

February 23, 2025
Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time



**Merciful and gracious is the LORD,
slow to anger and abounding in kindness.**
— Psalm 103:8

DO NO HARM

We listen quite a while before we get to the “punch line” of the first reading today: even though it would be an easy thing to do, David will not harm the anointed one of the Lord. We, of course, know that Jesus is the Messiah, the anointed one of God, but the Bible uses this term for many different people. It is scripture’s way of indicating who has been chosen by God for a special place and mission in salvation history.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus presents a greatly enlarged list of those who, as children of God, we should not harm, but love instead: our enemies, those who curse us or do us harm, those who owe us money, the ungrateful, the wicked. The point of Jesus’ teaching is not to encourage these kinds of behaviors in others, but rather to form us in the image of our heavenly Father by increasing our opportunities to love unconditionally, expecting no return; to be merciful and forgiving, even when it would be easier not to.

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REFLECTING ON GOD’S WORD

By the time Mary Ellen discovered her business manager’s thievery, he had charged ten thousand dollars of personal items on the corporate credit card. It was a slap in the face that left her feeling angry, deceived, betrayed. Knowing that Chuck’s extended family was in financial trouble only made things harder. Didn’t he know he could come to her for help?



Rather than press criminal charges, Mary Ellen decided to ask for Chuck’s resignation and two hundred dollars per month until the “debt” was paid. She knew she’d made the right decision when Chuck sobbed, “I was wrong. I’m so sorry. I’ll pay back every cent.”

In our culture such mercy is considered foolish and stupid. From lawsuits to the death penalty, from violence in our schools to gang wars, revenge seems to be our

operating principle. Not so in these scriptures. Instead they urge: “Love your enemies,” “Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful,” “Bear the image of the heavenly one”—Jesus. In short, we are to ask and to do what Jesus would do.

—Virginia Stillwell

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TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

When the Roman Empire turned a favorable eye toward the once-persecuted Christians, among the effects was a population explosion in the baptismal font, as Christian sympathizers stepped from the shadows. With more and more people becoming Christians, laws were passed to protect Sunday as a work-free day. Soon, it became possible to celebrate Mass later in the morning, rather than the older custom of gathering before dawn to celebrate Eucharist. Amazingly, despite the increasing numbers of Christians, there was great resistance to adding to the number of worship events; the Eucharist that began as a few friends around a table soon was transformed into a more formal event with throngs crowding a large hall. All the Christians in a city or town would gather around the bishop for the one Sunday Eucharist, and only when the crowds became unmanageable was there an impulse to divide the assembly by splitting off a new bishop and flock.

Now, sixteen hundred years later, many parishes see a need to trim or combine Mass schedules. This is often seen as tough surgery. Yet our forebears in the faith would see it as a gain: a filling up of the Eucharist with a large and vigorous assembly, a fullness of ministry, an opportunity to make the Church more fully visible and stronger for service.

—James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

TODAY’S READINGS

First Reading — David found Saul in a deep sleep, but would not harm him (1 Samuel 26:2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23).

Psalm — The Lord is kind and merciful (Psalm 103).

Second Reading — We shall bear the image of the heavenly Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45-49).

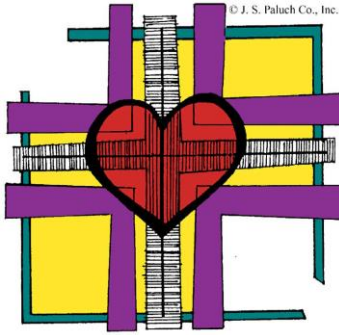
Gospel — Give to everyone who asks of you. Lend expecting nothing back (Luke 6:27-38).

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Living God’s Word

Lent is fast approaching. Lent is a season for receiving more deeply the merciful love that God showed us in Jesus. It is a season for letting God’s mercy convert us more fully into the image of Christ who loved his enemies even on the cross.

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Saturday, February 22nd

5:00PM-IHM – +Maria Morales Guerrero, Rodolfo Morales, Carlos C. Guerrero; +Daniel Grimaldo

Sunday, February 23rd –

8:30AM– Por la gente de Nolan County

11:00AM – +Martina Herrera; +Aurelia Garza; In thanksgiving for Richie Solis’ birthday

Tuesday, February 25th 9:00AM – HF

For the well-being of Tanis Moreno’s family

Wednesday, February 26th 6:00PM-IHM

+Maria Aguilera Marquez

Thursday, February 27th 9:00AM-HF

+Ernestina Perales & deceased members of her family

Friday, February 28th 9:00AM-HF

+Marcelino Rodriguez

Saturday, March 1st

5:00PM-IHM – Guadalupanas living and deceased +Daniel Grimaldo

7:00PM – Roscoe – For the People of Nolan County

Sunday, March 2nd –

8:30AM– +Cirilo, Victoria y Lucia Chavira; Por los cumpleaños de Arianni Martinez y Nayely Hernandez

11:00AM – +Martina Herrera; In Thanksgiving for Kinsley Heredia’s birthday

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Sir 1:1-10; Ps 93:1-2, 5; Mk 9:14-29
 Tuesday: Sir 2:1-11; Ps 37:3-4, 18-19, 27-28, 39-40; Mk 9:30-37
 Wednesday: Sir 4:11-19; Ps 119:165, 168, 171, 172, 174, 175; Mk 9:38-40
 Thursday: Sir 5:1-8; Ps 1:1-4, 6; Mk 9:41-50
 Friday: Sir 6:5-17; Ps 119:12, 16, 18, 27, 34, 35; Mk 10:1-12
 Saturday: Sir 17:1-15; Ps 103:13-18; Mk 10:13-16
 Sunday: Sir:27:4-7; Ps 92:2-3, 13-16; 1 Cor 15:54-58; Lk 6:39-45

Please pray for our Holy Father, Pope Francis

CCD CLASSES – Sunday - 9:30-10:40am
 Wednesday - 7:00-8:30pm

OCIA (formerly known as RCIA) - Classes are held on Thursdays, at 6:00pm at Holy Family Hall, 507 Crane Street.

PARISH MOVIE GROUP – meets at Holy Family Hall, this Sunday, February 23rd, from 4:00pm - 6:00pm.

YOUTH GROUP meets this Sunday, February 23rd, at 6:30pm @Holy Family Hall.

WEDNESDAY – Confessions begin at 5:15pm followed by Mass at 6:00pm & Adoration until 8:30pm @IHM.

GRUPO MISIONERO - Meets on Thursdays, at 7:00pm at Immaculate Heart Hall.

BAPTISM – To schedule, please call the office

OFFERTORY ENVELOPES 2025– Please come by the parish office for your envelopes.

FOOD DRIVE

The parish will be collecting non-perishable food items to donate to one of our local food pantries. You can bring your donations to any of the Masses during the month of February. Let us share what we have with those in need.

God Bless you – Thank you!

COLECTA DE ALIMENTOS

La parroquia recolectará alimentos no-perecederos para donar a una de nuestras despensas de alimentos locales. Puede traer sus donaciones a cualquiera de las Misas durante el mes de febrero. Compartamos lo que tenemos con los necesitados. *Dios lo Bendiga- Gracias!*

WORD OF LIFE – February 2025

“The essence of our identity is that we are created in God’s image and likeness and loved by Him. Nothing can diminish the priceless worth of any human life. Every person is cherished.”

USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities
 Respect Life Reflection: Cherished, Chosen, Sent
usccb.org/cherished-chosen-sent-reflection

February 15/16, 2025 COLLECTION DATA

ENVELOPES/CHECKS.....\$3401.00
 LOOSE PLATE.....1169.15
 BUILDING FUND.....902.40
 TOTAL COLLECTION.....\$5472.55

Thank you for your generosity

HOLY SPIRIT CLEANING SCHEDULE

March 1–Finance Comm. March 8 – Grupo Misionero

DESTROYING ONE’S ENEMIES

Am I not destroying my enemies when I make friends of them?
 —Abraham Lincoln

#17 - The Eucharistic Prayer Intro + Epiclesis

There are many different Eucharistic prayers: 4 main ones, and 6 supplemental ones. From the 4 main ones, we will focus on the first three. The first Eucharistic prayer is the oldest, and it begins by acknowledging that we are making a humble prayer and petition to God the Father through Jesus. We ask the Father to bless the gifts, and we tell Him that these gifts are offered on behalf of the pope, the bishop, and all those who hand on the catholic and apostolic faith. Then we pray specifically for those present in church, and any living person who we can think of to lift up in prayer. In this time as we hear the name of the pope and bishop, we are invited to recognize that we are much bigger than the Church in Sweetwater. We are part of the universal church, and as members of this giant family, we lift up all the members of our worldwide family in prayer. Then we acknowledge that we are in communion in our prayer with all of the saints in heaven, and we list several of them starting with Mary and Joseph.

The second and third Eucharistic prayers are a little shorter, and they begin by acknowledging that God is holy and the source of all holiness. In the third Eucharistic prayer there is a line where we say that God gives life to all things and never ceases to gather all people to himself. This is an appropriate moment to think of those people who we want to pray for.

Then the priest will extend his hands over the offerings and the bells are rung as the epiclesis prayer is prayed. This short prayer asks God the Father to send the Holy Spirit upon the offerings of bread and wine so that they may be transformed into the Body and Blood of Jesus. The second part of this prayer is that all who share in the Body and Blood of Jesus may be brought together into the Body of Christ. In the same way that the Holy Spirit overshadowed the Virgin Mary, and she became pregnant with Jesus, the Holy Spirit overshadows the gifts of bread and wine and they become the Body and Blood of Jesus. It is not the priest who is doing this marvelous work. The Holy Spirit is present and accomplishes this mysterious sacrifice. Nothing human takes place at this holy altar.

#17 – La Plegaria Eucarística Intro + Epiclesis

Hay muchas oraciones Eucarísticas diferentes: 4 principales y 6 complementarias. De las 4 principales, nos centraremos en las tres primeras. La primera oración Eucarística es la más antigua y comienza reconociendo que estamos haciendo una humilde oración y petición a Dios Padre a través de Jesús. Pedimos al Padre que bendiga los dones, y le decimos que estos dones se ofrecen en nombre del papa, el obispo, y todos los que transmiten la fe católica y apostólica. Luego oramos específicamente por los presentes en la iglesia y por cualquier persona viva que se nos ocurra para elevar en oración. En este momento, cuando escuchamos el nombre del papa y el obispo, se nos invita a reconocer que somos mucho más grandes que la Iglesia de Sweetwater. Somos parte de la iglesia universal y, como miembros de esta familia gigante, elevamos a todos los miembros de nuestra familia mundial en oración. Luego reconocemos que estamos en comunión en nuestra oración con todos los santos del cielo y enumeramos varios de ellos, comenzando con María y José.

La segunda y tercera oraciones Eucarísticas son un poco más breves y comienzan reconociendo que Dios es santo y fuente de toda santidad. En la tercera oración Eucarística hay una línea en la que decimos que Dios da vida a todas las cosas y nunca deja de reunir a todas las personas hacia él. Este es un momento apropiado para pensar en aquellas personas por las que queremos orar.

Luego el sacerdote extiende sus manos sobre las ofrendas y se hacen sonar las campanas mientras se reza la oración epiclesis. Esta breve oración pide a Dios Padre que envíe el Espíritu Santo sobre las ofrendas de pan y vino para que se transformen en el Cuerpo y la Sangre de Jesús. La segunda parte de esta oración es que todos los que participan del Cuerpo y la Sangre de Jesús puedan unirse en el Cuerpo de Cristo. De la misma manera que el Espíritu Santo cubrió con su sombra a la Virgen María, y ella quedó embarazada con Jesús, el Espíritu Santo cubre con su sombra los dones de pan y vino y se convierten en el Cuerpo y la Sangre de Jesús. No es el sacerdote quien está haciendo esta obra maravillosa. El Espíritu Santo está presente y realiza este misterioso sacrificio. Nada humano ocurre en este altar sagrado.

