

## Week of November 19, 2007

### MONDAY

1 Mc 1:10-15,41-43,54-57,62-63 \* Ps 119:53,61,134,150,155,158 \* Lk 18:35-43

### TUESDAY 8:00am Word & Communion

2 Mc 6:18-31 \* Ps 3:2-8 \* Lk 19:1-10

### WEDNESDAY 8:00am Mass

2 Mc 7:1,20-31 \* Ps 17:1,5-6,8,15 \* Lk 19:11-28

### THURSDAY THANKSGIVING DAY 9:00am Mass

Sir 50:20-24 \* Ps 138:1-5 \* 1 Cor 1:3-9 \* Lk 17:11-19

### FRIDAY

1 Mc 4:36-37,52-59 \* 1 Chr 29:10-12 \* Lk 19:45-48

### SATURDAY 4:30pm Mass

1 Mc 6:1-13 \* Ps 9:2-4,6,16,19 \* Lk 20:27-40

### SUNDAY 9:30am Mass

Children's Liturgy of the Word & Nursery

Ez 34:11-12,15-17 \* Ps 23:1-3,5-6 \* 1 Cor 15:20-26,28 \* Mt 25:31-46



## Parish Activities

- Mon., Nov. 20 6:15pm Religious Education  
Tues., Nov. 21 6-9pm VIRTUS-Parish Center  
6:30pm Choir Practice  
6:30pm Quilters-Faith Baptist Church  
Thurs., Nov. 23 Thanksgiving Day-Parish Office closed  
Fri., Nov. 24 Parish Office closed

**Liturgical Ministers:** We will be creating the next ministry schedule very soon, so please get your "can't serve" dates (December 1 through February 28) into the office by Mon., Nov. 20. If you can serve for any Holy Day Masses (Dec. 8, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, etc.), please let us know that as well. Call 662-6861 or email [parishoffice@auburnac.org](mailto:parishoffice@auburnac.org). Thank you for your service in liturgical ministry! We appreciate you so much!

## Preparing the Way

**Thank You** to everyone who helped prepare our Advent bulk mailing! We greatly appreciate the time you took to stamp, stuff and seal all those envelopes!

A reminder that all are welcome to attend the **Small Group Scripture Sessions for Advent** beginning on Sun., Nov. 26, 6:30-8pm, and the Advent Morning of Reflection on Sat., Dec. 2, 9:30-11:30am. Sign-up sheets are at the entrances and the Café Kiosk. Email Connie at [adulted@auburnac.org](mailto:adulted@auburnac.org) or call the parish office at 662-6861 for info.

**Giving Trees** will be up for one more weekend (Nov. 25/26) so don't forget to take a tag! Gifts can be returned starting Dec. 2/3 and **MUST be in NO LATER than Dec. 10 at 10:30am (after 9:30 Mass).**

**Handbell Choir** practice for the 6pm Christmas Eve Mass will be on Tuesdays at 5:45-6:15pm, beginning Tues., Nov. 28. We must have a commitment of at least 10 young people 4<sup>th</sup> grade and up who are interested in participating. In order to prepare music for the hand chimes, please commit no later than Sun., Nov. 26 by calling the parish office at 662-6861 or Sue at 205-4322.

**Children's Choir** practice for the 6pm Christmas Eve Mass will be on Sundays after the 9:30am Mass, beginning Sun., Nov. 26. Children ages 5 and older are welcome! Contact Sue at 205-4322 with any questions.



**"Lord, help me lead  
a productive life."**

**VIRTUS:** If you have been considering volunteering in the school or with children of the parish, you will need to attend a VIRTUS session (training for keeping children safe). Conveniently, we will be hosting a VIRTUS session here at St. Gabriel in the Parish Center on November 21 at 6:00pm. Please register by calling Christine Sellnow at 662-6861.

## Stewardship

Weekly Target: \$11,538.47 \* Offering: \$11,678.60  
Food Pantry: \$40.00 \* Christmas Flowers: \$743.00  
Campaign for Human Development: \$60.00

### Children's Good Deeds: My Good Deed was...

- ...put my dirty dishes in dishwasher & started it.
- Cleaned up toys.
- ...I helped do the dishes.
- ...I helped babysit my cousins.
- ...helped my dad.



**Children's Offerings:** Beginning the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent (Dec. 2/3) during Mass, our children will be able to bring their contribution forward during the offertory time while the ushers are taking up the collection. There will be a basket in front of the altar for them to put their offering in. Envelopes are available at school, during religious education or at the entrances of church that can be used for their offering of time, talent & treasure. The envelopes have a place for them to write how they used their time and talent for God that week, their good deed. It is important for the children to understand that as a disciple of Christ, we use our God given talents and our time to give back to God from the monetary reward we receive for using them. Teaching and modeling stewardship for our children is momentous.

## Education/Formation

### Family Talk Time

Sunday for Catholic Families, Sara McGinnis Lee

Are you ever afraid of using your gifts? Name one of your gifts and how you can use it today.

► **Reflecting on the Word:** Our gifts are given to us to be used. However, it can be scary that the offer of our gifts will be rejected. What we see in this story is that God will make our gifts more bountiful when we use them. Our gifts will not grow unless they are used. Sometimes it takes a while to discover our strengths and talents, but when we do, they will bring abundance to us and others as well.

► **Living the Word:** Discuss how using our gifts can be scary. One of the scariest things about using our gifts is that we may actually succeed at what we have set out to do. As you imagine your gifts growing, write or draw things that could stand in the way of using your gifts to their fullest. Invite the children to share how they feel about the obstacles. Take a moment to work through those emotions together and then encourage the children to dispose of the obstacles by giving them over to God.

## Auburn Area Catholic School

► **Thank You** to all who have donated to AAC's Spreading the Spirit fund. This fund is available to assist larger families or families who experience financial hardship. If you would like your child to receive a K-5<sup>th</sup> Catholic Education, but feel that tuition would be difficult, please contact Mrs. Reder at 662-6431 or [jreder@auburnac.org](mailto:jreder@auburnac.org) for more information. This year we have been able to help 10 families.

► **Thanksgiving Break:** The school and school office will be closing on Wed., Nov. 22 at 11:30am for Thanksgiving break. Classes will resume Mon., Nov. 27.

## From Father Tom's Desk

33<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time Celebration

All three readings this week ask us what we are doing with the time of our life. The worthy woman is a model of God's faithful ones who go about doing good in every circumstance. Paul addresses a community anxious for predictions and tells them not to worry about the end but rather about the way they were living day to day. If they live as children of the light, they have nothing to worry about. With that preparation, we come to Jesus' parable of the talents. Here we have the question of what we do with the time and circumstances of our lives, but also very directly the question of why we do what we do and what it has to do with God. Today's readings remind us that everything we have is a gift from God given so that we may know God's joy. Each of us must then decide what to make of the time of our lives.

### Using Our Gifts

Patricia Sanchez, Celebration

As the liturgical year winds down, the sacred texts draw our attention to the ultimate winding down of our lives and our world, and we are reminded that there will be a final reckoning. Each of us has been given unique gifts and abilities that we must put to the best possible use. Discovering our particular talents can be a delightful adventure; helping others to discover theirs is equally rewarding. But the real challenge lies in translating that delightful discovery into serious, practical service of God and others. This can be a rather risky enterprise. Well-worn talents placed in the service of others are open to criticism, scrutiny and ridicule. Nevertheless, even if our efforts will never be acknowledged as eloquently as those of the worthy wife in the Proverbs reading, our belonging to Jesus calls forth our generosity and perseverance.

In all we are and all we do, we keep in mind that there is no room here for procrastination. God's gifts cannot be left on the shelf until we retire or find a more convenient moment. On the contrary, these gifts have a very short shelf life, and the precious fragility of life should spark a sense of immediacy that makes us willing to share our gifts and ourselves *now*. Moreover, we are to praise and foster the talents we see in others.

An anonymous story included in William J. Bausch's *World of Stories* may help to prompt our efforts. An old man approached the 19<sup>th</sup>-century poet and artist Daniel Gabriel Rossetti and asked him to look at his portfolio to see if his work showed potential talent. After looking through several sketches, Rossetti very gently told the elderly man that the pictures had little value and showed little talent.

Disappointed but not surprised, the old man apologized for taking up Rossetti's time but asked if the artist might look at a few more drawings done by a young art student. As he looked at each creation, Rossetti became enthusiastic in this praise. "These are very good; this young student has great talent and should be encouraged. Who is the artist? Is it your son?" "No," said the old man sadly. "This is my work from 40 years ago. If only I had heard your praise then! For you see, I got discouraged and gave up too soon!"

With this story in mind, and with the sacred texts to challenge us, let us use our talents wisely and well in the time at hand – and let us offer one another the encouragement to do likewise.

### Recognizing Your Gifts

Deacon Dick Folger, Celebration

Today's Gospel tells us to realize that our God-given talents are not ours to keep. We are called to discover and find our personal gifts. If we have a lousy voice, it's a good thing when we turn down invitations to sing the national anthem before the big game. However, if we have the voice but lack the courage to step up to the microphone, then we are thwarting God's plan for us, hiding these gifts under the bushel basket.

Singer-songwriter Jesse Manibusan was given the gift of music. His toe always tapped right on the beat. His fingers sprawled effortlessly over the frets of his guitar. His big voice ranged to dizzy heights and thunderous lows as he sang with an overflowing, full heart. When Jesse was younger, his kids loved to hear their daddy sing "The Cow Says Moo." Today the world loves to hear and sing one of Jesse's most popular songs: "Open My Eyes, Lord."

God had always been patiently calling Jesse to full-time music ministry. One day, he quit his job as a printing salesman and bravely stepped into an uncertain future. Like today's Gospel promises, the subsequent years brought Jesse national recognition including World Youth Day performances plus many songs and albums. God is still not done heaping more upon anyone to whom much was given.

### View of the Master

Jennifer Green, Celebration

The servant's failure to fully understand who his master is and what is most important to him leads the servant to think that burying his treasure is the correct course of action. His misconception of what the master demanded caused the servant to act out of fear, a fear so deep he was afraid to even try and do the work expected.

We, like all the people in today's reading, are called to work with the talents our master has given us. This requires us to look at our image of God. Do we have a "fear of God," meaning awe that inspires a desire to double God's treasures? Or is it a fear and misunderstanding of a punishing God that causes us to doubt our own abilities? What image of God can we carry forward that will help us discover and use the gifts we are given so we, too, can hear our master's voice saying: "Well done, good and faithful servant"

**Reality Check:** Much discussion has taken place on a diocesan level on the challenges facing the diocese with respect to the staffing of parishes. We have a shrinking number of priests and not many in the seminary. While the priests are talking about it, I'm concerned how much the lay people are aware of the impending crisis. Fr. Joe Griffin, from Assumption in Larkin, offered the following in his parish bulletin:

Every diocese is divided into smaller units called vicariates. This is like a county that is then divided into townships. Our diocese covers 11 counties and is currently divided into five vicariates and we are part of Vicariate 4, comprised of five of the most northern and western counties. There are 12 parishes in Vicariate 4 and the current "pastoring" leadership offers a snapshot of the challenge of providing ordained leaders and the Sacramental ministry that is key to our Catholic tradition of Christian faithfulness and life.

Two of the 12 parishes in our vicariate are now served by a Lay "pastor" (both are retiring this summer). So their leadership of the faith community needs to be supported by an ordained person who will lead the parish's Sacramental prayer especially weekly Eucharist. Therefore, senior (retired from active pastoring) priests are assigned as "Sacramental Minister" to each of those parishes. Across the diocese there are about a dozen parishes served in this same fashion.

Two other of the 12 parishes of our vicariate share a single ordained pastor. Then, three of the remaining parishes are currently being pastored by priests who are now over age 70 (including St. Gabriel's). And one other of these 12 is being served by an African priest and pastor on loan to us from his home diocese.

If you do the math, that means, of the 12 parishes in our vicariate, we only have four local priest pastors who are below "retirement" age.

As the Scriptures say: "*The harvest is rich, but the laborers are few. Ask the harvest master to send laborers to the harvest.*" Fr. Tom

**Amen Corner:** The Planning Group and Building Committee are meeting on Nov. 21 and Dec. 5. The schematic drawing will be on display the first weekend of December. There will be an 8x11 take-home sheet with a copy of the drawing. Fr. Tom