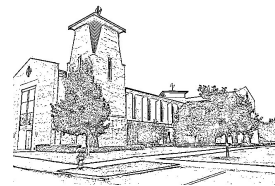


ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL CATHOLIC CHURCH

Office Hours: Monday-Friday: 9:00 am-5:00 pm • Office is closed on Saturday & Sunday

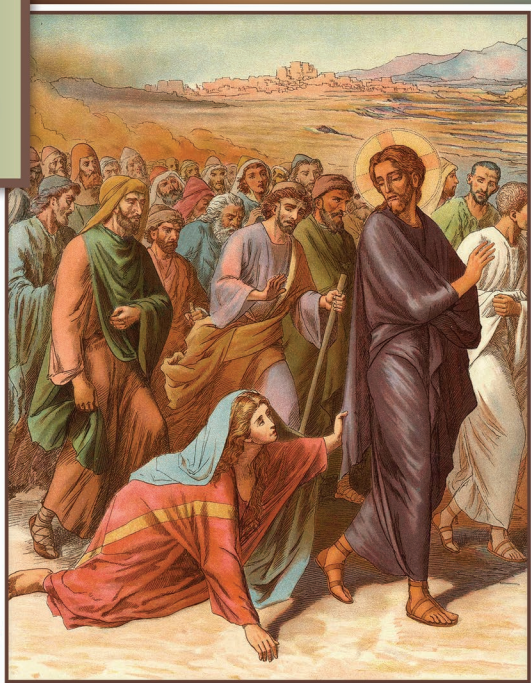
Office: 972-542-4667 Fax: 972-542-4641 • 411 Paula Rd, McKinney, Texas 75069

Email: freugene@stmichaelmckinney.org • frjuancarlos@stmichaelmckinney.org
deaconjohn@stmichaelmckinney.org • deaconsid@stmichaelmckinney.org



July
1
2018

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME



Jesus said to the woman,
"Daughter, your faith has saved you.
Go in peace and be cured of your affliction."

Mark 5:34

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Julio
1
2018

DECIMOTERCER DOMINGO
DEL TIEMPO ORDINARIO



Jesús le dijo a la mujer:
"Hija, tu fe te ha curado.
Vete en paz y queda sana de tu enfermedad".

Marcos 5:34

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Priests

Rev. Eugene Azorji

Rev. Juan Carlos Marin

Deacons

George Polcer, Andrew Tanner,

Juan Jorge Hernandez,

Jose Vasquez, Patrick Hayes, Sid Little

Facilities Manager: Deacon John Rapier

Business Manager: Joe Olickan

Director of Music: Valerie Stagaman

Youth Ministry: Deandria Gonzalez

Facilities: Emilio Zavala

There will be NO 7:00 pm Spanish Mass

**We pray for those who need the healing touch of Christ/
Oramos por aquellos necesitan el toque de Christ**

Ken LaForge, Ralph Flores,

Chris Paul, Mercedes Peltz, Marilyn Kelly,

Len Scorz, Robert Kelly, Alex Cole,

Maria Langoria, Zhao Hong Fang, Heathr Wood,

Tony Greise, Patrick Greise,

Margarito Ramirez, Ryan Meadors, Macias family

Kathy Stowe-Bateman, Bryant family, Graciela Zavala,

Kerman Joseba Iriarte

Please inform us of your loved one needing to be added to the prayer list, please call the parish office @ 972-542-4667. Names will remain on the list for 1 month, at which time you can re-submit their names for prayers.

Para agregar o quitar a alguien de la lista de oraciones, por favor llama a la oficina.

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL CATHOLIC CHURCH

7/8 JULY - FOURTEENTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

GLORIA

page 214

LITURGY OF THE WORD

page 96

RESPONSORIAL

Psalm 123



CREED

page 110

There's A Wideness in God's Mercy

Frederick Faber / BEACH SPRING



1. There's a wide-ness in God's mer-cy like the wide-ness of the
2. There is wel-come for the sin-ner, and a pro-mised grace made
3. For the love of God is broad-der than the meas-ures of the
4. Trou-bled souls, why will you scat-ter like a crowd of fright-ened



sea; There's a kind-ness in God's jus-tice, which is more than lib-er-good; There is mer-cy with the Sav-ior; There is heal-ing in Christ's mind; and the heart of the E-ter-nal is most won-der-ful-ly sheep? Fool-ish hearts, why will you wan-der from a love so true and



ty. There is plen-ti-ful re-demp-tion in the blood that has been blood. There is grace e-nough for thou-sands of new worlds as great as kind. If our love were but more sim-ple, we would know the liv-ing deep? There is wel-come of the sin-ner, and more grac-es for the



shed; There is joy for all the mem-bers in the sor-rows of the Head. this; There is room for fresh cre-a-tions in that up-per home of bliss. Word; and our lives would be thanks-giv-ing in the kind-ness of our Lord. good; There is mer-cy with the Sav-ior; There is heal-ing in Christ's blood.

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL CATHOLIC CHURCH

Parish Calendar for the week of July 2nd, 2018.

Monday, July 2nd-

8:00 am- Mass Chapel
 10:00 am – 2 pm- Prayers & Squares- Holy Family Room
 7 pm- CRHP Women – Classroom 3
 7 pm- CRSP Mujeres – St. Michael Hall
 7 pm- Jóvenes para Cristo- St. Rose Hall
 7 pm- Legion of Mary- North Drake
 7 pm- CRSP Continuation Formation- South Drake

Tuesday, July 3rd-

2:00 pm- St. Vincent de Paul Food Distribution- Holy Family Room
 5:30 pm- Mass- Chapel
 6:00 pm- KoC Business Mtg.- St. Michael Hall
 7:00 pm- Grupo Emmanuel- Church
 7:00 pm- MFCC- Junta Mesa Directiva- N. Drake

Wednesday, July 4th-

8:00 am- Mass- Chapel
 10:00 am- Women's Bible Study- Classroom 3
 9:00 am – 11:00 am- Adult Choir Rehearsal – Holy Family

Thursday, July 5th-

10:00 am- Bereavement Class- Classroom 3
 2:00 pm- St. Vincent de Paul Food Distribution- Holy Family Room
 5:30 pm- Mass, Adoration and Confessions- Church
 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm- CRSP Hombres- St. Rose Hall

Friday, July 6th-

8:00 am- Mass- Chapel- 1st Friday Adoration
 5:30 pm- Wedding Rehearsal- Church
 7:00pm- Misa Sagrado Corazón de Jesús- Church
 7:00 pm- Couples for Christ- North & South Drake
 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm- Ensayo Coro- Misa 9:30 am- Holy Family Room

Saturday, July 7th-

8:00 am- 4:00 pm- Catechist Training- St. Michael Hall
 11:00 am- Quinceañeras- Church
 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm- Confessions- Church
 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm- Convivio Grupo Emanuel- St. Rose Hall
 5:00 pm- Mass
 5:30 pm- Choir Rehearsal- Bride's Room

Sunday, July 8th-

8:30 am – 4:00 pm- Faith Formation Registration- St. Rose
 8:00 am – English Mass- Church
 9:30 am – Spanish Mass- Church
 11:30 am- English Mass- Church
 12:30 pm – 2:00 pm- Choir Rehearsal- Bride's Room
 2:00 pm- Spanish Mass- Church

O LORD, BE MY HELP

Today we encounter readings that draw us into the mystery of suffering and death. In the past few years we have witnessed the devastation of life and property through earthquakes and hurricanes. So many lifted their lament to God, simply asking, "Why?" This is an honest expression of anger toward a God who we believe is the giver of life. When we lose a loved one, we can wonder why the presence of Christ is not enough to make that person rise, even from death, as did the little girl in today's Gospel passage. Again we raise our voices and ask, "Why?" At moments such as these, let us make the prayer of the psalmist our own: "Hear, O LORD, and have pity on me; O LORD, be my helper." Let us pray that our mourning will one day be turned into dancing.

There will be a bilingual Mass on Wednesday, July 4th at 10:00 a.m.

Mass Intentions June 23-30, 2018

Saturday, June 30

5:00 pm Rev. Salvador Guzmán

Sunday, July 1

8:00 am ✠Yuan Miao
 9:30 am ✠Andres Martinez y Anita Perez
 Paulo Gonzalez
 Almas en Purgatorio
 For the People
 11:30 am ✠Joan Critchlow
 2:00 pm Rev. Salvador Guzmán
 Aniversario de Cruz y
 Margarita Hernandez
 Jaime Giovani Solis Torres
 ✠Familia Gandarilla Barraza

Monday, July 2

8:00 am Ralph Flores

Tuesday, July 3

5:30 pm ✠Burblis Family

Wednesday, July 4

10:00 am ✠Anniversary of Roy & Marie Kerschbaum

Thursday, July 5

5:30 pm ✠Denise Wolf

Friday, July 6

8:00 am ✠Al Frettoloso

Saturday, July 7

5:00 pm ✠Arthur Paul

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL CATHOLIC CHURCH

8 DE JULIO - DECIMOCUARTO DOMINGO DEL TIEMPO ORDINARIO

LITURGIA DE LA PALABRA

página 97

A Quién Iremos

Tradicional / Mary Frances Reza

¿A-quién i - re-mos, Se-ñor, a quién i - re-mos? Tie-nes pa-la-bras de vi-da. ¿A-quién i-re-mos, Se-ñor, a quién i - re-mos? Tie-nes pa-la-bras de a-mor. ¿A-quién i-re-mos, Se-ñor, a quién i - re-mos? Tie-nes pa-la-bras de paz. E-res Dios ver-da-de-ro, el hi-jo de Dios, en Ti cre-e-ré. E-res Dios ver-da-de-ro, el hi-jo de Dios, en Ti cre-e-ré.

1. Con este pueblo quiero aprender. Amar a Dios es mi deber.
Con este pueblo quiero aprender. Amar a Dios es mi deber.
2. Pues este amor será muy vano si no amo a Dios y mi hermano.
Pues este amor será muy vano si no amo a Dios y a mi hermano.

Tradicional arr. Mary Frances Reza © 1989 Mary Frances Reza.
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Soy Feliz

Emilio Vicente Matéu

Te da-mos gra-cias por-que nos lla-mas, por-que nos tie-nes cer-ca de Ti. Mi vi-da en-te-ra es to-da tu-ya. Yo na-da quie-ro. Ya soy fe-liz.

1. Mas yo, Señor, sé comprender que nada puedo; que nada soy.
Pero tu voz viene hasta mí: “nada te inquiete. Contigo estoy.”
2. Has sido Tu quien me buscó. Viniste a verme. Tu voz me habló.
Yo sólo sé seguir tu voz. Tan sólo a Ti busco Señor.
3. Quiero cantar quiero decir cuanta alegría nace de mí.
Quiero habitar dentro de Ti. Siempre a tu lado quiero vivir.
4. Gracias te da mi corazón porque nos haces uno en tu amor.
Todo mi ser es para Ti. Yo nada quiero Ya soy feliz.

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL CATHOLIC CHURCH

Weekend Mass Schedule

Saturday: Vigil Mass 5:00 pm English
NO 7:00 pm Spanish mass
Sunday: 8:00 am & 11:30 am English
Sunday: 9:30 am & 2:00 pm Spanish

Weekday Mass Schedule

Monday, Wednesday & Friday: 8:00 am
Tuesday & Thursday: 5:30 pm

Confessions: Thursday: 6:00-7:00 pm
Saturdays: 3:30 pm-4:30 pm
Adoration: Thursday 6:00 pm-7:00 pm
First Friday **8:30 am - 8:00 pm**
After Hours: Sick Call or Funeral
Requests: 469-667-7324

Funerals: Contact Valerie Stagaman
972-542-4667 ext 114.

Weddings: Contact Brenda Rivera
972-542-4667 ext: 102.

Six months prior to wedding date.

Holy Family

919 Spence Rd • P.O. Box 482
Van Alstyne, Texas 75495 • 903-482-6322
Sunday: 9:00 am English
Sunday: 12 noon Spanish
Thursday: 9:00 am English

There will be a bilingual Mass on Wednesday, July 4th at 10:00 a.m.

TODAY'S READINGS

First Reading — God did not make death, nor does God rejoice in the destruction of the living (Wisdom 1:13-15; 2:23-24).

Psalm — I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me (Psalm 30).

Second Reading — Your abundance should supply the needs of the others (2 Corinthians 8:7, 9, 13-15).

Gospel — Your faith has saved you (Mark 5:21-43 [21-24, 35b-43]).

LECTURAS DE HOY

Primera lectura — Por envidia del diablo entró la muerte en el mundo (Sabiduría 1:13-15; 2:23-24).

Salmo — Te ensalzaré, Señor, porque me has librado (Salmo 30 [29]).

Segunda lectura — Que la abundancia de ustedes remedie la necesidad de sus hermanos pobres (2 Corintios 8:7, 9, 13-15).

Evangelió — ¡Oyeme, niña, levántate! (Marcos 5:21-43 [5:21-24, 35b-43]).

Collection Totals for June 24

Regular Collection: \$ 14,771.34

Building Fund: \$ 6,511.00

Attendance: 2768

Thank You



Baptisms / Bautismos

Registrations for Baptism and Baptism Class

are on

Tuesdays: 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Wednesdays: 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Call the Church office for more information:

972-542-4667

Registraziones para Bautismos y Pláticas

Bautismales están

Martes: 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Miércoles: 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Por favor llama la oficina para mas

información: 972-542-4667

AYÚDAME, SEÑOR

Hoy escuchamos lecturas que nos acercan al misterio de sufrimiento y muerte. En los últimos años hemos sido testigos de la devastación de vidas y propiedades a manos de tsunamis y huracanes. Muchos elevaron su lamento a Dios y preguntaron: “¿Por qué?” Esta es una expresión sincera de ira hacia un Dios que creemos da la vida. Cuando perdemos a un ser querido, puede que nos preguntemos por qué la presencia de Cristo no es suficiente para hacer que esa persona resucite, incluso de entre los muertos, como la pequeña niña del pasaje del Evangelio de hoy. Entonces alzamos la voz y preguntamos: “¿Por qué?” En momentos como estos, debemos acudir a la oración del salmista: “¡Escucha Señor y ten piedad de mí; Señor, socórreme”. Recemos para que nuestro luto algún día se convierta en danza.

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL CATHOLIC CHURCH

TRADICIONES DE NUESTRA FE

Esta semana conmemoramos al apóstol santo Tomás, el cual es normalmente recordado por haber dudado de la resurrección de Jesucristo. La incredulidad de este santo es explicada en el Evangelio según san Juan (20:19-31) con la famosa frase: “Si no veo en sus manos la señal de los clavos y no meto mi dedo en el agujero de los clavos y no meto mi mano en su costado, no creeré.”

Los latinos somos de culturas religiosas que consideran la incredulidad como algo pecaminoso y camino al ateísmo. Hay que aceptar que la duda es algo normal en el ser humano. Dudo que exista alguien que nunca haya dudado de su fe. Sólo al aceptar esta duda estaremos abiertos a la invitación de Jesús: “Acerca aquí tu dedo y mira mis manos; trae tu mano y métela en mi costado, y no seas incrédulo sino creyente.” Santo Tomás aceptó esta invitación y llegó a su gran proclamación de fe: “Señor mío, y Dios mío”. La duda no es mala, para muchos es el camino a una fe más profunda y a un compromiso mayor.

LECTURAS DE LA SEMANA

Lunes: Am 2:6-10, 13-16; Sal 50 (49):16bc-23; Mt 8:18-22

Martes: Ef 2:19-22; Sal 117 (116):1bc, 2; Jn 10:24-29

Miércoles: Am 5:14-15, 21-24; Sal 50 (49):7-13; Mt 8:28-34 o para el Día de la Independencia se pueden tomar las lecturas de las Misas para varias necesidades y ocasiones: Por la nación o por la paz y justicia

Jueves: Am 7:10-17; Sal 19 (18):8-11; Mt 9:1-8

Viernes: Am 8:4-6, 9-12; Sal 119 (118):2, 10, 20, 30, 40, 131; Mt 9:9-13

Sábado: Am 9:11-15; Sal 85 (84):9ab, 10-14; Mt 9:14-17

Domingo: Ez 2:2-5; Sal 123 (122); 2 Cor 12:7-10; Mc 6:1-6a

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Adoration is the first attitude of man acknowledging that he is a creature before his Creator. It exalts the greatness of the Lord who made us and the almighty power of the Savior who sets us free from evil. Adoration is homage of the spirit to the “King of Glory,” respectful silence in the presence of the “ever greater” God. Adoration of the thrice-holy and sovereign God of love blends with humility and gives assurance to our supplications.

—Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2628

St. Michael is expanding our hours of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on the first Friday of every month in the chapel from 8:30AM (immediately following the 8:00AM Mass) to 8:00PM. Please consider joining us in silent prayer during the day by signing up for an hour. Call the receptionist with your commitment at (972) 542-4667 ext 104.

WELCOME MINISTRY

A Welcome Ministry is being formed with volunteer Ambassadors. Their purpose is to use the spirit of “God is Love” to make everyone coming through the doors of the Narthex at St. Michael feel important and welcome to our Faith Community. Seeking:

- volunteers who are comfortable with social interaction, conversations, answering questions, directing inquiries to appropriate resources.
- A bilingual Coordinator to drive the excitement, energy, and spirituality of this Ministry
- Contact: Marina Comerford
bilmarcomtx.att.net or Evelyn Davison
evelyndavison@tx.rr.com

MINISTERIO DE BIENVENIDA

Un nuevo Ministerio de Bienvenida está siendo creado con Embajadores voluntarios.

El propósito es de usar el espíritu de “Dios es Amor” para hacer que todas las personas que entren en nuestra Iglesia se sientan importantes, bienvenidas y parte de nuestra comunidad de Fe.

Necesitamos voluntarios que se sientan confortables en un medio de inter acción Social, conversando, respondiendo a preguntas y dirigiendo a los asistentes que necesiten, a usar los recursos apropiados.

Coordinador (a) que hable Español e Inglés, para que dirija este nuevo Ministerio con entusiasmo, energía y espiritualidad.

Interesados por favor contactar:

Marina Comerford: bilmarcomtx.att.net
Evelyn Davison: evelyndavison@tx.rr.com

There will be a bilingual Mass on
Wednesday, July 4th at 10:00 a.m.

FOUNDATION

The will of the people is the only legitimate foundation of any government, and to protect its free expression should be our first object.

—Thomas Jefferson

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL CATHOLIC CHURCH

You want to be connected to the Parish?

*Go to the website and sign up for Flocknotes
and you will start receiving texts or emails of
events and happenings in the parish!*

stmichaelmckinney.org

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Am 2:6-10, 13-16; Ps 50:16bc-23;
Mt 8:18-22

Tuesday: Eph 2:19-22; Ps 117:1bc, 2; Jn 10:24-29

Wednesday: Am 5:14-15, 21-24; Ps 50:7-13, 16bc-17;
Mt 8:28-34 or, for Independence Day, any
readings from the Mass "For the Country or
a City," nos. 882-886, or "For Peace and
Justice," nos. 887-891

Thursday: Am 7:10-17; Ps 19:8-11; Mt 9:1-8

Friday: Am 8:4-6, 9-12; Ps 119:2, 10, 20, 30, 40,
131; Mt 9:9-13

Saturday: Am 9:11-15; Ps 85:9ab, 10-14; Mt 9:14-17

Sunday: Ez 2:2-5; Ps 123:1-4; 2 Cor 12:7-10;
Mk 6:1-6a

TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

As Independence Day draws near, we think of the men and women of the military who serve with courage and competence, some far from home. How does the Church accompany them? In 1939, Pope Pius XII created an independent jurisdiction of the Catholic Church called the "Military Vicariate." In 1985 Pope John Paul II created the "Archdiocese for Military Services, USA." Spanning the globe and serving nearly one and a half million Roman Catholics, more than one thousand priests minister in hospitals, on military bases of all the armed forces, on ships at sea, and on the battlefield. The AMS does not ordain priests, but accepts priests on loan from religious orders and dioceses.

In 1824 a Jesuit priest named Adam Marshall enlisted in the Navy and died at sea in 1825. He was assigned as a "schoolmaster," but he sought out and ministered to Catholic sailors. Twenty years later, President Polk was worried that the war with Mexico was seen as anti-Catholic, so he recruited two Jesuit priests to serve in the army as chaplains. At the time of the Civil War, only about ten percent of Americans were Catholic. Military policies forced Catholic soldiers to attend Protestant services. The Church protested this rule, and many priests volunteered to become chaplains. Their witness and the courage of the "Nuns of the Battlefield" (several orders of sisters who assisted Civil War victims) helped temper prejudice against Catholics and pave the way for the life and ministry of this vigorous and unique archdiocese.



St. Vincent de Paul Distribución de Comestibles

Martes y Jueves de las 2PM a 4PM
2do Sábado del mes de las
8:30AM a 9:45AM

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Tuesday and Thursday • 2:00 pm-4:00 pm
2nd Saturday of the month • 8:30 am -9:45 am

Helpline: 214-314-5698 •
Thrift Store Pick up: 214-373-7837

GIVE BLOOD FOR YOUR FRIENDS
GIVE BLOOD FOR YOUR NEIGHBORS
GIVE BLOOD FOR YOUR COMMUNITY
GIVE BLOOD TO HELP THOSE IN NEED
GIVE BLOOD TO HELP YOUR FELLOW AMERICANS
GIVE BLOOD BECAUSE IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO

 Carter BloodCare
#GiveForLife

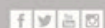
St. Michael the Archangel


Sunday, July 8, 2018
9:00 am - 3:30 pm

411 Paula Road
St. Michael's Catholic
Church - Carter
BloodCare Bus
McKinney, TX 75069



John Rapier
Volunteer Drive Coordinator



 CarterBloodCare.org 800-366-2834



Questions about your eligibility to give with Carter BloodCare? Call 1-888-480-8200.
If you were already planning to give in your community, we thank you.
For information about our privacy policy, please click [here](#).

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ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL CATHOLIC CHURCH

Faith Formation Registration Dates

Parishioners

Non-Parishioners

In St Rose Hall

Sunday, July 8, 2018 9 AM-3:30 PM

Tuesdays 9 AM-4:30PM

07/10, 07/17, 07/24 07/31

Wednesdays 9 AM-4:30PM

07/11, 07/18, 07/25



FEDERACION MCKINNEY

**Movimiento Familiar
Cristiano Católico**
MFCC de La Iglesia de
San Miguel Arcángel

*Te invita a la
fiesta de ambientación,
el día 26 de agosto
a las 3:00 p.m.
en el salón Santa Rosa*
en donde conocerás más acerca del MFCC.

¡Tendremos cuidado de niños!

Las inscripciones ya están abiertas. Si desea unirse al movimiento Familiar Cristiano Católico llame para más información a la oficina o a los coordinadores a los teléfonos: 972-542-4667.

Coordinadores de Zona:
Francisco y Guadalupe Rangel
Tel: 972-832-2806

Secretarios:
Luz Maria Y Jaime Solis
Tel: 254-266-0525



*Let us teach the young in the
school of the fear of the Lord.*

Pope St. Clement I

GIVE BLOOD FOR YOUR FRIENDS
GIVE BLOOD FOR YOUR NEIGHBORS
GIVE BLOOD FOR YOUR COMMUNITY
GIVE BLOOD TO HELP THOSE IN NEED
GIVE BLOOD TO HELP YOUR FELLOW AMERICANS
GIVE BLOOD BECAUSE IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO

 Carter BloodCare
#GiveForLife

St. Michael the Archangel

**Domingo, 8 de julio
de 2018**

9:00 am - 3:30 pm

411 Paula Road
St. Michael's Catholic
Church - Carter BloodCare
Bus
McKinney, TX 75069



John Rapier
Coordinador de Drive Voluntario



 SalvaVidasDonaSangre.org 844-372-5827



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Books, talks, videos articles, visit Formed.org. This FREE content is great for furthering your Catholic education, and reaching out to your children with good Catholic content. Watch the videos with the whole family and discuss.

*Come by the church office and get your parish code,
or pick up a card in the narthex.*

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL CATHOLIC CHURCH



During the American Revolution, the legal separation of the Thirteen Colonies from Great Britain in 1776 actually occurred on July 2, when the Second Continental Congress voted to approve a resolution of independence that had been proposed in June

by Richard Henry Lee of Virginia declaring the United States independent from Great Britain rule. After voting for independence, Congress turned its attention to the Declaration of Independence, a statement explaining this decision, which had been prepared by a Committee of Five, with Thomas Jefferson as its principal author. Congress debated and revised the wording of the Declaration, finally approving it two days later on July 4. A day earlier, John Adams had written to his wife Abigail:

The second day of July, 1776, will be the most memorable epoch in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forever more.

Adams's prediction was off by two days. From the outset, Americans celebrated independence on July 4, the date shown on the much-publicized Declaration of Independence, rather than on July 2, the date the resolution of independence was approved in a closed session of Congress.

Historians have long disputed whether members of Congress signed the Declaration of Independence on July 4, even though Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and Benjamin Franklin all later wrote that they had signed it on that day. Most historians have concluded that the Declaration was signed nearly a month after its adoption, on August 2, 1776, and not on July 4 as is commonly believed.

Coincidentally, both John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, the only signers of the Declaration of Independence later to serve as Presidents of the United States, **died on the same day: July 4, 1826**, which was the 50th anniversary of the Declaration. Although not a signer of the Declaration of Independence, James Monroe, another Founding Father who was elected as President, also died on July 4, 1831. He was the third President who died on the anniversary of independence. Calvin Coolidge, the 30th President, was born on July 4, 1872; so far he is the only U.S. President to have been born on Independence Day.

LAW and GRACE

The relationship between law and grace is a central issue for almost anyone involved in religion. Basically, it is the creative tension between religion as requirements and religion as transformation. Is God's favor based on a performance principle (Law)? Or does religion work within an entirely different economy and equation? This is a necessary boxing match, but a match in which grace must win. When it doesn't, religion becomes moralistic, which is merely the ego's need for order and control. I am sorry to say, but this is most garden-variety religion. We must recover grace-oriented spirituality if we are to rebuild Christianity from the bottom up.

In Romans and Galatians, Paul gives us sophisticated studies of the meaning, purpose, and limitations of law. He says its function is just to get us started, but legalism too often takes over. Yet Paul's brilliant analysis has had little effect on the continued Christian idealization of law, even though he makes it very clear: Laws can only give us information; they cannot give us transformation (Romans 3:20; 7:7-13). Laws can give us very good boundaries, but boundary-keeping of itself is a long way from love.

Paul describes Israel as looking for a righteousness derived from the law and yet failing to achieve the purposes of the law. Why did they fail? Because they relied on being privately good instead of trusting in God for their goodness! In other words, they stumbled over the stumbling stone (see Romans 9:31-32). Law is a necessary stage, but if we stay there, Paul believes, it actually becomes a major obstacle to transformation into love and mercy. Law often frustrates the process of transformation by becoming an end in itself. It inoculates us from the real thing, which is always relationship. Paul says that God gave us the law to show us that we can't obey the law! (See Romans 7:7-13 if you don't believe me.) Paul even says that the written law brings death, and only the Spirit can bring life (Romans 7:5-6; 2 Corinthians 3:6). This man is truly radical, but it did not take churches long to domesticate him. We've treated Paul as if he were a moralist instead of the first-rate mystic and teacher that he is.

Ironically, until people have had some level of inner God experience, there is no point in asking them to follow Jesus' ethical ideals. It is largely a waste of time. Indeed, they will not be able to even understand the law's meaning and purpose. Religious requirements only become the source of deeper anxiety. Humans quite simply don't have the power to obey any spiritual law, especially issues like forgiveness of enemies, nonviolence, self-emptying, humble use of power, true justice toward the outsider, and so on, except in and through union with God. Or as Jesus put it, "the branch cut off from the vine is useless" (John 15:5).

Fr Richard Rohr, *Center for Action and Contemplation*

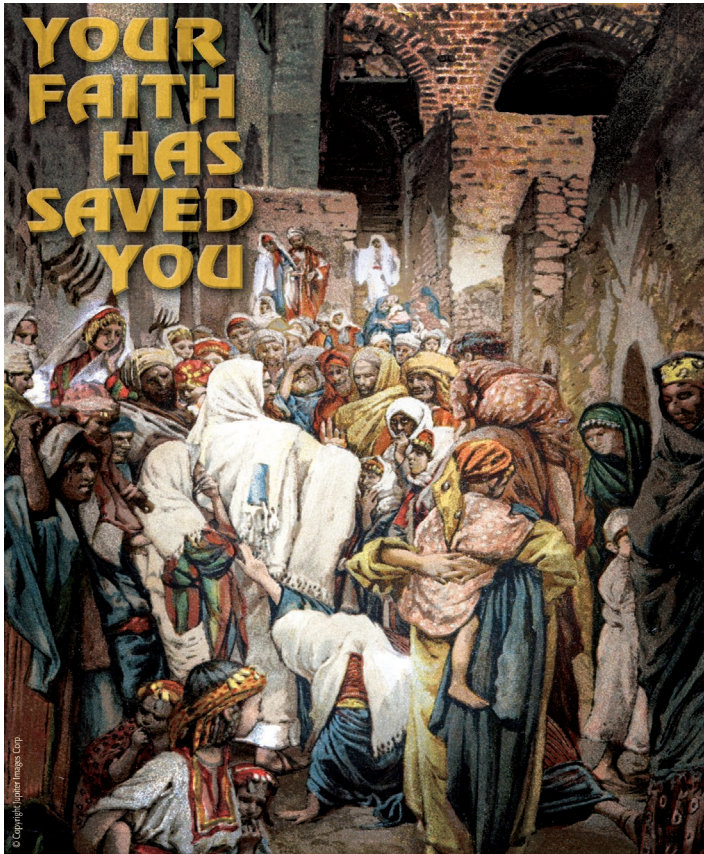
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