

## Fear

"If today you hear God's voice, harden not your hearts." Words from the Psalm for Sunday. As a composer, I can understand some of the devices I might use to make a musical setting of this Psalm. But when I hear them I don't really concentrate on any one or the other word. I am taken away by their meaning.

Sunday's Readings give a similar command. We are told to hear with our hearts the word of God, not to get sidetracked.

By what?

The First Reading offers an answer. Moses quotes God's words:

I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their kin, and will put my words into his mouth.

Moses has acted as intermediary between God and the people, and now they are promised another mediator between them and the God they fear.

Fear?

Yes. If you have a bible handy, look at people's reaction to God's gift of the ten commandments (or just click this link: Exodus 19:16). There the Lord descended upon Mount Sinai in great fire and thunder and the blare of trumpets! The people understandably became afraid and trembled and stood far off.

"Don't make us listen to that voice again, or see that great fire again, because we might die from it."

In today's First Reading, Moses reminds them of this reaction. Fear had frightened the people away from God. They did not even hear the word of God because dread had deadened their hearts.

Do we ever find God too large and threatening for our small selves? Do we ever want to ignore such a voice, especially when it is speaking commandments that go against what we find much easier?

Television and so many movies depict the joys of sins that make them part of the landscape and hard to resist! We can be lured. Maybe we take the name of the Lord our God in vain. Or miss Mass on Sunday. Or—you know the rest—dishonor our parents or desire to commit adultery, or steal or lie, or lust after already committed wives or husbands in spite of their relationships—or ours. Isn't such behavior common in today's world?

But God's voice is a lure also, especially as it evokes the psalm setting, as in the Second Reading. We are to be wrapped in the luxury of God's words, to bask in the beauty of a love that only wants our own good. St Paul says "I should like you to be free of anxieties."

So, would we have been afraid of Jesus as well? In the Gospel, we find him teaching "as one having authority." I suppose the answer, then, is yes. He drove a devil out of the man in the synagogue, who, notice, was violently afraid, no joke about it. Jesus gave a command and "the unclean spirit convulsed [the man] and with a loud cry came out of him."

Notice: God and Jesus become stern for our good, not because they are destroyers. Destruction is what they are trying to get us to leave behind.

We sing joyfully to the Lord, the psalm says.

All rebukes from the Lord are for our own good. If today we hear God's voice and listen to it and don't harden our hearts out of fear, maybe we will find this out.

John Foley, SJ

## Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time January 31, 2021

### 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 McMahan.....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 is available for those who are in need, terminal and 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 February 1st through February 7th:

Mon: Heb 11:32-40; Ps 31:20-24; Mk 5:1-20  
Tue: Mal 3:1-4; Ps 24:7-10; Heb 2:14-18; Lk 2:22-40  
Wed: Heb 12:4-7, 11-15; Ps 103:1-2, 13-14, 17-18a; Mk 6:1-6  
Thur: Heb 12:18-19, 21-24; Ps 48:2-4, 9-11; Mk 6:7-13  
Fri: Heb 13:1-8; Ps 27:1, 3, 5, 8b-9c; Mk 6:14-29  
Sat: Heb 13:15-17, 20-21; Ps 23:1-6; Mk 6:30-34  
Sun: Jb 7:1-4, 6-7; Ps 147:1-6; 1 Cor 9:16-19, 22-23; Mk 1:29-39

### Parish Collection

Last week mail in collection TBA

*"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

1/31:	Sunday	+June Shakespeare
	Sunday	For the people
2/3:	Wednesday 5pm	Kelsey Couture
2/4:	Thursday 7:15am	Patrick O'Halloran
2/5:	Friday 5pm	Pauline Roberts
2/7:	Sunday	+Georgie Crawford
	Sunday	For the people

As we continue to celebrate Mass at St. Stephens, we are limited to 10 people in attendance as we follow the Wind River Intertribal Council's resolution. If you would like to be added to the rotating list of parishioners for Mass please call the office or email the parish office. Please also email the parish office ([melissa.brown@saintstephensmission.com](mailto:melissa.brown@saintstephensmission.com)) to make sure your contact information is on file with the Parish as this is our primary way to contact you when things change or if we have an event you might be interested in. Thank you!

Please remember that Bishop Steven's general dispensation from the Sunday Mass obligation will remain in effect for the duration of Mass attendance restrictions. Mass is available for viewing on K2 Television at 9am and/or you may watch via livestream on St. Margaret's or Holy Rosary's FB pages.

Face masks are required at Mass. Please use hand sanitizer, refrain from exchanging handshakes during the Sign of Peace and maintain at least six feet apart from parishioners (except if you are in the same household) including processing to receive the Eucharist. If you are not feeling well and are scheduled to attend Mass please stay home and call the office so we can switch you with another parishioner until you feel well. Please keep our church family safe. We appreciate your cooperation as we move forward, safely, together.

Please pray for the family of the deceased:

+Rose Potter

*Eternal rest grant unto her O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her. May her soul and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*

Having Mass offered for an anniversary, marriage, special occasion, or in memory of someone is a special gift. Cards are available at the office.

Diocesan guideline is \$10.00 for Mass.

Praised be Jesus Christ!

Praise Him now and always!

### The Seminarian Education Fund

The Seminarian Education Fund appeal has begun. Many of you should have received a letter and prayer card in the mail this past week. In addition to praying for vocations, offering financial support to our seminarians is another way you can actively promote vocations in the Diocese of Cheyenne, which is among the goals of Vision 2030. Your gift will help to provide for tuition, room and board, and other expenses related to forming our seminarians. Perhaps more importantly, your gift, no matter how large or small, will encourage and sustain our seminarians as they make their journey toward priesthood. Please prayerfully consider your gift to The Seminarian Education Fund.

On January 25, 2021, the Diocese of Cheyenne issued a press release on the Canonical Rebuke and Definitive Decree regarding Bishop H. Joseph Hart by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. It can be found at: [dioceseofcheyenne.org](http://dioceseofcheyenne.org).

### Worldwide Marriage Encounter

Are you anxious about the things of the world? God's desire for your marriage is to experience the unconditional love that allows us to let go of our worries. Join us for a Worldwide marriage Encounter experience to learn about the gifts in your marriage. Upcoming dates: Feb. 19-21 or a virtual experience Sundays 2-5pm and Tuesdays 7-9 pm Feb 28 – March 23. For more information and to apply visit [www.wwme.org](http://www.wwme.org), email [montana.dooleys@gmail.com](mailto:montana.dooleys@gmail.com). or call Dan & Clare Dooley 406-697-3275.