

**Twenty-seventh Sunday
in Ordinary Time
October 3, 2021**

Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

— Mark 10:14

THE BARRIERS THAT SEPARATE US

We live in a society that has many technological avenues for stimulation and entertainment, one in which the urban population exceeds the non-urban. It is curious that loneliness is a prevalent malady. It is easy to reach out and touch someone, we are told. But—in truth—it is not all that easy, and statistics from the mental health field will reinforce that opinion. Today's readings are about the ways in which we can authentically reach out: God touches Adam to create a mate and end his solitude; God-in-Jesus takes on human flesh and death in order that we might come to glory; Jesus reaches out to the children whom the disciples had tried to keep away, showing us the manner in which we must approach the loving embrace that awaits us in heaven. Until that day, however, we must remember that ours is a sacramental church, a church of signs of the love of God. And so we are called to reach out continually to ease the loneliness and the barriers that separate us from one another and, therefore, from the love of Christ. -J. S. Paluch Co.

FEAST OF FAITH

The Sign of Peace

"Greet one another with a holy kiss," wrote Saint Paul to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 16:20), and he said the same thing to other communities as well. The holy kiss, the sign of peace, has been a hallmark of Christians from the very beginning. In giving and receiving the sign of peace, we are not giving something of our own, but something that Christ has given to us. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you," Jesus told his disciples (John 14:27). Jesus comes to us when we gather together in community. We celebrate the Eucharist not just to receive spiritual nourishment to help us on our solitary way to salvation, but to be transformed into one body, the Body of Christ in the world. As we receive the Eucharist, we are not only united to Christ; we are united to each other. It is never easy to live in community, and we hurt each other on the way. So we need to turn to each other in a sign of reconciliation and forgiveness, to look into each other's eyes, and give and receive the peace that is not ours, but Christ's.

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

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Jon 1:1 — 2:2, 11; Jon 2:3-5, 8; Lk 10:25-37
 Tuesday: Jon 3:1-10; Ps 130:1b-4ab, 7-8; Lk 10:38-42
 Wednesday: Jon 4:1-11; Ps 86:3-6, 9-10; Lk 11:1-4
 Thursday: Mal 3:13-20b; Ps 1:1-4, 6; Lk 11:5-13
 Friday: Jl 1:13-15; 2:1-2; Ps 9:2-3, 6, 16, 8-9; Lk 11:15-26
 Saturday: Jl 4:12-21; Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12; Lk 11:27-28
 Sunday: Wis 7:7-11; Ps 90:12-17; Heb 4:12-13; Mk 10:17-30

SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

Monday: St. Francis of Assisi
 Tuesday: Bl. Francis Xavier Seelos
 Wednesday: St. Bruno; Blessed Marie-Rose Durocher
 Thursday: Our Lady of the Rosary
 Saturday: St. Denis and Companions;
 St. John Leonardi; Blessed Virgin Mary

Finance Corner: Your generosity is greatly needed and appreciated! For the month of **September** offerings: PLEASE put in Mass collection box or 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!



9/26: 1st collection: \$1114. Rural Food: \$1760.

10/3: Operating Expenses & Mission Co-op. 10/10: Capital Expenditures.

Mark your Calendar for Future Events & Meetings:

Parish Council [PC]: TBA
Finance Council [FC]: TBA
Liturgy Committee [LC]: Fri., 11/5/21, at 9:45am in Hall
St. Teresa Ladies Guild: Contact Diane, 823-6044
St. Philip Ladies Guild: Contact Penny, 559-367-7403

✠ ♥ ✠ Mass Intentions ✠ ♥ ✠ Schedule

10/02 Sat. 5pm Mass for the People
 10/03 Sun. 8am Mass ✠ Denis & Josephine Poynter
 10/03 Sun. 9:30am Mass
 10/03 Sun. 11:15 am Mass

 10/09 Sat. 5pm Mass
 10/10 Sun. 8am Mass ✠ Tina Bartolo
 10/10 Sun. 9:30am Mass for the People
 10/10 Sun. 11:15 am Mass

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., River M.; Nikkie; Mr. C., Michelle, Christian A., Samantha S., Gary E., and for repose of the soul of Claudia Munoz's mother.

Mission Santa Ines (link)



(the California missions are featured in our current bulletins)

Our Current Parish Mass Schedule:

St. Philip, Occidental: 8am & 11:15am Sun.; 9am Wed. & Fri.
 St. Teresa, Bodega: 5pm Sat.; 9:30am Sun.; 9am Tues. & Thurs.

RURAL FOOD PROGRAM UPDATE for September 2021

On Tuesday, September 14, 42 families, 105 individuals received nutritional support during our distribution at the St Philips Parking lot and parish hall. The bounty of beautiful produce, from community gardens as well as from Redwood Empire Food Bank, was a highlight of our distribution this month.

Volunteers enjoyed a selection of pastries and cake and received gift certificates to celebrate their dedication to the Rural Food Program during the past 18 months.

If you are aware of a family which needs nutritional assistance, please let them know about our program. Leave a message at the parish office, (707) 408-2650 to get a call back with additional information.

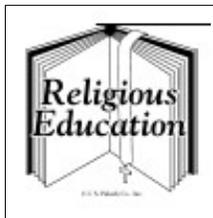
This program is funded through monthly Rural Food Collection, private donations and the dedicated, awesome volunteers. **Thank you for your generous donations as we strive to meet the nutritional needs of all attendees at our food distributions.**

RURAL FOOD VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES in the Parish Hall and parking area:

Saturday, October 9, 9:00-- 10:00am repackaging;

Monday, October 11, 9:00 – 11:00am set up; and

Tuesday, October 12, 7:30– 11:00am to distribute food to clients.



Parish Religious Education Program

We are happy to announce the return of our Religious Education [CCD] K-12 program this September at the 11:15am Sunday Mass. You can get more information for your family and friends, as well as register, by going online to www.stphilipsteresa.org or by contacting Religious Education Director Jolene Corcoran

at jolene@lunardielectric.com. See you soon!



[bible-story-of-the-day-stairway-to-heaven.gif](#)

How to read Scripture

I used to meet on Saturday mornings in the back room of a local restaurant with about 20 retired men – mostly of a

professional background – to read and discuss the books of the Bible – old and new Testaments. This was about 40 years ago and it continued over the subsequent years – the group growing smaller as time took its toll on the members.

They were all laymen – ordained ministers were banned. They wanted to take their own bearings on the writings – and so they began with Genesis and trudged their way through week after week until the closing book of the New Testament – at which point they reverted back to Genesis and started the quest over again – and again. And it being a lot of reading and discussion to do, each cycle took a few years – while the group dwindled to maybe ten? The “group” continues to meet every Saturday, after an interval taken to respond to the Covid pandemic, and the group now consists of two, me and a local once Lutheran and now Presbyterian elder.

We had reached last Saturday the Genesis episode in which the patriarch Jacob, en route to find a wife in his ancestral country, stops for the night to sleep and has a dream. It's of a stairway reaching from earth into the heavens upon which angels of God descend and ascend – as if on an escalator. And the Lord appears in this dream promising Jacob and his descendants a future (as Israelites) that will become a blessing for all the families of the earth. Upon this, Jacob awakens frightened and says: *How awesome this place is! This is nothing else but the house of God, the gateway to heaven.*

How might one read and understand that episode? For centuries probably people took it literally – as a description of what actually happened. Jacob was travelling, became tired, went to sleep and had a dream that promised a future – and the dream was real – the ladder and the angels were real – and the words spoken by the Lord were remembered and recorded by Jacob – for who else was there?

Reading the passage that way – literally – leaves the event at a vast distance of time and space from us today. We read it and maybe wonder why such episodes don't seem to happen to us – as to the saints of old. But Church tradition has always allowed that such a story can be your story – in its deeper sense. Read yourself into it – take the place of Jacob; experience his dream everyday of your life and get to know yourself better. Everyday – as you sleepily go through your routine existence – angels link you to the very source of your Being – taking up your concerns and drawing down hope, expectations, nudging your imagination to sense that your life has meaning – a destiny, making you realize that this world, after all, is the domain of its Maker and everyday a gateway to something new, unanticipated – and so it's time to wake up and get moving.

Such a reading of Scripture reels the episode in from thousands of years ago and makes it a present event – *your* event to interpret as only *you* can.

--Geoff Wood, 9/26/2021

[Heart](#) - Stairway to Heaven

The Apple Tree Project Dear Parishioners and Friends,

Many thanks for the generosity of our parishioners. We provided new backpacks and needed school supplies to 32 children and 18 families from our Rural Food Program. We appreciate your caring support in getting our kids off to a good start for this challenging academic year. In appreciation, Diane Schwab, Colette Raya, and Peg Duffy



Parish Notes:

1. There is still need of Volunteers for various ministries, like Ushers for weekend Masses, Lectors for 11:15am Sunday Mass, and weekend Altar Servers (especially from past groups of children who received First Communion and Confirmation).
2. This October we will **not** have blessing of pets and animals at either church on or before Oct. 4, feast of St. Francis of Assisi.
3. **Masks are still mandated for use indoors at churches, halls, and other public buildings.** Thank you for your cooperation. At Mass, we will continue with singing a Recessional Hymn with masks on. Before we start singing the Recessional Hymn, there will be time given for those (perhaps two or three people) to leave the church silently if they have health or other good reason for safety.

Summer Appeal Reminder: An anonymous donor has pledged **\$35,000** in funds that will match whatever gifts our generous parishioners make available before the match challenge ends this week, on October 4th, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi. **Whatever you donate to the Summer Appeal between now and October 4th will be doubled!** Please take advantage of this wonderful opportunity by sending in your gift via check or PayPal, earmarked for the "Summer Appeal."



Detail of *Moses Choosing the Seventy Elders* by Jacob de Wit. Image courtesy of [Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam](https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en).

God's unexpected voice

by [Rev. Gregory Dyson](#)

It was almost 20 years ago. I met a friend and told him of our vision to see young people's lives changed. We prayed, studied, pondered, and we watched for God's opportunity. We listened for God's voice.

My friend said, "I'm not a prophet, but maybe God is opening an opportunity." He told me of a building near him for sale. It was old, in need of some repairs, and on the market for \$100,000. I was not impressed. I said, "I just feel like God wants us to have something else." His response was notable:

"If God is closing other doors, maybe this is the window for you."

Not profound, not inspiring, not even Scripture. Years ago, on the show *Touched by an Angel*, when it was time for the big reveal, the angel on the show, Della Reese, and her sidekick, Roma Downey, would start to glow, and they would give some super-enlightened God-message. It would be backed by a cello, and some other stringed instruments, and come at least two minutes before the commercial break, so it must be from God! But the message I was getting from my friend seemed far from that. Could this really be from God? I was expecting a bit more. Something. Anything!

Well, as time passed, we did what the Word of God says in 1 John 4:1, test the spirit and see if it really is from the Lord. And, to my surprise, it was. We bought that building. Not for \$100,000, but for \$1!

We moved in with the help of dozens of volunteers. The ministry efforts began in 2001, and the following years brought some 50,000 visits to the centre. God led scores of young people to start or renew their relationship with Him. The work was handed over to another ministry and continues to this very day.

In the Sunday's reading from Numbers, Moses' faithful and trusted assistant, Joshua, saw men prophesying in the camp and told Moses, "They better stop it! Shut them up Moses!" It was different than the way, place, or time that he expected to hear God. It didn't sound like God's voice.

Maybe Joshua assumed himself an expert on God's voice. I suppose he had attended *Here's How God Speaks University*, or maybe he saw himself as a lobbyist for God's truth. But the bottom line is, he got it wrong. He was shouting, "Shut them up!" But Moses said, "Let them prophesy!" And Moses hoped that everyone would prophesy. In fact, Moses' words sound similar to Jesus's words in Luke 19:40 – "I tell you, if these should hold their peace, the stones would cry out!"

A few thoughts on God's unexpected voice:

1. He is God. He does what He wants when He wants.
2. God did more than create. He interacts with His creation.
3. God is sovereign.
4. When in doubt, refer to point #1.

No doubt, God is speaking! The question might be: are you able to hear?

Softening your spiritual ears or removing the carnal wax build-up puts you into a place where God can use whatever and whomever He desires to speak to you: a donkey, a burning bush, a couple of guys in the camp who were not in the right place at the right time, and maybe even this blog post you are reading now.

Dear God, soften our hearts so we can hear from you. Open our eyes to those around us, to help us see. Strengthen our feet so we can run to you. And loosen our tongues so we can shout praise and rejoice.



Rev. Gregory Dyson is a husband, father, preacher, administrator, and motorcycle envy-ist. He currently serves as the Vice President of Intercultural Leadership and Church Relations at Taylor University in Upland, Indiana.