

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church Newsletter
July 11, 2021

My Dear Parishioners

The Blessed Apostles and Disciples had everything they ever needed for a complete and joyful life in their relationship with Jesus Christ. They knew, however, what they had was not just for themselves. They knew that they were the chosen instruments so that others could also have the complete joy a relationship with Jesus Christ. So they went out at our Blessed Savior's command as both missionaries and messengers. They went out both before and after His Passion, Death, and Resurrection. They wanted everyone they met to have what they had. We, of course, are the beneficiaries of their desire that all people should have an opportunity to have true relationship with Our Blessed Savior.

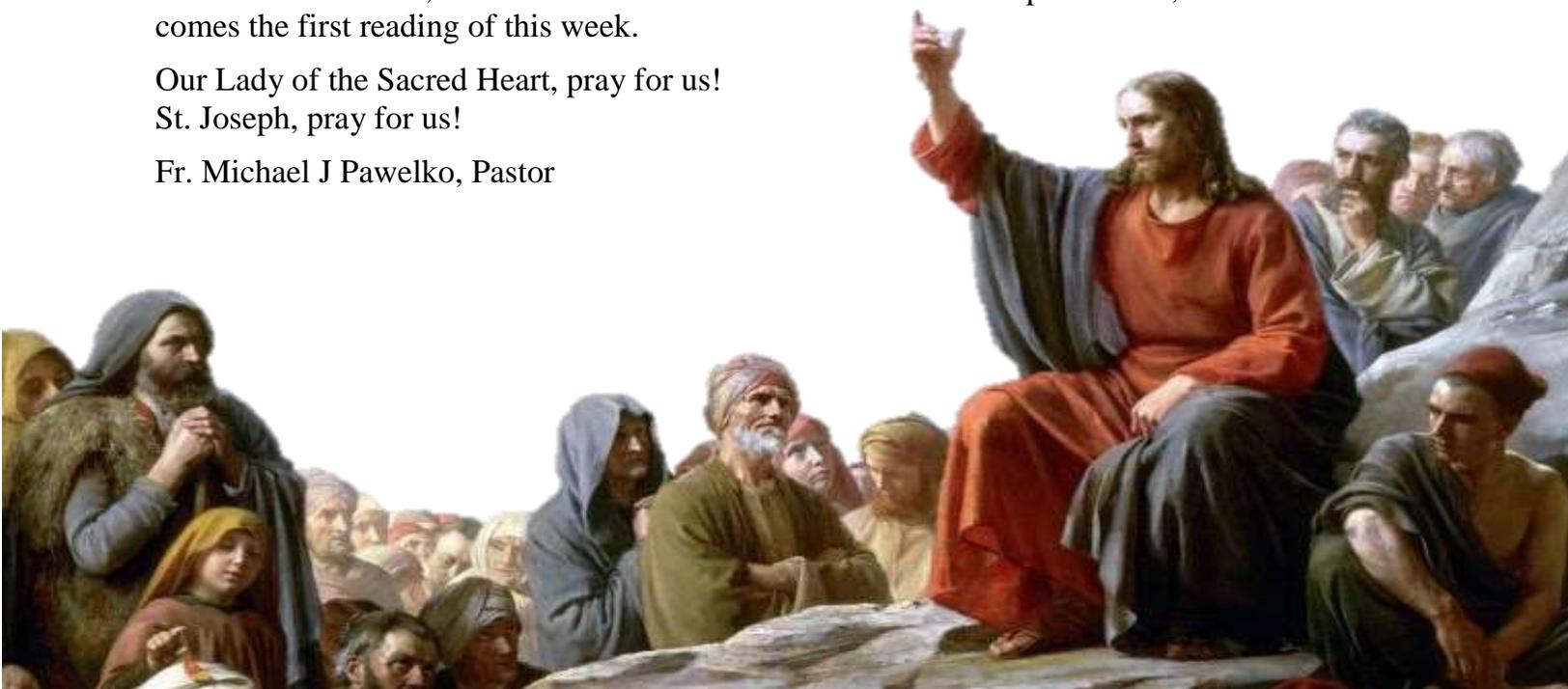
As we give thanks for the Mission of the Blessed Apostles and Disciples, this is a good weekend to give thanks for those who were the instruments in our lives who first introduced us, or helped to re-introduced us, to Our Blessed Savior. They could be our parents who had us baptized as babies, a spouse, a family member, a friend, a priest, a nun. May God always give us the gift of true appreciation for the missionaries and messengers that He has placed in our lives, and may He give us the grace to always be good and holy instruments to those around us.

On a similar note, an important way we as a parish community "pass on" the Faith is through our CCD program. I am very happy to report that I have appointed Mrs. Julie Reed as our new Director of Religious Education effective July 20. Mrs. Reed is a parishioner with many years of experience in Catholic Education and a background in management. She is also familiar to us as a cantor and choir member. I am also happy to report that our retiring Director of Religious Education, Mrs. Joanne Roberts, will be working closely with Mrs. Reed through the end of the summer to make the transition as smooth as possible. I ask you to give Mrs. Reed a warm welcome and your prayerful support as she begins this new journey in her life. I moreover thank Mrs. Roberts, Mrs. Reed, Mrs. Gehman, and all involved in the CCD program, and I firmly believe that this great program has a very bright future.

For further reflection on this week's readings, I have included an instruction for Pope Benedict XVI. Also, I have included some information on the Prophet Amos, from Who's Book comes the first reading of this week.

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, pray for us!
St. Joseph, pray for us!

Fr. Michael J Pawelko, Pastor





Book of the Prophet Amos

Our first reading is from the Book of the Prophet Amos. Amos is listed among the “Minor Prophets.” As a side, the distinction between the “Major Prophets” and the “Minor Prophets” does not have anything to do with the importance of the message, for the message of all of the prophets was important. The distinction has to do with the length of the books that record their message: the “Major Prophets” have the longest books and the “Minor Prophets” have the shortest books.

What is important to remember that the mission of all of the prophets was not to predict the future but to encourage faithfulness to the Law, repentance, and continual conversion. The prophets were sent by God to encourage those who were faithful to the Covenant to continue to be faithful and to call back those who were unfaithful--for their own good.

Amos preached in the northern kingdom of Israel during the 8th Century BC, just before Israel fell to the Assyrians.

Amos was not a professional prophet—yes, they had professional prophets back in the day. No, Amos received a personal call from God to leave the comfort of his life and accept the mantle of a prophet. He took that call very seriously, and in today’s world, Amos would be considered a “fire and brimstone” type of preacher. He didn’t hold back, nor did he sugar-coat his message. He boldly condemned sin, especially idol worship, lukewarmness, and the neglect of the poor. He directed most of his words towards the wealthy and movers and shakers of his own time, because he thought that they were using religion for purely political purposes and not for the right reasons. He also preached that the coming war with Assyria was a Divine Punishment for Israel’s failure to remain faithful to the Law of Moses.

For us, Amos is a reminder that preachers who challenge our “comfort zones” are really a gift from God. They are a gift because is working through them to led us to an ever deeper relationship with Himself. So this weekend, as we give thanks to those who have introduced us to Our Blessed Savior, we also give thanks to those who have challenged us and called us to an ever deeper relationship with Him. May the Good Lord reward them for caring so much that they challenged us.



Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Homily of His Holiness Benedict XVI Pastoral Visit to Frascati, Italy ~ July 15, 2012

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am very pleased to be with you to celebrate the Eucharist and to share the joys and hopes, efforts and commitments, ideals and aspirations of this diocesan community. I greet Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, who is my Secretary of State and the titular of this Diocese. I greet Bishop Raffaello Martinelli, your Pastor, as well as the Mayor of Frascati. I thank them for the courteous words of welcome with which they have greeted me on behalf of you all. I am glad to greet the Minister, the Presidents of the Region and of the Province, the Mayor of Rome, the other Mayors present and all the distinguished Authorities.

I am also very glad to be concelebrating this Mass today with your Bishop, a very faithful and capable collaborator of mine in the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, as he said, for more than 20 years. He was involved above all in the catechism and catechetics sector where he worked in deep silence and discretion. He contributed to the Catechism of the Catholic Church and to the Compendium of the Catechism so in this great symphony of faith his voice is also truly present.

In this Sunday's Gospel Jesus takes the initiative of sending the Twelve Apostles out on mission (cf. Mk 6:7-13). In fact the term "apostles" means, precisely, "messengers" or "envoys". Their vocation was to be fully achieved only after Christ's Resurrection with the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Yet it is very significant that Jesus wants to involve the Twelve in his action from the outset: it is a sort of "apprenticeship" with a view to the great responsibility that awaited them. The fact that Jesus calls certain disciples to collaborate directly in his mission demonstrates one aspect of his love, namely, he does not spurn the help that other people can contribute to his work; he knows their limitations, their weaknesses, but bears no contempt for them. On the contrary Jesus confers on them the dignity of being his envoys. He sends them out two by two and gives them instructions which the Evangelist sums up in a few sentences. The first concerns the spirit of detachment: the Apostles must not be attached to money or to other comforts. Then Jesus warns the disciples that they will not always receive a favourable welcome. Sometimes they will be rejected; they might even be persecuted. However this must not frighten them: they must speak in Jesus' name and preach the Kingdom of God without being worried about whether or not they will succeed. Succeed — its success must be left to God.

The First Reading presents us with the same perspective, showing us that all too often God's messengers are not well received. This is the case of the Prophet Amos whom God sent to prophesy in the Sanctuary at Bethel, a sanctuary of the Kingdom of Israel (cf. Amos 7:12-15). Amos preached very energetically against injustices, denouncing in particular the abuses of kings and notables, abuses of power that offend the Lord and nullify acts of worship. Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, therefore ordered Amos to leave. Amos answered that it was not he who chose this mission but that the Lord had made him a prophet and sent him to this very place in the Kingdom of Israel. Therefore, whether he was accepted or rejected, he would continue to prophesy, preaching whatever God told him and not what men wished to hear. And this has continued to be the Church's mandate: she does not preach what the powerful wish to hear. Her criterion is truth and justice even if it is unpopular and against human power.

Let us think of parish priests, who are responsible for formation in the community, of all priests in their various fields of work. They all live an important dimension which is educational. Likewise the lay faithful, in addition to the role of parents, mentioned above, are involved in the service of formation with young people or adults, as those in charge of Apostolic Action and other ecclesial movements, or are involved in civil and social contexts, always paying great attention to a person's formation.

The Lord calls everyone, distributing different gifts for different tasks in the Church. He calls people to the priesthood and to the consecrated life and he calls them to marriage and to commitment as lay people, both in the Church herself and in society. It is important that the wealth of gifts be fully accepted, especially on the part of the young; so that they feel the joy of responding to God with the whole of themselves, giving joy on the path of the priesthood or of the consecrated life, or on the path of marriage, two complementary routes that illuminate and enrich each other and together enrich the community. Virginity for the Kingdom of God and marriage are both vocations, calls from God to which to respond throughout one's life.

God calls: it is necessary to listen, to receive and to respond to him, like Mary: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word" (Lk 1:38). Here too, in the diocesan community of Frascati the Lord sows his gifts by the handful, calls people to follow him and to extend his mission in our day. Here too there is a need for a new evangelization, and for this reason I propose that you live intensely the Year of Faith that will begin in October, 50 years after the opening of the Second Vatican Council. The Council documents contain an enormous wealth for the formation of the new Christian generations, for the formation of our consciences. Consequently, read it, read the Catechism of the Catholic Church and thereby rediscover the beauty of being Christian, of being Church, of living the great "we" that Jesus formed around him in order to evangelize the world. Be the "we" of the Church, never closed, but ever open and reaching out to proclaim the Gospel.

Dear brothers and sisters of Frascati. May you be united with each other and at the same time open, be missionaries. Stay firm in the faith, rooted in Christ through the Word and the Eucharist; be people who pray, in order to remain linked for ever to Christ, like branches to the vine. At the same time go out, take his message to all, especially the lowly, the poor and the suffering. In every community love one another; do not be divided but live as brothers and sisters so that the world may believe that Jesus is alive in his Church and that the Kingdom of God is at hand. The Patron Saints of the Diocese of Frascati are two Apostles: Philip and James, two of the Twelve. I entrust to their intercession the progress of your community so that it may be renewed in faith and may give a clear witness with works of charity. Amen.