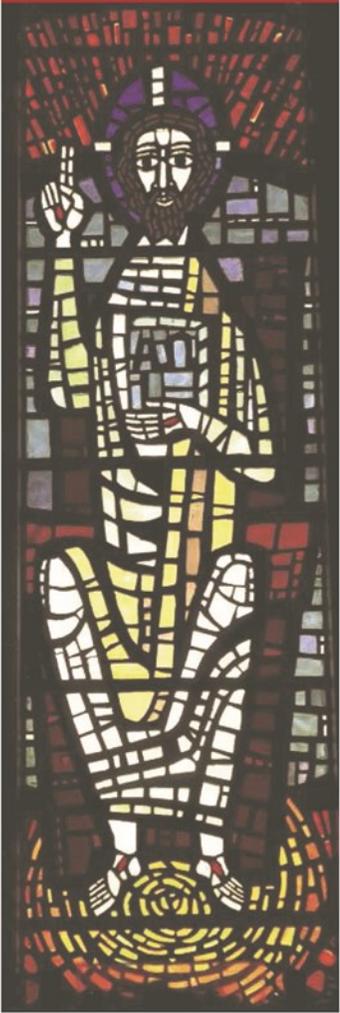


St. Paul Catholic Newman Center



1572 East Barstow Avenue
Fresno, Ca 93710
Office 559.436.3434
csufnewman.com

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

August 14, 2022

Readings: Jer 38:4-6, 8-10; Heb 12:1-4; Lk 12:49-53

So much of the staff's energy and attention these past few weeks have been devoted in planning and scheduling for our upcoming fall programs, it has been exciting and a bit overwhelming to review so many different procedures and topics. But, I am excited to say that there is a sense of enthusiasm and anticipation for things to come. I have been constantly listening, researching, or reading in order to get a feel and understanding for the many aspects of the Newman Center. During this past week, while I ventured on to the Claretian website and reading various items... there was one particular thing that caught my eye. I have been thinking about it and decided that it was going to be my focus for this week because it has continued to resonate with me ever since. I came across a quote and although it has no liturgical connection with our Readings, I felt it was at the heart of... **"what we are"** and **"what we do"** as a Newman Center, especially here in Fresno.

Let's start with a brief background on Newman Centers and how they have evolved. The "Newman Movement" was named after St. John Henry Newman and was started in the 1800's at the University of Wisconsin. The "Movement" was a way for young Catholics to live out their faith while attending college during a time when Catholicism was not viewed upon favorably. About 10 years later, the "Movement" spread to other Colleges and was renamed the "Newman Club". By the 1900's, the "Club" became a National Association with other clubs at several Colleges and Universities. Eventually, Church leaders began to support "Newman Clubs" because of an influence from Vatican II which changed their viewpoints regarding campus ministry.

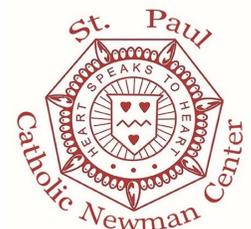
Today there are many Newman Centers throughout the United States. Some are still viewed solely under the scope of a Campus Ministry, while others are under Diocesan care. Our situation here, is somewhat unique because we are not only a Newman Center, but we are also a Parish. Most Newman Centers do not fall under that type of Ecclesial identity. One unique distinction that seems to repeat itself is that many of our parishioners are alumni members of our Newman Center. This gives us an exceptionally diverse and dynamic community. Hopefully understanding our past will allow you to embrace the metaphor I associated in the excerpt that I quoted from Pope Francis' homily. It reflects on the story of the Presentation in the Temple, at the time when Joseph and Mary take Jesus to the Temple where they meet Simeon and Anna who have been waiting to see the Messiah:

"[The following is an excerpt from a homily given after the birth of Christ.] ...this feast is called the "Feast of Encounter": it is the encounter between God, who became a child to bring newness to our world, and an expectant humanity, represented by the elderly man and woman in the Temple.

Continued on page 2

Mission Statement

Gifted by God, called by Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, St. Paul Catholic Newman Center is a parish committed to serving the academic community and all those who choose to be part of our parish family. We dedicate ourselves to bringing the transformative power of Christ to the world through word and action.



In the Temple, there is also an encounter between two couples: the young Mary and Joseph, and the elderly Simeon and Anna. The old receive from the young, while the young draw upon the old. In the Temple, Mary and Joseph find the roots of their people. This is important, because God's promise does not come to fulfilment merely in individuals, once for all, but within a community and throughout history. There too, Mary and Joseph find the roots of their faith, for faith is not something learned from a book, but the art of living with God, learned from the experience of those who have gone before us. The two young people, in meeting the two older people, thus find themselves. And the two older people, nearing the end of their days, receive Jesus, the meaning of their lives. This event fulfils the prophecy of Joel: "Your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions" (2:28). In this encounter, the young see their mission and the elderly realize their dreams. All because, at the centre of the encounter, is Jesus.

Let us look to our own lives, dear consecrated brothers and sisters. Everything started in an encounter with the Lord. Our journey of consecration was born of an encounter and a call. We need to keep this in mind. And if we remember aright, we will realize that in that encounter we were not alone with Jesus; there was also the people of God, the Church, young and old...

...remember that we can never renew our encounter with the Lord without others; we can never leave others behind, never pass over generations, but must accompany one another daily, keeping the Lord always at the centre. For if the young are called to open new doors, the elderly hold the keys. An institute remains youthful by going back to its roots, by listening to its older members. There is no future without this encounter between the old and the young. There is no growth without roots and no flowering without new buds. There is never prophecy without memory, or memory without prophecy. And constant encounter.

*Homily of His Holiness Pope Francis,
Vatican Basilica, Friday, 2 February 2018,*

I realize that was a very long excerpt, but there was just so much richness to be found in all of it. The words were written so beautifully and with such delicacy. The audience for this homily was for those celebrating Consecrated Life, but I think that anyone could easily find personal meaning and relate to it.

As I read this, I could easily see all of those in our parish... young and old having an encounter with one another. I think the one line that is so descriptive is that... "no growth without roots, no flowering without new buds." I hope that you will all take advantage of the opportunity to accompany one another on our journey together in our faith and remember to keep Christ at the center of our lives.

... If we encounter Jesus and our brothers and sisters in the everyday events of our life, our hearts will no longer be set on the past or the future, but will experience the "today of God" in peace with everyone." (*Homily of His Holiness Pope Francis, Vatican, 2 February 2018*)

Remember, to experience the encounter...

Many blessings,

Linda Ram

A New Church for a New Campus

In the 1950s, Fresno State Catholics gathered with Fr. Sergio P. Negro at the Shrine of St. Therese. It became less convenient as Fresno State transitioned from the current Fresno City College campus to its Cedar and Shaw campus. Classes were on both campuses for a time. Father Negro spearheaded creation of a Newman Center near the new campus, celebrating our church's first Mass in 1964. We're still celebrating and this year we continue the tradition during Founders Day weekend, September 9-10.

Mission Appeal

Our church is missionary by nature. Each of us as baptized Catholics are called to share in the work of evangelization. The diocese of Fresno collaborates with mission groups every year to raise fund for their missions through a program called the Missionary Cooperative Plan. The group assigned to our parish this year is the Missionary Society of St. Paul. Fr. Benjamin Okon, MSP will be speaking to us from the Missionary Society of St. Paul this weekend, August 13-14. There will be a second collection to support them in their work.

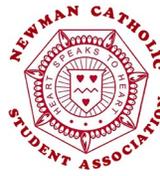
The Missionary Society of St. Paul (MSP) is a congregation of priests founded in Nigeria in 1977. The Society now has 293 priests. They are working in eleven countries of Africa, (South Africa, Malawi, Botswana, Cameroon, Liberia, Chad, Central African Republic, The Gambia, Nigeria, Kenya and Southern Sudan), Grenada in the West Indies, the United States, England, Sweden and Ireland. They also have over 120 seminarians in their seminary in Nigeria.

Their mission in Malawi provides rehabilitation and support for over 300 orphans who lost their parents due to AIDS. They need our financial assistance to continue this mission. They also need funds to: 1) provide freshwater wells, and education in rural communities of Chad, Malawi, South Sudan, Kenya and Nigeria; 2) Sponsoring seminarians, our future priests; 3) Supporting priests in the founding / building of new churches. Your support to this worthy cause will be an immense encouragement to the Missionary Society of St. Paul to as they continue to take the good news to those desperately in need of it. May God bless you!

Find out more about them on www.mspfathers.org.

August 13: Feast of Blessed Joseph McGivney

Michael Joseph McGivney (August 12, 1852 – August 14, 1890) was an Irish-American Catholic priest based in New Haven, Connecticut. He founded the Knights of Columbus at a local parish to serve as a mutual aid and fraternal insurance organization, particularly for immigrants and their families. In his honor, please say a prayer for all our faithful Knights of Columbus here in our own 9445 Council. Blessed Michael McGivney, pray for us! -Fr. Byron Macias, CMF; Council Chaplain."



Campus Ministry News!

Week of August 14-21

Seeking Wednesday Student Night volunteers

We begin our Wednesday Student Dinners August 31st. This evening has been the bedrock of our outreach to our students, all made possible by YOU!

There are two ways to help:

Meals: You, along with 5 others will provide either a meal from a restaurant, a gift card (e.g., VISA gift card/cash), or a homemade dish (main dish, salad, or dessert).

Kitchen: You can help in preparing all that is needed to serve dinner alongside 2 other volunteers.

The commitment consists of one Wednesday a month. To sign-up you may reach out to our campus ministry administrative assistant at catholicclub@csufnewman.com.

You can also find a Google Form to sign up on the Website Homepage under Campus Ministries.

Please indicate what Wednesdays of the month and area you'd prefer to volunteer. Thank you!

Young Adult Bible Study:

This week, we will still meet at the Student Lounge at 6:00pm, then we will head over to Holy Spirit Church to attend the Eucharistic Revival Mass at 7:00pm.

School Supply Drive:

One way we have been able to help in preparing students for their studies is easing the burden of buying school supplies. You'll find, located by the reception desk, a bin to collect donations. Items that students most request are: pens, index cards, highlighters, pencils. Thank you!

Student Lounge:

As the school semester begins we will continue offering our study lounge to students and others. As an added bonus we like to offer a few snacks and drinks. If you'd like to donate an item(s) see our list below.

- microwavable ready meals
- water bottles
- snack size chips
- granola bars
- pastry snacks

Campus Ministry Contacts

Edgar Guzman, Director: edgar@csufnewman.com
Fr. Byron Macias, Chaplain: frbyron@csufnewman.com
Karina Tellez, Administrative Assistant:
catholicclub@csufnewman.com

Weekly Calendar

Sunday, August 14

Jer 38:4-6, 8-10; Heb 12:1-4; Lk 12:49-53

Mission Appeal

7:30am Mass Sr. Donna Shanahan, C.S.J. Chapel
 9:30am Mass for Lai Pham Chapel
 11:30am Mass for Peppino Caraccilo and RCIA Chapel
 Dismissal
 7:00pm Mass Chapel

Monday, August 15 Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab; 1 Cor 15:20-27; Lk 1:39-56

8:00am Mass for David Bowling Chapel
 8:30am Men's Morning Scripture Study Library
 6:00pm Young Adult Bible Study St. John XXIII

Tuesday, August 16

Ez 28:1-10; Mt 19:23-30

8:00am Communion Service Chapel
 5:30pm Interfaith Alliance Dinner CNH

Wednesday, August 17

Ez 34:1-11; Mt 20:1-16

8:00am Mass Int. of Tom Sommers Chapel
 6:30pm Prayer and Life Workshop CNH 105
 7:00pm RCIA Inquiry Community Room

Thursday, August 18

Ez 36:23-28; Mt 22:1-14

8:00am Communion Service Chapel
 10:00am Serra Club Meeting Cafeteria
 4:00pm Confessions Chapel
 6:00pm Mass Chapel

Friday, August 19

Ez 37:1-14; Mt 22:34-40

8:00am Mass for Leticia Tacedena Chapel

Saturday, August 20

Ez 43:1-7ab; Mt 23:1-12

College Welcome Weekend
Catholic Charities Truck
Second Collection - Cathedral Maintenance
 8:00am Secular Franciscans Cafeteria
 5:00pm Mass for Carlos Sanchez Chapel

Sunday, August 21

Is 66:18-21; Heb 12:5-7, 11-13; Lk 13:22-30

College Welcome Weekend
Catholic Charities Truck
Second Collection - Cathedral Maintenance

7:30am Mass for Jesus Ortega Chapel
 9:30am Mass for Jim Cook Chapel
 11:30am Mass for Carrie Lou Butchert and RCIA Chapel
 Dismissal
 7:00pm Mass Chapel

August Contributions

2021		2022	
Aug. 1	\$17,923.00	Aug. 7 ACH	\$27,087.20
Aug. 8 ACH	\$20,215.21	Aug. 14	
Aug. 15 ACH	\$10,196.11	Aug. 21 ACH	
Aug. 22	\$16,574.61	Aug. 28	
Aug. 29	\$10,557.30		
August Total	\$75,466.23	August Total	\$27,087.20

Prayers:

- ◆ **For those who died this week:** Jack Border, Hubert Lee Cox
- ◆ **Please pray for those who have requested special intentions and prayers:**
 Joan Renner, Margery Toll, Kristal Lowe Limon, Abigail Love, Linda Alvarez, Julissa Mojarras, Estefania Medina, Mary Garr, Kathy Papagni, Michael Vienna, Issac Orozco, Diana Mock, Sandra Barrie, Nettie Shute, Sandy Keith, Dan Dungy, Isabel Wiggins, Monica Becerra, Alice Schultz, Dick and Jan White, Sr. Joanne Bauer, Jan Fusselman, Nyla Zender, JoAnn Myers, Monica Baker (Lucido), David Toll, Susan Olson, Mary Yoakum, Olivia King, Maria Coronel, Clara Marrone, Penny Mull, Judy Marchi, Raymond Ram, Nacho Flores, William Rogal, Donna Garcia, Kim Bach, John Cook, Joey Perez, John Morgenroth, Walt Whelan, Martin Zapata, Carl Britto, Hannah York, Lisa Pinedo, Lexi Leon, Frances' Parents, Toni Schneider, Bill Simon, Zenaida Billena, Ani Lara, Sally Caglia, Maria Sanchez, Camila Carouso, Ramona Egan, Maryjane Abella, Michelle Coyle, Nancy Georgio, Efrain Garza, Jessie Joseph Ruelas, Randy Avila, Jorge Martinez, Dr. Jim Davis, Amy Davis

To better serve our Faith Family we are updating our list of prayers. **Names for the sick / special intentions will remain in the bulletin for one month then removed from the list unless otherwise notified.** If deceased, names are only published the week they died. If you have someone who is in need of prayers please contact the office at 436-3434 or go on our website and fill out the form under the "Prayer Intentions" tab.

Parish Information

Weekend Masses: Saturday Vigil: 5:00pm
 Sunday: 7:30am, 9:30am, 11:30am & 7:00pm
Weekday Masses: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8:00am
 First Tuesday 6:00pm, Thursday at 6:00pm
Communion Services: Tuesday and Thursday at 8:00am
Reconciliation: Thursday 4:00pm to 5:45pm or call the office for an appointment.
Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00am to 3:00pm
 CLOSED FRIDAY

Prayer & Life Workshop

If you missed the Introductory session you can still join! Wednesday evenings, August 17 to November 16, 2022 from 6:00pm to 8:00pm in Cardinal Newman Hall.

"The Prayer & Life Workshop is one of the most faith building journeys I have encountered. The workshop is progressive and each week a different prayer method is introduced, along with Scripture readings and a message. It is exactly what the name says – prayer and life. I have learned ways of prayer, ways to be near God, and these ways with practice have permeated my daily life. It is silent, peaceful, grateful daily practice that gives you time with God as one might have with a dear friend. A gift!" Jane Toon

To register: Email Regina Flores at rmflores39@icloud.com.

Spirituality of the 12 Steps

This course is a spiritual journey through the 12 Steps to help you grow in your relationship and intimacy with God through Christ Jesus. It will introduce you to the spirituality of the 12 Steps through the integration of Sacred Scripture and aspects of Ignatian Spirituality to enrich your journey along the Steps.

When: Thursday evenings from 5:30pm to 7:00pm beginning September, 8, 2022 and continuing through Thursday, November 17, 2022.

Where: Cardinal Newman Hall, Room 103 Fee: \$20 for materials. Facilitator: John Prandini, MA - Director of Ministries

To Register: email John Prandini, Director of Ministries at prandinij@csufnewman.com.

Ignatian Retreat for Busy People

Join us in this spiritually invigorating 34-week Ignatian Spirituality Retreat specifically designed for busy people. Experience your relationship with God coming alive in the midst of everyday life and discover a freedom and peace too often out of reach in the modern world. This can be a self-directed online retreat or you can choose to meet with others to enrich your experience in a supportive group setting to share your insights gained each week.

The Retreat begins with an in-person orientation on Wednesday, September 7, 2022 from 5:30pm to 6:30pm in the Newman Center Community Room. Each Sunday thereafter, you will be provided with an online link to the week's retreat materials that takes only 10 - 20 minutes to read or listen to.

Retreat Fee: A \$20 materials fee for retreat materials. Weekly optional discussions will be held on Wednesday evenings, 5:30-6:30pm in the Community Room, facilitated by John Prandini, MA - Director of Ministries

To Register or for information: email John Prandini at prandinij@csufnewman.com.

Family Life Ministries

Joy of Love Moms

The Joy of Love Moms Group invites families to the west playground after 9:30am Mass for an opportunity for children and families to meet, socialize and play together. Please join us!

Men's Scripture Reflection and Discussion Group

This ministry meets on Monday mornings at 8:30am in the Library after our 8:00am Mass.

Prayer Ministry

Christian Meditation

This ministry will resume in September after Labor Day on Tuesdays - TBA. Sessions include 20 minutes of silent meditation followed by a brief lesson about this ancient Christian prayer tradition and discussion. The group is a member of the World Community for Christian Meditation. Meetings are facilitated by Benita Lankford.

For information email contact John Prandini at prandinij@csufnewman.com.

Book Study: The Universal Christ by Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM.

- When: This book study begins on Wednesday, August 24, 2022, from 12:00pm to 1:00pm, and will continue on Wednesdays for 10 sessions through October 26, 2022.
- Where: Newman Center Cafeteria.
- To Register: Please contact John Prandini at prandinij@csufnewman.com.
- Please purchase the book in advance and read the Introduction "Before We Begin".
- Facilitated by: John Prandini, M.A., Director of Ministries
- Registration Deadline: August 22, 2022
- No fee
- Bring your lunch and a friend!

Football Parking Passes

Season parking passes for the Newman Center are now available for a guaranteed spot all six home games for \$150. If you would like to purchase a pass, you may do so at the front desk.

Second Collection Next Weekend

Next weekend there will be a second collection for St. John's Cathedral. Your donations will go towards the maintenance of our Diocesan Cathedral. Thank you for your generosity.

From Fr. Byron Macias, CMF

It is so good to be back with you! Thank you all for your support and for being so patient with me as I also fulfill my Congregation's obligations. For ten days, I was up and down cities promoting the movie *Slaves and Kings: the Life of St. Anthony Claret*. I got back last Monday and I missed you.

...And then we have this Sunday Gospel!

The Prince of Peace is also about division!

This is indeed a tough dynamic to wrap around our minds. Yet, Jesus is all about that: new paradigms and in Jesus even division can become a good thing. There are things that attach to us as we go through life. Sometimes the attachment is silent but deadly or obvious and easy to overcome. It can be as if you walked into cobwebs and one of those still sticks to your arms; or it can be like a chewing gum smashed on our hair! (Well, your hair, not mine!).

The point is that bad things can attach to our soul like a leech, and they can blood-suck our energy, our peace, our hope and faith. This is why Jesus in the Gospel this weekend can't wait for the fire to be over so He can start melting off from our souls the things that are killing them. He wants to do it with the fire that burns in the heart of God. And to do this, Jesus has to wait for that "baptism"... Maybe that "baptism" is our willingness to let him do his thing.

If God can turn death into life, of course God can take division and turn it into a blessing! Let's ask God to help us be divided from what is contrary to God's vision for us!

New Officers for the Knights of Columbus

Please let us welcome, thank and keep in prayer our new Knights of Columbus Officers. I also thank them for allowing me to be their chaplain for another year!

Welcome Back Weekend

Our college students are moving in next week and we want to make them feel welcome at the Newman Center. You can help in several ways: next week, if you see a new family or a young student in Mass, please yourself and welcome them. You can give them a bulletin, lead them to the Campus Ministry Board or lead them to Edgar and the Students who will have a table by the Community Room.

Please reach out to Edgar Guzman, our Campus Ministry Director, if you would like to help in any other way.

Claret Movie

Here are the theaters where the movie *Slaves and Kings The Life of St. Anthony Claret* will be showing on Monday, August 22:

Regal Fresno Stadium 22
250 Paseo Del Centro, Fresno, CA 93720
7:00 PM (I will be going to this one myself with the Youth Group and some College Students; let's fill this theater with Catholics!)

Regal Manchester Stadium 16
2055 E. Shields, Fresno, CA 93726-5428
7:00 PM

Galaxy Tulare 10
1575 Retherford St, Tulare, CA 93274
7:00 PM

Please support good Catholic quality films. This past week I learned so much about Catholic films. When you support them, you are securing other Catholic movies to come to theaters in the future; and you are evangelizing as well! Tickets available at: www.slavesandkingsthemovie.com

Saintly Quote

"After Jesus, Mary is everything for us." - St. Anthony Claret

Have a Laugh

What is a missionary's favorite kind of car?

Answer: A convertible.

Adult Confirmation Help Needed

Our adult confirmation program goes from the end of September to the beginning of January. We are looking for people to be a part of the formation team. Whether you would like to do a presentation, lead prayer, help with paperwork and phone-calling, or shop for snacks, we can use your help.

Call or email Fr. Paul if you have questions or would like to assist with this wonderful ministry.

Deacon John's Blog

Keep up with Deacon John as he travels through Italy through his blog! <http://ljsupino.blogspot.com/>.

Altar Flowers

The flowers on the altar this weekend are in memory of David Bowling.

COMMUNITY WORKING GROUPS MEETING TO END GUN VIOLENCE

AN INTERFAITH & COMMUNITY WORKING MEETING TO
DEVELOP STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING GUN
VIOLENCE. IN FOUR KEY AREAS:
EDUCATION
LEGISLATION
MENTAL HEALTH
SYSTEMATIC SOCIAL DISPARITIES

SAT. AUGUST 20TH, 9AM-12PM
ST. JAMES
EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL
4147 E. DAKOTA AVE FRESNO, CA 93726

FOR MORE INFO, TO ORDER YARD SIGNS, OR TO JOIN THE
MOVEMENT, VISIT ENOUGHGUNVIOLENCE.ORG



Bishop's Annual Appeal Update

On July 31st we had a second collection for the Bishop's Annual Appeal. Our parish goal is \$15,000, and we have raised \$8,602.01 so far. It is not too late to contribute. You can send in a payment or make a donation on our website: <https://csufnewman.com/giving/credit-card-donation>. Thank you for your generous support .

Books Available

We are in the process of freeing up space in our library. People are welcome to look at the books and take any they would like. We would like for them to be put to good use and find a good home. Books are still available in the front lobby for you to take this weekend.

Parish Directory

Linda Ram Parish Life Coordinator	436-3434, ext. 109 linda@csufnewman.com
Fr. Byron Macias, C.M.F. Parish Priest	436-3434, ext. 105 frbyron@csufnewman.com
Fr. Paul Keller, C.M.F. Parish Priest	436-3434, ext. 106 frpaul@csufnewman.com
Deacon John Supino	436-3434, ext. 103 deak@csufnewman.com
Deacon Bill Lucido	436-3434, ext. 118 bill@csufnewman.com
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Gus Duran Facilities	436-3434



Knights of Columbus

The Building the Domestic Church kiosk next to the Knights of Columbus bulletin board is sponsored by the John Cardinal Newman Council. The books that are in the kiosk are for anyone to get for free for anyone. The Building the Domestic Church series presents some of the most popular CIS resources aimed at helping us to live out the Church's mission and vision for our families. Series topics include parenting, fatherhood and family prayer life, as well as two of St. John Paul II's famous messages for the family - Letter to Families and The Family in the Modern World.

Installation Mass

The John C. Dugan Assembly will be holding their annual installation of Council Officers on August 13 after the 5:00pm Mass. The new Council officers are:

Grand Knight- Bruce Myers PGK
Deputy Grand Knight- Ken Deluca PGK
Chancellor- John Turner PGK
Recorder- Ron Kuber PGK
Financial Secretary – David Henard PGK
Treasurer- Patrick Hill PGK
Advocate – Joseph Hill PGK
Warden- Frank Nunes
Inside Guard- Terry Jesse, Sr.
Outside Guard- Michael O'Hare PGK
Trustees
1 year- Thomas Meisch PGK
3 year- Ken Barnes PGK

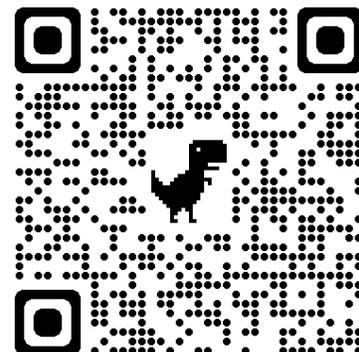
We would like to ask anyone who would like to stay after Mass to see the Installation you are all welcome to. This day is also the Feast of the Blessed Fr. Michael J. McGivney who is the Founder of the Knights of Columbus.

Catholic Charities Truck Next Weekend

We will have the Catholic Charities Collection Truck out in the parking lot during all morning Masses the weekend of August 20 – 21 in the East Parking Lot.

Live Streaming

We will be live streaming our 9:30am Mass on Sundays. Use the QR Code below to tune in.



Bag Stuffing for Congress!!!

Location: Pastoral Center, Office of Formation and Evangelization

9/17/2022: 9 am - 12pm

Relleno de Bolsas para el Congreso

Sitio: Centro Pastoral, Oficina de Formación y Evangelización



[Click to Register / Hacer Clic Aquí Para Inscribirse](#)



Volunteers Needed
Necesitamos
Voluntarios

For more information Contact/ Para mayor información comuníquese con:

Roman Flores: 488-7474 ext. 107, rflores@dioceseoffresno.org

Family Conflict

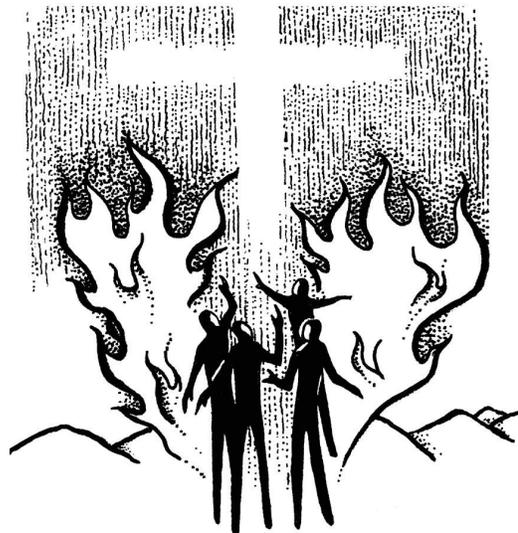
This Week's Readings at Mass

- ▶ Jeremiah 38:4-6, 8-10 - Jeremiah in the miry cistern
- ▶ Hebrews 12:1-4 - God's treatment of his sons and daughters
- ▶ Luke 12:49-53 - Jesus' mission of division

All three readings today speak to the unavoidable conflict and divisions that arise when we try to live lives of faithfulness to God. Jeremiah knew the plight of the prophets because speaking his message from God offended the status quo. He got thrown into a pit for it. The passage from the Letter to the Hebrews reminds the faithful that following Jesus will entail suffering, maybe even to the point of bloodshed. Jesus' teaching in the Gospel bluntly tells us that belief in him will lead to division, even among family members and loved ones.

The Gospel reading begins by speaking to Jesus' sense of urgency which was a mark of his ministry. Hurry - there is work to do! People are suffering and need help. Injustice is killing people - it must be stopped. The Kingdom of God is at hand - we must help bring it to birth! Jesus was not neutral or wishy-washy in any way. He was for justice, mercy, and compassion in all forms, and he wanted those who were sleeping their way through life to wake up and work toward these. He wanted to see a blazing fire of energy fueling the people around him.

Jesus' reference to division is a puzzling one, given that usually we think of him as a man of peace and love, not a herald of division and conflict. Yet anyone who has experienced conflict with family members or loved ones around religious issues will recognize that belief in Jesus sometimes leads to division. A gay person believes he is loved and cherished by God while his father believes it is a sin to be gay. A woman



“Let us persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus.”

Sheepish Questions:
What injustices do I see in my community?
How will I respond?

converting to Catholicism is disowned by her born-again Pentecostal mother. A spouse who attends mass is questioned for her beliefs from an atheist parter. Households - and communities, and church bodies, and nations - are divided by religious belief all the time, not because Jesus wanted division, but because he understood human nature. What one person and one community believes is God's truth might at best be misunderstood, or at worse, hateful to another person or community. On the night before he died, Jesus prayed for unity among his followers, but he also knew the reality of the division he would cause.

Questions of the Week

- 1 What kind of work/ministry do you feel most passionate about that you think is urgent to be done?
- 2 Have you experienced division among your family or friends because of religious beliefs? How?

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