

THIRTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

MATTHEW 22:34--40

October 23, 2011

- The gospel today centers the message of Jesus on love; on two loves united in each of us. Love God, love thy neighbour—this is the only commandment of Jesus. Without this, all we say we do for him is really done for ourselves.
- No detail of religious observance is above this law of love. Jesus said this and lived it in his life. He never allowed the laws of religion to overtake the need for love.

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 24TH

Wednesday	9:00 a.m.	Mass Jackie Moore by Lydia Richard
Friday	9:00 a.m.	Mass
Saturday(Oct 29)	7:00 p.m.	Lillian Roberston by Teresa Sullivan
Sunday (Oct 30)	9:00 a.m.	Maurice Roy by Mary Callahan & Family Mary Kelly by Carol Ann Bowers
	11:00 a.m.	Elise Boucher & Charles Laurendeau by Pierrette Laurendeau Des Bolton by Beth & Jack Picard

WEEKEND COLLECTIONS: \$2,130.95 Thank You!

And so the Journey to Confirmation and First Communion begins...

That refers to the meetings of this coming week with the candidates and parents of those who have registered for Confirmation and for First Communion to be celebrated in the Easter Season of this coming year. Actually, that journey does not begin with these meetings. It really began with the request of the parents so many years ago to have their children baptized. Baptism, in a comprehensive sense, includes Confirmation and Participation in the Eucharist (First Communion). However, when children began to be baptized in infancy, for a variety of reasons, their Confirmation and Participation in the Eucharist got to be separated from their Baptism and celebrated much later, at least in the Western Church; even their sequence got changed. The result is that those baptized in infancy now join us at the Table of the Lord when they are about 7 or 8 or older; those to be confirmed – at least in our Diocese – are now expected to be 15 or older at the time of their Confirmation. It is altogether not a very coherent picture, but established patterns are difficult to break.

This coming Tuesday (October 25) the parents of the First Communion candidates meet for the first time. Mind you, a member of our First Communion preparation team will have visited them at home already, much like we do with parents when they ask their son/daughter to be baptized. (What is dedication?) The following Thursday (October 27) the candidates for Confirmation and their parents will have a similar meeting.

Why these preliminary steps? The way those to be confirmed and those who will be making their First Communion are prepared today is quite different from the way most of us came to these sacraments. For one thing, the schools have nothing to do with it. That is already so for a number of years. The preparation is now entirely in the hands of the families and the parish, as it really should be. Are the families and the parishes ready for that? In all honesty, it is quite a challenge for both families and parishes!

The path we try to follow

As for preparing for these sacraments of Confirmation and Participation in the Eucharist (First Communion), a number of paths can be followed. There are several so-called sacramental preparation books on the market and they present a helpful guide. Needless to say, this sort of preparation cannot be limited to working through a book, helpful as such an instrument can be. There is a fair bit more to be done.

That is why, on our part, here at St. Mark's, we try to implement the orientation laid out in the 2004 diocesan document ***Discovering Jesus Christ: the Path to Freedom***. Interesting! The focus is indeed on Jesus Christ. And rightly so! What else could be the life-long faith-journey for the Christian but a *getting to know Jesus Christ, being initiated into Jesus Christ, cultivating a taste for Jesus Christ and for the Kingdom of God that he lived and gave his*

life for and that he inaugurated? Ideally, that is the overriding concern of every aspect of our parish life – much work still to be done there! And that is what ideally we try to expose our candidates for Confirmation and First Communion to. In that case, Confirmation and First Communion cannot be presented as ends in themselves (in the sense of ***been there, done that***), but as privileged grace-filled moments on the life-long journey that we are all engaged in. In other words, this sort of formation in the Christian life cannot be limited to preparation for Confirmation and for First Communion, nor is it finished there. The journey goes on...

We hope that, with the help of the Spirit that Jesus Christ promised, our preparation for next year's celebration of Confirmation and First Communion will in some way reflect that.

All Souls Day is fast approaching

We will be observing it on Thursday, November 3, at 7:00 p.m.

Each year, the Church observes ***Commemoration of all the Faithful Departed*** (or as it used to be called ***All Souls Day***) on November 2nd. It is a day on which we want to remember the dead, but remember them in the light of our Christian faith which holds that the dead are called to share in Christ's victory of life over death.

The plan is to do that in the celebration of the Eucharist on **November 3rd at 7:00 p.m.** We had to move it to Thursday evening, because other things are planned already on the 1st and the 2nd. During that Mass on the 3rd we will call forth the names of the persons who have been buried from St. Mark's since last year's All Souls Day. For each of them we light a small candle from the **Easter Candle** as an expression of our Easter faith.

The families who have one of their members buried from St. Mark's in this past year will have received a letter inviting them to that Mass. There may be parishioners who experienced the death of a close relative (such as father/mother, daughter/son, brother/sister) this past year. The burial may have taken place elsewhere. If you want to have your close relative's name called forth here as well, please, let us know. Then we can include their name too.

One might say that calling forth the name of the deceased and lighting a candle is done in other places as well, even in a purely secular context. Are we just following a fad? Not really. In our faith context these two gestures are very special. When the priest calls for the names of the deceased, he lends God his voice, as it were. It is really God who calls them by name. And it is an echo of the first time our names were called as part of the baptism ceremony, based on that beautiful line in Scripture: ***I have called you by name... I have carved your name in the palm of my hand.*** When God calls forth our name, he calls to life as only God can. Needless to say, that has special significance when death has claimed us. Then God's counter-claim calls us to life. As for the lighting of a small candle from the **Easter Candle**, it evokes for us the Christian faith conviction that the deceased are called by God to share in the victory of life over death that the dead and risen Jesus won for us. It is an important aspect of the core of our Christian faith.

So much of our faith is at stake for us in that celebration of **November 3rd, at 7:00 p.m.**

Saturday, November 5, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Diocesan Pastoral Launch for the English Parishes, at St. Mark's

This year's Diocesan Pastoral Launch is done in four different locations rather than in one general session. One session is set aside for us, the English parishes in the Diocese. That is a first. So let us make sure to be there. Its target is *priests, pastoral agents, and all those who are interested in pastoral activities aimed at the 18-35 age group*. So often we hear that we do not do enough for that age group! So here is the chance to see what we want to do, what we need to do and what we can possibly do! Even if the session is held in our parish, it is important to register for it with Ginette Delorme at 819 771-8391 or delorme@diocesegatineau.org one week before the launch.

DEVELOPMENT & PEACE: What is ecological justice?

1. **Ecological justice** is a celebration of the interconnection and interdependence of all beings and recognizes our human responsibility to co-exist in harmony for the well-being of the Earth community. Ecological justice promotes human dignity, the self-determination of all persons, and the development of sustainable economies with justice for all within a finite world.

2. From a Christian perspective, **ecological justice** is based on the belief that the Earth is sacred, and that the dignity of the human person requires particular attention to the needs of the marginalized and the poor - a preferential option for the poor.
3. From a scientific perspective, **ecological justice** is based on the knowledge that the Earth and its resources are finite, that ecosystems are complex and fragile, that the natural world, of which humans are a part, exists as an interconnected and interdependent system. In this web of existence, human ingenuity and activity must be founded on prudence and care.
4. From a historical perspective, **ecological justice** is based on the fact that the Earth's dominant economic, social and political systems have favoured—and continue to primarily benefit—people in the Global North. This has led to the depletion of Earth's ecological diversity, ecosystem destruction, pollution of soil, sea and sky, species extinction, and climate change. The effects of this have been felt most deeply by populations in the Global South who are least responsible for them.
5. **Ecological justice** is a relatively new concept for many of us. Working for **Ecological justice** therefore calls for inspiration, prayer, resourcefulness and imagination. Responding to the urgency of the present global inequities and ecological degradation—particularly from the effects of climate change—will require determination, restraint, solidarity and love from each of us.

ELECTIONS FOR THE WARDENS AND PARISH COUNCIL: There are two upcoming vacancies for the wardens, and four for the parish council (PPC). If you are interested in serving the parish in these roles, please pick up a nomination form from the parish office, at the entrances to the church, or by contacting one of the nominating committee members: Margaret Gillis 819 682-9640, Skip Brooks 819 827-2943, or Bob Rutter 819 685-1968. The nominations for both the wardens and the PPC will close on November 6. Candidates will be presented to parishioners on November 12 and 13 and elections held on November 19 and 20.

WANT TO MAKE A CHILD HAPPY THIS CHRISTMAS?

You can do so by filling out a shoebox which will be sent to a needy child for Christmas; a wonderful activity to do with your children. Boxes are available at the church entrances. Deadline for return of the boxes is during the Masses of Nov. 12 and 13. For more information, please contact Shirley at 819 685-0776.

MEALS ON WHEELS needs volunteer part-time delivery drivers for Monday, Wednesday or Friday mornings. If you are interested, please call Cal Mott at 819 684-8523.

CWG REGULAR MEETING: Tuesday, November 1st at 7 p.m. Memberships will be taken. Last meeting before the Bazaar – please try to attend. The **Bazaar** will be held on November 12th. More information to come.

WAYNE PARRINGTON'S RETIREMENT: Please mark your calendars for the celebration of Wayne Parrington's retirement after the 7:00 Mass, Saturday October 29.

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK: Kindly remember Gabriel Filiou, Lucy Lafontaine, Jean Paul Bourassa, Don Daly, Bernie McGuire, and their families in your prayers.

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