



## THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

JANUARY 24, 2021

### PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

**MONTHLY COLLECTIONS FOR NEEDY**—Our February collection for St. Vincent de Paul will be canned goods. Containers will be in the gathering space for your donations. Thanks so much.

**DAY OF PRAYER & PENANCE FOR LIFE**—January 29 has been designated by Bishop Foy as a Day of Prayer & Penance for Life, in conjunction with the annual March for Life. We are encouraged to offer prayers and penances for the promotion of life and overcoming the culture of death.

**9 DAYS FOR LIFE**—As part of our witness for life, we are called to pray for the conversion of our nation and individuals to the God-given culture of life. You can pray a 9 day novena for life beginning January 21. The website is [9daysforlife.com](http://9daysforlife.com). There are wonderful prayers, reflections, acts of reparation, and methods to witness for pro life. This is a wonderful tool for Catholics. There are a few printed copies in the back of church if you prefer those.

**TAX STATEMENTS**—The 2020 donation statements for taxes will be in the gathering space next week. Please pick yours up after Mass. The statements not picked up will be mailed.

*The Kingdom of God*

*is at hand.*

*Repent,*

*and believe in the Gospel.*



### FROM THE PASTOR – THE BIBLE: WAYS OF READING

As I highlighted last week, Pope Francis has declared this Sunday as the Sunday of the Word of God. I talked last week about how the Bible is the Word of God revealed to us through divine inspiration. This means that it has a far greater impact above any other document by a saint or the Church. But how do we read the Bible?

Some think it is as simple as just picking up the Bible and starting from Genesis. However, we must understand that the Bible is not an easy read, even for Christians. It is not simply reading the numerous words found throughout the different books. The traditional way of reading the Bible in union with the Church involves understanding the various senses in which it can be read. There are four traditional sense of understanding the Scriptures as outlined in the Church Fathers.

- 1) The *literal* or *literary* sense is understanding what is meant by the words and the manner or style in which those words are composed. The various books of the Bible are of different genres or styles of composition which require different interpretations. The letters of St. Paul are different from Genesis which are different from the Gospels.
- 2) The *allegorical* sense helps us interpret the Old Testament through the lens of the New. This is seeing the events and stories of the Old Testament as a preparation for what is fully and finally revealed in the New Testament, specifically in Jesus. Some examples of this are the journey through the Red Sea as a type of baptism and the Exodus journey through the wilderness as an experience of repentance and conversion of heart.
- 3) The *moral* or *tropological* sense sees the Bible as revealing the pattern of Christian living. This may be the most used sense after the literal/literary sense. We want to know how to live as a Christian, but what does that take? We read the Bible in this way to understand how to believe, how to act, and how to cooperate with God's will for us each day.
- 4) The *anagogical* sense is so described from the Greek word for "climb" or "assent". This is reading the Bible to understand what will happen in the future, in particular the eternal realities. The Bible pulls back some of the veil between now and eternity and helps us prepare for what awaits: death, judgment, and the eternal destinations of heaven and hell.

The ultimate goal of the Bible, St. Augustine tells us, is to help us love God and love our neighbor. In fact, Augustine continues by saying "a man who is resting upon faith, hope and love, and who keeps a firm hold upon these, does not need the Scriptures except for the purpose of instructing others." In the end, the Bible is to help us to follow Jesus Christ in this life and prepare to be with Him forever in the next. Let us pick up our bibles and read with fervor and joy, and put its saving truth into practice every day.

*Fr. Jacob Straub*