

In Vain, in Vain

The word “vanity” has come to mean “excessive belief in your own abilities or your attractiveness to others.” But the original meaning of the word, the one that makes sense of the First Reading, was “empty or valueless.” “In vain” comes closer to the meaning.

So when Qoheleth, the presumed author of this Reading says, “vanity of vanities! All things are vanity,” he means that everything we do is in vain. This is like a statement of despair. Likely he would be diagnosed today with depression. Maybe you or I, at the bottom of our hearts, would be tempted to this dark vision also, especially with so many things going wrong today. Is the answer found when the beer commercials tell us “it doesn’t get any better than this,” illustrating people as they drink too much, with laughing, perfect smiles? We have to wonder if maybe there is something more to live for than this.

So let us ask whether the First Reading is correct, that our lives are truly “in vain.” The reading gives a dark answer.

What profit comes to man from all the toil and anxiety of heart with which he has labored under the sun? All his days sorrow and grief are their occupation; even at night his mind is not at rest.

Do we recognize this state?

Is our life devoted to riches or looking good? No? Then are we dedicated to “the bottom line,” to fighting for “enough” (so we will have something to live for)?

Qoheleth says we seek these things in vain. Maybe we should listen to him. Maybe we should stop ignoring the poor, for instance.

Look at the Gospel. There Jesus says succinctly that our life should not consist of possessions, even though we may have plenty. He tells the famous parable about a very rich man who produces a huge harvest and is busy tearing down his barns to build still larger ones in order to hoard more. Read it.

Then ask, is that a reasonable way to live?

Must be, because we can find it all through Americanized cultures, constructing ever flashier buildings in our cities even while drugs and poverty beset our very lives. Don’t we say that values are unnecessary? Do we use other people to get what we want? Just like the man in Jesus’ story. Just like what Qoheleth calls “vanity.”

Well, this particular rich man got a nasty surprise when he went about eating, drinking and being merry (Gospel). God said to him,

“You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you; and the things you have prepared, to whom will they belong?” Thus will it be for all who store up treasure for themselves.

Could this be said to you or me? “You fool!”

Whether we are rich or poor, are we trying to hoard what we have? Are we being children of God or children of mammon?

Truth is, human beings are fashioned in such a way that we are able to open up to the source and summit of all love, God. This might be the one thing that makes life worth living! If we cannot see over the piles of possessions we have (or wish we had), aren’t our honors and gains in vain?

If death were on its way to us this very night, what would God say to us?

John Foley, SJ

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time July 31, 2022

St. Stephens Indian Mission
www.saintstephensmission.com

856-7806

33 St. Stephens Road

PO Box 250

St. Stephens, WY 82524

Fr. Drew Duncan.....Pastor
Sr. Monica Suhayda, CSJ.....Past. Asst./ Gift Shop 856-4330
Patti McMahon.....Director of Faith Formation

Blessed Sacrament & St. Josephs 332-9090

Sr. Teresa Frawley, OSF.....Past. Asst./Director of Faith Formation

St. Stephens

Friday: Adoration followed by Benediction 3:45pm
Saturday: Sacrament of Reconciliation 2:00 PM to 2:30 PM

Sunday Masses: 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM

Tuesday & Thursday: Mass at 7:15am

Wednesday & Friday: Mass at 5:00pm

1st Saturday: Adoration at 8:00am; Mass at 9:00am

St. Josephs, Ethete

11am Sunday Mass

Sacrament of Reconciliation 15 minutes before Mass

Blessed Sacrament, Ft. Washakie

Saturday Vigil Mass 4:30 PM

Sacrament of Reconciliation 15 minutes before Mass

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 August 1st through August 8th:

Mon: Jer 28:1-17; Ps 119:29, 43, 79-80, 95, 102; Mt 14:13-21
 Tue: Jer 30:1-2, 12-15, 18-22; Ps 102:16-23, 29; Mt 14:22-36
 Wed: Jer 31:1-7; (Ps) Jer 31:10-12b, 13; Mt 15:21-28
 Thur: Jer 31: 31-34; Ps 51:12-15, 18-19; Mt 16:13-23
 Fri: Na 2:1, 3, 3:1-3, 6-7; (Ps) Dt 32:35c-36b, 39abcd, 41; Mt 16:24-28
 Sat: Dn 7:9-10, 13-14; Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 9; 2 Pt 1:16-19; Lk 9:28b-36
 Sun: Wis 18:6-9; Ps 33:1, 12, 18-22; Heb 11:1-2, 8-19; Lk 12:32-48

Sunday Ministry Schedule-St. Stephens

7/31/22

9:00am Mass
Linda Bebout

5pm Mass
Volunteer Needed

8/7/22

9am Mass
Forrest Cole

5pm Mass
Volunteer Needed

Parish Collection

7/24 \$1329

"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

Praised be Jesus Christ!

Praise Him now and always!

Mass Intentions this week

7/30: Saturday 4:30pm Blessed Sacrament	Bill Gianola
7/31: Sunday 9am St. Stephens	Sheri Hinkle
Sunday 11am St. Josephs	Mavis Willow Family
Sunday 5pm St. Stephens	For the people
8/1: Tuesday 7:15am St. Stephens	Jensen Family
8/2: Wednesday 5pm St. Stephens	Mitchell Family
8/3: Thursday 7:15am St. Stephens	+Duane Bell, Jr.
8/4: Friday 5pm St. Stephens	Mike Buffalo
8/5: Saturday 9am, St. Stephens	Carl & Sue Acres
Saturday 4:30pm Blessed Sacrament	Father Apel
8/6: Sunday 9am St. Stephens	Eva Brown on her 13th birthday
Sunday 11am St. Josephs	J. Sammie Ferris
Sunday 5pm St. Stephens	For the people

Please pray for the families of:

+Helen Vigil

+Gary Murphy

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

SAVE THE DATE!

WCCW 68th State Convention

"Faith, hope, and love remain - greatest of these is love." 1 Cor. 13:13

Sept. 9-11, 2022 - Our Lady of Peace Church - Pinedale, WY

Keynote speakers:

Danielle Bean - Ascension Press published author (WHISPERS) and "Girlfriends" podcast

Kitty Cleveland - "music missionary" - singer and songwriter - CDs found at Lighthouse Catholic Media

More info. contact:

Kathy Larson - 307-360-7016

Peg Carney - 307-360-6350

Erica Bohnet - 307-367-2359

Parish Business Manager

St. Stephens Catholic Church on the Wind River Indian Reservation is seeking a full-time Office and Business Manager. While providing a welcoming and orderly atmosphere for parishioners and visitors, the position oversees the administration, personnel, finances, and the building facilities of the parish. Qualifications include being a full initiated and practicing Catholic with the ability to work effectively with personnel, clergy, diocesan staff, advisory bodies, and volunteers, also, the ability to work in a multicultural environment with special outreach to Arapaho and Shoshone people. Salary range: \$55,000 to \$60,000 (DOQ), with full benefits. Please contact Melissa at St. Stephens for the full job description. 307.856.7806

Blessed Sacrament and St. Josephs

If you would like to have your child baptized please talk with Sister Teresa.