

LET US BE EXTRAVAGANT IN SHARING THE WORD OF GOD WITH OTHERS.

Two images dominate our Scriptures this Sunday, both from the world of nature – rain and the sowing of seeds. Together they are used to describe not just the kingdom of God, but more importantly, how that kingdom is part of who we are as disciples of Christ. In our reading from Isaiah, the Word of God is compared to the rain from heavens, pouring down, soaking the earth, softening it and nourishing it so that it produces its many fruits. Rain is essential to growth; without it, the land is unable to release its potential. So, too, for the Christian! The Word is essential for our spiritual growth. Like the rain, the meaning, imagery and teachings of God’s word are meant to soak in to our hearts, permeate our lives and so release our spiritual potential to be faithful disciples and heirs to the kingdom.

This word of God, contained in both the New and Old Testaments, is the story of the Church and God’s faithful interaction with his people. Like a family gathered around the table to celebrate a joyful occasion, so the Church invites us to hear the telling of that interaction and God’s promises to all. So, when God promises in our first reading that His word shall not return void but will achieve its end, that promise is as real for us as it was for the people at the time of Isaiah. So, what is that promise? This is where today’s passage from Romans is so helpful, for here Paul sets out the promise, once the unique preserve of Israel but now open to all nations, namely, that we shall be liberated from slavery to corruption and we will share in the glorious freedom of the children of God.

The Power of the Word of God is equally laid out for us in the parable Jesus tells in the Gospel, using the imagery of sowing seed. Like all parables, it teaches by means of what is common and known. On the face of it, Jesus is telling the story of a farmer sowing seeds – very familiar and very simple. Yet beneath this ordinary story is a metaphor of the Christian vocation – a story that Jesus hopes will provoke some response in his audience and some personal application in each of our lives.

This parable is not simply about the soil on which the seed falls – it is about the process of growing in our faith, for it is here that we truly find the kingdom. Responding to and faithfully living out the Gospel message are key here. In the same way that the farmer can never expect a 100 percent yield, so we are not able to choose the time and place in which we are to bear witness to the Gospel in a generous and faithful way. But we must be ready. What is important is that like the sower in today’s Gospel parable, we are extravagant in sowing that seed and sharing that word.

Glory to you, O Lord our God, Your love calls us to be your people. By sharing our many and diverse gifts we share in your mission. We ask you, Lord, to shape us into a community of faith. Nourish us by your word and sacraments that we may grow into the image of Jesus. Through the power of your Holy Spirit, heal us that we, in turn, may heal the wounded. Form us to be instruments of love, justice, and peace in our land, and send us to proclaim your saving work. RENEW us, Lord, that we may renew the face of the earth. AMEN.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK FAMILY

Mon Jul 17	Ex 1:8-14, 22, Mt 10:34-11:1
Tues Jul 18	Ex 2:1-15a, Mt 11:20-24
Wed Jul 19	Ex 3:1-6, 9-12, Mt 11:25-27
Thur Jul 20	Ex 3:13-20, Mt 11:28-30
Fri Jul 21	Ex 11:10 – 12:14, Mt 12:1-8
Sat Jul 22	Ex 12:37-42, Jn 20:1-2, 11-18
Sun Jul 23	Wis 12:13, 16-19, Rom 8:26-27, Mt 13:24-43



YOUR SUNDAY TITHING AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Regular Collections	\$	8,608.00
Nativity Maintenance	\$	1,119.00
Nativity Elem.	\$	628.00
Capital Improve.	\$	1,085.06
TOTAL COLLECTION	\$	11,440.06
CASH NEEDED	\$	14,400.00

BISHOP KIHNEMAN VACATION!

Bishop Kihneman will be on vacation from Monday, July 17th until Monday July 24th. We wish our Bishop a relaxing and enjoyable vacation. We also offer our prayers for safe travel!

WELCOME FATHER COLTEN SYMMES!

We wish to welcome Father Colten Symmes to Nativity Cathedral as our Parochial Vicar this week. We are so grateful to have you, Father Colten!

NATIVITY CATHEDRAL, 175 YEARS OLD

Anno Domini (the Years of the Lord) 2018 will mark Nativity BVM Cathedral’s 175th year. Founded in 1843 as the Second Catholic Parish in the state of Mississippi by Bishop Chance, we will begin celebrating this milestone with a year filled with memorial activities. A steering committee for this momentous year has been formed. It will have its first meeting on Tuesday, July 18th, at 6:00 p.m. an exciting year is awaiting us as we celebrate this significant landmark!

FIRST FRIDAY ADORATION

First Friday Adoration will resume on August 4, 2017 from 8:30 a.m. until 9:30 a.m., in our Chapel, with Deacon Ben.

NEW WINE DEADLINES EXTENDED:

Those interested in being part of our New Wine group that begins in the fall of 2017 have new extended deadlines: Deadline for submitting names and email addresses: Monday, July 17, 2017. Deadline for submitting completed applications: Monday, July 31, 2017. If you have any questions about the program, or if you need an application, please all Leo Trahan at the Office of Religious Education at 228-702-2131.

FATHER DENNIS VACATION!

Father Dennis will be on vacation from Friday, July 21st through Thursday, July 27th. We wish you a relaxing and enjoyable vacation, Father. Father Colten Symmes will be available to our Nativity Parish while Father Dennis is away.

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS	LECTORS	ALTAR SERVERS
Jul 22 4:00 pm 1. Deacon Ben 2. Mary Wimberly 3. Andrea Gilich 4. Gayle Mavar 5. Ann Kavanagh	Jul 22 4:00 pm Julie Capuano	Jul 22 4:00 pm Simon Randall Sabree Sander
Jul 23 7:00 am 1. Deacon Ben 2. Dale Dorcik 3. Vicki Howard	Jul 23 7:00 am Marcia Mayfield	Jul 23 7:00 am Wyeth Stewart Alec Ryan
9:00 am 1. Deacon Ben 2. Jim Compton 3. Maggie Landry 4. Belinda Corley 5. John Brauchle	9:00 am Al Simons, Jr..	9:00 am Morgan Newman Rhys Newman Rush Newman McKinzy Mathis
11:00 am 1. Deacon Ben 2. Linda Welter 3. Rocky Greathouse 4. Sondra Williams 5. Johnny Williams	11:00 am Michelle Sekul	11:00 am Hadyn Hollis Greysen Ross McRae Ross
5:30 pm 1. Deacon Ben 2. Angela Cannon 3. Teresa Ballinger	5:30 pm Maggie Landry	5:30 pm Samantha Sharplin Breanna Smith Taylor Yehereskin
	CANTORS	
	Jul 22 4:00 pm Dennis Burke	
	Jul 23 9:00 am Phil Frisby	
	11:00 am John Welter	

MASS INTENTIONS

		6:30 a.m.	8:00 a.m.
Mon	Jul 17	Jacinto/Norine Baltar	Sonny/Helen Ross
Tue	Jul 18	Anna Jo Wentzell	Virgie Hester
Wed	Jul 19	Gladys Schmidt	Anthony Walter Davidson, Jr.
Thur	Jul 20	Dr. Jessica Crowder	Clare Sekul Hornsby
Fri	Jul 21	Gaspar/Mary Pisarich	Patsy Smolcich
Sat	Jul 22	8 Collins-Sims Fly. 4	Josephine Esposito Allen
Sun	Jul 23	7 Collins-Sims Fly. 9-	F. T. P.
		11 – Jacinto/Norine Baltar	5:30 Clare Sekul Hornsby

PLEASE KEEP OUR SICK IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Laura Weiher, Candy Widener, Tiffany Whitehead, Lena Marchioni, Kay Lawson, Jeanie Harbison, Holly Hill, Georgia Bellais Dominick, Maxine Kiddinger, Marie Manning, Lisa Walker Kirkman, Raymond Egers, Betty Hilton, Walter Blessey, Mary Lancaster, Mickey Bradley, Cheryl Terry, Gwen Gollotte, Greg Hotaling, Richard "Red" White, Jack Joachim, Jr., Eugene LaCaze, Don Viator, Mabel Viator, George Krebs, Marian Semski and Michael Zorich.

NATIVITY BVM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

*Although the Summer Saints program is almost finished for this year, the activities and events continue! Children in prek through grade 6 are actively in outdoor and indoor activities as well as special opportunities to explore and learn. We thank our adult and college-aged staff for providing wonderful experiences for our children!

*Final Registration for families who will have children attending Nativity School will be held on Thursday, July 20th from 4:00-7:00 p.m., Friday, July 21st from 10:00-2:00 and Friday, July 28th from 10:00-2:00.

*Don't forget! The annual Nativity School BYT Day will be held on Saturday, July 22nd from 9:00 until noon. Jobs of all kinds will be available for adults as well as children.

Come and enjoy the fun as we prepare for the new school year!

NATIVITY MEN'S CLUB

Nativity Men's Club will have their first meeting after a summer break, on Monday, August 7, 2017 at 6:00 p.m., in the Sacred Heart Center. **All men of the parish are welcome to attend.** Please email Dennis Burke at djburke@cableone.net if you plan to attend. We would love for you to join us!

PARISHIONER REGISTRATION

When planning a baptism, marriage, or for subsidized tuition rates for our Catholic Schools, you must demonstrate that you are a practicing Catholic and that you attend Mass. Using envelopes helps maintain a record of Mass attendance. The parish registration form can be found online at www.nativitybvmcathedral.org, or at the entrance of the Cathedral in the vestibule.

COMMUNION VISITATION

Jesus says of you and me, "You are the salt of the earth". No one should be deprived of the Most Holy Eucharist because they are homebound, elderly, have no means of getting to Mass and/or sick in their home. Sister Jackie Tarrant, RSM will gladly bring the Eucharist to you in your home. Together we can be "salt of the earth". Sister can be reached at 228-223-8129 or the rectory at 228-374-1717.

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 18 -Men of St. Joseph, 7:00 a.m. – SHC
 Bingo Mania 5:30 p.m.

July 19 -**Cleaning Team "D"**

- Mass at Seashore Retirement Home, 3:00 p.m.

July 20 Mass at Greenbriar Nursing Home, 10:00 a.m.

BINGO MANIA

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday. The following families are scheduled for July 18th. Davis (Andy & Jennifer), Gollott (Arny & Jamie), Gollott (Victor & Trulie), Gonzalez (Tony & Margaret), Gopffarth (Bobby & Amy), Kelly (Joshua) and Kuluz (Kevin & Bridgette). **REMEMBER! If you are unable to attend, it is your responsibility to secure a replacement.**

BISHOP KIHNEMAN'S HOMILIES

Bishop Kihneman's homilies will be available each week in audio form on Nativity BVM Cathedral's website. To access these homilies, visit nativitybvm.podbean.com

WELCOME SOUTHBORO, MASSACHUSETTS YOUTH

For the past several years, Biloxi has hosted a large group of young people from St. Matthew Parish in Southboro, Massachusetts. They will be visiting us again during the first week of August. Let us open our arms in welcome to this vibrant group of young Catholic teens.

PRAYER FOR PROTECTION FROM HURRICANES

Father, may all the elements of nature obey Your command. Calm the storms that threaten us and turn our fear of Your power into praise of Your goodness. Grant this, through Our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit. Amen.