

Gospel Reflection ~ September 10, 2017

Jesus' teaching to Peter in today's Gospel continues his long discourse on Church life. Peter's initiating question flows naturally from Jesus' instruction on the process of forgiveness that we heard in last Sunday's Gospel. Now Peter is asking just how far forgiveness should extend. What limits can he put on forgiving a member of the Church who has sinned against him? When Peter suggests forgiving as many as seven times, he apparently thinks he is being magnanimous. After all, Peter and his fellow Jews knew well that God punished foreign nations after only three transgressions (see Amos 1:3-13). Some Jewish teachers at the time of Jesus interpreted this to mean that forgiving three times was sufficient. Forgiving seven times goes far beyond the "rule of three" forgiveness. Forgiving seven times also draws on the Jewish symbolism of seven, signifying completeness.

Picking up on symbolism, Jesus must have shocked Peter and the disciples by expanding to an almost impossible offer of forgiveness: seventy-seven times, or even seventy times seven. Forgiveness, according to Jesus, has no bounds. He illustrates such overwhelming forgiveness through a parable in three scenes. In the first, the king forgives an excessive amount to a slave who begs forgiveness. Scene two presents a huge contrast when the same slave refuses to forgive a much smaller debt. The parable concludes with the king calling back the unforgiving servant and punishing him for his lack of mercy. The twofold teaching of the parable, couples with Jesus' initial response to Peter, emphasizes God's extravagant mercy, and the necessity of exercising the same mercy in our own lives, even to seventy times seven.

Source: Workbook for Lectors, Gospel Readers, and Proclaimers of the Word.

Around the Town

Bi-Monthly Healing Mass on September 18 at Saint Joseph Cathedral: A Mass of Healing and Healing Service will be celebrated on Monday, September 18, 6:30 p.m. at Saint Joseph Cathedral, 212 East Broad Street, Columbus. Following the Mass, a Service of Healing will begin with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Veneration of relic of the True Cross of Christ, followed by an opportunity for each person to speak individually with a priest and receive prayers of healing for what they seek; the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick will also be available. The Service of Healing will conclude with Benediction. All persons who seek Christ's healing are invited – especially those who suffer with physical illness and infirmities (e.g. cancer and other debilitating diseases and conditions), in addition to those who seek emotional and spiritual healing. All caregivers, family members, and members of the medical community are invited as well. Parking is available at the rear of the Cathedral accessible off East Gay Street; handicap accessible elevator is located in the courtyard (west side of the Cathedral) on East Broad Street. If you have any questions about this special Mass please call the Cathedral: (614) 224-1295.



Family Rosary Day - The Diocese of Columbus' annual Family Rosary Day is scheduled for Sunday, October 8, at 3 p.m., at St. Joseph Cathedral, 212 E. Broad St, Columbus. Bishop Frederick F. Campbell will be the presider and homilist. This special event in the life of our Diocese demonstrates our commitment to the Blessed Mother as a model for the Church's mission and life of worship. All are encouraged to attend.



Looking Ahead

St. Francis' Social Justice Group will meet on **Sunday evening October 15 from 6-8 pm** in the church hall. Activities and plans for our parish's various social justice ministries will be discussed during the first part of the meeting and the BREAD (Building Responsibility, Equality and Dignity) House meeting will be held during the second part. The latter is an opportunity for parishioners to share their ideas about what should be the focus of BREAD's attention in the upcoming year, so please plan to attend. Food will be served!



Fall Craft Fair – It's time to get your crafts ready for our Annual Fall Craft Fair. The event will be held on Sunday, November 5 in the Parish Hall. If you are a crafter and would like a table, please contact Amy Knight at 614-251-1477. There is no table fee, but we do ask that you donate 10% of your sales back to the church to be sent to the St. Francis Center in McArthur, Ohio.

Rectory Project

During the month of August, while Father was on vacation, the rectory received some much needed attention. This is an overview of the work.

Projects included repairing the ceiling and walls in the second floor study and painting the room. Guest bedroom was cleaned and repainted to prepare for the missionary priest that stayed at the rectory, along with deep cleaning of the bathroom.

The first floor of the rectory received the most attention as the hallway carpet, rose (pink) ceramic tiles and radiators were removed. The hardwood floor was sanded and refinished. Walls as well as the baseboard were painted and new LED lights installed in the ceiling.

The first floor restroom was also a center of major attention as the rose (or pink) ceramic tiles were removed, pink radiator removed, pink wallpaper removed only to discover additional challenges which required the room to have dry wall installed. A new tile floor was installed along with a fresh coat of paint, new sink, and lights.

Kitchen cabinets were cleaned, broken trash compactor removed, walls and ceiling painted and new LED lights installed.

The entire rectory was thoroughly cleaned, except for Father's bedroom out of respect for his privacy. If a room wasn't painted, the walls were wiped down, baseboard washed and furniture polished. The first floor wall decorations were also addressed.

The parish is very fortunate to have many parishioners who have given of their time, talent and donations to ensure the rectory is welcoming and comfortable. All is very much appreciated. Thank You

Prayer Needed

We have many in our parish right now who are in need of prayer. Please know that you are in our thoughts and prayers daily, and we hold you ALL in our hearts.

Be strong and take heart, all who hope in the Lord. Psalm 31:25