

Just Imagine

I taught grade school religion for a short semester when I was about 22. By accident I discovered a great trick of teaching, one I needed very much. The class, you see, was in complete chaos each time I arrived in mid-day.

But if I told a story, even the simplest story, the pandemonium ceased. It morphed into rapt attention. You could hear a pin drop. Until the story ended, that is, and then anarchy resumed.

I never did find another way besides stories to reach these little cherubs, even though I memorized each name and each picture in the long list, and called different ones out for serious talks, etc.

There must be a special part of the brain devoted to stories.

It was only years later that I applied this insight. Why does the gospel get such special attention at Mass? Why do we hold the book up and parade it to the pulpit? Because it is a story, the story of Jesus. We are struck by the narrative about him, much more than we are by the sometimes complicated theology in Paul's letters. Within the gospels, which are themselves stories, we find the parables Jesus told.

Stories.

So take a good look at the parable in Sunday's Gospel and let the story lead you.

See if it works. Imagine the landowner hiring laborers for his vineyard as he shakes their rough hands and invites them to work. You can see their satisfied smiles, since they know they will get the usual daily wage.

The day gets hotter. And hotter. High noon has come and the owner walks back to town to go shopping for this and that. He glances around. Men are leaning on buildings, loitering really, bored but still hopeful. The owner crosses over to them and offers to hire them. They come to life and hurry off to his vineyard to earn just half a day's wages. It is more than nothing.

Then the work day is about over. The owner is still in town for whatever reason, and what should he see but strong men lolling about in doorways, wet with sweat from the heat and from their dejection. To their surprise, he hires them too.

Day ends and "just wages" are handed out. It is the exact same amount for every worker, no matter how many or how few hours anyone had worked. Look at the faces. Anger in the ones who had slaved all day This is not fair! We demand our rights! We put in the time and these oafs did nothing. The late ones smiling sheepishly.

What does the story mean? You will find the answer if you sense the scene rather than just use brain power. Let your imagination see the kindness in the owner's face. Call to mind the gloom of the ones hired so late. See their amazement now. Obviously these wages are not a strict remuneration for hours worked. They more like a gift from a fond heart. How does this feel to you?

Didn't Jesus tell his parable to show how God's caring heart works, how he gives a depth of love to each person in this world, especially to ones who suffer and are left behind?

If it is hard to see, ask for light.

John Foley, SJ

Twenty Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time September 20, 2020

St. Stephens Indian Mission

www.saintstephensmission.com

856-7806

33 St. Stephens Road

PO Box 250

St. Stephens, WY 82524

Fr. Jim Heiser.....Pastor

Sr. Monica Suhayda, CSJ.....Past. Asst./ Gift Shop 856-4330

Patti McMahon.....Director of Religious Education

Blessed Sacrament & St. Josephs

332-9090

Sr. Teresa Frawley, OSF.....Past. Asst./Director of Religious Education

Sacrament of Reconciliation & Sacrament of the Sick

You may call the office to schedule an appointment for confession. If there is no answer please leave your name and phone number and Father Jim will return your call. Please do not schedule an appointment if you are sick, please wait until you are well to protect yourself and the priest. Priest and penitent will be required to wear a mask and maintain a safe six foot distance during confession.

The Sacrament of the sick will still be available for those who are terminal and is now available to those who have an upcoming surgery. Please call the office if you or a loved one is in need of this sacrament.

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Come in seeking; come in wondering; come in hurting. Come into this house of companionship and compassion. Come in. You are welcome here. Our faith Family opens its doors to you and in the name of Christ, bids you Welcome!
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The purpose of St. Stephen's Indian Mission, the presence of the Roman Catholic Church among the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho, is to grow into a strong community of believers, sharing our lives in the Holy Spirit, forming one welcoming People of God, who are committed to Jesus Christ, His gospel and mission.

Readings September 21st through September 27th:

Mon: Eph 4:1-7, 11-13; Ps 19:2-5; Mt 9:9-13
 Tue: Prv 21:1-6, 10-13; Ps 119:1, 27, 30, 34-35, 44; Lk 8:19-21
 Wed: Prv 30:5-9; Ps 119:29, 72, 89, 101, 104, 163; Lk 9:1-6
 Thur: Eccl 1:2-11; Ps 90:3-6, 12-14, 17bc; Lk 9:7-9
 Fri: Eccl 3:1-11; Ps 144:1b, 2abc, 3-4; Lk 9:18-22
 Sat: Eccl 11:9-12:8; Ps 90:3-6, 12-14, 17; Lk 9:43b-45
 Sun: Ez 18:25-28; Ps 25:4-9' Phil 2:1-11; Mt 21:28-32

Parish Collection

Last week mail in collection \$585

"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." Corinthians 9:7

THANK YOU to all who have continued to make financial contributions to St. Stephens Indian Mission through these most trying times! God Bless!

Mass Intentions this week

9/20: Sunday +Suzanne Kaufman
 Sunday For the people
 9/23: Wednesday Byron H.
 9/24: Thursday Mamie Cunningham for her birthday
 9/27: Sunday In thanksgiving for LoriAnn Brown's healing
 Sunday For the people

Please pray for the family of the deceased: +Charles Brown
Eternal rest grant unto him O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May his soul and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Congratulations to those who were baptized last week!:

Jaroe Joaquin Abeyta

Mallani Neveah Ann Green Lorion LaLuna Hunter Green

Bethany Mya Joan Green Orion Nuada Vincent Green

Tristan Rae Her Many Horses

Aleksander Istvan Murphree Judith Ann Shakespeare

Courtney June Posey Octavia Marie Posey



From September 23 through November 1, you're invited to join other Christians for 40 Days for Life - 40 days of prayer and fasting for an end to abortion. You're also invited to stand and peacefully pray during a 40-day vigil in the public right-of-way on the SW Corner of 2nd and Main Street, and also to help spread the word about this important community outreach. If you'd like more information - and especially if you'd like to volunteer to help, please contact: Lisa @ 561.379.8052, Karen@ 954.303.4523 or www.40daysforlife.com/lander

Sacramental Preparation 2020-2021

First Communion and Confirmation Classes

Due to continuing Covid-19 restrictions, there will not be group religious education classes until at least January 2021. Preparation will be individualized. Sr. Teresa or Patti will meet with the parents/guardians of the students, and the parents/guardians will then do the preparation at home. Materials will be provided. If you wish your child to make First Communion or be Confirmed in the spring of 2021, please call:

Sr. Teresa 332-9090 (St. Joseph's and Blessed Sacrament)
 Patti McMahon 856-7806 (St. Stephen's)

Registration and parent meetings will begin by October 4, 2020. Sr. Teresa and Patti will meet with each parent/guardian every 3-4 weeks, materials will be given, and parents/guardians will then work with their child on those materials. If possible, we will resume group classes in January. Only children who have been working with parents/guardians will be admitted to classes when they resume.

These are unusual times and we are attempting to make the best of the unusual situation. We want children to have the opportunity to receive the Sacraments, so we will work hard to make this happen for them.

So, please call Sr. Teresa or Patti at the above numbers and arrangements will be made to meet with the parents/guardians in order to begin the sacramental preparation.

Baptism

Please call Sr. Teresa or Patti for Baptism preparation classes.

Baptism and Confirmation for adults

Anyone age 18 or older who wishes to be Baptized or Confirmed, please call Sr. Teresa or Patti.