To be grateful is to recognize the love of God in everything He has given us and He has given us everything.
— Thomas Merton

CLERGY
Rev. Jake Anderson, MDiv
Director/Parochial Administrator
jeanderson@archomaha.org
ext. 4101

Rev. Andrew Roza, STL
Associate Pastor, Vocations Director
aroza@archomaha.org
ext. 3011

Deacon Jim Keating, Ph.D.
Catechist & Spiritual Director
JamesKeating@creighton.edu

MASS TIMES
(When school is in session, Check website for Mass changes)
Sunday..................10:30 am
..................8:30 pm
Monday....................5:30 pm
Tuesday...................5:30 pm
Wednesday.............5:30 pm
Thursday.................8:30 pm
Friday....................5:30 pm
Saturday...............9:30 am
Confessions available 30 minutes prior to every Mass.

JANUARY 27, 2019 | THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN TO BE A CHRISTIAN?

PART II OF IV BY FATHER ANDERSON

PLEASE NOTE! This is Part II of a IV part series so if you have not read last week’s bulletin consider going on our website! It can be found at JPiiOmaha.org/bulletin

Dear reader,

I ask you to lend me your heart for the next few minutes. Really. I mean it, find a place where there is silence and where you can give contemplative attention to these words and you can “feel” your heart—your “hidden center.” I say this because there are few points in life that carry as much weight as this. I say this first as your priest and pastor but also as your friend and brother in Christ.

“We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us” (1 Jn. 4:16).

St. John, the closest earthly friend of Jesus, penned these words near the end of his life. Notice how he says “we have come to know...” in other words, this was a relational process, a life-long journey of coming to know, deeply, intimately and experientially, the Love of God. Pope Benedict XVI, almost with a sense of deep fascination, says: “(this)verse offers a kind of summary of the Christian life.” Christ came into the world to save us from our alienation from God (sin) and that we would come to know the overwhelming, superabundant, Love of God for us in the Holy Spirit.

I want to be very clear on this: The Love of God does not come about once we “meet a certain moral threshold” or “personal status.” The reality is that “the Love of God has been poured out” when I am at my worst: “While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8). From the mouth of Christ Himself: “I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners” (Lk. 5:32).

Let me put this in practical terms: when you feel profoundly stuck in your vices, (e.g. pornography, anger, gossip) and you feel your own self-hatred, when you are stuck in the sadness of wishing you had someone else’s life, when you feel like you have nothing to offer in life, when you feel like your life is a mistake... maybe when you just don’t care, Christ desires you to experience his love for you in these lowest of places. This is simply called grace—God’s gratuitous favor. He is not loving my sin but me in my sinfulness. We are not identified by our sin, rather, we are “the sum of the Father’s love for us.” (St. John Paul II).

It might be helpful to ask; what is at stake here? The great risk, in the words of the writer, Albert Camus, is “You have to meet love before you meet morality. Otherwise, it’s torture.” One of the great dangers for us is moralism—trying to do things for God in an effort to become pleasing to Him. This error is an over-emphasis on our actions over and above God’s action but often hidden and undetected. The “fruits” of moralism are often various forms of a sort of “burnout of the heart,” and a lack of interior dynamism: sadness, suppressed anger, self-hatred, judgment of others, etc.

Who is the authentic Christian? The man or woman who lives from the conviction that comes by faith, that God, by His Incarnation, has already reached me and seek me in “my lowest places.” Seen in this light, the Sacraments are not ladders by which we climb up to God but rather ladders that God has given to come down to us to give us His own Divine Life. Because of the Incarnation “It is precisely in the lowest and most frightening places of our souls that we have been accompanied by the Son of God” (Bishop Barron).

Do you see this “movement”? How the law of grace mirrors the law of gravity? Like water, grace always flows to the lowest places. Where gravity only goes so far, grace goes further in order to raise up and revivify; how else can we explain God, who needs nothing, becoming a zygote in the womb of Mary? “O man, do you not realize by what means Christ pursues you in order to call you back?” (St. Peter Chrysologus).

“We only love because He first loved us” (1 Jn. 4:19). When we start receiving the Love of God for us in this way, we are living as true Christians—those whose “hidden centers” has been pierced by the outpouring of grace and the Holy Spirit. It is the odd sort of paradox in which we have been disarmed by love and yet armed to love. We are living in God who is Love itself.

Stay tuned for next week’s 3rd point!

In Christ,
Fr. A

THIS WEEK AT JPII!

Mondsy, January 28—Ladies in Waiting
7:30 pm Karol’s Commons

Thursday, January 31—Community Night
8:00 pm Reconciliation
8:30 pm Mass
9:00 pm Karol’s Commons—Bags

CATHOLIC QUOTE!

"Grace is nothing else but a certain beginning of glory in us."

-- St. Thomas Aquinas

LEASING FOR 2019-2020

Hurry and apply to live in the best home in hOmaha! Leasing now for 2019-2020 year! Applications can be found at: JPiiOmaha.org/apply-now/

APPLY TO BE AN RA!

If you missed the RA informational meeting, please talk to Lauren Hankes, Resident Manager, for more information! We are taking applications through February 15.
GOSPEL MEDITATION

"He came to Nazareth, where he had grown up." Did you grow up in a small town? Whenever you see stories of tight-knit communities, a common refrain is that everybody knows everybody and that's very difficult to change. If you leave and return, people expect you to be and act a certain way, and it's strange for them if you do not. In today's Gospel, we see that Jesus was already moving "in the power of the Spirit and news of him spread throughout the whole region. He...was praised by all." His ministry has begun! News of his growing popularity must have proceeded him to Nazareth.

Upon his arrival, he "went according to his custom into the synagogue on the sabbath day." For the first few moments, he is what they expect - their hometown boy returning to pay his respects. As was common of men at the time, he takes a turn reading a passage of Sacred Scripture. It is a bold passage, one he selects intentionally. "He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." After reading about holy anointings, liberation for the poor and prisoners, and physical healings, Jesus does the unthinkable. "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing."

We are all called to imitate Christ wherever we are. This might mean doing the unexpected! All too often we're content with the daily status quo, and so are the people around us. When we take a stand for Christian values, change our lifestyle to reflect the Gospel, and work for justice in society, we may make others uncomfortable. But Jesus doesn't call us to the same life we lived yesterday or the year before that. He is calling all of us - each and every one of us - to deeper conversion of heart. No matter what other people expect, will you love in the Spirit of the Lord today?

DAILY READINGS

Sunday: Neh 8:2-4a, 5-6, 8-10/Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 15 [cf. Jn 6:63c]/1 Cor 12:12-30 or 12:12-14, 27/Lk 1:1-4; 4:14-21
Monday: Heb 9:15, 24-28/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4, 5-6 [1a]/Mk 3:22-30
Tuesday: Heb 10:1-10/Ps 40:2 and 4ab, 7-8a, 10, 11 [8a and 9a]/Mk 3:31-35
Wednesday: Heb 10:11-18/Ps 110:1, 2, 3, 4 [4b]/Mk 4:1-20
Thursday: Heb 10:19-25/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6 [cf. 6]/Mk 4:21-25
Friday: Heb 10:32-39/Ps 37:3-4, 5-6, 23-24, 39-40 [39a]/Mk 4:26-34
Next Sunday: Jer 1:4-5, 17-19/Ps 71:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 15-17 [cf. 15ab]/1 Cor 12:31-13:1 or 1 Cor 13:4-13/Lk 4:21-30

BULLETIN & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Any submissions for the bulletin or announcements are due Monday at Noon. All bulletin and announcement information submitted will be subject to review for content and editing due to space availability. Please submit requests to: info@JPiiOmaha.org.

GET INVOLVED!

Join the Choir! ...................... Michael.Stevens@JPiiOmaha.org
Community Events............... Katie.Winkler@JPiiOmaha.org
Sacristan/Altar Server .... Renee.Hendricks@JPiiOmaha.org
General Questions............... Katie.Winkler@JPiiOmaha.org
Live Here! ........................ Lauren.Hankes@JPiiOmaha.org
Knights of Columbus ............ KofC16680@outlook.com
Alpha ................................ Quinlan.Keller@JPiiOmaha.org

FOCUS BIBLE STUDY

Alex Pandolfo............... Alexander.Pandolfo@focus.org
Bethany Claussen............. Bethany.Claussen@focus.org
Brian Couri ..................... Brian.Cour@focus.org
Morgan Heimes................. Morgan.Heimes@focus.org
Miranda Ketteler.............. Miranda.Ketteler@focus.org

SACRAMENTS

Contact the parish office ......................... 402.557.5575
Reconciliation: Available 30 minutes before every Mass
RCIA: Quinlan Keller
Quinlan.Keller@JPiiOmaha.org
Marriage/Weddings: Katie Winkler
ext. 3036 or Katie.Winkler@JPiiOmaha.org
**At least 6 months before the wedding date
Priesthood/Consecrated Life: Father Andrew Roza
ext. 3011 or ajroza@archomaha.org

STAY CONNECTED

Text BeNotAfraid to 84576 to receive text message updates about events and opportunities at JP II Newman.

LITURGY SCHEDULE

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BE BOLD. BE FAITHFUL. BE NOT AFRAID.