

The Paper Pulpit

(Reflections from the Pastor)

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Scripture: Are you proud to be Catholic? I am and I hope you are. But some people may not be. Some may look to the sins of Church leaders or other members for reasons not to be proud. We all know a priest or sister that said something we didn't like a hundred years ago and we still labor over it. Maybe we know some Catholics who don't appear to be all Christian. Maybe... We should be proud we are in the Church that Jesus established. Last week, the Gospel told us our Lord founded the Church on St. Peter, the first Pope (*You are Peter and upon this Rock I will build my Church and the gates of Hell will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven. Whatever you declare bound on earth will be declared bound in heaven. Whatever you declare loosed on earth will be declared loosed in heaven.* Matthew 16:18-19). Not only did our Lord establish the Church on St. Peter (*You are Peter and upon this Rock I will build my Church*), but He also gave the Church the authority to make and change laws; the "binding" and "loosing" (*Whatever you declare bound on earth will be declared bound in heaven, Whatever you declare loosed on earth will be declared loosed in heaven*). This is essential for someone who asks the question: Is this or that a human law? If the Church declares it, then it comes from Christ. This is the promise He made to His Church (*the gates of hell won't prevail against it*). So even though things may seem bad at times, it may seem that the devil has his way, Jesus promised the gates of hell would not prevail. Jesus also gave Peter the "keys to the Kingdom of Heaven." The "key" is that the person with the "key" has complete authority from Christ. That is why we look to the pope for the final say regarding things of faith and morals.

Just after our Lord names St. Peter the first pope, Peter does something stupid and our Lord calls him a name: Satan. Could you image the headlines? "Jesus calls Pope Peter, Satan." Would you have still followed him? Would you have left the Church? Why do you think Jesus called Peter Satan? Did he just un-establish the Church He just established? Of course not! Jesus called Peter Satan because St. Matthew tells us he "*thinks as human beings do, not as God does.*" Peter and other Apostles got it wrong from time to time. We call it sin. But our Lord made a promise that He would be with His Church from all times; even if popes, priests, bishops or anyone sins (*thinking not as God does but as human beings do*). Our Lord guarantees the Catholic Church will be without error in the areas of faith and morals. Remember the Church is a hospital for sinners not a hotel for saints. As Catholics, it is absolutely essential we understand this. Millions of people leave the Catholic Church for misunderstandings but no one would ever leave if they understood the facts. This is good news and we should be proud to be Catholic.

Bible Studies: Our next Bible Study will begin on Tuesday, September 9th. We will be looking at and praying over the Gospel of St. Mark. St. Mark's Gospel will be read at Mass in 2015, so what a great way to prepare.

Adoration and Benediction: Beginning on September 9th, we will offer Adoration and Benediction every Tuesday evening from 5:00pm to 6:00pm. Mass will be offered at 6:00 PM followed by a light supper and the St. Mark Bible Study. I will be speaking about this at all Masses this weekend and offer more information in next week's bulletin.

IS YOUR MARRIAGE A SACRAMENT?

Are you (or someone you know):

- Not married in the Catholic Church.
- Married in a non-Catholic Church.
- Thinking about getting married, but not in the Catholic Church.

Did you know, a Catholic married outside the Church would not be allowed to be a godparent or receive Holy Communion?

Here is a wonderful opportunity for you. I take this opportunity to help you celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony. Please see Fr. Jim Trempe for more details.

ARE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW?

- Baptized in the Catholic Church and never made your First Holy Communion?
- Baptized in the Catholic Church, never were confirmed and wish to be confirmed?
- From another Christian denomination interested in joining the Catholic Church?
- Catholic but not confirmed and are getting married in the Catholic Church?
- Non-Catholic, married to a Catholic, attending Mass and interested in receiving Holy Communion?
- Not baptized and would like to be?

I take this opportunity to help you know more about the Catholic Church. Please contact Fr. Jim as soon as possible to learn more about joining the Catholic Church.

Sincerely in Christ, Fr. Jim Trempe