

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE THIRTIETH WEEK IN ORDINARY TIME
Our commitment to daily prayer using the weekday Mass readings as our guide

MONDAY 10/31

Romans 11:29-36
Luke 14:12-14

TUESDAY 11/1

Rev 7:2-4, 9-14; 1 Jn 3:1-3
Matthew 5:1-12

WEDNESDAY 11/2

Wis 3:1-9; Rom 6:3-9
Matthew 25:31-46

THURSDAY 11/3

Romans 14:7-12
Luke 15:1-10

FRIDAY 11/4

Romans 15:14-21
Luke 16:1-8

SATURDAY 11/5

Romans 16:3-9, 16, 22-27
Luke 16:9-15

Feasts, Solemnities, and Memorials This Week:

Tuesday, All Saints; Wednesday, All Souls; Thursday, Martin de Porres; Friday, Charles Borromeo

TUESDAY, HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION

Tuesday of this week, November 1, is the Solemnity of All Saints, a holy day of obligation. Masses will follow the Sunday schedule. See the front cover.

FALL BACK NEXT SUNDAY

This is a reminder that next Saturday evening before going to bed, we should turn our clocks BACK one hour to reflect the end of Daylight Savings Time for this year.

THANKSGIVING FOR FAVORS RECEIVED

Our gratitude goes out to Bill Curtis and Willy Bauer for fixing up our church sign on Old Mammoth Road and clearing a lot of underbrush along our lot on Ranch Road. Thanks, guys, for all you do. Speaking of signs, blessings to Carrie Taylor for re-painting our church sign along 395 in Bridgeport. Nice work. The "sign" of our love of God is the sacrificial offerings of our time, energy, talent, and money in service to the church. As Scripture says: "Do not appear before the Lord empty handed." (Deuteronomy 16:16)

PRAYERS

Our prayers are requested for Bonnie Zwart, Mark & Mary Anne Bewsher, Tina Quan, James Zvetina, Pat Glynn, Bobbie Engstrom, Ed Power, Diane Evans, Raquel Rodriguez, John Gracey, Bob Tomko, Jr., Virginia Reyes, Elizabeth Cauzza, Kay Reilly, Mary Jo Ferreira, Julie Rogers, Josefina Flores, and for the repose of the soul of Mark Kirkner and Barbara Head.

DAILY MASS

Weekday Mass is celebrated Monday through Saturday in St. Joseph's Rectory in Mammoth Lakes beginning at 7 AM. The door is open; just come in; don't ring the bell. Everyone is welcome to stay after for coffee and fellowship.

FIRST FRIDAY DEVOTIONS

Mass is celebrated followed by Eucharistic adoration and benediction THIS FRIDAY and every First Friday of the month beginning at 7:00 PM at St. Joseph Church in Mammoth Lakes.



THE MONO COUNTY CATHOLIC

Before the mountains were born, the earth and the world brought forth, from eternity to eternity you are God. Psalm 90:2

October 30, 2011

Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time



We were gentle among you, as a nursing mother cares for her children. With such affection for you, we were determined to share with you not only the gospel of God, but our very selves as well, so dearly beloved had you become to us.

1st Thessalonians 2:7-8

**SAINT JOSEPH PARISH
MONO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

**P.O. Box 372,
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546
Phone: 760-934-6276**

Rev. Paul Boudreau, Pastor

CONFESSIONS

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated at St. Joseph Church from 5:30 to 5:45 PM on Saturdays, 7:30 to 7:45 on Sunday mornings, y en español a las tardes del domingo de 5:00 a 5:15; and upon request before mass at Our Savior of the Mountains and Infant of Prague missions.

**Mammoth Lakes: St. Joseph Church –
Mass: Sat 6:00 PM, Sun 8:00 AM
La Misa en Español: Dom 5:30 PM**

Lee Vining:

**Our Savior of the Mountains Mission -
Mass: Sun 10 AM**

**Bridgeport: Infant of Prague Mission -
Mass: Sun 12 Noon**

FIRST READING:

Malachi 1:14b—2:2b, 8–10

And now, O priests, this commandment is for you . . . You have turned aside from the way, and have caused many to falter by your instruction; you have made void the covenant of Levi, says the LORD of hosts. I, therefore, have made you contemptible and base before all the people, since you do not keep my ways.

At a time when the actions of a few priests have left devastation, harm, and mistrust in their wake, and some bishops have been exposed as shamefully complicit in these reprehensible crimes, it is with particular interest that we read a diatribe against the villainy of the priesthood straight from the mouth of God.

The prophet Malachi does not mince words on behalf of the Lord. The priests are accused of accepting sacrificial offerings from some people that weren't really sacrificial.

A true sacrifice engages trust in the Lord. A healthy, "unblemished" lamb constitutes good breeding stock, a valuable commodity that represents hope for the future. But a true believer will sacrifice that lamb as a profound expression of his greater hope that the Lord will provide.

What the prophet was accusing the priests of doing was accepting sick and defective lambs for sacrifice, offerings that were essentially worthless and were no expression of faith at all. Such an offering would be like one of us throwing twenty bucks in the basket and calling it a sacrifice.

Having thus allowed the connection between God and the people to be broken, God threatens to turn their privileged role among the people inside out. They are empowered to offer blessings, but those shall wilt into curses.

They have given corrupt instruction to the people. In turn, their corruption will be revealed and they will be debased. Every modern priest who stands before the assembly when these words are proclaimed must shudder a little at how truly prophetic they are.

What is unfortunate is that the reading skips over the positive verses describing the good priesthood of Levi, from whom the class of priests emerged. The covenant with Levi "was one of life and peace," as he spoke the truth and lived in integrity with it. "For the lips of the priest are to keep knowledge, and instruction is to be sought from his mouth, because he is the messenger of the Lord." (Mal 2:5–7) These verses remind us why we need a renewed and vital priesthood, and why all of us, lay and clergy together, must search our hearts to find the will to support a leadership that follows in the way of life and peace.

SECOND READING:

1 Thessalonians 2:7b-9, 13

With such affection for you, we were determined to share with you not only the gospel of God, but our very selves as well.

Saint Paul likes to think of himself as an ultimate apostle, but we would not be wrong to consider him also a quintessential pastor. This section of his letter, for some time considered a defense of his ministry against some perceived accusation, is now understood as Paul's "autobiographical confession," in the style of Jeremiah and later Augustine. With no apparent gender squeamishness, Paul compares the approach of his team (he, Timothy, and Silvanus) with the role of the nursing mother, and also the guidance and encouragement of a father (v. 11). What they offered the community was not simply the gospel proclaimed, but a caring and intimate relationship. They brought themselves

into their work, so that the word they preached really did become flesh in them.

Isn't this the description of the best pastors you've known? Dare we withhold ourselves from our ministry, offering a thin word without a presence and a person behind it? The twenty-first century is no easy time to be a priest, occupying a role more ambiguous than at any time in the history of the church. The old honors due the priesthood do not come automatically anymore, nor does the trust that that the Roman collar guaranteed in an earlier generation. Today, a pastor will be known not by his clothes, his title, or his liturgical function, but through the authenticity of his presence as God's word-made-real. Of course this is a goal for every Christian, but the job description of the designated leader, the priest, is to lead the rest of us to our common destination. It's not a role for the faint of heart, and it's not going to get easier anytime soon.

GOSPEL: Matthew 23:1-12

As for you, do not be called 'Rabbi.' You have but one teacher, and you are all brothers. Call no one on earth your father; you have but one Father in heaven. Do not be called 'Master'; you have but one master, the Christ. The greatest among you must be your servant.

Can we afford to spend one Sunday a year talking about the role and goal of leadership with our assembly? It seems we can't afford not to. Jesus talked a lot about leadership. He speaks as often to the scribes and Pharisees as he does to the crowds in general. Jesus was a firm supporter of leadership, grooming at least twelve men and not a few women throughout his ministry to carry on the roles of proclamation and pastoral care. Jesus understood that what

leaders said and did was significant, and could be like a millstone around the necks of the innocent. Authority had to be wielded responsibly and with integrity. A leader's words and life should proclaim the same message.

One is tempted to argue: but are not all leaders likewise sinners? Most certainly! This is why any trappings of leadership – the titles, the marks of respect, the chief seats in the assembly – are to be seen as symbolic of something greater. When clerical garb draws attention to the cleric and not to the gospel he proclaims, his ministry is on thin ice.

Religious leadership, as today's gospel suggests, took a wrong turn at some point, becoming its own message instead of pointing to the One who ultimately leads. In the light of this gospel, today may be a good day for church leaders to remind their people once again that they are human, in need of prayers and support, as vulnerable as anyone to temptation and failure. Bishops, priests, and deacons accept the burden of bearing the gospel to the community, but we ourselves are not the word we preach.

+ + + + +

If Jesus said, "Call no one on earth your father," why do we call our priests, "Father"? Good question. I think Jesus was using hyperbole, like when he said, "If your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out! If your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off!" Heck, if we took that literally, we'd all be half blind and left handed! We need to understand the verse in its context. Jesus was talking to men who "loved" the titles "Rabbi" and "Father". To be sure, such men lead our church today. Imagine people calling *you* "Your Excellency" or "Your Eminence". I am particularly fond of "Padre" myself. Another J.J. Crowley I ain't, but it's fun to be so honored. But I'd be a fool to insist on it. Better for me to be humbled by familiarity and your friendship. Just don't call me late for lunch. *FP*