

Dear Padre,

In the story of Noah, God destroyed most of the world. Did that really happen? How should we think about the world's end?

Most biblical scholars generally consider the Noah story to be a tale of God's new covenant with the people. Life here is temporary, but life with God is eternal. The story of the Flood was probably based on some historical event that was recounted in oral traditions for centuries before the story of Noah was written.

The National Geographic Society, in researching that region, discovered that the Mediterranean Sea broke through a natural dam more than 7,500 years ago, filling a freshwater lake with seawater and creating the Black Sea. This natural catastrophe could be the basis for the story of Noah and the Ark. Catastrophic world events such as war, floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, or tornadoes remind us repeatedly how fragile and temporary our lives are.

The biblical truth of the Noah story and of Jesus' account of the end of the world tell us that God is our beginning and our end. The world will end, but God will not end. God's love for us will also never end. There is a spiritual transformation that will happen both at the end of lives on earth and at the end of time. We can be certain that, in the end, sin and death will be no more and God's love will reign forever.

—Fr. Paul J. Cury, CSSR
Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org



A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

It is vital that the Church today go out to proclaim the Gospel to all, in all places, on all occasions, without delay, reluctance, or fear. We do so in obedience to the Lord's missionary mandate, certain of his presence among us until the end of the world.

—ADDRESS TO UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES, OCTOBER 5, 2017

Calendar

Monday
SEPTEMBER 7
Weekday

1 Cor 5:1–8
Lk 6:6–11

Tuesday
SEPTEMBER 8
Nativity of the Blessed
Virgin Mary

Mi 5:1–4a or
Rom 8:28–30
Mt 1:1–16, 18–23
or 1:18–23

Wednesday
SEPTEMBER 9
St. Peter Claver,
Priest

1 Cor 7:25–31
Lk 6:20–26

Thursday
SEPTEMBER 10
Weekday

1 Cor 8:1b–7, 11–13
Lk 6:27–38

Friday
SEPTEMBER 11
Weekday

1 Cor 9:16–19, 22b–27
Lk 6:39–42

Saturday
SEPTEMBER 12
Weekday

1 Cor 10:14–22
Lk 6:43–49

Sunday
SEPTEMBER 13
Twenty-fourth Sunday
in Ordinary Time

Sir 27:30–28:7
Rom 14:7–9
Mt 18:21–35

Our Parish COMMUNITY

September 6, 2020

Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

Ez 33:7–9

Rom 13:8–10

Mt 18:15–20



*If...you warn the wicked to
turn from their ways, but
they do not, then they shall
die in their sins, but you
shall save your life.*

EZEKIEL 33:9

It's None of My Business

This statement might sound like we are respecting the independence of others. It is none of our business how they live their lives, how they behave in society, how they worship God. We mind our own business; they mind theirs. After all, are we our brother's or sister's keepers?

Today's readings challenge this attitude. Ezekiel is told that he must proclaim God's will to the Israelites. If he reneges in his calling and someone dies in guilt, Ezekiel will be held responsible for that death. However, if the wicked refuse to hear this message, their death in guilt will be their own doing, for one must freely accept God's word. In the Gospel, Jesus outlines a way for his disciples to lead sinners back to the community. Both Ezekiel and the disciples have responsibilities to those who are not living faithfully. They both take steps to call them back. In this sense, they act as their brother's or sister's keeper. However,

they do not meddle in the other's business. The sinner must freely decide to return. God does not force repentance.

This might be a hard message. Who wants to step up and point out another's error in leaving the Church? However, if we are really concerned, we will do what we can to bring them back. We might not proclaim like the prophet or the disciples did. But the way we live our lives should show them the true value in being a faithful follower of Jesus.

—Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

FOR *Reflection*

- ★ *Is your life an example of the values of your faith?*
- ★ *Pray for those whom you love, who have left the practice of the faith.*



Rectory & Parish Office
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 Fr. Peter Tran, Pastor—355-6405
 Tuesday—Friday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
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Louise Miller, Bookkeeper	jingles@pld.com
Molly Shelden DRE	640-2742
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Gwen Waechter, Parish Council Chair	272-1030
Tressa Powers, Finance Council Chair	355-6206
Altar Society President, Nanette Rice	355-7676
Tom Bachman, Grand Knight	640-8259
Prayer Line Starters, Allison Bushek & Nanette Rice	355-1696 355-7676

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

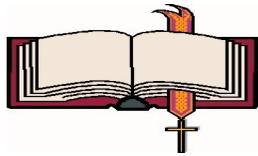
Monday, Sept. 7	8:00 a.m.	Favorable Weather
Tuesday, Sept. 8	8:00 a.m.	Pastor's Intention
Thursday, Sept. 10	8:00 a.m.	Special Intention
Friday, Sept. 11	8:00 a.m.	Marcos S. Cardenas
Saturday, Sept. 12	4:00 p.m.	For the People
Sunday, Sept. 13	9:00 a.m.	Pastor's Intention

Readers for Saturdays & Sundays

September 2020

September 5, 4:00 p.m.	Debbie Frederick
September 6, 9:00 a.m.	Mike Broeckelman
September 12, 4:00 p.m.	Tom Bachman
September 13, 9:00 a.m.	Steve Sullivan
September 19, 4:00 p.m.	Gwen Waechter
September 20, 9:00 a.m.	K of C Members
September 26, 4:00 p.m.	Karen Burden
September 27, 9:00 a.m.	Alvin Berkamp

Thank you so much for your ministry!



VOCATION VIEW

“Where two or three are gathered, there I am in the midst of them.” Make Christ the center of your conversations and interactions with others. (Matthew 18:20) If you think God is calling you to priesthood or to consecrated life, visit our website at www.dcdiocese.org/vocations

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT

Am I my brother's keeper? All three readings today suggest that for the Christian steward the answer is “Yes!”

SACRAMENTS

Reconciliation: Confessions will be heard every Saturday at 3:00 p.m. and every Sunday at 8:00 a.m. or by appointment. Please be humbled to reconcile with God, the Church, and the community.

Baptism: Parents who have children to be baptized must be registered. Godparents must be 16 years of age or older and have received Confirmation and Eucharist. Please call the parish office for an appointment.

Marriage: Please contact parish priest at least six months before the wedding.

Anointing of the Sick: Celebrated anytime by calling a priest.

A FEW WORDS FROM THE PASTOR: My Dear Parishioners: Greetings in the Lord on this twenty-third Sunday of the ordinary time. Much of what we hear from the mouth of Jesus in Scripture is **difficult for us to get on board with**. Love your enemies, turn the other cheek, go and sell all your possessions, lay down your life for a friend . . . you get the idea. These are the kinds of **challenges** that Jesus continually places before us, the radical kind of living that our Lord invites us to. And **embracing this sort of life** is often more than we are willing to give. Today He tells us, “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault...” In the second reading, St. Paul reminds us, “Owe nothing to anyone, except to love one another....” And so, it seems clear that if we are pointing out someone else's faults to him or her, **LOVE** better be the **ONLY** motivation. If we are doing it to **put someone down**, then we should keep our mouths shut. If we are trying to **get back at someone**, we should keep our mouths shut. If we are telling them these things because we **feel better than them, or morally superior**, we should keep our mouths shut. Or if we're doing it simply so our **own faults and failings don't seem so bad**, we should keep our mouths shut. In other words, if we feel the need to **say some tough things** to another person, or feel compelled to bring up a difficult subject with them, it has to be because we love them, we care about them, **we only want the best for them**. And the **WAY** we bring it up, the **TONE** we express, the **WORDS** we choose must be such so that the receiver of our counsel will be **receptive** to what we have to say, and will **know that it's coming from love** -- and not for any other reason. And just a couple of more things. One --- If you're the kind of person who really **hates unsolicited advice**, then it might be best (and most fair) to simply stay out of it. And two ---- it's almost always best to **articulate our own faults first** when we are trying to help someone else see a situation differently. (Words such as --- “I struggle with a similar thing and I don't want you to make the same mistake.”) In other words, “**Me too**,” is infinitely better than, “**You should**.” If we follow these simple rules --- embrace a **compassionate attitude** in all that we say, and act out of **love** and for no other reason, maybe we all can grow in holiness **TOGETHER**. And that would be a **beautiful thing**. Peace and good health to you all—Fr. Peter

COLLECTION for August 31, 2020: Envelopes: \$600.00; Loose: \$131.95; Online Giving: \$188.17; Total \$920.12; Average Weekly Expense: \$1,989.55. Income over/under (- 1,069.43) *Thank you so much to our faithful stewards for supporting our parish, diocese, and worldwide Church.*

2020 CCD ENROLLMENT: We're excited to inform you that CCD enrollment for this year will be on **SEPTEMBER 9 AT 5:30 P.M. TO 7:30 P.M.** Please make an effort to come to enroll your children for classes. Masks and face coverings are required. Thank you.

RCIA (RITE OF CHRISTIAN OF ADULTS) PROCESS IN THE PARISH

- Have you been worshipping with us, but never officially taken the step to become Catholic?
- Have you been away from the Church, and have now returned, but want to know more?
- Have you been a Catholic all your life, but never celebrated all the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist)?

- Have you joined us from a different background and would like to find out more about the Catholic Church? If you ("or someone you know") answers YES to any of these questions, you are invited to find out more through process called the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). It is a journey that begins with your questions. There is no obligation to join us as you discover more about your Catholic faith. The decision is ultimately yours to discern if this is to be your spiritual home. The invitation is always open. Please call us (620-355-6405) when you are ready! On behalf of the Catholic faith community of the St. Anthony, we look forward to welcoming you.

UNDERSTANDING THE GOSPEL OF THE WEEK (MATTHEW 18: 15-20)

Clear guidelines In the fourth book or section of Matthew's Gospel Jesus tackles the problem of sin within the Christian community. In this passage he outlines a procedure for dealing with individual Christians who are committing a serious sin. The procedure comes from Judaism. Step 1: Talk with the person privately. Step 2: Talk with the person in the presence of 1-2 other people who can both confirm the points you're making and hear the other person's response. Step 3: Bring the matter to the attention of the whole community. If the person still refuses to repent, exclude him/her from the community. Serious sin makes the whole community look bad and can lead others to sin. This three-step procedure protects the community and gives the serious sinner every possible chance to change.

Avoiding hypocrisy Those who talk with the sinner must do so prayerfully and with love. Jesus takes a harsh stance against hypocrisy (Mt 23). He also warns us to vigorously root out sin from our own lives (18:6-9).

Like a Gentile or tax collector Jews tried to keep apart from Gentiles (non-Jews) and tax collectors, who raised money for Rome, their foreign conqueror. Because Jesus reached out to people who felt unloved and excluded, he probably doesn't mean that he wants sinners to be ignored or treated meanly.

Authority In Jewish tradition it was said that when two devout Jews gathered to reflect on God's law, God was with them. Jesus adapts this familiar saying to assure his church that when they follow the proper procedures humbly and prayerfully, he will uphold their decision.

Excommunication is the penalty in canon law (the Catholic Church's legal system) for sins like renouncing one's faith or causing schism. Someone who's excommunicated isn't allowed to participate in aspects of Church life like the Eucharist. The penalty of excommunication can be lifted through the Sacrament of Penance and, in more public cases, through a formal statement. <https://oursundayreadings.files.wordpress.com/2020/08/guide-083020-22a.pdf>

SAINT OF THE WEEK—The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (September 8)

The Story of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary- The Church has celebrated Mary's birth since at least the sixth century. A September birth was chosen because the Eastern Church begins its Church year with September. The September 8 date helped determine the date for the feast of the Immaculate Conception on December 8. Scripture does not give an account of Mary's birth. However, the apocryphal *Protoevangelium of James* fills in the gap. This work has no historical value, but it does reflect the development of Christian piety. According to this account, Anna and Joachim are infertile but pray for a child. They receive the promise of a child who will advance God's plan of salvation for the world. Such a story, like many biblical counterparts, stresses the special presence of God in Mary's life from the beginning. Saint Augustine connects Mary's birth with Jesus' saving work. He tells the earth to rejoice and shine forth in the light of her birth. "She is the flower of the field from whom bloomed the precious lily of the valley. Through her birth the nature inherited from our first parents is changed." The opening prayer at Mass speaks of the birth of Mary's Son as the dawn of our salvation, and asks for an increase of peace.

We can see every human birth as a call for new hope in the world. The love of two human beings has joined with God in his creative work. The loving parents have shown hope in a world filled with travail. The new child has the potential to be a channel of God's love and peace to the world. This is all true in a magnificent way in Mary. If Jesus is the perfect expression of God's love, Mary is the foreshadowing of that love. If Jesus has brought the fullness of salvation, Mary is its dawning. Birthday celebrations bring happiness to the celebrant as well as to family and friends. Next to the birth of Jesus, Mary's birth offers the greatest possible happiness to the world. Each time we celebrate her birth, we can confidently hope for an increase of peace in our hearts and in the world at large. <https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-teresa-of-calcutta/>

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Lord Jesus, today let us hear your voice; open our hearts to your love. When we sin, help us to admit it. When we persist in sin, give us the strength and wisdom to ask for help. When someone points out our sin, humble us to receive correction. When we must point out someone else's sin, help us speak with gentleness and love. Today let us hear your voice; open our hearts to your love. We ask this in your holy name. Amen.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Why would a global pandemic happen? Is God doing this?

This question was raised, sheepishly, by a friend who considers herself a progressive-thinking Catholic. She doesn't imagine God as a big punishing dude on a throne, exacting vengeance for humanity's crimes—which are considerable, when you think about it. She's been thinking about it: counting ways that maybe we "deserve" a global reckoning. We destroy rainforests, fill oceans with floating continents of plastic, poison the soil, make the air unbreathable, contaminate freshwater with hazardous waste. We torture Creation to make a buck, while the gap between rich and poor widens. Honestly: why wouldn't God "do this"?

It's not a stupid question. It's an ancient biblical question: is human suffering a measure of divine wrath? Is God "pleased to crush us with infirmity," to restore balance to a celestial justice we've disregarded?

The biblical character of God does seem to exact justice by means of catastrophe: The expulsion of humanity from Eden. The great flood in Noah's time. The ten plagues visited on Egypt. Israel's trials in the desert due to relentless ingratitude. Babylonian exile. Sequential occupations by Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Egypt, Greece, Rome. The death of Jesus "for the sins of the world" can be viewed as ringing evidence that God expects satisfaction for offenses against divine justice. From this perspective, human suffering is the currency in which God is to be paid.

Some routinely see God's wrath expressed in famine, war, and disease, as when half of Europe's population died in the Black Death, or the 1918-1920 Spanish flu infected one in three people worldwide. AIDS has claimed 35 million lives and counting, causing some to point to divine judgment. Yet at least once a century, flu season results in a million deaths. The odds of getting cancer across a lifetime are roughly one in two for men, one in three for women.

The biblical story of Job objects to drawing clean lines between human guilt and periods of devastation. Job is just; why would God punish him? The book argues that the why of suffering is a mystery best left to God. The more meaning-laden question may be: when suffering comes, what will we make of it? Jesus refused to blame a blind man or his parents for this misfortune. The crucifixion testifies that God isn't "doing this": God is suffering this with us. The cross invites us to take all our pain and to consecrate it to God's benevolent purposes. God redeems human misery and, indeed, saves the world. That's a promise. ([Alice L. Camille](#) is a religious educator, scripture commentator, and author of many books including *This Transforming Word* and other titles found at [alice-camille.com](#).)

SUNDAY MEDITATION

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

STRIVE FOR RUGGED INTERDEPENDENCE

Individualism—rugged or otherwise—has its perks. But what's more rugged and infinitely more fruitful is the spirit of communal interdependence. Jesus tells us not merely that there's safety in numbers, but that Christianity itself is in the balance. A loner Christian simply can't be found. Even a hermit lives in communion with the greater church. Our gathering hymn at the start of each Mass tells us why we come together, whether in person or online: because Jesus is present in the love that passes between us. Practice your Christianity in all of your daily contacts. *"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."* (Prepare the Word)

VIGÉSIMO TERCER DOMINGO DEL TIEMPO ORDINARIO

LUCHA POR UNA ROBUSTA INTERDEPENDENCIA

El individualismo—ya sea robusto o no—tiene sus ventajas. Pero lo que es más resistente e infinitamente más fructífero es el espíritu de interdependencia comunitaria. Jesús nos dice no sólo que hay seguridad en los números, sino que el cristianismo mismo está en la balanza. Simplemente no es posible encontrar a un cristiano solitario. Incluso un ermitaño vive en comunión con la gran iglesia. El himno de nuestra reunión al comienzo de cada misa nos dice por qué nos reunimos, ya sea en persona o en línea: porque Jesús está presente en el amor que pasa entre nosotros. Practica tu cristianismo en todos tus contactos diarios.

Lecturas del día: Ezequiel 33:7-9; Romanos 13:8-10; Mateo 18:15-20 *"Porque donde están dos o tres reunidos en mi nombre, allí estoy yo en medio de ellos."*