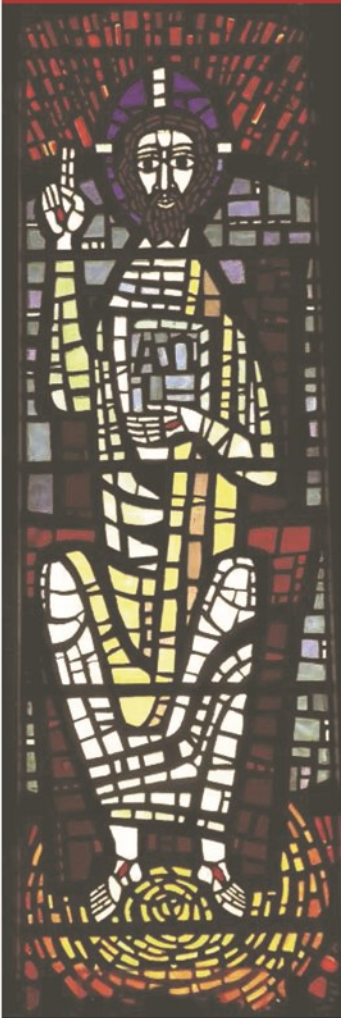


St. Paul Catholic Newman Center



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

Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

September 4, 2022

Readings: Wis 9:13-18b; Phmn 9-10, 12-17; Lk 14:25-33

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

While for many this weekend marks the beginning of the collegiate Football Season, with the NFL following next week, there is another Season we begin this week which is much more important.

It's called the Season of Creation, and beginning in 2015, it is a worldwide effort of over 2 billion Christians to join in prayer and action in our faith-based commitment to care for Mother Earth, or as Pope Francis calls it, our Common Home.

Originally this annual Day of Prayer for Creation began with Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios of Constantinople way back in 1989. His initiative was continued and expanded by his successor Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, whom Pope Francis highlights in #8 and 9 of his encyclical "Laudato St: On Care for Our Common Home" (2015) https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html

Over the years, Francis and Bartholomew have become not just friends, but brothers, and together they have co-signed ecological statements and ecumenical commitments with many major churches to not just pray for but work together to care for God's creation at this critical time in the earth's history.

This "Day of Creation" is now a global Season of Creation which begins on September 1 and extends through October 4, the Feast of St. Francis. This year's theme is "Listening to the voice of creation", which Pope Francis describes passionately in this year's "World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation". <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/pont-messages/2022/documents/20220716-messaggio-giornata-curacreato.html>

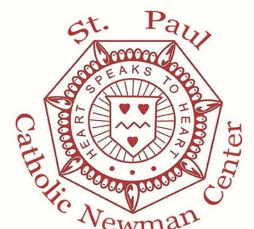
Here are some of the ways that St. Paul Catholic Newman Center community will celebrate the Season of Creation this year:

1. We will launch the Season of Creation at all weekend Masses on September 3-4.
2. Thanks to liturgical artist Donna Locati and Parish Life Coordinator Linda Ram, a beautiful "Burning Bush" will be displayed in the sanctuary of the altar. This powerful liturgical symbol will remind us all Season long of our need to "Listen to the Voice of Creation" just as Moses learns in Exodus 3:1-12) that God, speaking from a burning bush, had "witnessed the affliction and heard the cry of His people" and promised to come down and rescue them and lead them to a "good and spacious land, flowing with milk and honey".

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.



Continued from page 1

3. This same liberating God still cares for every single part of Creation, but we have a part to play as well. As Laudato Si reminds us “ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion...an ecological conversion whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them. Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional aspect of our Christian experience” (# 217)... Today we must realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor” (Laudato Si, # 49)

4. We’ll try to start this “ecological conversion” in several ways. At all liturgies during September, we will have special prayers, intercessions and music that remind us of the work we have before us.

5. On our Creation Care webpage, we will be sharing resources for personal, family and parish-based ways to start to prolong the Season of Creation by acting on proposals readily available to all of us on www.laudatosiacionplatform.com.

6. On most Tuesday evenings from September 20 through November 29 we will offer elective sessions during “Faith, Family & Friends” which will focus on Care for Creation and other social justice issues focusing on “the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor”.

7. On October 3, we will resume our “Creation Care Team” meetings by Zoom and make a greater effort to “listen and act on” the input from participants about their priorities around “Creation Care”, including follow up on a St. Paul Catholic Newman Center Community Garden and composting which were favorites last year.

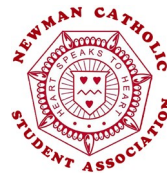
8. On October 4 we will have an Intergenerational evening celebration of Catholic Traditions and Rituals concluding with reflections on St. Francis and Care for Creation.

9. Details on all these efforts will be found in future parish bulletins and on the St. Paul Catholic Newman Center website. Just go there, click on “Ministries” and then “Peace and Social Justice” for weekly updates on the six major Social Justice issues which we will be developing this year:

- A. Environmental Justice (Creation Care)
- B. Racial Equity and Social Justice
- C. Restorative Justice
- D. Health Care
- E. Care for the Poor
- F. Anti-Violence Commitments

Please feel free to contact me with any questions, and better yet, suggestions that you may have for helping us all “listen to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor” (L.S. 49)

Jim Grant, Volunteer, Social Justice Advocate,
jimgrantbc@gmail.com



Campus Ministry News!

Week of September 5– 11

Study Night

We could all use more productive study times, so let’s make it happen together! You’re invited to join other students for a Study Night where we can help one another focus and who knows, actually get stuff done. Thursday, September 15 at 6:30pm in the Student Lounge.

Young Adult Bible Study

Our session is canceled on Monday, September 5 due to the Labor Day Holiday. We will resume next week, September 12 at 6:00pm.

Wednesday Student Night

Looking for a community to grow in your faith and meet other college students? Join us this week for a prayer activity and a dinner inside Cardinal Newman Hall beginning at 6:00pm. Afterwards, we will have our Student Lounge open.

Picture of the Week



Club Fair at Fresno State

Campus Ministry Contacts

Edgar Guzman, Director: edgar@csufnewman.com

Fr. Byron Macias, Chaplain: frbyron@csufnewman.com

Karina Tellez, Administrative Assistant:
catholicclub@csufnewman.com

Founders Weekend Invites Us to Help Our College Students

As we celebrate Founders next weekend, September 10 and 11, a Second Collection will benefit the Sergio P. Negro Scholarship Endowment fund. Your financial support will build the endowment to sustain the scholarship program and the mission of ministry to the college community. Donations to the endowment are encouraged. (Please make checks payable to the St. Paul Newman Center Sergio Negro Endowment.) More information will be available next weekend after each Mass when we gather for pastries and coffee as we have the past 58 years.

2022-2023 Sergio P. Negro Scholars

On Founders Weekend, we will introduce two very deserving students as the 2022-2023 Sergio P. Negro Scholars. Please join in congratulating them in person at a reception following the 9:30am Mass.

Weekly Calendar

Sunday, September 4 Wis 9:13-18b; Phmn 9-10, 12-17; Lk 14:25-33

7:30am Mass for Marciana Leyva Chapel
 9:30am Mass for John Godburn Chapel
 11:30am Mass for Gus Short and RCIA Dismissal Chapel
 7:00pm Mass Chapel

Monday, September 5 1 Cor 5:1-8; Lk 6:6-11
Office Closed - Labor Day

Tuesday, September 6 1 Cor 6:1-11; Lk 6:12-19
 8:00am Communion Service Chapel
 12:00pm Christian Meditation Community Room
 6:00pm FF&F - Children's Mass Chapel

Wednesday, September 7 1 Cor 7:25-31; Lk 6:20-26
 8:00am Mass for Dolores Monahan Chapel
 12:00pm Universal Christ Book Study Cafeteria
 4:00pm Simon Funeral Visitation Chapel
 5:30pm Ignatian Retreat for Busy People Community Room
 6:00pm College Night CNH 101
 6:30pm Prayer and Life Workshop CNH 105
 7:00pm RCIA Inquiry Library

Thursday, September 8 Mi 5:1-4a; Mt 1:1-16, 18-23 or 1:18-23
 8:00am Communion Service Chapel
 10:00am Simon Funeral Chapel
 4:00pm Confessions Chapel
 5:30pm Spirituality of the 12 Steps CNH 103
 6:00pm Mass Int. of Maria de Jesus Sanchez Chapel
 6:00pm HS Confirmation Parent Meeting CNH 102
 6:30pm Women's Guild Meeting Cafeteria

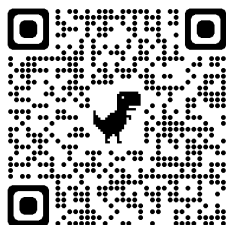
Friday, September 9 1 Cor 9:16-19, 22B-27; Lk 6:39-42
 8:00am Mass Int. of Peter Mai Chapel
 5:30pm Food Recovery Network Cafeteria

Saturday, September 10 1 Cor 10:14-22; Lk 6:43-49
Fresno State Football - 7:30pm
Founder's Day Weekend
 5:00pm Mass for Dolores Monahan Chapel

Sunday, September 11 Ex 32:7-11, 13-14; 1 Tm 1:12-17; Lk 15:1-32
Founder's Day Weekend
 7:30am Mass for Zenaida Lira Villena Chapel
 9:30am Mass for Lai Pham Chapel
 10:00am HS Confirmation Class CNH
 11:30am Mass for Ferdinand Erese and RCIA Dismissal Chapel
 12:30pm Deacon Information Meeting Library
 2:00pm Baptism Prep Class (via Zoom)
 7:00pm Mass Chapel

Live Streaming

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



August Contributions

2021		2022	
Aug. 1	\$17,923.00	Aug. 7 ACH	\$27,017.20
Aug. 8 ACH	\$20,215.21	Aug. 14	\$14,826.61
Aug. 15 ACH	\$10,196.11	Aug. 21 ACH	\$12,042.82
Aug. 22	\$16,574.61	Aug. 28	\$10,936.68
Aug. 29	\$10,557.30		
August Total	\$75,466.23	August Total	\$64,823.31

Prayers:

- ◆ **For those who died this week:** Ronald Toffoli
- ◆ **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, Maria Coronel, Clara Marrone, Penny Mull, Judy Marchi, Raymond Ram, Nacho Flores, William Rogal, Donna Garcia, Kim Bach, John Cook, John Morgenroth, Walt Whelan, Martin Zapata, Carl Britto, Hannah York, Lisa Pinedo, Lexi Leon, Frances' Parents, Toni Schneider, 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, Barbara Barrows, Carlos Garcia, Marian Martin, Fr. Kevin Bray, Sam Scialabba, Diane Decker, Tommy Estep, Jeri Maxwell

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

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 morning Mass.

Prayer Ministry

Christian Meditation

This ministry will resume on Tuesday mornings beginning September 20 from 11:00am - noon in the Community Room. 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.

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, 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 from 5:30pm to 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.

Liturgical Ministries

Anyone with questions about serving as an extraordinary minister of communion, lector, usher, or greeter, please contact our Liturgy Director Karl Gurney for more information.

Message from Bishop Brennan

Bishop is pleased to announce the historic event of the Consecration of St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church, Visalia through a special video message. St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church, the largest Catholic Parish Church in the Northern America, will be consecrated on **Thursday, February 2, 2023**. It is located at 5099 West Caldwell in Visalia. Please go to the Diocesan website or the YouTube link to hear Bishop Brennan's entire message at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1jEli78-p2w>.

Fresno Catholic Singles

Catholic singles is resuming our monthly meeting and potluck on the 2nd Wednesday of each month in the Newman Center Cafeteria at 5:30pm. Our group is open to any unmarried Catholics in the Diocese of Fresno who are 40 years and older. For information call John at 559-960-6814.

2022 Diocesan Congress Volunteers Needed

As our Diocese prepares for our 2022 Diocesan Congress and Youth Day they are once again in need of volunteers. Anyone interested in serving as a volunteer and has not registered please register using the online link or call the Office of Formations and Evangelization at 488-7474, ext. 107. Also look for separate registration in volunteering for pre-congress needs, such as stuffing bags and other specific areas in which the Diocesan office might need assistance. Thank you and God bless, Roman Flores, Coordinator of Catechetical Ministries.

Healing after abortion

OCTOBER 7-9, 2022

Fresno area, for men & women
Please call Jennifer

833-776-0023

Rachel's Vineyard



Thinking About Becoming a Deacon?

Is God calling in you? Come to an informational meeting and learn more about what a deacon is and does. We will meet in the Newman Center Library Sunday, September 11 at 12:30pm after the 11:30pm Mass.

Office Closed Labor Day

Our office will be closed on Monday, September 5 in observance of the Labor Day holiday. There will be no morning Mass.

Parish Directory

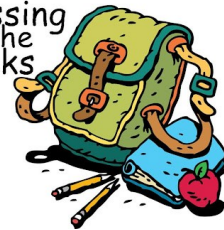
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Fr. Byron Macias, C.M.F. Parish Priest	436-3434, ext. 105 frbyron@csufnewman.com
Fr. Paul Keller, C.M.F. Parish Priest	436-3434, ext. 106 frpaul@csufnewman.com
Deacon John Supino	436-3434, ext. 103 deak@csufnewman.com
Deacon Bill Lucido	436-3434, ext. 118 bill@csufnewman.com
Edgar Guzman Director of Campus and Young Adult Ministries	436-3434, ext. 108 edgar@csufnewman.com
Sr. Kathleen Drilling, S.S.N.D. Director of Religious Education	436-3434, ext. 104 skd@csufnewman.com
John Prandini Director of Ministries	436-3434, ext. 107 prandinij@csufnewman.com
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Gus Duran Facilities	436-3434

Faith, Family & Friends

Adult Sessions, Kindergarten thru Eighth Grade Religious Education, and High School Faith Formation will begin on Tuesday, September 6. We will begin this year by celebrating with an intergenerational Mass and a blessing of the students' backpacks at the end of the Mass. If a student would like to participate in that Mass, please contact Sister Kathleen, Director of Religious Education or Karl Gurney, Director of Liturgy. Registration forms are available on our website.



Blessing of the Backpacks



On Tuesday, September 6, there will be an **Intergenerational Mass** for the start of the Newman Center's Faith Formation programs. Everyone is welcome to attend. Please invite your children to bring his or her backpacks to

participate in the "**Blessing of Backpacks**". It is a special reminder of the love and care that supports them by the community of the Newman Center.

Newman Center Women's Guild

All ladies of the parish are welcome to our first meeting of the year on Thursday, September 8 at 6:30pm in the Cafeteria. Come a little early to socialize. We have a very busy year planned with lots of activities for you to be involved in. Dues are \$20.00 a year. We hope to see you there!

Policy for All Parish Communication

The Newman Center's Communication's Committee is in the process of reviewing policy and procedure for all communications (i.e. print, web, social media, etc.) within the Newman Center community. In order to ensure continuity of our mission, Catholic identity, Newman Center brand, grammar, content, standard of quality, etc. it is important to establish some guidelines and best practices. Therefore, once the Committee has determined and organized these protocols, the final draft will be publicized and available for all ministries, organizations and groups to utilize. At this time our most essential requirement of these policies is that all information associated with St. Paul Catholic Newman Center be reviewed by a member of the Communications team prior to being printed, posted, or distributed. Please contact the Parish Office for more information.

From Fr. Byron Macias, CMF

Jesus invites us this weekend to think about another dimension of carrying our cross: reflection. Certainly, carrying a cross sounds bad, like a consolation prize or reasoning to bad things that happen to us. But it is not.

Carrying a cross a journey to encounter the One who helps us find meaning in our daily struggles, fears and suffering. It is not a matter of resignation, but the realization that "if God is able to draw life from a tomb, He will turn your tears into joy" (Pope Francis).

If we go through this journey, we meet God there, who will not hesitate to empty Himself (Philippians 2:7) so that you are filled with hope! Then, the cross becomes a compass that will lead us to the fulfillment of our realization as children of God!

World Youth Day Fundraiser

Please save the date:

Saturday, September 24 (5:00pm - 7:00pm) and Sunday, September 25 (8:00am - 2:00pm). Our Claretian Youth attending World Youth Day will be having a **CAR WASH** at the parking lot under solar panels next to the parish hall. Donations will be accepted. Come and have your car squeaky clean and help our Youth raise the almost \$4,000 (each) it takes to make it to WYD!

Creation Care Team

This is a reminder to our Creation Team People: Our next meeting will be on Monday, October 3 at 6:30pm (both Zoom and in person).

Honoring Our Police

We have several parishioners who are part of the Police Department. There will be a BLUE MASS to pray for them on Friday, September 30 at 12:15pm. Mass will take place at St John's Cathedral. I hope you can make it; otherwise, please keep our good officers in your prayers.

Away

Being a Claretian demands that besides our parish assignment we have Congregation assignments. So far this year, I have been out for work for my Claretian Congregation. Yet, I will be away September 1 - 6 to stay with my family (finally vacation!). Then, September 8 - 15, I will be traveling to Peru to meet with the Claretians from the Americas who are ministering to the Youth. In Peru, I will make time to visit the tombs of St. Rose of Lima and St. Martin de Porres and will light up a candle for you all. Please keep me in your prayers and be good to Fr. Paul!

Saintly Quote

"Apart from the cross there is no other ladder by which we may get to heaven." -St. Rose of Lima

Have a Laugh

One Sunday a young child was "acting up" during Mass. The parents did their best to maintain some sense of order in the pew but were losing the battle.

Finally, the father picked the little fellow up and walked sternly up the aisle on his way out.

Just before reaching the safety of the foyer, the little one called loudly to the congregation, "Pray for me! Pray for me!"

Adult Confirmation

Have you been confirmed (received the sacrament of confirmation)? If not, then now is the perfect time. Our Adult Confirmation formation program begins September 26. If you are 20 years old or older and haven't been confirmed, please sign up now. Registration forms are available at our website or at our front desk. If you have any questions, call Fr. Paul.

Founders Weekend Continues with Tradition and Invites Us to Help Our College Students

After the first Mass in 1964, St. Paul Catholic Newman Center parishioners began enjoying bread and coffee. Our founding pastor Fr. Sergio P. Negro believed gathering after Mass would help grow our faith family through fellowship and a reminder of the Eucharistic breaking of the bread. The simple act of community continue to this day, although now it's served with donuts. The weekend of September 10 and 11, as part of our Founders Day celebration, we will continue the tradition.

Food Recovery Network - Friday Dinners

We are happy to announce the restarting of the Parish's Friday Dinner Ministry. We are partnering with the Fresno State University Dining Hall, the Food Recovery Program at Fresno Metro Ministry and the Vineyard Farmers Market. Our intent is to serve 80-90% of the recovered food to needy individuals every Friday evening from 5:30pm to 6:30pm in the Cafeteria. We are happy to have a core team of about 20 parishioners who have volunteered one Friday per month to prepare and serve a complete and wholesome meal. If you are interested in volunteering, or making a donation to cover the costs of our dinner ministry, please contact Jim Grant at 559-708-3530 or jimgrantbc@gmail.com.

We Need Your Help!

The pandemic had yet another victim. Between jail lockdowns and volunteer concerns, the presence of a Catholic ministry in the Fresno jails has all but disappeared. We are trying to rectify this problem by recruiting volunteers to conduct services for and make visits to the Catholic inmates. If you are seeking to personally encounter Jesus, guaranteed you will find Him there.

If you are at all interested in this rewarding ministry, we invite you to an Introductory Meeting on Wednesday, September 14 from 7:00pm to 8:30pm here at the Newman Center. We will describe in depth the function of a volunteer, answer questions and guide you through completing the security clearance application. To help us prepare, please text (preferred) or call Elida Foster at (559) 288-0033 or Tien Nguyen at (559) 287-6441 to let us know that you are coming. Hope to see you there. God bless!



DIOCESE OF
FRESNO

8th Annual Blue Mass

FRIDAY
SEPTEMBER 30, 2022

12:15 P.M.

St. John's Cathedral, Fresno

**Bishop Brennan invites
all First Responders.**

Lunch Reception to follow the Mass

Reception hosted by:

- Catholic Daughters Council 2526, St. John's Cathedral
- Knights of Columbus Council 9525, St. John's Cathedral
- Knights of Columbus Council 16185, Holy Spirit Fresno.
- Me & Ed's Pizza



**For more information contact:
Deacon Pete Marquez, Blue Mass Chair at
petemarquez3@comcast.net**

On the Dangerous Road

This Week's Readings at Mass

- ▶ Wisdom 9:13-18b - Solomon's prayer
- ▶ Philemon 9-10, 12-17 - Plea for Onesimus
- ▶ Luke 14:25-33 - Sayings on discipleship

All three readings today offer examples of God's mysterious nature and remind us that God's ways are not always our ways. We all have our preferences of how we want things to go for us in life, as well as our hopes of how things will turn out if we follow the rules. The Book of Wisdom reminds us explicitly that we can't imagine or understand what the Lord intends for us and our world. Paul writes to Philemon of how he wishes he could keep his dear friend Onesimus with him, yet Paul feels compelled to send him back for a higher purpose which he can't fully understand yet. Jesus then tells the crowds that what they thought was the ideal in love is not the ideal at all. All are reminders that we can never fully understand the vision God has for us as individuals or as a whole. We are called to keep listening and responding as God invites us to, even when we don't know why God is leading us in such a direction.

As today's Gospel reading opens, Jesus is on the road to Jerusalem, which was code language for the people of his day, meaning "trouble." Jews of the time recognized Jerusalem as the place where prophets met their doom, finally killed by the unjust powers they challenged. Jesus knew he was on the road to a confrontation with the authorities that would ultimately cost him his life. With "great crowds" following him, he pauses to make it clear that if they choose to continue following him, they must be prepared to say goodbye to the life they know.

Jesus tells them they must be willing to leave behind their families, their possessions, and all that they know if they want to follow him. There is no "half-following Jesus" or "half-discipleship." He gives them a choice. You either follow fully, being will-

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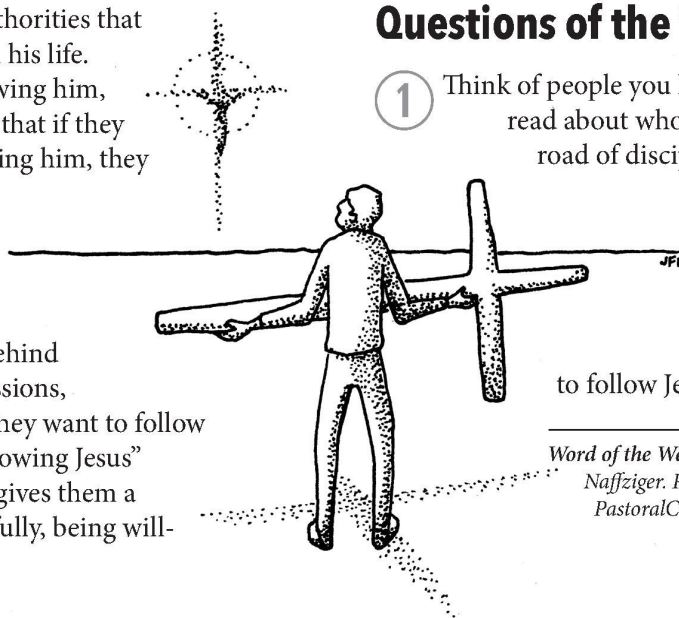
"The corruptible body burdens the soul."

Sheepish Question:
What weaknesses frustrate my commitment to follow Jesus' way?

ing to leave everything behind, or you don't follow, he seems to say. Such words may seem harsh, but Jesus refuses to sugar-coat his calling. Those following Jesus have presumably already experienced joy, new life, community, grace, and healing as they've walked with him. Now he wants to make sure they know they are also heading down a dangerous road and they should choose him with eyes wide open. It is a challenge that almost surely stopped some people up, and made them decide to go back to their former, safe ways of living.

Questions of the Week

- 1 Think of people you know or have heard or read about who continued to travel the road of discipleship even as the cost to themselves became more evident. What do they have to teach you?
- 2 What do you need to renounce to follow Jesus more faithfully?



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