

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time July 18, 2021

Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up a righteous shoot to David.

— Jeremiah 23:5a

THE DAYS ARE COMING

Separation, isolation, and hostility are terrible things. We are, sadly, too familiar with all of them in our modern life, whether we look at world events or events in our own neighborhoods and families. All three readings today refer to these same sad human conditions.

The prophet Jeremiah describes world conditions as if the people of his time were sheep who had been scattered by poor leadership and corrupt shepherds. But “the days are coming,” he assures us (Jeremiah 23:5), when a new shepherd, a just king, will come. We meet that king in the second reading and the Gospel. Paul reminds us in the Letter to the Ephesians that all divisions can now cease in Christ Jesus, who has brought us together through his blood. In Mark’s Gospel we see Jesus himself, looking with pity on those searching for him as if they were sheep without a shepherd.

—J. S. Paluch Co.

FEAST OF FAITH

The Prayer Over the Offerings

In the liturgy of the 1570 Missal, this prayer was called the “secret” prayer. It was “secret” not because its content was mysterious, but because it was prayed in silence by the priest, who only recited the conclusion aloud: *...per omnia saecula saeculorum*. With the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, we again hear these rich prayers spoken aloud. They remind us to prepare ourselves for what is to happen in the Eucharistic Prayer, for it is not only the bread and wine that will be transformed.

The Prayer Over the Offerings is a prayer for transformation, an expression, in a few words, of all that we hope that the liturgy will accomplish in our lives. We ask God to accept the gifts we present, and to change us even as God hallows the bread and wine. As we listen carefully to the Prayer Over the Offerings, we are reminded of what it is that we seek in the Eucharist: to be made holy; to be drawn closer to God; to come to eternal joy, unity, peace, and salvation.

—Corinna Laughlin, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Ex 14:5-18; Ex 15:1bc-6; Mt 12:38-42
 Tuesday: Ex 14:21 — 15:1; Ex 15:8-10, 12, 17; Mt 12:46-50
 Wednesday: Ex 16:1-5, 9-15; Ps 78:18-19, 23-28; Mt 13:1-9
 Thursday: Sg 3:1-4b or 2 Cor 5:14-17; Ps 63:2-6, 8-9; Jn 20:1-2, 11-18
 Friday: Ex 20:1-17; Ps 19:8-11; Mt 13:18-23
 Saturday: Ex 24:3-8; Ps 50:1b-2, 5-6, 14-15; Mt 13:24-30
 Sunday: 2 Kgs 4:42-44; Ps 145:10-11, 15-18; Eph 4:1-6; Jn 6:1-15

SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

Tuesday: [St. Apollinaris](#)
 Wednesday: St. Lawrence of Brindisi
 Thursday: St. Mary Magdalene
 Friday: St. Bridget
 Saturday: St. Sharbel Makhlūf



WEEKLY



Finance Corner: Your generosity is greatly needed and appreciated! For the month of July offerings: PLEASE mail to St. Philip/St. Teresa Parish, P. O. Box 339, Occidental CA 95465. Or donate at our website www.stphilipstteresa.org via Paypal or card. Please include your offering envelope # [if you have one] with your donation. Bless you!

mid-July summary: 1st collections: \$3849. 2nd collections: \$660.

July 10-11: 1st collection: \$1881. 2nd collection: \$450.

7/18: Capital Expenditures. 7/25: Rural Food.

Mark your Calendar for Future Events & Meetings:

Parish Council [PC]: TBA
Finance Council [FC]: TBA
Liturgy Committee [LC]: TBA
St. Teresa Ladies Guild: Contact Diane, 823-6044
St. Philip Ladies Guild: Contact Penny, 559-367-7403

✠ ♥ ✠ Mass Intentions ✠ ♥ ✠ Schedule

7/17 Sat. 5pm Mass ✠ Chris Olson
 7/18 Sun. 8am Mass ✠ John Kennedy
 7/18 Sun. 9:30am Mass for the People

 7/24 Sat. 5pm Mass for the People
 7/25 Sun. 8am Mass ✠ Denis & Josephine Poynter.
 7/25 Sun. 9:30am Mass for All Grandparents and Elderly

Prayer Requests: Please leave a message at 707-408-2650.

Teresa K., Pat K., Thomas T., Susan B., Lorri McC., Sarah, Clifford J., Terri A., Fred P., Theresa S., Sara, Mary Anne P., Barbara, Dave C., Jim P., William, Parson P., Dave, Mary O., Bill Z., Daniel, Sally T., Michael D., Richard M., Kathleen, Peter, Rosa S., Susan B., Joyce D., Anita C., George H., Mimi H, Steve, Barry, Lorrin K., Hugh P., Robert S., Britney N., Chuck, Rebecca A., April K., Jacinta G., Leo A., Ed C. family, Kathy R., Donna W., Jim K., Sherry S., Papke family., Gail F., Marie N., Christine, James G., Gary S., Peter R., Gerry N., Diane K., Janet K., Norma M., Elaine J., River M.





Detail of *Saints Augustine and Monica* by Ary Scheffer
(Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#))

Deacon-structing Church Mothers: Part Four

by [Deacon Pedro](#)

So far, our little expedition into the early Church has uncovered quite a few women who seem to have been very influential. Even though they were not great writers, or their writings were not preserved, we know that the early Church had many women who we can say were foundational.

[Three weeks ago](#), we learned about Thecla, Irene of Macedonia, Macrina the Elder, Macrina the Younger, Nino, and Proba. [Two weeks ago](#), we learned a bit about the daughters of St. Philip. And [last week](#), we learned about a few 2nd- and 3rd-century holy women: Eudokia, St. Blandina, Syncretica of Alexandria, Demiana, and Margaret the Virgin. I bet that, like me, you had not heard of these saints before.

Today, let's look at some women who lived in the 4th century. I'm sure you've heard of some of them:

Helena was the mother of the Roman emperor Constantine the Great and lived from AD 246 to 330. Because of her name we can deduce that she was a native Greek, likely from a humble background (St. Ambrose described her as a *bona stabularia* or "good stable-maid"), although this part of her life has all but completely been erased. At some point she met the future emperor Constantius, perhaps during one of his campaigns in Asia Minor. The nature of their union is also not clear, whether it was an official marriage or one of common law or cohabitation. In 293, Constantius was raised to the rank of Caesar. However, after becoming emperor, he divorced Helena. She only came back into public life, receiving the title "Augusta", much later, when her son Constantine became the emperor. Eusebius of Caesarea writes that Helena was converted to Christianity by her son. Helena is well-known for her pilgrimage to Palestine in search of the "true relics of Christianity". For this purpose she had unlimited access to the imperial treasury. Eusebius of Caesarea writes that Helena, during this trip, was responsible for the restoration of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and the Church of the *Pater Noster*, on the site of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives. Tradition also holds that Helena is responsible for building churches at the site where God appeared to Abraham in Mamre, the site of the Burning Bush in Sinai, and other sites commemorating various martyrs. While in Jerusalem, Helena ordered the destruction of a Roman temple which had been built over the site of Jesus' tomb and recovered the True Cross on which Jesus had been crucified. On this site, Constantine ordered the construction of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Other churches were also built on other sites "discovered" by Helena. There are legends that say that Helena also found other relics, such as the nails of the crucifixion, part of Christ's tunic, and pieces of the rope that held Jesus to the cross. Eusebius of Caesarea writes that Helena was about 80 years old when

she returned from Palestine, around the year AD 327, and brought with her large parts of the Cross and other relics, which can be venerated to this day at the Minor Basilica of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem, in Rome.

Catherine of Alexandria was a martyr and is also considered one of the Fourteen Holy Helpers that I mentioned [last week](#). She lived from around AD 287 to 305. Tradition says that she was the daughter of a Roman governor, converted in her teens, and died at the hands of the emperor Maxentius before her 19th birthday. According to legend, when Catherine protested the persecution of Christians to Maxentius, he brought 50 of the best orators to debate with her, but none were able to refute her arguments, and many of them converted. After being flogged, she was sent to starve in prison. However, angels tended to her wounds, and she was fed daily by a dove from Heaven. Christ himself also visited her and encouraged her. During her imprisonment, more than 200 people came to see her and converted to Christianity, among them Maxentius' wife. All of them were martyred. Unable to kill her on an execution wheel (it shattered when Catherine touched it), she was beheaded. Catherine herself ordered the executioner to strike the blow.

Monica is best known for being the mother of [St. Augustine](#). She lived between AD 322 and 387. She was from Thagaste in North Africa, possibly of Berber descent, and married a Roman official. It seems that at the time of their marriage, Monica was already a Christian as she was distressed at not being able to have her two eldest children baptized. Her husband did, however, agree to Augustine's baptism because he had fallen ill. Years later, when the young adult Augustine shared his heretical Manichean views with his mother, she sent him away and refused to see him. After a vision convinced her to reconcile with him, she was encouraged by a local bishop not to give up on him: *"It cannot happen that the son of these tears should be lost."* Augustine was spiritually lost and living an unchaste life, and Monica wept and prayed ceaselessly for him to come to the Faith. She followed Augustine to Milan where she met St. Ambrose, who eventually, after 17 years, thanks to the help of her tireless prayers, helped Augustine convert to Christianity. St. Augustine went on to become a bishop and one of the most influential theologians of the early Church – likely the most important of our Latin Church Fathers. In his writings he praises his mother's wisdom, perseverance, and holiness.

Marcella lived in Rome from AD 325 to 410. St. Jerome wrote a memoir of her life titled ["To Principia"](#). In it he says that he found much virtue, intellect, holiness, and purity in her. Marcella's father died when she was a little girl, and she was married only seven months when her husband died. Afterwards, she dedicated herself to the pursuit of holiness. Jerome describes how she practised fasting and her love of Scripture; she founded a school of biblical studies in her own palace. It was not the custom in Rome for a noble lady to live a monastic life, yet Marcella learned about the discipline of virgins and widows, which was by now common in the East, from the writings of St. Anthony of Egypt. Marcella embraced this life and formed many other women in it (as well as in Scriptural studies), including her dear friend St. Paula and Paula's daughter, Julia Eustochium (you'll read more about Paula and Eustochium next week). St. Jerome writes that, led by her example, many ladies shaped their conduct; thus, monastic establishments for virgins and of hermits became numerous, and he "had the joy of seeing Rome transformed into another Jerusalem". Marcella was also influential during a time of heresy that came upon Rome, writing letters challenging the heretics. In 410, during the third Visigoth sack of Rome, Marcella, aged 85, was attacked in her own home and killed.

Mary of Egypt was a Desert Mother who lived from AD 344 to 421. According to ["The Life of Mary"](#) by St. Sophronius, in her early years she lived a disreputable life, making a living from begging and offering sexual favours. In her early 30s, she travelled to Jerusalem hoping to find more partners for her indiscretions. When an unseen force prevented her from entering the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, on seeing an icon of

Mary, she repented and promised to give up her worldly lifestyle. She was then able to enter the church and venerated the relic of the True Cross. Upon leaving the church, she heard a voice directing her to cross the Jordan, where she would find peace. She did and dedicated herself to a life as a hermit living in the desert for 47 years. Her body was found incorrupt by the monk Zosima, to whom she had told her story, one year after she died.

It is clear that asceticism and celibacy were highly valued in these first four hundred years of the Church, giving rise to desert monasticism and religious communities, no doubt greatly influenced and promoted by women. I am intrigued by the role that was played by women, particularly women of nobility in Rome, like Marcella and Helena, in highly influencing the culture during a time when the Roman Empire with its pagan cults was slowly coming to an end.

Come back next week and learn more about some of these women.



Every week, Deacon Pedro takes a particular topic apart, not so much to explore or explain the subject to its fullness, but rather to provide insights that will deepen our understanding of the subject. Contact: pedro@saltandlighttv.org.

Pastor Speaks:

1. Updates from the 2021 Annual Appeal

As for the latest communication from the Chancery, our parish has so far 28 pledges only. The pledged amount is \$ 9,900.00, and the paid amount is \$ 9,040.00. I appeal to all other parishioners to come forward and contribute generously for the Annual Appeal of Santa Rosa Diocese to reach the Target of \$ 13,754. If your donations exceed the Target amount, the surplus will come back as Refund to our parish. Let us be generous as God is!

2. As per Prot. No. 2021/540 from Vatican, dated 22 June 2021, Cardinal Kevin Farrell, Prefect of Dicasterium Pro Laicis, Familia Et Vita wrote: *"Today, the Holy Father's video message was published for the FIRST WORLD DAY FOR GRANDPARENTS AND THE ELDERLY, which will be celebrated next 25 July.We have chosen to give pride of place to the local celebration of this Day, so as to ensure that its joyous message (which you can all read in our bulletins, this and next week) reached every grandparent and elderly person effectively, even the most isolated....."* In our parish, let us dedicate one of the Sunday Masses to grandparents and the elderly on Sunday 25 July, as the memorial of Sts. Joachim and Ann, grandparents of Jesus, approaches. **–Fr. Bala**

Part One of Papal Message to Elderly

Dear Grandfathers and Grandmothers, Dear Elderly Friends,

"I am with you always" (Mt 28:20): this is the promise the Lord made to his disciples before he ascended into heaven. They are the words that he repeats to you today, dear grandfathers and grandmothers, dear elderly friends. "I am with you always" are also the words that I, as Bishop of Rome and an elderly person like yourselves, would like to address to you on this first World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly. The whole Church is close to you – to us – and cares about you, loves you and does not want to leave you alone!

I am well aware that this Message comes to you at a difficult time: the pandemic swept down on us like an unexpected and furious storm; it has been a time of trial for everyone, but especially for us elderly persons. Many of us fell ill, others died or experienced the death of spouses or loved ones, while others found themselves isolated and alone for long periods.

The Lord is aware of all that we have been through in this time. He is close to those who felt isolated and alone, feelings that became more acute during the pandemic. Tradition has it that Saint Joachim, the grandfather of Jesus, felt estranged from those around him because he had no children; his life, like that of his wife Anne, was considered useless. So the Lord sent an angel to console him. While he mused sadly outside the city gates, a messenger from the Lord appeared to him and said, "Joachim, Joachim! The Lord has heard your insistent prayer". 1 Giotto, in one of his celebrated frescoes, seems to set the scene at night, one of those many sleepless nights, filled with memories, worries and longings to which many of us have come to be accustomed.

It makes no difference how old you are, whether you still work or not, whether you are alone or have a family, whether you became a grandmother or grandfather at a young age or later, whether you are still independent or need assistance. Because there is no retirement age from the work of proclaiming the Gospel and handing down traditions to your grandchildren. You just need to set out and undertake something new.

At this crucial moment in history, you have a renewed vocation. You may wonder: How this can be possible? My energy is running out and I don't think I can do much. How can I begin to act differently when habit is so much a part of my life? How can I devote myself to those who are poor when I am already so concerned about my family? How can I broaden my vision when I can't even leave the residence where I live? Isn't my solitude already a sufficiently heavy burden? How many of you are asking just that question: isn't my solitude already a sufficiently heavy burden? Jesus himself heard a similar question from Nicodemus, who asked, "How can a man be born when he is old?" (Jn 3:4). It can happen, the Lord replies, if we open our hearts to the working of the Holy Spirit, who blows where he wills. The Holy Spirit whose freedom is such that goes wherever, and does whatever, he wills.

As I have often observed, we will not emerge from the present crisis as we were before, but either better or worse. And "God willing... this may prove not to be just another tragedy of history from which we learned nothing... If only we might keep in mind all those elderly persons who died for lack of respirators... If only this immense sorrow may not prove useless, but enable us to take a step forward towards a new style of life. If only we might discover once for all that we need one another, and that in this way our human frailty can experience a rebirth" (Fratelli Tutti, 35). No one is saved alone. We are all indebted to one another. We are all brothers and sisters.

Given this, I want to tell you that you are needed in order to help build, in fraternity and social friendship, the world of tomorrow: the world in which we, together with our children and grandchildren, will live once the storm has subsided. All of us must "take an active part in renewing and supporting our troubled societies" (ibid., 77). Among the pillars that support this new edifice, there are three that you, better than anyone else, can help to set up. Those three pillars are dreams, memory and prayer. The Lord's closeness will grant to all, even the frailest among us, the strength needed to embark on a new journey along the path of dreams, memory and prayer.

[Part Two in next bulletin]

My Life as a Pinball

At the close of my eighth grade in parochial school I was surprised to learn that I had been selected among some other boys to test for a scholarship at the two private Catholic high schools of the diocese, one run by the Christian Brothers and the other by the Jesuits. I was surprised because I never took school too seriously as other than a place that had a playground for recess antics. Nevertheless I crossed town twice to take the scholarship exam at LaSalle High in a then somewhat suburban location and at St. Joseph's Prep (originating out of St. Joseph's parish founded in 1733). Being that old and also *Jesuit* made it an honor even to cross Saint Joseph's threshold.

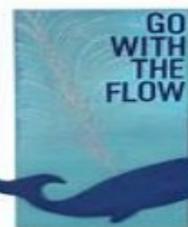
I first took the LaSalle test – impressed by its gothic architecture and pleasant neighborhood and later took the St. Joe's test – situated in the noisy inner city. The environment put me off right away but it was the half-eaten hamburger I found in my desk while taking the exam that made me skip the test and catch the trolley. The result? I won a half scholarship to LaSalle – and guess what was the half tuition my parents had to pay back in 1941? Twelve dollars a month!

What would have happened had I gone to St. Joseph's to undergo the influence of the elite Jesuits? I can't even imagine. But it would have taken me far afield from the direction my life took after attending LaSalle. Indeed it wasn't a matter of *what* I would become but *who*. I mean of course we have genetic characteristics that chart our path in many ways but it's the incidents, the turns, the detours, the confrontations, the people we meet once we are launched that bring us to where we *are*. As I look back I am surprised at the meandering, the unexpected, the disappointments, the treasurable people I have encountered – surprised even in retrospect. The same can be said of you.

As people of faith we accept that something more than our reason and choices pulsate our growth – every life is a novel co-authored in some way by a dynamo somewhere beneath our soles (souls). The Hebrew and Christian traditions demonstrate this by the directionless ways its characters chose to advance only to wind up always focused on "a promised land" – each a metaphor of every human experience. What would *you* be and *who* would you be today, if . . .

In today's first reading Amos serves as an example. After all he had settled into being an anonymous, forgettable fellow defined as a shepherd and a dresser of sycamores – when something diverted him to confront the priests of Bethel and wind up - his oracles, his poetry, his insights echoing down the corridors of time forevermore. So that we now know *who* and not just *what* Amos was!

Today's Gospel spells it all out. Hang loose. Travel light. Go with the flow. Food, baggage, money, wardrobe – don't make them a weight that burdens your mental mobility. Don't trivialize your life. If you find hospitality along the way, enjoy it. If you experience rejection, let it go. Just stay open to the oncoming summons that may arrive from where you least expect it. Stay open-minded, openhearted. As the Gospel parables put it: stay awake to the Spirit's lure; don't bury your gift of life simply to keep it intact, unwrapped.



[ocean currents game](#)

--Geoff Wood, 7/11/21

Volunteer Search

St Philip the Apostle and St. Teresa of Avila churches are looking for volunteers. As a result of our parish re-opening in June, we have a need to get the word out to let our parishioners know what volunteer opportunities are available. Below is a list opportunity areas and a brief description of what skills and experience would likely be needed. If you have a background, working experience or just a general interest in any one of those opportunities please contact Father Bala. He can be reached via email; govindu77@gmail.com. He will pass your show of interest to the appropriate person. Please include any contact information you have.

- **Mass:**
Lector, usher, Mass setup, church cleaning, liturgical events, weddings, funerals & CCD
- **Building maintenance:**
Electrical, plumbing, general contractor, refrigeration, heating & sound system support
- **Landscape maintenance:**
Enjoys all facets of gardening, plumbing (PVC), electrical (watering timer systems)
- **3rd party hall events & kitchen management:**
Event coordinator, kitchen manager, customer contact and scheduling
- **Fundraising:**
Experience, organization, ideas, planning, promotion
- **Parish social events:**
Ideas, planning, promotion, setup, cooking, serving, raffles
- **Parish/Office support:**
Accounting experience, video & sound support, Wi-Fi communications