

Resources for Family Mass

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Sunday, 5 October • Matthew 23:1-12

Theme: Authentic Christianity

Sacred Space: Symbols of holiness: Holy water and white robes

Homily: In this week's gospel Jesus reminds us of the dangers of arrogance. He illustrates the importance of being truly humble, a message that is echoed throughout the New Testament. Here we observe Jesus becoming angry; he attacks the Pharisees and the Scribes, outlining the various ways in which their hypocrisy should not to be imitated. While the Pharisees and the Scribes did think that they were following in the tradition of Moses and they did set out to preach what is right, they were unwilling to act in accordance with their own teachings. Admiration of decency is only worthwhile if it is imitated and lived out. The Pharisees and the Scribes were only benevolent when they were being observed by others, in doing so they assumed a position of the utmost importance wherever they went.

Jesus urges his followers not to be hypocrites like the Pharisees and the Scribes. He condemns them because of their false devoutness. Jesus goes on to remind us that no one should feel as if they are superior, stating hypothetically that no matter how great an individual may be, they are still to perceive themselves as if they were a servant to others. By serving others we remain humble and full of love and goodness, we live our Christianity in an authentic way.

Prayer of the Faithful

1. Lord God, empower us to do our best, especially when no one is watching.
2. Saving God, bless those who are suffering with mental illness. Grant them the care and ability to reach their full potential.
3. Gentle God, allow us to be open to forgiveness and the blessing it brings to our lives.



Sunday, 12 October • Matthew 25:1-13

Theme: Right Here, Right Now!

Sacred Space: Symbols of the present: A ticking clock/calendar

Homily: This week's gospel focuses on the importance of being present and never losing sight of the kingdom of God. Jesus explained this through the parable of the wise and the foolish bridesmaids. The wise bridesmaids were prepared, making sure they had enough oil for their lamps. The foolish bridesmaids on the other hand, were not prepared and expected others to come to their aid when their oil ran out.

We should strive to do our best. No one can realise or fulfil their full human potential if they are lazy. We cannot expect others to always come to our aid when we haven't prepared properly. Think of the washing that is left for others, the bedrooms that are left in chaos and the times when we don't bother because we know someone else will sort things out. We

should always be alert and awake, and we should always carry our own load. Despite the fact that the sun always rises tomorrow, it's important to be present at any given moment and to prepare adequately for the future in the now. Life's distractions can often cause us to lose sight of the kingdom of God, and this week's gospel is a reminder to live each and every day with the ultimate goal in mind. Life is at its richest when we are fully alive!

Prayer of the Faithful

1. Jesus, help us to stay awake, stay present and stay faithful.
2. Lord, grant us the courage to see through the temptations of our modern world. Help us to appreciate the beauty in our ecological surroundings.
3. Holy Spirit, guide and focus our moral compass. Empower us to avoid the pitfalls of selfishness and shallow attractions.



Sunday, 19 October • Matthew 25:14-30

Theme: Be all you can be and you will set the world on fire!

Sacred Space: Symbols of opportunity: Basket of flower bulbs

Homily: This week's gospel is an invitation to go out and take risks in order to reach your potential. Jesus explains that a master gave various amounts of money to his three servants before leaving on a journey. After some time when the master returned, two of the servants had traded with his money, each of them doubling the amount originally handed to them by the master. Out of fear of losing the money that the master had given him, the third servant buried the money in order to keep it safe and then hand it back to the master when he arrived home. This servant is condemned for not going out and investing his master's money.

This message can often cause confusion. The key idea here is that the master handed different amounts of money to his three servants according to their ability. The master did not expect any more from his servants than they were capable of. Like the master in this parable, God is fair and just in his expectations of us. God does not expect more from us than is in accordance with our individual strengths, talents and gifts. However, God does call us to live fully, and this can often be a daunting request. Sometimes human weakness gets in the way of our potential to be what we are called to be. Like the trustworthy servants in this parable God is inviting us to go out and take risks in order to find out what we are capable of. We shouldn't bury our treasures and stay put at the level at which we currently find ourselves. We should thrive in the pursuit of our potential, we should be thrilled with the thoughts of finding peace and love in our hearts, with the kingdom of God always in mind.

Prayer of the Faithful

1. Gracious God, help me to strive to share my gifts and talent with those I love and those I will work to love.

- Holy God, grant us the grace to see the best in ourselves and in all those we meet. Help us to stay away from gossip and hurt, always being mindful of your unconditional love.
- Saving God, shower us with the courage and strength to stay faithful, love wholeheartedly and forgive always.



Sunday, 26 October • Matthew 25:31-46
Theme: Treat others with respect and dignity, always

Sacred Space: Symbols of different people and cultures/pictures of many people from different cultures

Homily: In this Sunday's gospel Jesus metaphorically depicts judgement day, where the virtuous will be eternally separated from those who lack selflessness. Interestingly, those who are judged virtuous and those who are judged selfish seemed confused at their particular position on either side of the throne of the Son of Man. Jesus thanked the virtuous for feeding him, clothing him, nursing him and visiting him, but the virtuous did not recall doing any of these good deeds for him. Jesus also condemned the selfish for failing to feed him, failing to clothe him, failing to nurse and failing to visit him, but the selfish did not recall failing to do any of these good deeds for him.

Jesus answers both the selfish and the virtuous telling them, just as they acted towards the least of all people on earth, they have acted towards the Son of Man. The difference between them is that the virtuous cared for all, including those who were perhaps not cool, fashionable, good looking or perceived as interesting. On the other hand, the selfish disregarded these, the least of all people, caring only for those who could offer them something in return.

Do we treat people differently based on their popularity or social status? Do we have a tendency to exclude the less interesting or attractive? This gospel urges us to act towards all people with the same respect and dignity that Jesus showed and lived for all. Following this example we should strive to treat all our fellow humans with the compassion, respect and dignity they deserve, no matter what their life situation.

Prayer of the Faithful

- Gentle Jesus, we are guided by your compassionate love, your unyielding selflessness for all you meet, help us respond to your love with all of our might.
- Gracious Jesus, we pray for all of those who suffer with illness of one sort or another. Ease their pain and bring them special healing for their mind and bodies.
- Loving Jesus, you give us everything, you love us unconditionally, you bless our lives with bountiful abundance. Allow us the eyes to see and the heart to be open and true.



The gospel resources were written this month by Orla's son, Oisín Walsh. Oisín is studying communications at DCU.



Resources

Feast of All Souls

MUSINGS

The death of a Christian is an event of grace, having, as it does, a positive value and significance in Christ and through Christ. According to the faith of the Church, 'to die in Christ' begins at baptism. In baptism, the Lord's disciples sacramentally die in Christ so as to live a new life. If the disciples die in the grace of Christ, physical death seals that 'dying with Christ' and consummates it by incorporating them fully and definitively into Christ the Redeemer.

The just encounter God in death. He calls them to himself so as to share eternal life with them. No one, however, can be received into God's friendship and intimacy without having been purified of the consequences of personal sin. 'The Church gives the name Purgatory to this final purification of the elect.'

Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy



Sunday, 5 November 2017

SEEING YOUR LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPELS

Matthew 21:28-32

- It is possible to be a dutiful and observant Christian, and yet feel there is something missing. It makes such a difference when your heart is in what you are doing – so much better than just going through the motions. Where do you experience that most in your life?
- The desire of Jesus for us is that we grow in that kind of committed, enthusiastic involvement in life. What encourages you to grow in this way?
- The elders probably thought well of themselves in contrast to the tax collectors and sinners. Perhaps you know some unconventional people, ones who appear to ignore the 'right' way of doing things, and yet they have taught you something about true goodness.

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MUSINGS

Why does Jesus choose this person or that one? Look, Jesus doesn't choose a crowd. He chooses each person, one by one. So he chose the first twelve as his apostles. But we – you and I – are also chosen, with a first name and a family name. I have been chosen as Jorge Mario and you as Juan Pablo. We have been chosen to be Jesus' friends and to do something in this life.

Pope Francis.

Dear Pope Francis: The Pope Answers Letters from Children Around the World

