

## *NOTES FROM FR. SEÁN*

November 22, 2020

### **In Today's Gospel**

Today is the last Sunday of Ordinary Time. On this day, we celebrate the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. As we prepared for the season of Advent, as we prepare to welcome Christ, we recognize that he is indeed our king, and we must be ready to welcome him at all times.

In today's gospel, we hear the story of the Judgment of the Nations. Jesus tells us that the Son of Man will come in his glory to judge all the nations, and he will separate "the sheep from the goats," those who did the will of God, from those who did not. Those who will be judged righteous will be those who acted with love for all. Those who did not act, those who thought they could wait until the king was visible to act, will be condemned "into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels." (Mt 25:41b) Let us not wait until we see Christ the King present in our midst to act. Let us go out and treat our brothers and sisters with the love that we have from God, in whose image they were created.

### **Happy Thanksgiving**

This week, we celebrate Thanksgiving. This is a day when all Americans, regardless of religion, are called to give thanks for what we have. This year, it may be challenging to find a reason to give thanks. We are suffering through a pandemic, many people have lost work, and we have been told that we cannot gather together in large groups. During the most challenging times, we must give thanks all the more for what we have.

Spend some time this week, before Thursday, reflecting on what you have for which you can give thanks. Do not focus so much on material things; material things come and go. Focus on the things that endure through good times and bad. Then, on Thursday, offer these up as your prayer of Thanksgiving.

### **COVID-19 Updates**

Since the resumption of public Masses, there has been a dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass. Because of the increase in COVID-19 cases in Michigan, the Archbishop has extended this dispensation. The dispensation now expires on February 17, Ash Wednesday.

It is important to remember that this is only a dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass. It is not a dispensation from the obligation to keep holy the Sabbath, which is Divine Law. If you cannot get to Sunday Mass, you must set aside a time for prayer on Sundays regardless of the reason. An excellent way to do this is by tuning into our livestream for the 11:30 Mass. The livestream can be found on the Facebook pages for both St. Mary and St. Richard, as well as our YouTube page. Once the livestream has ended, the Mass will remain posted on our YouTube page. You can find it by going to YouTube and searching for "St. Mary and St. Richard." We should be the top search result. Click on the subscribe button and click the bell for notifications.

In addition to extending the dispensation, we have also begun to limit events at the parish. We will continue to have Mass, but we will be canceling many social gatherings in our parishes. Meetings

that do continue will be limited to 10 people. If you have any questions, please contact the parish office to see if your event has been canceled.

We must all work together to help stop the spread of COVID -19.

### **Church Repairs**

Although we have had to postpone replacing the carpet at St. Mary, many other maintenance projects continue. Our boilers are more than 50 years old. Over the last couple of years, we have made significant repairs to them, and those repairs continue. When you come to Mass at St. Mary, you will likely hear some clanking from our boiler system. We are continuing to work on the system, making additional repairs and adjustments to make it run as efficiently as possible.

Another issue we have had has been the damage to the roof on the bell tower at St. Mary. If you drive past the church on Michigan Avenue, you will see a bright shiny new copper section on the bell tower. In addition to repairing this damage, we have also replaced some missing shingles on the roof of the church and the activity center. These were also repaired. All of these repairs were covered by insurance, so all we had to pay was the deductible.

Most of our roofs, at both St. Mary and St. Richard, are all reaching the end of their useful life. We are doing what we can to extend that life for at least a few more years.

View this full bulletin on the *Parish Life* tab on our webpage.