

Week of July 23, 2017

MONDAY

Ex 14:5-18 * Ex 15:1-6 * Mt 12:38-42

TUESDAY

2 Cor 4:7-15 * Ps 126:1-6 * Mt 20:20-28

WEDNESDAY 8:00am Mass

Ex 16:1-5,9-15 * Ps 78:18-19,23-28 * Mt 13:1-9

THURSDAY 8:00am Mass

Ex 19:1-2,9-11,16-20 * Dn 3:52-56 * Mt 13:10-17

FRIDAY

Ex 20:1-17 * Ps 19:8-11 * Mt 13:18-23

SATURDAY 4:30pm Mass

Ex 24:3-8 * Ps 50:1-2,5-6,14-15 * Jn 11:19-27

SUNDAY 9:30am Mass

1 Kgs 3:5,7-12 * Ps 119:57,72,76-77,127-130 * Rom 8:28-30 * Mt 13:44-52

*All events take place at St. Gabriel East Campus unless otherwise noted.



Parish Activities

VBS: Mighty Fortress: In Jesus, the Victory is Won!

It's not too late to register your child for Vacation Bible School. Registration forms can be found at the school entrance of church or on the homepage of our website auburnac.org. VBS runs July 31 - August 3. Register your child today!

Cantor Practice: Mon., Aug. 6 at 6:30pm. We will be scheduling for Aug. 13 through Oct. 1.

Cemetery: If you are a parishioner here at St. Gabriel, there is still time to take advantage of last year's cemetery plot prices. After September 1, prices for plots and niches in the columbarium will go up! Call the Parish Office for more information.

Some "Good Deeds" listed on children's contribution envelopes:

My "Good Deed" was...

Help mom serve cookies to our guests
and cleaned up my toys in the camper.

Playing with Grady
Helped Mom

Stewardship

Weekly Target: \$11,538.47 * Offering: \$9,547.00

Food Pantry: \$25.00

Mission Co-Op: \$1,816.00 * Priests Retirement: \$45.00

On behalf of the Servite Friars serving in Zululand, South Africa, I would like to thank you for your generosity in the donations made after I preached on July 8th and 9th. Please continue to support all the Church's missions with your prayer and financial contributions. You are a wonderful Parish family. Sincerely, Fr. Paul Gins, O.S.M. (he also wrote to me...)

Thank you for such terrific parishioner singing, responses, punctuality, attentiveness, and even standing during the Eucharistic Prayer. You have much to smile about. All the young families at the 9:30am Mass, as I told them, are the hope of the Church.

Statement of Generosity: The "extra" collections for the Retirement Fund for diocesan priests and the missionary co-operative for the Servites both revealed the generous disposition of the parish. The former received a total of \$3,569; the latter to date \$1,816. I am pleased and proud of your response. Fr. Tom

**If there is a stairway to heaven and a highway to hell,
is that any indication of the expected traffic???**

Education/Formation

FAMILY TALK TIME Celebrating Sunday for Catholic Families, Sara McGinnis Lee Weeds will always be weeds; they will never become flowers or fruit. Are we like weeds if we disobey God?

► **Reflecting on the Word:** Jesus' parables seem to captivate the people who must grow things in order to live. Allowing wheat and weeds to grow at the same time until harvest is like good people and sinners being together in the world. In eternity, Jesus will welcome the good and "bundle for burning" those who have not been faithful followers. It's terrifying to think of being bundled for eternal condemnation, but the greater question is "where have the weeds come from?" The weeds are unrepentant people who made sinful choices.

► **Living the Word:** We believe in a God who loves us unconditionally. We are God's children through Baptism. Though evil exists in the world and bad things happen, God forgives our sins & welcomes us into heaven. We need to aim our lives on God, and stay focused on loving God and each other. Find a morning or evening Mass in your neighborhood this week, and attend as a family. Receive Holy Communion joyfully, and give thanks to God for his unconditional love.

Auburn Area Catholic School

► Look at what AACs has to offer...

- † A faith-based education from Preschool-5th grade
- † Bi-monthly Masses
- † Small class sizes with an average of 15 students per classroom
- † iPads and laptops available for student use
- † Smart boards in the K-5 grade classrooms
- † Participating in the Dow STEM & Engineering for Kids
- † Progress monitoring to individualize instruction
- † Service projects and community outreach
- † PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions & Support)
- † Before/after school care
- † Extended Day Preschool for 4-year-olds
- † Athletics beginning in preschool

► **Registration:** For more information or to schedule a tour, call 662-6431. Registration packets can be found on the school bulletin board. You may also contact Mrs. Reder at jreder@auburnac.org or visit our website www.auburnacschool.org under Registration.

► **Like us on Facebook!** Look for Auburn Area Catholic School.



The Parish in the Community

► **Mid-Michigan affiliate of Voice of the Faithful** meeting July 27, 4pm at St. Brigid, Midland. Concluding discussion will be The Francis Effect video along with planning for 2017-18 program topics. VOTF welcomes Catholics to their meetings who are concerned about our Church and its future. Goals are to support priests of integrity and survivors of clergy sexual abuse, and to shape Spirit-guided structural change within the Church.

From Father Tom's Desk

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sr. Mary McGlone, [Celebration](#)

Were there weeds in the Garden of Eden? The day I heard that there is such a thing as dandelion wine I started to question the either/or classification of plants as good or wee. Who are we to judge?

That's the question we start with in today's Gospel. A landowner's servants notify him that his crops have been corrupted. Somebody has sown alien seed in the field reserved for wheat. The servants are quick to offer to cleanse the land of the intrusion, but the landowner has a different point of view. He's not ready to make a final determination about the worth of everything growing out there. There may be some surprises, and harvest time will tell the final tale.

There's no doubt that the landowner sees his servants as too precipitous in their eagerness to fix the field. One question here might be, "Just what is a weed?" Wikipedia defines a weed as "a plant considered undesirable in a particular situation." Of course the next question must be "What is undesirable to whom?" The servants saw the weeds as undesirable. The owner saw the servants' presumed horticultural infallibility as undesirable. What needs to be eliminated here?

When Jesus interpreted the parable of the weeds, he talked about the world with good and evil people and he specified that the task of weeding questionable people out of the community was not part of the disciples' job description. As the landowner, he mandated that there was to be no weeding. The sifting would happen at harvest. Until then everything would have its chance to grow.

Weeds or Not?

McGlone, [Celebration](#)

When Jesus told the story of a landowner whose pristine field had been sullied, he may have been talking a bit tongue in cheek, nudging his listeners to ask what makes the difference between produce and weeds. Adding to the humor he used to make his point, he followed the weed story with one of sowing a mustard seed in a field. He painted a wonderfully comic scene as he described a planter setting out into a field armed with a first-century shovel and one tiny mustard seed. Add to that the fact that his audience knew that mustard was a pernicious plant that tended to take over everything around it.

When Jesus says that the kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, he may well be saying that it's something growing prodigiously, much to the chagrin of many who see it. In that case, the mustard seed story refers to the tale of the weed-infested field and underlines the idea that it's not always so easy to know who or what should be uprooted.

With the parable of the mustard seed, Jesus talked about planting a fast-growing weed as a symbol of his ministry. That takes us right back to the first question: Who gets to judge what is weed and what is worthy? Frustrating as it may be, Jesus is not giving us the answers. One can imagine Jesus saying, "Let it grow together until the harvest, then I'll send some angels to evaluate the situation."

Jesus is not giving us the answers – perhaps we would find them too hard to accept. In regard to weeds in the Garden of Eden, my guess is that everything had its own appeal. Diversity? Yes. Weeds? Isn't that just another name for the main ingredient of dandelion wine?

Wisdom's Insight

[Celebration](#)

A benign expression of power is nutritive, the power that supports the life of another. That is the power of parenthood, of the teacher, of anyone who helps others grow into all that they can be. The downfall of this expression of power comes when the giver creates or allows

dependency to develop. The corruption of nutritive power creates a welfare state, whether in government, church or family.

God's power as described in today's reading from Wisdom is different. The first statement simply tells us that God's wisdom and power are such that coercion can play no role in the relationship between heaven and earth. This passage extols the divine willingness to forgive and then goes further. By saying "In those who know you, you rebuke temerity," the author indicates that God exercises power by calling everyone to be fully who they are, to speak and act in honesty with no fear of God or human beings.

The end of this reading reminds us that we are to imitate the God in whom we believe. If God, the most powerful, is beyond coercion and domination, how much more should we eschew them! Not only that, but we should judge any attempt at domination, whether by brute force or manipulation, as counter to the will of God. We will be rebuked for our temerity if we fail to speak out against such attitudes and actions.

Paul on Prayer

[Celebration](#)

In his book *Thoughts on Solitude*, Thomas Merton shared a prayer in which he admitted that no matter how hard we try, we may not be following God's will. He prayed further, "But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing." It was a powerfully honest and humble recognition of human limitations by a man many think of as one of our 20th century saints.

Merton said that he hoped he had the desire to please God in everything. The very use of the word hope gives us a hint that he was thinking of the working of the Spirit in him. We hope for what is beyond us; what we can accomplish on our own we call a plan. Paul's statement that "The Spirit comes to the aid of our weakness," tells Merton that his hope was well placed.

In the two verses we hear today, Paul describes the mystery of the Spirit's action within us. This is the Spirit's personal effect not just on us, but the Spirit dwelling in us and moving us from within. If Paul were not speaking of the context of prayer, what he is saying could almost sound like possession, being taken over by the spirit. But, Paul prefaced this idea saying that when we do not know how to pray, the Spirit moves in us. The Spirit's work begins with our desire, our attempt to pray. When we open ourselves thus to God, Paul says that the Spirit will pray in and for us, enticing us into greater union with God and God's will.

**“Lord, help me leave
the judging to you.”**

AMEN CORNER:

Nine members of the combined planning group and building committee met this past Tuesday evening. They received a report from the invitations that were sent out to two architects and three design-build contractors asking if they were interested in the proposed project at St. Gabriel's, i.e. building a church and remodeling the current church into a social hall/gymnasium. One contractor did not respond. The others expressed interest, although the contractors' indicated because it was a church they would prefer an architect be hired independently.

Dates were set to invite the architects for interviews. The objective remains to garner a cost estimate for the projects. We would hope such a ballpark figure would be available for both Bishop Cistone and the Parish Council for its September meeting.

Fr. Tom