

Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.

Psalm 116:2

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time September 12, 2021

The Lord GOD is my help, therefore I am not disgraced.

— *Isaiah 50:7*

IT'S ALL ABOUT CONTROL

From toddlerhood to old age, we grow in mastery of our own lives, our bodies, and our destiny. This mastery is hard won, and we don't let go of autonomy easily. Much of this self-mastery involves the avoidance of pain or discomfort, so when we hear things like "take up your cross" and "lose your life," we tend to resist the message.

James says that faith without works is dead. Ouch! That is really a direct message! One way to look at this, as well as the part about losing our life to find it, is that faith is a process of more and more openness to God's direction of our lives. It is very hard for us to give up control, but perhaps what we are being asked to do is not to become passive and babyish, but to allow God to direct where our self-mastery will lead and what it will accomplish. We are asked to relinquish the need to control the results of our efforts; to risk, as Jesus did, the loss of everything we are working to achieve. We are asked to let God take the lead and to control the results, even though we may never see those results.

—*J. S. Paluch Co.*

FEAST OF FAITH

Offering and Intercessions

In this holy moment—with the consecrated bread and wine, the Body and Blood of Christ, upon the altar—we pray for a share in the fruits of Christ's sacrifice. We offer to God what God has given to us, and we intercede for the Church and the world. We pray for the pope and for all the bishops, and we mention the bishop of our local church by name. We pray for the clergy and for all the people of God. We pray in a special way for those who have died. And we pray for ourselves, that one day, with Mary and all the saints, we may come to that place where Jesus already reigns. These prayers of intercession, like the General Intercessions earlier in the Mass, broaden our focus and remind us that the Eucharist is offered not just for those gathered, but for the salvation of the entire world. The Eucharistic Prayer leads us from an intense focus on Christ, present in the consecrated host in the hands of the priest, to a loving sweep of prayer that embraces the world.

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

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: 1 Tm 2:1-8; Ps 28:2, 7-9; Lk 7:1-10
 Tuesday: Nm 21:4b-9; Ps 78:1bc-2, 34-38; Phil 2:6-11; Jn 3:13-17
 Wednesday: 1 Tm 3:14-16; Ps 111:1-6; Jn 19:25-27 or Lk 2:33-35
 Thursday: 1 Tm 4:12-16; Ps 111:7-10; Lk 7:36-50
 Friday: 1 Tm 6:2c-12; Ps 49:6-10, 17-20; Lk 8:1-3
 Saturday: 1 Tm 6:13-16; Ps 100:1b-5; Lk 8:4-15
 Sunday: Wis 2:12, 17-20; Ps 54:3-8; Jas 3:16 — 4:3; Mk 9:30-37

SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

Sunday: Grandparents Day
 Monday: St. John Chrysostom
 Tuesday: The Exaltation of the Holy Cross
 Wednesday: Our Lady of Sorrows
 Thursday: Ss. Cornelius and Cyprian
 Friday: St. Robert Bellarmine;
[St. Hildegard of Bingen](#)
 Saturday: 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!



9/05: 1st collection: \$2945. Diocesan Seminarian: \$225.

9/12: Operating Expenses. 9/19: Capital Expenditures.

Mark your Calendar for Future Events & Meetings:

Parish Council [PC]: Tues., 9/21/21, at 4pm on Zoom: to RSVP email Joe at bodegajoe@icloud.com

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

9/11 Sat. 5pm Mass for Gene & Pat Gallagher anniversary
 9/12 Sun. 8am Mass ✠ Denis & Josephine Poynter
 9/12 Sun. 9:30am Mass for the People

9/18 Sat. 5pm Mass for the People
 9/19 Sun. 8am Mass ✠ Tina Bartolo
 9/19 Sun. 9:30am Mass ✠ Elaine Joyce

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., Christian A., Samantha S., Gary E., and for repose of the soul of Claudia Munoz's mother.

Mission San Fernando Rey De Espana (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.
 (NOTE: on 9/12/21, the St. Philip Sunday 11:15am Mass resumes)

RURAL FOOD PROGRAM UPDATE for August 2021

On Tuesday, August 10, 46 families, 114 individuals received nutritional support during our modified distribution at the St Philips Parking lot and parish hall.

We will continue to look at a variety of ways to distribute food as the COVID pandemic restrictions change. 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:

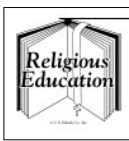
Saturday, September 11, 9-10:00 am repackaging;

Monday, Sept 13, 9 –11:00am set up; and

Tuesday, September 14, 7:30a – 11:00a to distribute food to clients.

Parish Religious Education Program

We are happy to announce the return of our Religious Education [CCD] K-12 program in early Fall 2021 at the 11:15am Sunday Mass. It is time now to enroll the children. You can get more information and also register by going online to www.stphilipsteresa.org or by contacting Religious Education Director Jolene Corcoran at jolene@lunardielectric.com.



If . . . you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Sit here, please," while you say to the poor one, "Stand there," have you not made distinctions among yourselves? Letter of James 2: 3-4.

Having had to place my wife into Assisted Living recently, I am reminded of a story written by Eudora Welty about a Campfire Girl's visit to elderly people in such a facility – one not to be compared to the one where Jane now resides. The story is titled "A Visit of Charity". It's about a fourteen year old Campfire Girl named Marian who, bearing a potted plant, pays a visit to an Old Ladies Home upon a wintry day. The nurse who opened the door was also dressed in white – like the snow. "I'm a Campfire Girl," said Marian. "I have to pay a visit to some old lady." (The visit was worth three points toward a merit badge.)

The nurse asked if she were acquainted with any specific residents. "With any old ladies? . . . No - but any of them will do." The nurse took her down a corridor to one of the rooms, "There are two in each room." "Two what?" asked Marian. Suddenly Marian was alone with two old women. One was feeble but up and about. With a claw like hand she plucked off Marian's hat. "Did you come to be our little girl for awhile?" she asked - and then snatched the potted plant. The other woman was lying flat in bed, cranky. "Stinkweeds," she said, referring to the plant. And so it went, with the one being cloyingly sweet and the other irritable. The tension in the room made Marian go rigid.

The irritable woman summoned Marian to her side. "Come here!" Marian trembled. The other woman explained: "She's mad because it's her birthday." "It's not my birthday," screamed the woman in bed. "No one knows when that is but myself and will you please be quiet or I'll go straight out of my mind!" Marian wondered about her for a moment "as though there was nothing else in the world to wonder about." It was the first time she had ever experienced anything like this. Then the old face in the pillow slowly collapsed. "Soft whispers came out . . . she sounded like -- a little lamb." Surprised and embarrassed, Marian turned to the other woman and said, "She's crying!"

And with that she jumped up, grabbed her cap and, eluding the other lady's grasp, ran from the room, . . . past the nurse and out into the cold air. "Wait for me!" she shouted to a passing bus and jumped on; then sat down and took a bite of an apple she had hidden for herself.

We have all been somehow educated to repress our powers of perception, to shy away from pain. But to avoid intimate sharing, engagement with one another is to abort our capacity to become profound, fully human beings in the manner of Christ. Shared broken hearts have a way of becoming wonderfully open hearts. Of course, that's what a Church is meant to be - a place where, beneath the image of the crucified Christ, we may honestly exchange our pain and in the process discover ourselves to be not strangers at all but a family with so much in common.

Hopefully Marian will one day return to that Old Ladies Home with something more than a merit badge in mind.

--Geoff Wood, 9/05/2021

Pastor Speaks....

* I am happy to announce that the 11:15am Sunday Mass is being resumed on Sunday, September 12, 2021. I exhort all those parishioners who used to attend this Mass in the past and who are newly interested to join us at this Mass; you are cordially welcome! We have a good tradition in our parish for the children who register for CCD and Confirmation Programs

this month; they are very much expected to attend this Mass after their catechetical instruction class along with their parents or sponsors.

*I deeply appreciate and am grateful to a generous donor who has already given a matching grant of \$35,000.00 towards our second summer appeal to benefit our parish. The end date of this appeal is October 4, 2021, the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi. Some of our parish leaders on the two Parish Councils made already their contributions to support this appeal. We have only a month to go and reach the set goal of \$70,000.00. The anonymous donor and several of us are confident that with your generosity we can easily realize this and more. Please hurry and donate through PayPal or mail your check to the parish office: St Philip / St. Teresa, PO Box 339, Occidental CA 95465.

*The Religious Education Department of Santa Rosa Diocese welcomes all adults in our parish to attend free of cost the Congress on Saturday, September 25th. Please see the *Brochure* with descriptions and the *Registration Form* at [Santa Rosa Diocese website](#). Due to limited seating, please register early to guarantee a seat. Kindly note that the Workshops fill up quickly.

--Father Bala.



The host would like you to unmute
by [Katie Zou](#)

In early August, I had my first in-person meeting with our Summer Bible Camp leaders. We had filmed a couple skits in our parish parking lot that day and decided to order dinner and have our final meeting face to face under the evening sun rather than on Zoom. It was surreal. One of the best moments? When we had our closing prayer, we ended with the Our Father, and I heard something I never thought I knew I missed hearing: everyone saying the Lord's Prayer together, and hearing us say it at the same time. On Zoom, you cannot pray together unmuted: you'll only hear a cacophony of noise. I had led prayer so many times on Zoom and just got used to the silence. That evening, it was as if we came to life again. I was not the only one who noticed that difference.

It's amazing what being in-person does to the human being: you want to talk and see each other's faces. It's strange how

meeting online suddenly made us self-conscious or made it normative to not show our faces. That same week, I had my Confirmation kids come in on a Saturday morning to do Confession, and to my embarrassment (and somewhat righteous frustration), I didn't recognize the kids who came in and expected me to know their names as I took attendance: I had never seen their faces until that morning — all the times when we had class on Zoom, they had their cameras off. I don't think these kids realize how much I — and perhaps their peers who would try to speak or turn their camera on — want to know there's somebody else in the room, to know what face owns that disembodied name.

I imagine that is how God feels about us, too. In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus heals a man who was deaf-mute. Jesus performed many healing miracles, but I think it is a huge oversight if we only see Jesus as being compassionate to the sick. It's nice that He heals — but Jesus wants to be more than just nice. He wants to give us glory. Being deaf-mute means more to Jesus than having a disability — it's a spiritual handicap as well: when you are deaf, you also cannot hear the Word of God; when you are mute, you cannot praise the Lord. This deaf-mute man had never in his life known the love of God proclaimed during the Sabbath, never known the salvation story or heard the praises of the psalms or the joy of the congregation on feast days. This man had never know what it means to burst out in song, speak with words that flow off the heart and tongue from knowing he has a merciful Lord keeping watch over him. For anyone who has ever recalled that one moment you realized Jesus is a real Person and wants to have a relationship with you, you know that kind of joy — you know you want to proclaim it from the rooftops. You want everyone else to get it. You want people to see and also be unmuted.

There are things other than physical disability that make us deaf, blind, and mute. The prophet Isaiah in the first reading says, "Be strong, do not fear!" Fear can block us from really seeing God. Fear is what Adam felt when he fell from grace, and what led him to hide and "turn off his camera" and "mute" himself, so to speak. Fear is a weakness — it makes us feeble. How many do you know who are reluctant to pray, go to Mass, dive deeper into their spirituality because they fear finding words of judgment, the way too hard, too unkind, too rigid? What kind of a God do they believe in, then?

Then there's something worse: those who are deaf and mute by choice. In a proverbial Zoom call with Jesus, these are the ones who don't want to be there and are probably listening and watching something else while the Lord waits on the other end. These are the ones who close their ears because Jesus calling their name makes them uncomfortable, or chose to remain silent so as not to appear "super-Catholic". And some others are deaf-mute because they are indifferent. Neither joyful news nor exhortation can compel them to listen or speak. Compare this to Mary who broke out in song, praise, and thanksgiving when she was filled with the Spirit at her cousin Elizabeth's house!

Love seeks to communicate itself: a love that remains hidden and silent is a love that will not last. The Host is asking you to unmute. "Adam! Where are you?" Jesus says, "Be opened!" Just as a father is delighted when his child seeks his face, so is our Lord when we seek Him face-to-face and proclaim His goodness so that others may join in, too.



Katie Zou is the Youth Minister at St. Agnes Tsao Catholic Church in Markham. She graduated with a Masters of Arts in Catechetics and Evangelization from the Franciscan University of Steubenville. Her greatest desire in ministry is to see young people choose sainthood. When she's not prepping, teaching, or leading formation, she likes to read, write, and enjoy time with her siblings.