

A Reflection from Fr. Joseph

Our reading this week begins with a wonderful little story about the prophet Elisha from the Second Book of Kings. If you remember, Elisha was Elijah's protégé. On one of Elisha's journeys, he came to the city of Shuman where he was warmly received by a generous lady of the city. She knew that he carried the presence of God's prophetic Spirit, so she invited him to stay with her and her husband anytime he was passing through the area. Elisha wanted to do something for her in return. He found out that she and her husband did not have any sons and that childbearing time was over. This was a serious situation because it was up to sons to care for their parents in their declining years. Elisha prophesied that God would reward her by giving her a son. And the prophecy was fulfilled.

This is a beautiful story of generosity and the love of God. You might remember a similar event in the Book of Genesis. Three men on a journey came upon Abraham's tent. Abraham treated them with complete respect, welcoming them and providing for their needs. In response, they promised him that his wife, Sara, would have a baby within a year. She was inside the tent and heard this. Knowing that she was beyond childbearing years, she, literally, started laughing. But the travelers were actually angels. And in a year, Abraham and Sarah had a baby they named Isaac, child of laughter.

Hospitality was one of the great virtues of the Bible. The ancients believed that each person should be welcomed as though one were welcoming God himself. Jesus moves this virtue into Christian times in today's Gospel, "*Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me. Whoever receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and whoever receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward. And whoever gives only a cup of cold water to one of these little ones to drink because the little one is a disciple - amen, I say to you, he will surely not lose his reward.*"

The virtue of hospitality is far more than being a good host at a dinner party. Hospitality means encountering the presence of God in others, usually in those whom we least expect. Sometimes we get so self-absorbed in our own expressions of spirituality, that we miss the presence of the Lord, as he stands right before us, in our family or as he knocks on the door of our homes and our lives through other people. For example, we can make the mistake of thinking that our expressions of spirituality, be they within the Catholic faith or within the general context of Christianity, are exclusive. If another person doesn't pray as we pray, express the presence of the Almighty as we express his presence, we might miss the Lord as he is standing right before us in a person that we least expect to meet him.

The virtue of hospitality is the virtue of recognizing the presence of God in others and nourishing this presence. When we practice this virtue, then the stranger among us is no longer a stranger, but a member of the family, more than welcome, like Elisha, to enjoy a room in our house, our Church. Today we pray for an openness to God's presence in ways we least expect. We pray for the virtue of hospitality.

DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Mon. July 3rd - ST. THOMAS, feast
Ephes. 2:19-22; John 20:24-29



Tue. July 4th - Genesis 19:15-29; Mat. 18:23-27

Wed. July 5th - Genesis 21:5, 8-20; Mat. 8:28-34

Thurs. July 6th - Genesis 22:1-19; Mat. 9:1-8

Fri. July 7th - Gen. 23:1-4, 19, 24:1-8, 62-67; Mat. 9:9-13

Sat. July 8th - Genesis 27:1-5, 9-10, 15-29; Mat. 9:14-17

Sun. July 9th - 14TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
Zechariah 9:9-10; Rom. 8:9, 11-13; Mat. 11:25-30

ALTAR SERVERS

As there is no schedule during the summer, please volunteer your services at the Mass you attend. Enjoy your summer.



FOR YOUR INFORMATION this will be our last bulletin until September. If you have any important announcements, please bring them to the parish office no later than Thursday mornings. Please check bulletin board and website for updates. Have a good summer!

PROJECT ADVANCE

The theme of Project Advance this year is
"Empowering our Parish Vision"

Next weekend will be our last weekend for after church pledging until September. Can we reach our diocesan goal of \$37,200??? Our Project Advance campaign continues this weekend, volunteers will be available, after all the Masses, to assist you. Thank you to all those who have responded to our appeal so far. Your generosity, especially in these hard times, is much appreciated. Lets try to increase participation. Every gift is important! Any amount we raise over and above our diocesan goal will be returned to our parish. Your gift, this year, will support primarily our parish's many needs, such as: replacement of the church roof, a new sound system for our church and repairs to our parking lot. It will also provide the necessary funds for the initiatives of the Archdiocese. Please consider prayerfully donating to this year's campaign. We are counting on your support! Donations can also be online at: www.projectadvance.ca.

CANADA DAY - Holiday

Please Note: Our office will be closed this Monday, July 3rd for the statutory holiday.

SCHOOL NEWS

Our school is now closed for the summer. The school will re-open for students on Sept.5th. Have a wonderful summer!

ARCHDIOCESAN NEWS

Up-Coming Events

Stewardship Reflection

"...whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me." Matthew 10:38

Pope Benedict XVI said "The world offers you comfort. But you were not made for comfort, you were made for greatness". "Comfort" puts me first. "Picking up your cross and following Jesus" puts God and others first. Why settle for comfort when you can achieve greatness! Pick up your cross, ask Jesus for guidance on using your gifts and live the life God intended for you!

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Seminary of Christ the King -Vocation Live-In

There will be a Vocation Live-In on the weekend of July 8 - 9, 2023 at the Seminary of Christ the King in Mission, BC. Anyone wishing to enter the Seminary in the next couple of years is welcome. For more information phone 604-826-8975 or email rector.minors@sck.ca

Street Missionary Weekend for Young Adults

Spend a weekend with other young adults in reaching out to our less privileged brothers and sisters on the streets of Vancouver! Organized by Catholic Street Missionaries, participants will live a communal life, pray, learn, enjoy recreational activities together, and reach out to our homeless friends on the streets. Participants will stay overnight at St. Mary's Parish in Vancouver. No experience necessary. Training will be provided. From Thursday, July 13, to Monday, July 17.

More at beholdvancouver.org/events

Upper Room Conference 2023

The Holy Spirit is moving in the Archdiocese of Vancouver! We're excited to announce that this year's Upper Room conference will take place on Saturday, September 23. Save the date and get updates by following @weareproclaim on social media or subscribing to email updates at: weareproclaim.com

Save the Date: The Men's Retreat 2023

Hosted by Life Restoration, this retreat offers something for every man: adventure, brotherhood, powerful keynotes, prayer, Sacraments, and the rugged outdoor beauty of Rockridge Canyon in Princeton, B.C.

Save the Date: Friday, Sept. 29th to Sunday, Oct. 1st.

Save 20% Off Sacred Burial Space - St. Peter's Open House

Summer is here, and we are hosting an Open House at St. Peter's Catholic Cemetery in New Westminster. Although we are sold out of traditional plots, cremation in-ground plots and spaces in St. Peter's columbarium are available. Catholics save 20% off burial space at our sacred grounds. Now is the perfect time to make pre-need burial arrangements for yourself or your parents! On Wednesday, July 12, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Learn more at rccav.org/events.