



St. John's Lutheran Church, ELCA

"A Legacy of Worship and Outreach in San Antonio since 1857"

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17th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

July 26, 2020

Welcome! In this week's Gospel, Jesus offers a handful of small parables containing everyday images that reveal to us the Reign of God: a tree that becomes a sheltering home, yeast that penetrates and expands, a treasured pearl, and a net that gains a great catch. Even as we are repeatedly amazed at the abundance of our God, the greatest surprise is that God's grace always finds us first!



GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

Prelude and Bells

**Messe por l'orgue a Veni Creator (Come, Holy Spirit)
Nicolas De Grigny (1672-1703) Prelude; Plein jeu;
Recit en Dialogue; Recit de Basse de trompette**

Welcome and Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, † one God, who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

In the presence of God, who sees our hearts and our minds, we confess our sin.

(Silence for personal reflection.)

God our strength:

We confess our captivity to the power of sin, both within and around us.

We put ourselves first and others last.

What we think makes us happy leaves us longing for more.

**Rescue us from death's grip on our lives, and raise us up day by day,
that we may be alive to God and to all others in Christ Jesus. Amen.**

Sisters and brothers, all have fallen short of the glory of God;
therefore we are justified by God's grace as a gift.

Nothing can separate us from the love of God in † Christ Jesus,
in whom we have forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation. **Amen.**

Choir

"We Praise You, O God"

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Beloved and sovereign God:
Through the death and resurrection of your Son
you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy.
By your Spirit, give us your wisdom,
that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ,
our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture and preaching; we respond in profession of faith and prayer

First Reading

Romans 8:26-35, 37-39

[Paul writes] ²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Holy Gospel

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-50

The good news of Jesus Christ according to St. Matthew:

Glory to you, O Lord.

³¹ *[Jesus]* put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; ³² it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

³³ He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

⁴⁵ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶ on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it."

⁴⁷ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸ when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The Gospel of the Lord:

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Pastor James Dew

Anthem

"My Lord, What a Morning" by Russell Robinson

Apostles' Creed

With the whole Church in heaven and on earth, we confess our faith...

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, we pray for the Church, the world, and all who are in need:

God of heaven and earth, we pray for your Church, that we, along with all of your people, may always find the courage to risk ourselves, in seeking your will and your reign for both our lives and our world. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray, O Lord, for all who are searching, wandering, or even fleeing, that you will open new doors for them where they may find meaning, purpose, and acceptance. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of grace, we pray for all who desire to reach out to others, that the net they cast be wide, to offer the good news of your welcome to all whom they encounter. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray, Lord God, for the grace to let go, that we may learn to surrender those things in our lives that actually rob us of life, and to make room for the better opportunities which you continually offer us. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Father God, we pray for all who seek your healing presence in their lives, including *Bob Cauble, Chris Gates, Danny Myers, Janice Williams, Ralph Detwiler, Claudine Michalek, Kim Friesenhahn, Kenny Knippa, Bill Rickrim, Frances Franz, Alwin Schaefer, Bill Brewer, Paul Mason, Bonnie Eckhardt, Albert and Deleyce Tietze, Paul and Gloria Boenisch, Nat Castillo, Bill Witte, Beth Knox, Tom Bartholomew, the Torres Family, the Garcia family, Lauren Ottsmer, Dottie Bowles, Don Vogt, Lee Iredale, Mary Jane Schessenhagen*, and those whom we name, that you will touch their lives with both strength and peace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Into your good hands, O God, we place ourselves and our prayers, trusting in your abundant mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

(Please verbally greet those nearest you these or similar words: "Peace be with you.")

MEAL

*We bring our "first fruit" offerings to the Table of the Lord
where we are strengthened and nourished with the Body and Blood of Christ*

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth, endless is your mercy and eternal your reign.

Praise to you for the grace you've shown to your people in every age: the promise to Israel, the rescue from Egypt, the words of the prophets; and, at this end of all the ages, the gift of your Son, who proclaimed the good news in word and deed, and was obedient to your will, even to giving his life.

For on the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this to remember me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this to remember me.

As often as we eat of this bread and drink of this cup, we proclaim our Lord's death until he comes:

Christ has died. Christ is Risen. Christ will come again.

Pour out upon us, O Lord, your Holy Spirit, uniting us through this Holy Sacrament, breathing new life into us, and sending us forth, as the body of Christ, for the sake of the world. Amen.

Remember us, Lord, in your kingdom, and help us to pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Agnus Dei

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: **Have mercy on us.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: **Have mercy on us.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: **Grant us peace. Amen.**

Holy Communion

We believe that Christ is truly present in the consecrated bread and wine and we welcome all who wish to receive the Holy Sacrament. During this time of pandemic, individual servings of the Eucharist will be consumed in the pews at the direction of the Pastor.

Communion Prayer

Our Lord Jesus,
You come to us in these simple gifts of bread and wine,
planting deep within us the seeds of your Kingdom.
Send us now, as a people bearing your fruit,
that through us,
you would fully bless the world. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us out in mission to the world

Benediction

Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you, protect you, and bring you to everlasting life. **Amen.**

Choir

"Be Thou My Vision"

Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ goes with you.
Amen. Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Finale from Sonata VI - Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Worship is central to who we are as a people of God. Every time we gather to hear and respond to the Word, to offer up our prayers for the needs of many, and to receive Christ's living presence in the consecrated bread and wine, we seek to "become what we receive", namely, the Body of Christ for the sake of the life of the world. As we are gathered, fed, and then sent back out in mission, God empowers us to be bearers of blessing and vessels of grace, commissioning us to intentionally live out the reign of God throughout the course of our weekly living.

This Week at St. John's

Today, July 26 @ 8:30am	Pastor's Class
Today, July 26 @ 10:00am	Worship
Wednesday, July 29 @ 12:15pm	Word, Silence, and Prayer (Online) (https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82041752892)

(Please see our online calendar at www.stjohnssa.org for other events.)

Ministry Opportunities at Christian Assistance Ministry (CAM)

CAM Annual Back-to-School Program

If you are interested in "adopting" a child by purchasing the school supplies they need for the school year, contact Nora Oyler at noyler@cam-sa.org or call 210-223-4099.

Clothing Needs

CAM is accepting gently-used clothing items for both adult men and women. Items needed are casual wear, jeans, khakis, t-shirts, tennis shoes, and athletic shoes. Currently, CAM is not accepting any slacks, suits, heels, men's dress shoes, prom dresses, or business wear. Contact Sarah Kory at skory@cam-sa.org or call 210-223-4099 with any questions.

Help Feed the Hungry

Every other Tuesday, we deliver sandwiches to CAM around 11:00am. If you would like more information about this ministry and how you can lend support, please contact Bea Imken at 210-887-2217.

*For prayer requests, please contact the church office
(210) 223-2611 or info@StJohnsSA.org
The Prayer List is updated monthly (or as needed).*



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

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