



parish newsletter

10 July 2022 | Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Who is my neighbour?

We can learn a great deal from Mister Rogers. Remember him? He was the gentle soul who found his way into living rooms worldwide starting as far back as 1968. Mister Rogers' Neighbourhood was a beloved program that celebrated and exalted people, especially children. He taught us that we are neighbours and that everyone has a place. Everyone matters. He had a vision, born of his relationship with God that highlighted every human life's innocence, beauty, and uniqueness. To that end, he called us to be responsible for each other, saying nothing different than what Jesus said. Viewers quickly learned that life is not just about me.

"We live in a world in which we need to share responsibility. It's easy to say, 'It's not my child, not my community, not my world, not my problem.' Then there are those who see the need and respond. I consider those people my heroes (Fred Rogers)." It is so easy to look the other way. After all, I'm not the one who needs

to leave home out of fear and try to find somewhere safe. I am not the one who is hungry and without shelter or food. I am not the one who has a child being bullied or ridiculed because of the way they dress or act. I am not the one being threatened with violence or unable to find meaningful work. The distress and agony of our neighbours are our distress and agony. We cannot walk by it with an attitude of indifference, especially if we call ourselves believers. When we no longer care, we have suffocated our souls. This is a great sin.

God's law "is something very near to you, already in your mouths and in your hearts; you have only to carry it out." We all have a need for love and acceptance. That's why Mister Rogers' television show was so popular. It spoke to something deeper, something sacred about humanity. God didn't give us his law in a book. He wrote it on our hearts. We know what we need to do. It's a matter of choice. Love is sacred. When we love another human be-

Everyday Stewardship

What Jesus didn't say

"If Jesus wanted us to (fill in the blank), he would have said so."

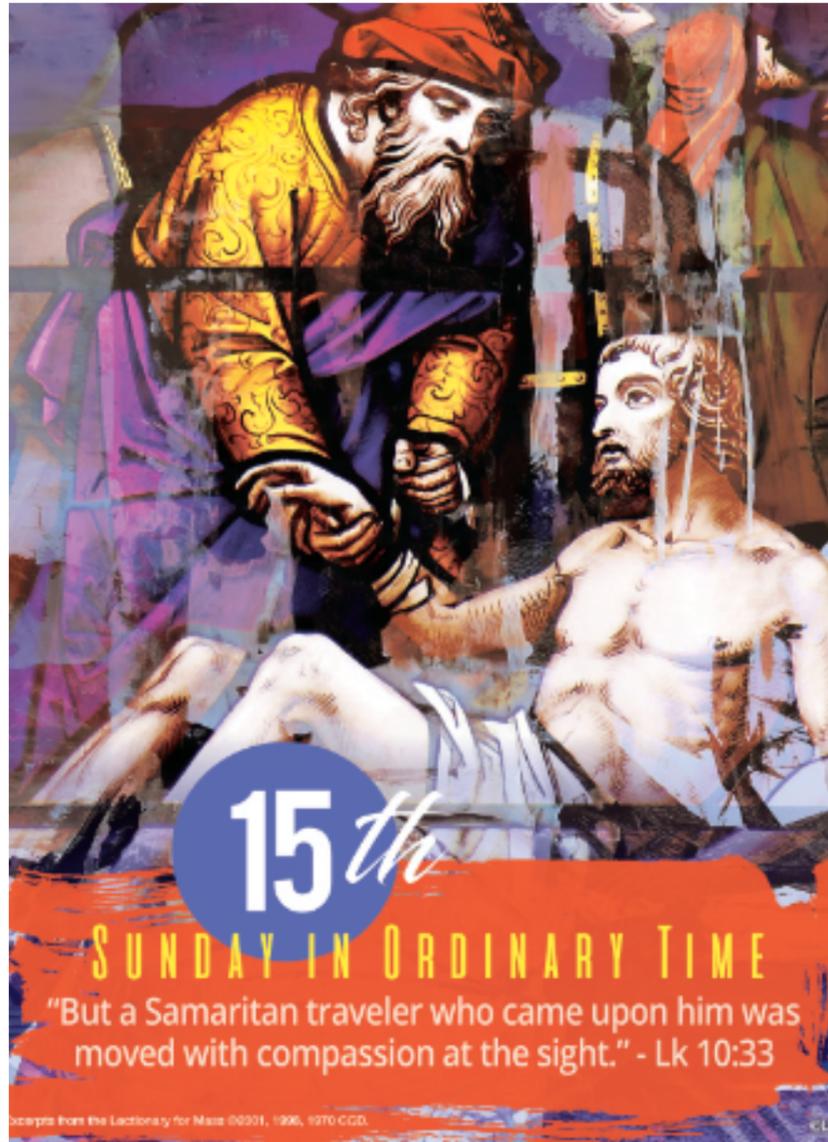
We hear this argument applied to every controversial topic under the sun — and even some not-so-controversial topics, too. Whenever someone is trying to make a case for a decision they have already made, they call in Jesus' scriptural silence on the matter as their expert, unimpeachable witness.

And sure, there's much Jesus doesn't talk about in

the Gospels. But by this logic, we would have to assume that Jesus doesn't care, for instance, if we drive well over the speed limit (he doesn't discuss cars and highways in the Bible) or what we do online (he never mentions the Internet or websites at all!), when we know that certainly is just not the case.

Like the scholar of the Jewish law who challenges Jesus to define who exactly his "neighbour" is, we can argue semantics all we want.

But if we rest in prayer and look deep into our hearts,



ing, especially without regard for ourselves, it is a holy moment. These moments are often missed due to our self-serving agendas and rules.

Living the Paschal Mystery

Many countries have Good Samaritan laws. These laws protect from legal prosecution for wrongdoing anyone who helps or tends to someone who is ill or injured. In a litigation-prone society, these laws are a necessary complement to the charity with which many of us naturally respond when

we encounter another in distress. In a sense, these laws protect charity, protect our acting with compassion, mercy, and love toward those in need. These laws take their name from this Sunday's gospel. This gospel not only expands the notion of neighbour, but also describes how, ultimately, we

Live the Liturgy

It's important to keep our eyes open. Otherwise, we can easily dismiss things that truly require our attention. Whether it is someone needing care, a wrong that must be rectified, an injustice that must be addressed, or someone in need of a helping hand, the lens through which we view life (and even the rules by which we live) can prevent us from stopping and acting. Whether it's an obsession with being on time, a compulsion to complete

tasks according to a schedule, or a rigidity with not breaking a law or fear of taking a risk, we miss daily opportunities to show mercy. We often fail in our duty to be a good neighbour, especially when it involves brothers and sisters remote from us whom we have never met. The pain of the world is our pain. God's law of love, mercy, and compassion is not something remote. It's already within us and very near. All we have to do is open our eyes and

are to love as God loves us. Neighbour is not simply a victim, someone in need. Neighbour is anyone who deserves our love. And that is everyone! The generosity of the Good Samaritan goes way beyond expected neighbourliness and simple human compassion. He personally cares for the victim: tending to his wounds, carrying him on his own animal, caring for him at the inn. Yet even this is not enough: he leaves money for his continued care. By this parable

Jesus teaches that to inherit "eternal life" we must go beyond who we love and how we love them. We must love as God loves: personally, extravagantly, continually. Jesus' commandment of love is not impossibly far beyond us because his own life manifests here and now how to live loving relationships with others. Jesus teaches us how far we must go in loving others. Love has no limits, as Jesus himself illustrated by his own life. He loved even to dying for us. Our own loving one another must go this far, too. This kind of boundless love redefines who our neighbour is (everyone) and sets no limits on our time or care for others. Further, we show our love for God "with all [our] heart[s]" precisely when we love our neighbour.

Ironically, the way we inherit eternal life is by dying to self for the sake of another. The Samaritan in the parable isn't moved to help the stricken traveler because of a commandment, but because he was a person of loving compassion and mercy—he illustrates

unbounded love. This is the law written within our hearts (see first reading)—not details about keeping specific commandments, but a positive regard for the other that arises out of genuine love. Our love must be as wide as our universe and embrace all of God's beloved. Only by loving in this way can we truly be neighbour. Only by loving in this way can we, like God, be defined as love.

Probably in our society and church today we need to become more aware of the value of keeping laws. Our reflection, however, alerts us to the fact that simply keeping laws and commandments isn't enough. All our actions must be directed to the good of others. Keeping laws promotes good order in any community; doing good for others promotes right relationships in those same communities. Love is the glue that binds us to each other, that helps us make sense out of just laws, that expands our notion of neighbour to include everyone. Love is of God. It must be of us.

Law is something external to us, rather easily measured. Mercy and compassion, love and care are internal to us and can be measured only in terms of the good we actually do for others. Laws are internalised—written in our hearts—when they are kept for the sake of others. We are to do as the Good Samaritan in the parable: let the law of love and compassion guide us and gain for us eternal life.



carry it out.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS



First Reading

"No, it is something very near to you, already in your mouths and in your hearts; you have only to carry it out." (Dt 50:14)

Psalm:

Seek the Lord, you who are poor, and your hearts will revive. (Ps 68[69])

Second Reading:

For in him were created all things in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible; all things were created through him and for him. (Col 15:15)

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia! The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice, says the Lord, I know them and they follow me. Alleluia!

Gospel:

"Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbour to the robbers' victim?" Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise." (Lk 10:36-37)

This Week

- 10 FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C)**
Dt 30:10-14/Ps 69:14, 17, 30-31, 33-34, 36, 37 or Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 11 [9]/Col 1:15-20/Lk 10:25-37
08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel
10:30 **Mass** St Mary's Maureen Riley (RIP)
17:00 **Mass** St Mary's People of the Parish
- 11 St Benedict**
Ls 1:10-17/Ps 50:8-9, 16bc-17, 21 and 23/Mt 10:34-11:1
08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel
12:05 **Mass** St Mary's Patricia Stonehouse (RIP)
17:15 **Evening Prayer** Mercy Chapel
20:00 **Prayer Group** St Cecilia's
- 12 Tuesday**
Ls 7:1-9/Ps 48:2-3a, 3b-4, 5-6, 7-8/Mt 11:20-24
08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel
12:05 **Mass** St Mary's Albert Locker (RIP)
13:00 **Over 60s** St Mary's Catholic Centre
16:00 **Chosen Tuesday** Upper Room
17:15 **Evening Prayer** Mercy Chapel
- 13 Wednesday**
St Henry
Ls 10:5-7, 13b-16/Ps 94:5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 14-15/Mt 11:25-27
08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel
12:05 **Mass** St Mary's Holy Souls
17:15 **Evening Prayer** Mercy Chapel
- 14 Thursday**
St Camillus de Lellis
Ls 26:7-9, 12, 16-19/Ps 102:13-14ab and 15, 16-18, 19-21/Mt 11:28-30
08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel
10:00 **Open House** St Mary's Catholic Centre
10:15 **Confessions** St Cecilia's
10:30 **Mass** St Cecilia's Séan Jacob (RIP)
12:05 **Mass** St Mary's Mary Teresa Harper (RIP)
17:00 **Evening with Jesus and Friends** Mercy Chapel
- 15 Friday**
St Bonaventure
Ls 38:1-6, 21-22, 7-8/Ls 38:10, 11, 12abcd, 16/Mt 12:1-8
08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel
12:05 **Mass** St Mary's Maureen Riley (RIP)
17:15 **Evening Prayer** Mercy Chapel
- 16 Saturday**
Our Lady of Mount Carmel
Mi 2:1-5/Ps 10:1-2, 3-4, 7-8, 14/Mt 12:14-21
08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel
10:30 **Confessions** St Mary's
11:00 **Mass** St Mary's James Youll (RIP)
11:45 **Confessions** St Mary's
18:00 **Vigil Mass** St Cecilia's Ronnie Foster (RIP)
- 17 SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C)**
Gn 18:1-10a/Ps 15:2-3, 3-4, 5 [1a]/Col 1:24-28/Lk 10:38-42
08:00 **Morning Prayer** Mercy Chapel
10:30 **Mass** St Mary's People of the Parish
17:00 **Mass** St Mary's Frederick Barber (RIP)



Bernadette, Jean Maureen, Christopher, Paula, Peter, Emilia, Jean, Teresa, Cath, the sick sisters at Oaklea, David, Marion, Dave, Neil, Paul, Andrew, Jacob, Stella, David, Alisa, Susan, Mary, Jack, Richard, Margaret, Maura, Colin, Gerry, Nick and Maureen.



Patricia Snowdon, Vera Wilson, Rosemary Hepple, Thomas Barraclough, Fr Michael Keoghan

Let us know if you would like a name added to the list.

Questions for the Week

First Reading: Toward the end of their 40-years of desert wanderings, Moses assured the Israelites that God's commandments and statutes are within each of us as long as we repent. How do you sustain a disposition of repentance?

Second Reading: In his letter to the Colossians, Paul inserts a very early Christological hymn that speaks to Jesus' divinity and his role as the mediator of creation and the source of reconciliation. How do you imagine the Colossians reacting to this astonishing teaching on Jesus?

Gospel: In the parable of the good Samaritan, Jesus taught the scribe the importance of showing mercy toward one's neighbour as central to following God's law. How well do you practice the virtue of mercy?

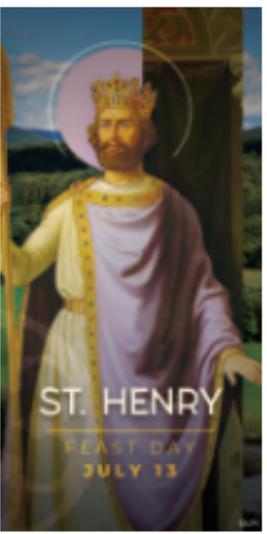
Why do we do that?



Question: What is *Lectio Divina*, and how is it associated with the Benedictine Monastic tradition, whose

founder, St. Benedict, we honour on July 11?
Answer: Benedict desired his monks to live in community, praying the Liturgy of the Hours together, contemplating sacred texts, and doing manual labor. The monks developed a technique to facilitate a spiritual and devotional reading of the Bible known as *Lectio Divina*, the holy reading of a text. This method encour-

ages the reader to hear the biblical text with an open heart and focus on whatever God wants to highlight and then apply it to daily life. There are variations on *Lectio Divina*, but essentially, the technique consists of a three-step process of reflection. When the reflection is done with a group, the responses are shared by all the participants. Once the text is selected, it is read meditatively, and the following are then explored: a word or phrase that attracts you; how and where the content of this reading touches your life today; what you believe that God wants you to do during this coming week (month, year, lifetime). Thanks to Benedict, the Christian community has been gifted with this special way of entering into the biblical text. This week, use the *Lectio Divina* process on one of the readings for the coming Sunday and make a note of the life connections you are making. How is this reflection on the biblical text drawing you closer to God and others?



Saint Henry was born in 972

Saint of the Week

to Henry, Duke of Bavaria, Germany, and his wife Gisela of Burgundy. Saint Henry's early life was permeated with Christianity, among those who guided his education was Bishop Wolfgang of Ratisbon, who became a saint himself. In 995, Saint Henry succeeded his father as Duke of Bavaria, and in 1002, upon the death of his cousin, Otho III, he was elected emperor. In 1014, Saint Henry undertook the long journey from Germany to Rome to be crowned Holy

Roman Emperor by Pope Benedict XIII. In 1022 Saint Henry assisted Pope Benedict VIII in holding the Council of Pavia, which promoted clerical celibacy and sought to end simony (the buying and selling of ecclesiastical goods and offices). During his reign, Saint Henry used his wealth and position for the Church. He confirmed Benedict's authority over Rome, was a patron of churches and monasteries, supported the Cluniac Re-

forms, restored episcopal sees, and founded the Diocese of Bamberg where he built a cathedral. Saint Henry was married to Cunigunde of Luxembourg, to whom he was incredibly devoted. Although disputed by some historians, some stories of the couple's marriage report they took vows of chastity because their union was childless. Saint Henry died in July of 1024 and was canonised in 1146 by Pope Eugene III.

Announcements

Morning and Evening Prayer in the Mercy Chapel

The mornings and evenings are brighter and the days are longer. Why not start and end your day praying the Prayer of the Church with the priests in the Mercy Chapel? The chapel is open from 8 am to 5.30 pm and we pray at 8 am and 5.15 pm. You're also free to pop in during the day to light a candle and say a prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.

Sea Sunday

Seafarers and fishers play a vital role in all of our lives, but they often work in difficult, hazardous conditions. In the past year, more crews have been abandoned by their employers then ever before. Many are still being denied the right to leave their ships for even a short break away from the relentless noise and pressure on-board. Many are reporting more stress and poorer mental health. Sea Sunday is Sunday 10 July. It is when the Church

prays for all those who live and work at sea. Your support will make a big difference to seafarers and fishers in need. You can donate in church, by visiting www.stellamaris.org.uk/ donate, or by texting SEA to 70460 to donate £5. This collection is vital to enable Stella Maris to continue its important work, so please give generously. Thank you.

Little Sisters of the Poor

The Little Sisters of the Poor would like to thank everyone for supporting the recent Diocesan Church Collection in aid of St Joseph's

Home (Newcastle). We are extremely grateful for the kindness shown to us. We ask God to bless and reward you and your families for all you have done to help us continue the work of Jeanne Jugan in caring for our elderly residents. Assuring you of our grateful prayers.

Flock Notes

St Benedict, whose feast we celebrate this week, once wrote 'Do everything after getting counsel and afterwards you won't regret it.' That's good advice. Asking advice, however, is not just something we need to do from people we trust, it is also something we need to ask from God. When was the last time you asked him to show you the way? Getting your own personal 'burning bush' experience might sound good—a

clear, unambiguous and direct communication from God, laying out exactly what he wants—but what if you don't like what you hear? What if God's advice means making painful changes to your life? Asking what God wants means potentially giving up control over our plans and desires, and that sometimes can be hard. How then, concretely, can we ask God what he wants and get a response?

The first thing is to make sure that there are periods of silence in our prayer so we can actively listen and pay attention to what feelings and images come to us. God often speaks in the silence. Second, read the Gospels, every day. The more familiar we are with Jesus and the choices he made, the easier it will be for us to discern God's will in our lives. God only has our best interests in mind. You can trust him and his plan for your life.. Just ask!



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