

July 27th, 2008
Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

MASS SCHEDULE:

July 26th & 27th:

5:30PM	Sick of the Parish
9:00AM	Thomas Towers, Jr.
10:30AM	Edwin Brooks
12:00Noon	Rita Valenjano

DAILY MASS IN CHAPEL - 9:00AM:

Monday	Richard Hendrickson
Tuesday	Edward Filipowski
Wednesday	NO MASS TODAY
Thursday:	Joseph & Anita Cote (L)
Friday	Deceased Priests of the Diocese

August 2nd & 3rd:

5:30PM	Msgr. James Fallon
9:00AM	Vocations to the Priesthood
10:30AM	Thomas Towers, Jr.
12:00Noon	Louise DeLuca

TODAY'S READINGS:

Today we have more of Jesus' parables in Matthew's Gospel, but their tone and audience are different. Now it is no longer the crowds Jesus addresses, as in the past two weeks in our liturgy. He now addresses his disciples. And unlike the focus in the past on the mysterious power of growing things, we now hear how wise people seize the moment: There is a treasure to be gained, there are fish to be caught and sorted for those of worth. We are prepared for this theme through the story of wisdom in Solomon's dream (first reading). In the passage from Romans (second reading) we see an echo of this theme. "All things work for good" not for all, but "for those who love God". Shrewdness and a capacity to "make a deal" are valued around us today. How can we focus on the long-term gains that come from seeking true understanding, the great "treasure hidden in a field"? Perhaps all of us can begin this spiritual journey by asking ourselves "What is my treasure in life? What do I seek? What do I value most above all else?" If we're honest with ourselves the answer will lead us to a life-long relationship with God who is the source of wisdom and truth.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURES:

I Kings 3:5, 7-12.

Solomon, realizing that he will succeed his father David as king, begs the Lord to give him wisdom and understanding in order to rule his people well. He sees this as a greater gift than wealth and power.

Romans 8:28-30.

St. Paul teaches that as heirs of God and heirs with Christ, we suffer in order to be glorified with Christ. In the midst of difficulty Paul gives us reason to hope.

Matthew 13:44-52.

Jesus speaks about the "reign of God," telling the parables of the buried treasure and the merchant's search for a truly fine pearl. The reign of God is more precious and valuable than any earthly treasure.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT FOR TODAY:

Today's Gospel talks about finding a buried treasure and seeking the pearl of great price. When we come to realize that Jesus is speaking about our faith we begin to realize that we are called to live out that faith in meaningful ways. Supporting the works of our Church is an important part of living out that faith.

BLESSING FOR EXPECTANT MOTHERS:

The Church has a special blessing for mothers-to-be. Any mother who is preparing for the birth of a child can receive this blessing. A good time for this blessing is after Mass. Please see one of the priests for this blessing.

GODPARENTS AT BAPTISM:

Parents making arrangements for a Baptism should be aware that Godparents are to be fully initiated Catholic Christians - that is, they should have received the Sacrament of Confirmation. If there are any questions regarding Godparents please call the parish office.

THE BEACON - DIOCESAN NEWSPAPER:

Knowing about our Catholic faith is important and keeping up to date as to what is happening in our Church is ongoing. A Catholic newspaper can keep us in touch with what is going on from a Catholic perspective. Parishioners can receive a free subscription to our diocesan newspaper, "The Beacon," by calling the parish office on weekdays during office hours...from 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

ONE DAY PILGRIMAGE TO CATHOLIC SHRINES:

Our Lady of the Lake parish in Sparta is planning a pilgrimage to the Shrines of Philadelphia on Saturday, August 9th. Includes the National Shrine of the Miraculous Medal, Shrine of St. Rita, Shrine of St. Katherine Drexel and St. John Newmann. Cost is \$60.00 and includes bus, lunch and dinner. For more information call fr. Michael Rodak at 973-729-6107.

GOOD SHEPHERD BOOK CLUB:

Normally meets on the second Tuesdays of the month after the 9:00AM Mass will not meet in August. For information call Henry deMena at 908-850-6098.

WITNESS TO CHRIST: MESSAGE FROM OUR HOLY FATHER, POPE BENEDICT, TO U.S. CATHOLICS.

On his apostolic visit to the U.S. Pope Benedict stressed the importance of unity. He repeatedly expressed sorrow for the divisions within our Church and called on Catholics to "reaffirm their unity in the apostolic faith," asking: "Was not this unity of vision and purpose - rooted in faith and a spirit of constant conversion and self-sacrifice - the secret of the impressive growth of the Church in this country?" Pope Benedict went on to tell the priests and

seminarians at St. Patrick's Cathedral that one of the "great disappointments" of recent history ... has been the experience of division between different groups, different generations, different members of the same religious family. We can only move forward if we turn our gaze together in Christ.... In the light of faith, we will then discover the wisdom and strength needed to open ourselves to points of view which may not necessarily conform to our own ideas or assumptions.

He further added, addressing the bishops: "There is a need for all of us to move beyond sterile divisions, disagreements, and preconceptions, and to listen together to the voice of the Spirit, who is guiding the Church into a future of hope."

For Reflection:

Our Holy Father encourages each Catholic community to promote unity and overcome division. Contributing to the unity of the community calls each person to rise above selfish interests for the greatest good.

Adapted from "Our Sunday Visitor"

A HEART HUNGRY FOR SURRENDER:

"The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field..." Matthew 13:44

The person who found the hidden treasure in today's Gospel did not totally claim the treasure at first. The treasure had to be earned, possessions and agendas had to be relinquished. Surrender had to take place in the heart so that the discoverer of the treasure would recognize that the reign of God begins right there in the emptied heart.

Try to identify with the one who found the treasure. Throw a dragnet into the sea of your heart. You may be surprised at what you pull in. There will be riches and treasures; there will be hindrances and obstacles. Evaluate what you need to live a vibrant, holy life. How can you live on the earth and be faithful to the reign of God already in your midst? What does "selling all you have" to obtain the pearl of great price mean to you?

Like King Solomon, I ask for a heart wise enough to discern right from wrong. I ask for a heart hungry enough to surrender everything for the treasure that God places in your life this day.

Living Faith

FIRST SUNDAYS - FOOD DONATION SUNDAYS:

Our parish Food Pantry is available to assist needy families in our area because of the ongoing generosity of parishioners. We invite you to bring non-perishable food items with you when coming to Mass on First Sundays.

CHURCH ROOF PROJECT IN PROGRESS:

Good Shepherd has undertaken the major project of replacing the roof of our parish complex. So pardon our appearance for the next month when coming to Mass.

The cost of removing the old roofing, the installation of our new roof, repairs to the bell tower and replacement of our sky lights comes to \$140,000. Thanks to the generosity of parishioners in our second collection maintenance fund, the parish has the necessary funds to pay for this

replacement. Fania Roofing from Dover is doing the work. We are confident our new roof and repairs will serve the parish community for many years to come. Special thanks to Sowinski-Sullivan Architects of Sparta for coordinating and overseeing our roof replacement project.

MISSIONARY COOPERATION SUNDAY NEXT WEEK:

Our second collection next week will be the annual Missionary Cooperation Sunday Collection. This year our collection will go to the Diocese of Nalgonda, India. Fr. Francis Gayam has indicated that the collection will be used for the care and cure of lepers and their children. In this jubilee year of evangelization in honor of St. Paul we ask that you be generous in your outreach to assist the missionary activity within our Church.

LORD, SHOW ME HOW:

If I can do some good today,
if I can serve along life's way,
if I can something helpful say,
Lord, show me how.

If I can right a human wrong,
if I can help to make one strong,
if I can cheer with smile or song,
Lord, show me how .

If I can aid one in distress,
if I can make a burden less,
if I can spread more happiness,
Lord, show me how.

G. Kleiser

PARISH CEMETERY:

Many of our summer residents are unaware that our parish has its own cemetery. If you have not as yet had the opportunity to visit Good Shepherd Cemetery we encourage you to do so. Our cemetery is located on Airport Road (Rt 603) and Creek Road in Green Township - just two and a half miles from our church. Questions about our cemetery can be addressed to Mary Bobbe at our cemetery office weekdays from 9:30 to 4:00PM 973-786-5811.

ON THE LIGHT SIDE:

-Many folks want to serve God, but only as advisors.
-Overheard: "Quit griping about your church: if it was perfect, you couldn't belong."

