

Church of the Divine Love

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

PROPER 19

SEPTEMBER 11, 2022

10:15 A.M.

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn #

Opening Acclamation page 355

Collect for Purity page 355

Gloria page 356

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Exodus 32:7-14**

Psalm 51:1-11

Second Lesson: **1 Timothy 1:12-17**

Gradual Hymn –#

Gospel: **Luke 15:1-10**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze

Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form IV page 388

The Confession of Sin page 360

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn #	
Doxology (sung)	
The Great Thanksgiving:	
Eucharistic Prayer C	page 369
Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal)	page 362
The Lord's Prayer	page 364
The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer	page 337
The Communion of the People	
Communion Hymn – #	
Post Communion Prayer	page 365
Prayer for Peace – on insert	
Prayer of St. Francis	page 833
Dismissal Hymn – #	
Dismissal	

Sermon Sunday September 11, 2022

Exodus 32:7-14; Psalm 51:1-11; 1 Timothy 1:12-17; Luke 15:1-10.

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

I remember hearing someone say, "I feel like there are parts of myself that have been lost along the way, and I don't know if I can go back and find them again." It was nearly twenty years ago when I heard that, and it's never left me. I knew exactly what he was talking about. I thought about parts of my life that had been lost along the way, recent losses and long-ago losses that had never been forgotten.

I suspect you know what that's like too. You can probably name parts of yourself that have been lost along the way. Some of those lost parts are recent wounds, others are scarred memories. And always the questions – Can we find the lost parts of ourselves? Can we become whole again? I wonder if that's what the shepherd and woman in today's gospel are asking themselves. I wonder if they feel as if they have lost a part of their life – a sheep, a piece of money. It's not just a sheep, any sheep, but this sheep, a particular sheep. And it's not just a piece of money, any piece of money, but this piece of money, a particular piece of money. It's not just a part of our life, any part, but this part, a particular part. Without it we are less than whole, and we want ourselves back.

If you know what it's like to have lost a part of yourself then you know what it's like to be the shepherd and woman in today's gospel (Luke 15:1-10). That's not the usual way this gospel is interpreted. The usual interpretation goes something like this. The lost sheep and lost piece of money are often taken to

be sinners, who have gone astray, done wrong, gotten lost. And the shepherd and woman are often seen as images of a searching God. But that doesn't really fit the story. The woman says, "I have found the piece of money that I had lost." The shepherd says, "I have found my sheep that was lost." The woman lost her piece of money. The shepherd lost his sheep. It's more about the shepherd and woman than the sheep and piece of money. Besides, it's hard to attribute culpability, free will, or a choice to a sheep or piece of money.

The lost sheep and piece of money already belonged to the shepherd and woman. The shepherd had one hundred sheep to begin with and the women had ten coins to begin with. The shepherd lost a part of himself. The women lost a part of herself. They were whole and complete until something of their life was lost. So, I want to take a different approach to today's gospel from the usual interpretation. What if we are the shepherd and the woman? And what if the sheep and coins are parts of our life, parts of ourselves? Maybe today's gospel is not about categorizing ourselves or others as sinners or righteous as the Pharisees and scribes are doing. Maybe this gospel is really about wholeness and losing parts of ourselves, and not who is good or bad, in or out. Is Jesus telling these parables to the tax collectors and sinners who were coming near to listen to him, or is he telling them to the Pharisees and scribes who were grumbling about him welcoming sinners and eating with them? Yes. It is for them, all of them. And it is for us. The difference between the tax collectors and sinners, and the Pharisees and scribes is not that one group is lost, and the other is not lost, one group is sinful and the other righteous. The difference is that one group is lost, and they know, and the other group is lost but they don't know it.

To be lost is something we've all experienced. Sometimes we know we are lost and other times we don't. When have you lost a part of yourself? What parts of your life are you searching for today? What do you need to have more wholeness? Have you ever said that you need to get your life turned around? Have you ever felt like something was missing? Maybe you knew what it was or maybe you didn't. You just had a restless longing, a sense that there was something missing, something more to your life. Maybe you knew something was missing in your marriage, your parenting, your reputation, your integrity, your work, and you wanted to turn things around. When have you walked away from a relationship or a part of your life because it was too hard or too scary? Have you ever looked in the mirror and wondered where the joy, enthusiasm, vitality of your life went?

Sometimes we lose parts of ourselves to grief and sorrow, when life becomes overwhelming and confusing, to the pain and wounds of life, to circumstances that are nobody's fault, and sometimes to the choices we've made. Sometimes we lose ourselves to fear, anger, jealousy, wanting to be right more than doing right, judgments we make of others, refusing to forgive. Sometimes we lose ourselves to success, gaining approval, meeting the expectations of others. Sometimes the lost part of ourselves is faith, hope, a dream. It is so easy to lose a piece of ourselves and it can happen in a thousand different ways. Are you today settling for less than what you really want out of life and your relationships? Are you living less than a whole and complete life? Today's gospel is an invitation to wholeness or what we sometimes call salvation. It's not about being 90% or even 99% alive or whole. We are to look at the entirety of our life. Every sheep matters. Every coin matters. This is about wholeness and abundance, not as a quantity but as a quality of life.

The gospel of Jesus is not about making bad people good. It's about bringing people back to life. It's a path by which we find ourselves. It's a call to wholeness. Jesus is always calling us back to ourselves, back to wholeness. Our life's journey is a journey toward wholeness. And it is a lifelong search to

integrate and live a whole life. Where are you on this journey? We know these stories as the Parable of the Lost Sheep and the Parable of the Lost Coin. But that's not completely accurate. They could also be called the Parable of the Found Sheep and the Parable of the Found Coin. That's how both stories end. The shepherd is once again whole. The woman is once again whole. And there is rejoicing. They are not just stories of losing but also of finding. It's both.

Jesus said the shepherd goes after the lost sheep "until he finds it," and the woman "searches carefully" for the coin "until she finds it." Until he finds it, until she finds it. There is a promise and a call in that for us too. The promise is that there will be a finding for us too and the call is to search until we find. Sometimes it's a call to light a lamp, sweep our house, and search carefully in the very place in which we live and have our relationships, the place that is most known and familiar. And other times the call to wholeness takes us into the wilderness, into the wild and untamed parts of our life. That kind of searching, searching until we find, is not a searching outside of ourselves but a searching within. It means searching until we value ourselves beyond what we have done and left undone, beyond what we have or don't have, beyond our successes and failures, beyond what is or might have been.

I don't know how or when that finding will happen for you, but I know it does. I've experienced it in my life, and I've seen it happen in the lives of others. That finding returns us to ourselves. And yet, I also know that the searching and finding never end. There is a continuing call to become more fully and authentically ourselves. Until we accept that we are all lost, how can we ever be found? Because the witness of the Biblical story from Genesis to Revelation is that our God is indeed relentlessly compassionate, pursuing us even when we are at our worst. **Amen!**

14 PENTECOST	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II	(also on zoom)
		COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS	
MONDAY	8:00 AM	AA MEETING	
WEDNESDAY	7:00 PM	AL-ANON MEETING	
THURSDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP	
	8:00 PM	AA MEETING	
SATURDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP	
15 PENTECOST	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II	(also on zoom)
		COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS	

SUPPORT THE FOOD DRIVE – DROP OFF IN THE KITCHEN

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Jess Berbeck	Anthony Giordano
Altar Guild	Deb Giordano	Roe Prosser
	Jess Berbeck	Marie Quatorze
Coffee Hour	Jess Berbeck	Giordanos

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Give to all who suffer the refreshing waters of your compassion and healing. Make them dwell in the safety of your care even in the midst of all that troubles them. Especially we remember before you:

Grace Schinella	Harriet Capers	Bob Curley
John Mulligan	Arlene Goodenough	Celeste
Chris Dickson	Kate Jones	Deb P.
Michael Echevarria	John Rocco	Robert Sweat
Barbara Stinson	Michael & Family	Warren
Charlotte H.	Bernie Walther	Anthony
Mo (Rachael)	Bill Conklin Sr.	Laura
Anthony Paribello	Barbara Curran	Taylor
Ciara	Gabriel	Aidan
Elodie	Sophia	Del

People of Haiti	Christopher & Family	Julia
Maggie & Family	People of Ukraine	Tim
Nathan Treadwell	Bob Lazevnick	Art
Carol K.	Carolyn	

Help us to speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them. Bring us with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom.
Amen

Prayer before Worship

Almighty God, who pours out on all who desire it, the spirit of grace. Deliver us, when we draw near to you, from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn to be sung during the consecration:

Father, I adore you,
Lay my life before you,
How I love you.

Repeat twice with second verse starting with Jesus and third verse starting with Spirit.

Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn
but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So
mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that
all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince
of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominions
and glory, now and forever. Amen