Herring by Yenid Herring

Sunday, August 23
8:00 a.m. Mass
Grace Nowak by Margo Bushmiaer
10:30 a.m. Mass
Intentions of Parishioners
5:30 p.m. Mass
Eddie Powers by Susie Powers

Mass Intentions may be offered for the Repose of the Soul of a deceased loved one or for healing, a special occasion, or a special intention for yourself, a family member, or friend. Please contact Cindy in the Church Office for more information.
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