

Homily Themes

2nd Sunday in OT through 6th Sunday in OT, Year B

Theme song for all weekend masses: Gather #743, Sing a New Church

Jan 13/14 2nd Sunday in OT

“Speak Lord, for your Servant is listening.” 1 Samuel 3: 9b

Today’s first reading invites us to continue the pondering that Mary did in her heart, when she heard the news which the Shepherds had recounted to her at the manger. It invites us to reflect on our particular callings in life too, and to ponder on how open we are to receiving greater direction and inspiration from the Holy Spirit in embracing those vocations to the full. It also challenges us to make course corrections when the Lord deems it necessary and to be unafraid of journeying into the unknown. In an age where there is so much noise and distraction that can keep us from hearing and responding to the will of God, John invites us to see the Lamb of God in our gospel and to come and see him in the poor, the suffering, the estranged, the voiceless, and the stranger and to bring all near through the Blood of the Lamb. Mention can also be made of the Ecumenical Movement during the upcoming week of Prayer for Christian Unity (Jan 18-25).

Liturgical Art & Environment: A big ear

Jan. 20/21 3rd Sunday in OT

“Immediately, he called them (James and John), and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him. (Mark 1: 20)

When God calls, we should respond! Yet sometimes, we have a lot of rationalizations or excuses that come into our mind that keep us from offering generous love and fitting service to Christ. Sometimes, we forget the power of the Word of God to change us and transform us and make us into the vision of whom God calls us to be. The Ecumenical movement is one such movement of the Spirit that calls us to conversion and to fidelity to God’s Word. Today is also the Sunday of the Word of God, in which Pope Francis invites us to “experience anew how the risen Lord opens us for us the treasury of his Word and enables us proclaim its unfathomable riches before the world.”(Aperuit illis, 2)

Liturgical Art & Environment: The Bible opened

Jan. 27/28 Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

“He commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him” (Mark 1: 27b)

The Precious Blood of Christ dispels the lie that evil can ultimately triumph over good! The power of Christ is incomparable compared with the demonic forces that seek to destroy families, the church, and our world. But do we really believe that? Sometimes, we Christians emphasize the power of evil and death having the upper hand rather than Christ and his Most Precious Blood conquering all sin and death. If we remain centered in Christ and powerfully proclaim, in word and deed, the marvellous things God has done for us, that will go a long way in putting evil to flight and proclaiming the power of Christ who has redeemed the world.

Liturgical Art and Environment: Exclamation marks of various sizes surrounding a chalice/cup

Feb. 3/4 Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

“To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means, save some.” (1 Corinthians 9: 22)

Adaptability and flexibility to the culture and ministry we’ve been given are significant hallmarks of the Christian life and vocation. Just like Paul, intentional missionary disciples must find what inspires and motivates those to whom we’re sent and also be open to being changed by them in the process. It means identifying with their personal struggles and difficulties in life and finding a way to bring good news to such circumstances. It’s this openness to other people and respect for their particular circumstances that enables the gospel to be embraced with joy.

Liturgical Art & Environment: Footsteps of various sizes.

Feb. 10/11 Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

“Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, ‘I do choose. Be made clean!’” (Mark 1:41)

Those on the fringes of society, those whom others would choose to ignore, those whom others had written of as expendable----these are the ones whom Jesus extends his hand and make a connection with! These are the ones outside the gates. These are the ones that are in the deep waters. These are the ones whom the cry of the Blood beckons us to minister to and to welcome with open arms. It has to be a conscious choice on our part, though, just as it was on the part of Jesus. Parishes can discern who are the “leprous” in their area and strategize on outreach efforts.

Liturgical Art & Environment: towels, chair, bowl

N.B. Lent begins on February 14th.