

Church of the Divine Love

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

PROPER 19

SEPTEMBER 15, 2024 10:15 AM

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

Prayer before worship – on insert

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn #

Opening Acclamation page 355

Collect for Purity page 355

Gloria (sung)

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Isaiah 50:4-9a**

Psalm 116:1-8

Second Lesson: **James 3:1-12**

Gradual Hymn #

Gospel: **Mark 8:27-38**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze (printed on insert)

The Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form VI page 392

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn #

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:	
Eucharistic Prayer B	page 367
Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal)	page 367
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 15, 2024

Isaiah 50: 4—9a; Psalm 116: 1-8; James 3: 1-12; Mark 8: 27-38.

Beloved in Christ,

Haven't you had times of disillusionment, times when you recognized that your life or the world wasn't what you thought it was, and may never be? Disillusion happens when the story we've told ourselves, the story on which we based our lives and beliefs, the story to which we committed ourselves, no longer makes sense, is no longer relevant, no longer works, or is no longer true. Disillusionment is an in-between time, a time when we have lost faith in the old familiar story but have not yet embraced another story. It leaves us panicked and fearful about the future. The world feels like a dangerous and chaotic place, out of control. And somebody needs to do something.

Does any of that sound familiar? Do you understand what I am talking about? What is your disillusionment today? Disillusionment, however, isn't only about what's going on around us. It begins within us. It's a spiritual issue. And it's one Peter knows well. In today's gospel (**Mark 8:27-38**) he is the picture of disillusionment. He's confessed Jesus as the Messiah. He has a particular story about who the Messiah is and what the Messiah should do and be about. Who doesn't? Jesus, however is about to undo and rewrite Peter's story. "The Son of Man," he says, "must undergo great suffering and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again." So much for Peter's understanding of the Messiah.

That's neither what he expected nor what he wanted. So, he takes Jesus aside and rebukes him, as if he knows more and better than Jesus. In Matthew's version of this story, we hear what Peter says to Jesus. "God forbid, Lord! This shall never happen to you" (**Mt. 16:22**). Can you see and hear Peter's disillusionment? Peter confesses and Peter rebukes, all with the same tongue in the same conversation. He's speaking with a forked tongue, or as a friend of mine says, out of both sides of his mouth. It's what James is describing in today's epistle (**James 3:1-12**). Listen to the disillusionment in your own life or in the life of another and you'll likely hear blessing and cursing coming from the same mouth. "With" the tongue, James says, "we bless the Lord and Father, and we curse those who are made in the likeness of God." The forked tongue is a symptom of division within ourselves. The division we see out there is a projection of the division within us. It reveals our panicked disillusionment. And it reveals our arrogance. More often than not panicked disillusionment comes with the arrogance that we know exactly where things are headed and what should be done. Peter's confession and rebuke have become his disillusionment and arrogance.

My brothers and sisters, James continues, "this ought not to be so." We know that, right? James states the obvious, "This ought not to be so." Our disillusionment is not an excuse to curse or rebuke another. It's not a basis for claiming we know more and better than another. And it is not a reason to declare or treat the other as less than us when that other has been created and loved by the same God who created and loves us. The arrogance of panicked disillusionment can quickly lead to self-assertion. We can see that in Peter and his rebuke of Jesus. I'm not saying that as a criticism or judgment of Peter but in recognition of and identification with times of my own disillusion, arrogance, and self-assertion. Jesus has no time for or interest in Peter's arrogant self-assertion. "Get behind me, Satan," he says. Those are the same words Jesus spoke during his temptations in the wilderness. Jesus hears Peter's rebuke as a temptation to be less than who he is and as a distraction from the work he is about. Maybe that's true for Peter, and for you and me. Disillusion tempts us to be less than who we truly are, tempts us to be arrogant and self-assertive, tempts us to lose sight of what we are really about.

In our disillusionment we often put our story in front of God's story, give more credence to what we see than what God sees, and take our story to be more real than God's story. Isn't that what Peter has done? Isn't that what's going on in the conflicts we have with another, in the times we assert ourselves and negate another, in our words and actions of violence? In our panicked arrogance we can easily and quickly betray ourselves, each other, and God. Despite what the prophets of doom say or what we feel, the world is not coming to an end, falling apart, or going to hell in a hand-basket. It wasn't for Peter and it's not for us. The truth is we don't understand what is happening and we feel lost, scared, angry, and confused. The old story of power and self-assertion no longer fits. It never did but we heard that story and told it to ourselves enough times that we began to believe and invest in it. We need to embrace a different story. Jesus gives Peter and us a new story. He is the new story.

It's a story of self-denial. "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves, take up their cross and follow me." It's not just a story that Jesus tells. It's the story he lives and if any want to become his followers it must become their story. What would self-denial look like in your life today? I am not talking about self-denial as passivity, self-negation, a denial of our needs or desires. It's not suffering for

the sake of suffering as if that is inherently holy or redemptive. Let's not forget that the first half of Mark's account of the gospel describes Jesus' healing and relieving suffering and oppression. And self-denial is more than just giving up a particular behavior, though that's sometimes not a bad thing. The way of Christ, self-denial, reminds us that our life is not our own. It belongs to God. It reminds us that we are not in control, God is. Our life is not about us. It is about God. There is great freedom in knowing these things. We are free to be fully alive. Through self-denial our falling down becomes rising up, losing is saving, and death is resurrection.

As long as we believe our life is about us, we will continue to exercise power over others, try to save ourselves, control our circumstances, and maybe even rebuke Jesus. Jesus rarely exercised power over others or tried to control circumstances. He simply made different choices. Self-denial is not about being out of control or powerless. It is about the choices we make. Jesus chose to give in a world that takes, to love in a world that hates, to heal in a world that injures, to give life in a world that kills. He offered mercy when others sought vengeance, forgiveness when others condemned, and compassion when others were indifferent. He trusted God's abundance when others said there was not enough. With each choice he denied himself and showed God was present.

Maybe self-denial is what makes space and place for another and recognizes her or his life as important and sacred as ours. Maybe self-denial is, paradoxically, what allows us to come alive. Maybe it means re-examining our beliefs and attitudes about who we are, who another is, and who God is. And, finally, maybe self-denial means we don't take ourselves more seriously than we take God. At some point those kinds of choices will catch the attention of and offend those who live and profit by power, control, and looking out for number one. They will not deny themselves. They will respond. Jesus said they would. He knew that he would be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes. It happens in every age for those who choose the path of self-denial. When it happened for Jesus, he made one last choice. He chose resurrection over survival. **Amen.**

248th Diocesan Convention will be held November 8, 2024

Delegate needed.

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, PROPER 19

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

COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS

MONDAY 8:30 PM AA MEETING

WEDNESDAY 7:00 PM AL-ANON MEETING

THURSDAY 10AM-2PM THRIFT SHOP

8:30 PM AA MEETING

SATURDAY 10AM-2PM THRIFT SHOP

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, PROPER 20

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

COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Deb Giordano	Anthony Giordano
Coffee	Erika Febres	Janet Croft

SUPPORT THE FOOD PANTRY – DROP-OFF IN THE KITCHEN

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Loving God, comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation. Especially we remember before you:

Sister Eddie	Betty Curley	Jess
Bob Curley	Steve Curley	Art
Chris Dickson	Donna Buchsbaum	Deb P.
John Mulligan	Don Edwards	Evelyn
Manetta Family	Robert Hosey	Kristen
Christopher	Bernie Walther	Celeste

Danielle	Phil Ryder	Warren
Anthony Paribello	Barbara Curran	Del
Donna A.	Kate Jones	Aidan
Sally & Roger	Sophia	Ciara
Mary & Family	Ann Turco	Jan
Nathan Treadwell	Gladys Hadija	Vincent
Michael & Family	Matthew Treasure	Mo
Michelle & Baby	Marjorie Guerrier	Joseph
John Rocco		

All people and countries suffering from violence, hatred and natural disaster.
Help us speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them.
Bring us with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen.

To add or make changes to prayer list during the week, email
Janet Croft at jmc220@optonline.net.

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 for ever. Amen