

Church of the Divine Love Annual Church Picnic

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

PROPER 21

SEPTEMBER 26, 2021

10:15 A.M.

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn #309 – **O Food to pilgrims given**

Opening Acclamation page 355

Collect for Purity page 355

Gloria (S-280 in hymnal) page 356

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Numbers 11:4-6, 10-16, 24-29**

Psalm 19:7-14

Second Lesson: **James 5:13-20**

Gradual Hymn: **How Great Thou Art** - sung by Fr. Jean

Gospel: **Mark 9:38-50**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze

Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form VI page 392

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn #343 – **Shepherd of souls, refresh and bless**

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:

Eucharistic Prayer A page 361

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 – #530 – **Spread, O spread, thou mighty word**

Post Communion Prayer

page 365

Prayer of St. Francis

page 833

Dismissal Hymn #376 – **Joyful, joyful, we adore thee**

Dismissal

Sermon Sunday September 26, 2021

Numbers 11:4-6,10-16,24-29; Psalm 124 or 19: 7-14; James 5: 13-20; Mark 9: 38-50

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

Today's gospel (Mark 9:38-50) tells a story about John and the other disciples running into a stumbling block, an outsider who, as John tells Jesus, "Was not following us."

John does not say that this guy interfered with the disciples' work, that he had a different purpose, or that he opposed them. He simply says, "He was not following us." Never mind that the guy was casting out demons in Jesus' name. He was not one of them, and that seems to be their stumbling point. I don't know what that meant for John and the others, but I know that today it often means the other does not look or dress like us, the other does not speak or act like us, the other does not think or believe like us, the other does not do it our way. He or she is not following us. Whatever it was for John and the disciples, they felt threatened by this guy. He was casting out demons, alleviating oppression, offering a new life, all in the name of Jesus. Chances are the guy was getting a name, status, and recognition.

Last week the disciples argued among themselves about who is the greatest (Mark 9:30-37). This week (Mark 9:38-50) they are complaining about this other guy, this stumbling block to their status, power, and recognition. I wonder if this might not be a variation on last week's argument. You remember how that ended, right? It ended with Jesus taking a child into his arms and saying, "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me." You may also remember that I said that the child is a symbol of vulnerability, powerlessness, and dependency on another.

Today's gospel (Mark 9:38-50) is a continuation and part of last week's story (Mark 9:30-37). It's one story told in two weeks. Jesus and the disciples are still in the same house as last week, the child is still on Jesus' lap, and Jesus is still deepening and moving the conversation inward. John, however, wants to make the conversation about this other guy, this stumbling block. "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us." Isn't that what we often do or want to do with our stumbling blocks? We draw lines in the sand, circle the wagons, divide into us and them, and try to stop them. I see that happening in the world today. I read it in the news. And I've done it. I've been John, haven't you? Jesus, however, takes a different approach. He

erases the line and enlarges the circle. He isn't so concerned about another who causes us to stumble. His concern is focused on us, not the other, and it's twofold:

First, whether we have become a stumbling block to another, "to one of these little ones," to the child sitting on his lap, and second, whether we have become a stumbling block to ourselves. Jesus is once again asking us to look at ourselves, to be self-reflective. It's as if he saying to John, "Don't you worry about that other guy. You worry about yourself." He's asking us to look within. The greatest stumbling blocks are not outside us but within us: anger and revenge, the judgments we make of others, prejudice, our desire to get ahead and be number one, the need to be right, our unwillingness to listen, the assumption that we know more and better than another, living as if our way is the only and right way, pride, fear, being exclusionary, our busyness, lies, gossip, our desire for power and control. These, and a thousand other things like them, are what cause others and us to fall.

In what ways have you and I become stumbling blocks to another or to ourselves? That's the unspoken question in today's gospel. When have we caused another to trip and fall? When have we tripped and stumbled over our own two feet, our own life? And it's not only looking at ourselves as individual stumbling blocks. The greater stumbling blocks are systematic. In what ways is the legal system a stumbling block to justice for all? In what ways has patriotism become a stumbling block to another's freedom? In what ways is the Church a stumbling block to Jesus and the life he offers the world? And in what ways have you and I participated in and perpetuated those and other systematic stumbling blocks? In what ways have we caused ourselves or someone else to stumble? And what might we need to change or give up in order to step into our better selves? As individuals, a nation, a church?

Brothers and sisters in Christ, the passage this week is a tough and a very serious one. Not that other place in Scripture isn't just as tough of course. So let this passage wake you from your spiritual slumber and encourage you this week and always as you go about the business of amputating any and all impurities from your life as a follower of Jesus Christ. It's good to remember that Jesus wasn't speaking to the uncovered or the godless in this passage, he was speaking to the disciples. May God the Father give us modern day disciples the courage and strength to listen and to obey Jesus our Lord. And may the Holy Spirit continue to lead us into holy lives and holy living.

Let us pray:

Lord God, Father and Mother, Maker and Sustainer of us all, we pray today for all those who work in your name, those far off and those who are near at hand. We ask you to bless those who work for your glory in ways that are different than our ways of working for you, and we ask you to bless those things that we do. Increase your church, O God, not for its own sake, but for the sake of those in need of our ministry -- the ministry that you do through those who truly believe in you and listen to you and trust in you. Make us, make this congregation, and every person in it, a beacon of your saving light. In Jesus's name. **Amen!**

Our Thrift Shop will be closed for 2 weeks. Re-opening
on Thursday, October 14th.

18 PENTECOST 10:15 AM HOLY EUCHARIST, II (also on zoom)

OUT-DOOR SERVICE

AND

PARISH PICNIC

MONDAY 8:00 AM AA MEETING

WEDNESDAY 7:00 PM AL-ANON MEETING

THURSDAY 8:00 PM AA MEETING

SUNDAY – 19 PENTECOST 10:15 AM HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II (also on zoom)

SUPPORT THE FOOD DRIVE – DROP-OFF IN THE KITCHEN

MARK YOUR CALENDAR – BISHOP’S VISITATION

Sunday, October 10th, 10:15AM – Our Visitor will be
The Rt. Rev. Allen K. Shin – Bishop Shin will celebrate
and preach – Let us all make an effort to attend.

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:

Girard Bishop	Chrissy Neville	Dorothy
Nathan Treadwell	John LoubengeigerDel	
Chris Dickson	Kate Jones	Julia
Michael Echevarria	John Rocco	James
Martinisi Family	Michael & Family	Warren
Charlotte H.	Bernie Walther	Sylvia
Mo (Rachael)	Bill Conklin Sr.	Laura
Anthony Paribello	Barbara Curran	Taylor
Ciara	Gabriel	Aidan
Elodie	Victims of Natural Disasters	
Victims of Terrorism	People of Haiti	
Edward Lent & Family	Christopher & Family	

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 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 for ever. Amen. *BCP Page 815*