

24th Sunday in OT through Solemnity of Christ the King
Theme is “I will choose Christ.”
Theme Song is #802 in Gather, ‘I will choose Christ.’

September 12/13 24th Sunday in OT

“Anger and wrath, these are abominations, yet a sinner holds on to them. The vengeful person will face the Lord’s vengeance, for he keeps a strict account of their sins.” (Sirach 27: 30, 28:1)

Anger, wrath, vengeance, harboring resentments, being unmerciful and unforgiving....All of these do not, in any way, allow us to serve Christ. They are choices we make, often to protect ourselves from being hurt. If anything, they block the grace of God from working fully in us and through us. Furthermore, they testify to others that we are far away from Christ and from the redemptive sacrifice He made on the Cross. They testify to others that we don’t take Christ’s atoning sacrifice seriously because we’re doing the exact opposite of what a follower of Christ is supposed to do. As a remedy, the author of Sirach invites us instead to consider the end of our lives before its too late to repent of our ungodly behavior. He invites us to be merciful and forgiving. He invites us to renew our fidelity to God’s commandments and to the covenants God made with us. For the Christian the ultimate covenant is the one made through the shedding of Christ’s Precious Blood on the cross. Have we embraced that covenant? Have we made Christ’s Blood Precious by the way we live our lives and relate to one another?

LAE: greenery with a crucifix at the centre.

September 19/20 25th Sunday in OT

“Live your life in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ.” Philippians 1: 27

Living according to the Good News is a choice! All of us have been given the grace to assent to this choice since we reached the age of reason. And from that moment on, we have a choice in how we orient our lives when we get ready for the day ahead. From that moment on, we have a choice in how we will choose to recognize the divine in each person. From that moment on, we have a choice in whether we will let the values of the world direct us or whether we will let the values which Jesus lived by inform, inspire and initiate in us, acts that will witness to God’s power and glory.

LAE: greenery with a Gospel opened up in the center.

September 26/27 26th Sunday in OT

“Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus....who emptied himself taking the form of a slave.”
(Philippians 2: 2b)

Jesus wants us to choose to emulate him on this earth. He'll give us all the graces we need to do this, but we have to be willing to ask for those graces and to be receptive to putting them into concrete actions. He asks us to avoid selfish ambition and conceit. He asks us to put our self-interest aside in favor of the interests and well-being of others. He invites us to be kenotic (self-emptying) in our prayer, so that God can fill us up with his agenda, his love, his mercy, his grace, his power to work through us for the greater glory of God.

LAE: greenery with an empty chalice at the centre.

Oct 3/4 27th Sunday in OT

“Whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.” (Phil 4:8)

One of the choices we have every day is what to focus our attention and our thoughts on each day. We can think positively or negatively. We can think with inspiration or with criticism and condemnation. We can think well of others, or we can only think about their defects. St. Paul invites us to think about the things that lift us and others up to Christ, rather than those things that can weigh us down and take away all hope that another person who may not be acting very godly can change. In those instances, we need to step up our prayer for them, that the Holy Spirit may help them to repent and be converted to the Good News. Such prayer is also a choice we must make if we are to serve Christ.

LAE: greenery with a picture of a brain at the centre.

October 10/11 28th Sunday in OT (also Thanksgiving Weekend)

“Many are called but few are chosen.” (Matthew 22: 14)

The wedding garments described in Matthew 22 would have been given to the invited guests to wear at the banquet and so, it would have been quite arrogant for the guest to refuse to wear such garments. It would have indicated that he/she didn't want to participate in the wedding celebrations or that their clothes were superior. The wedding garments thus symbolize the righteousness necessary to enter the Kingdom of God. Christ provides us this righteousness through his death on the cross. Each of us must choose to put on that righteousness and thus be saved. It's an open invitation to all to come, but each person must choose to accept it. On this thanksgiving weekend, it is also our opportunity to give thanks for God's great gift of salvation to all of us.

LAE: greenery with cornucopia and harvest gourds in the centre.

Oct 17/18 29th Sunday in OT

“For we know, brothers and sisters, beloved by God, that he has chosen you, because our message of the Gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.” (1 Thess 1: 4-5)

We can only choose Christ because he chose us first! And he doesn't choose us for some petty activity. No, he chooses us for a grandiose mission: to spread the message of the gospel in power, in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction! He chooses to entrust to us his message of love and mercy, of justice and peace, of faith and hope, of eternal life in the now of our everyday lives and fully realized in the age to come! His choosing us for this mission is not enough though. We have to accept it and embrace it with our full hearts! Only then can God's choice bear fruit for the salvation of the world.

LAE: greenery with a dove representing the Holy Spirit at the centre.

October 24/25 30th Sunday in OT

“The people of those regions report about us, what kind of welcome we had among you and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God and to wait for his Son from Heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.” 1 Thess 1: 9-10

Hospitality is one of the cornerstones of witnessing for Christ. It shows that we are open to allowing others into our lives and to getting to know us personally. It demonstrates an openness also to be changed by the persons whom we have welcomed as guests. How do we do in our hospitality to others at church or in our various ministries? How can we improve? How can we learn from others what they need to feel welcomed?

LAE: greenery with a welcome sign in the centre.

Oct 31/ Nov 1 Solemnity of All Saints

The Ordo states: Today is primarily a Sunday, the Lord's day; the saints are the principal witnesses to Christ and to the saving power of his death and resurrection. This is the focus of today's celebration.

“Beloved, see what love the Father has given us, that we should be called Children of God; and this is what we are.” 1 John 3: 1a

The people who constitute the militant church on earth are saints already! Those in purgatory are saints in the church suffering; those in heaven are saints in the church triumphant. And all of us are called to be saints according to God's plan for our lives. We have the choice as to whether or not we submit to that plan. Yet at the heart of every plan is that God has called us his children and made us inheritors of the Kingdom! Meditate on that this weekend! You are a child of God!

LAE: greenery with a copy of the Beatitudes at the centre.

Monday November 2nd is the Commemoration of the Faithful Departed. We will have a mass on this day at 6:30pm. Volunteers for music and singing would be appreciated.

November 7/8 32nd Sunday in OT

“The wise took flasks of oil with their lamps.” Matthew 25: 4

Today’s gospel invites us to be in a state of constant preparedness for the Lord’s return. It invites us to choose to keep the Parousia at the forefront of our consciousness and in our mission to serving the Lord each day. It invites us to avoid laziness, sloth, and last minutes efforts to seem as if we are ready when in fact we are not. Have we chosen to look with anticipation for the Bridegroom? Are the lamps of our bodies full of the Holy Spirit’s oil?

LAE: greenery with an oil lamp at the centre.

November 14/15 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time (also World Day of the Poor)

“Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master.” Matthew 25: 21

Being a servant of God is a choice. Being a good servant of God is a choice. Being a trustworthy servant of God is a choice. Using what God has given us well is a choice. Affirming the giftedness and resourcefulness of others is also a choice. Working together to advance Gospel values in our world is a choice. As servants of God we must all strive, with the help of God’s grace, to make Matthew 25:21 a lived reality in our vocational lives.

LAE: greenery with coins in a basket at the centre

November 21/22 Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

“Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.”
Matthew 25: 40

Jesus invites us to make a choice to reach out to those on the margins of society today, just as he had done during his own sojourn on earth. He invites us see Himself in them and to treat them with human dignity and respect. He invites us to identify their real needs and to see if we might be able to meet them. He invites us to be spirit-filled discerners of what will really be best for another’s well-being and not just throw money at a person. He invites us to enter into relationship if possible with such persons so that they are valued as human beings.

LAE: greenery with the words, “Whatsoever you do...”

Advent starts next weekend.

The theme song will be Song of St Patrick, # 793 in Gather.

The theme will be.... ‘Let us be God’s light in the darkness.’