

Church of the Divine Love
SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

PROPER 10

JULY 11, 2021

9:00 A.M.

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn **#294 – Baptized in water**

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: **Amos 7:7-15**

Psalm 85:8-13

Second Lesson: **Ephesians 1:3-14**

Gradual Hymn **#535 – Ye servants of God**

Gospel: **Mark 6:14-29**

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 – **#436, vs 1,2,4,5 – Lift up your heads**

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	page 364
The Communion of the People	
Communion Hymn #615 – Thy kingdom come!	
Post Communion Prayer	page 366
Prayer of St. Francis	page 833
Dismissal Hymn #495 – Hail, thou once despised Jesus!	
Dismissal	

Sermon Sunday July 11, 2021

Amos 7: 7-15; Psalm 24 or 85: 8-13; Ephesians 1: 3-14; Mark 6: 14-29

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

In last week's text in the Gospel of Mark, Jesus sent out His apostles, and they were able to do miraculous things. Jesus empowered them to take authority over demons. He empowered them to do miracles, to heal the sick. And it is almost as if Mark is anticipating that we as readers will read that and say, Wow! That is fantastic! Sign me up! Mark follows that with this section about the death of John the Baptist, as if to say, Wait a minute. Before you sign up too quickly, you need to understand there is a cost. It is sobering to remember that ten of the twelve apostles died a violent death because they were followers of Jesus.

There is no question that there is a cost to speaking out against sin. While there are many today that promote a gospel of health and wealth and prosperity, Jesus never did. As a matter of fact, if you read through the Gospels, over and over again Jesus says that you have to count the cost. It is not easy to be a follower of Jesus. We need to understand the price that we must pay if we are going to faithfully follow Jesus. We need courage to speak on behalf of God in corrupted society. According to the passage, John the Baptist was arrested and put in prison because he had the courage to speak clearly to Herod that he was not permitted to take the wife of his brother Philipp.

Indeed, Herod had repudiated his wife to take Herodias, Philipp's spouse. The reason why he did so is not clearly stated in the passage, but we know that Herodias was unhappy with John the Baptist. The reason for her unhappiness was that the messenger of God condemned Herod's action and therefore condemned her indirectly. Since the moment that John condemned the life in which the immoral couple was living, Herodias hated the servant of God. The hatred in her heart was so profound that she decided not only to have him arrested and put in jail, but she was looking at the opportunity that would cause his death.

From this very true yet sad history, we must consider at least two characteristics of John the Baptist's position that would help us reviewing our personal attitude towards and in the society in which we find ourselves today. John the Baptist, as a person appointed by God with a specific message for his people, was a courageous man. He knew in advance that king Herod had the authority to decide whether he would live or die. He also knew that telling the truth to king Herod could result to his death. He was aware of the fact that his life was in danger, and therefore, he could have chosen to keep silent. He

could have said for instance: That is Herod's problem with God. He has to deal with God. Despite of the great risk of exposing his life by taking an uncomfortable option against Herod, John the Baptist chose to say what can be summarized like this:

King Herod, I know that I am held in great esteem by you. I also know your inner willingness to protect me... But according to my commitment to serving the truth and advancing the Kingdom of God, I should tell you that you are wrong. Your position as king doesn't give you the right to repudiate your wife and take your brother's wife....King Herod, even though everybody around you seems to support you by saying nothing, let me tell you that the only and urgent thing you must do right now is to repent of your action... Herod the honor and respect that you deserve as king do not permit you to go down to such level. You have put yourself in a position of war against God, and you need to repent..."

We should ask ourselves a couple of questions at this stage: What causes John the Baptist to stand firm and to take such risks? How does he value his personal call and ministry? It is evident that John the Baptist bears a profound respect towards his personal ministry, in such a way that everything on this earth is seen as worthless compared to God's call in his life. In the meantime, his understanding of his relationship with Herod is sustained by the deep conviction that the unique way to show respect towards Herod is telling him the truth. It is encouraging to observe that even after John's death, the truth he has spoken, and his shadow continue to work in the conscience of Herod.

As a courageous man, John was also a man of honesty and integrity. Materially and probably financially speaking. More exactly, he was a poor man. In his deep poverty, he had the advantage of being esteemed by Herod, the greatest man of his people, and this could have stood as serious hindrance on John's path, for we all know the vulnerability of most people living in context of poverty. Instead of seeing king Herod's attitude towards him as an opportunity to be grasped, John the Baptist decided to stand against king Herod's position. He decided to stand on God's side.

The good news is a messenger of God can be arrested, put in prison. He can be decapitated, but the word he has spoken can never be arrested nor decapitated. Knowing such a truth gives us the courage to walk on John's path, and to continue to speak for God's glory in our perverted society, for we know that even if for one reason or another we are beheaded, our words will not be beheaded. They will continue to work in the conscience of those who might have beheaded us. Speaking the truth to someone is not only a mark of our love towards him, but it is also a great mark of self-respect, the respect towards our personal ministry, and the respect towards the person to whom we speak.

Churches, Christian organizations as well as the entire society are paralyzed by some people we don't really know where they stand. As Christians, we could hear the voice of God speaking to us in various ways. Our willingness to speak truth to power can be costly, at least in terms of this world's estimation, and many have paid the ultimate price for their witness. But despite the cost in this life, we have nothing to fear. One thing is certain, because Jesus defeated death in His resurrection, death does not have the final word for the child of God. Jesus promised, for whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

The call to minister in the face of resistance and opposition is our call today. We proclaim that the power of repentance changes us and the world in which we live. Jesus' ministry to tell the truth to power provides us the empowerment to speak and act for the sake of our world. May we experience the power of God's in our call to follow him into a world where power is abused. **AMEN!**

7 PENTECOST

9:00 AM HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II
(also on zoom)

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

8 PENTECOST

9:00 AM HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II
(also on zoom)

10:00 AM VESTRY MEETING

Prayer for Grace and Favor:

Dear God, we ask that you provide for our needs, we ask for your grace and favor. We pray for your blessings to cover us; we pray that you would help us to prosper and make every plan that you have birthed in our heart to succeed. We pray that others would take notice of your goodness and could not help but say, "these are the ones that the Lord has blessed." Shine your light in us, through us. May we make a difference in this world for your glory and purposes. Set

your way before us. May all your plans succeed. We may reflect your peace and hope to a world that so desperately needs your presence and healing. In Jesus Name, Amen.

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	Arlene Goodenough	Lois Kessler
Nathan Treadwell	John Loubengeiger	Chris Dickson
Michael	Echevarria Francisco Febres	Del
Martinisi Family	Michael & Family	Kathleen
Charlotte H.	Bernie Walther	James
Kim	Mo (Rachael)	Warren
Bill Conklin	Anthony Paribello	Kate Jones
Barbara Curran	Edward Lent & family	Irene
Frances & Donna Mongelli	Christopher & his family	
Franklin Tenesaca	Aidan	Elodie
Ciara	Gabriel	

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.