



Preaching Reflections for Beacons of Light

As Beacons of Light progresses forward, the focus of communication moves from the Pastoral Center to the Family of Parishes. Since each Family will be on different timelines and working with their local community, it is important that the parishes themselves drive the ongoing communication related to Beacons of Light purpose and execution. One of the best ways to reinforce such important far-reaching changes in parish practice and direction is from the ambo. Therefore, the Center for Parish Vitality has prepared these preaching reflections beginning with Ordinary Time in 2023. These reflections relate the Sunday scriptures to Beacons of Light Principles and Vision Points to help parish preachers reinforce key themes of Beacons of Light with their parishioners. We do not anticipate that parishes will utilize these themes every weekend but will utilize this resource as appropriate for their community. Feel free to reach out to Deacon Mike Lippman at mlippman@catholicaoc.org if you have feedback, questions, or suggestions!

1/15/2023

[2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A](#)

Is 49:3,5-6, 1 Cor 1:1-3, Jn 1:39-34

Isaiah promises that God will make us a light to the nations *that his salvation may reach the ends of the earth*. This is a call to all of us, not just Israel. God wants us to bring his salvation to all the earth. We do this by being missionary disciples ([Evangelization Vision Point: Missionary Disciples](#)) and not being focused on our parish alone.

Paul opens his letter to the Corinthians reminding them and us that we are all called to be holy. We become holy through our reverence for the Eucharist ([Eucharist Vision Point: Christ's Presence](#)) and making our church a sacred and welcoming place ([Church Vision Point: Local and Universal](#)).

John the Baptist in our gospel proclaims Jesus as the Lamb of God who will baptize with the Holy Spirit. It is this same Holy Spirit that compels us to go out into the whole world, baptizing and making disciples. ([Evangelization Vision Point: Missionary Disciples](#))

1/22/2023

[3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A](#)

Is 8:23—9:3, 1 Cor 1:10-13, 17, Mt 4:12-23 or 4:12-17

Discipleship is not something we just take upon ourselves to do, but rather we are called to it. Some of us are very aware of the call and recognize it in the events of our lives, therefore we hear the call clearly. For others, the call may be more difficult. Some of us may think that only men can hear the call because Jesus only called men in his day. But, Jesus calls each and everyone one of us to a life of servant-hood. Disciples are called to leave behind certain ways of living to follow Him.

We are called away from narrow-mindedness and mean spirited competition. We are called to a life of Servanthood and to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom of heaven.

Disciples of Jesus are called to bring light into a dark situation. We may not have all the answers, but one thing we have for sure is the Crucified Jesus, who died for our sins on the cross and the assurance of God Our Father, Our Light and Salvation.

[\(Evangelization Vision Point: Missionary Discipleship\)](#)

1/29/2023 **4th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A**

Zep 2:3; 1 Cor 1:26-31, Mt 5:1-12a

Zephaniah encourages all of us to seek the Lord and to seek justice and humility. As individuals and as a parish we do this through our Love In Action by acknowledging the human dignity of all people and fostering their belonging with us. ([Love In Action Vision Points:Human Dignity, Belonging](#))

Paul reminds the Corinthians that God has chosen the foolish to shame the wise. God has accomplished great deeds through all people of his church, not just leaders like Paul. We are all called to be missionary disciples, to evangelize. God will give us the strength! ([Leadership Vision Point: Co-Responsibility](#) and [Evangelization Vision Point: Missionary Disciples](#))

In the beatitudes, Jesus is sharing that we are blessed when we comfort those who mourn and feed the hungry. These are the actions of Christians who embrace being a disciple of Christ and are committed to a Stewardship way of life! ([Stewardship Vision Point: Way of Life](#))

2/5/2023

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

Is 58:7-10, 1 Cor 2:1-5, Mt 5:13-16

I recently had a conversation with a person of faith about wealthy donors who were large contributors to the church. His belief was that all contributions to the church, large or small, should be used for members only. While his belief may be perfectly sincere; I wondered if it was well thought out?

Isaiah reminds us that as disciples of Christ, we are obligated to share our bread with the hungry, shelter the homeless poor, and clothe the naked. In the world where we live today for some of us it is important to impress others with how much money we have, the size of our houses, etc., but Jesus tells us the biggest impression we can make on each other is love.

As children many of us were taught corporal works of mercy. These may be small tasks i.e., looking after a sick neighbor, helping a child do his or her homework. As followers of Christ, his disciples, we are not called to do extraordinary things. Remember the original followers had no money. Followers of Jesus are called to do over and above, larger than life, but in an ordinary way. ([Love in Action Vision Points: Human Dignity, Charity & Justice](#))

2/12/2023

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

Sir 15:15-20, 1 Cor 2:6-10, Mt 5:17-3

Sirach recounts essential spiritual truths - that all people are called by their life choices to choose between fire and water, life and death, good and evil. We who choose life by following Christ and his church are called to witness to this faith by calling others to the same choice. ([Evangelization Vision Point: Missionary Disciples](#))

Paul quotes Isaiah 64 to make us all aware of the deep love God has for us: *Eye has not seen, ear has not heard... what God has prepared for those who love him.* Our hospitality to all should reflect this deep and abiding love. ([Stewardship Vision Point: Hospitality & Welcome](#)) Our worship should reflect our gratitude and appreciation of Christ's presence. ([Eucharist Vision Points: Christ's Presence and Ars Celebrandi](#))

Just as Jesus is forming his disciples with this gospel reading, pastors and their families of parishes are responsible for forming their parishioners. ([Eucharist Vision Points: Formation and Trained Ministers](#); [Leadership Vision Points: Co-responsibility and](#)

[Formation; Stewardship Vision Point: Way of Life; Evangelization Vision Point: Prioritize Adult Formation; Love in Action Vision Point: Formation\)](#)

2/19/2023

7th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

Lv 19:1-2, 17-18, 1 Cor 3:16-23, Mt 5:38-48

“God is love, and he who abides in love, abides in God, and God in him.” These words are the first line of the song entitled “God is Love”, written by Reverend Clarence Rufus Joseph Rivers. Father Rivers, to keep it short, was my mentor and the first African American Catholic priest in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. He would always greet others as “your Grace”, because of the belief that God abides in us.

Today’s reading in Leviticus reminded me and tells all of us about a life of the Holiness of God that abides in us, therefore we too must live in covenant with God. To be holy as God is Holy, we must not have Hatred in our hearts, God is Love.

Paul tells us that we the people are the “holy house” of God, God is Love, God is Grace, God Abides in us.

In Matthew we are reminded if someone hits us on one cheek turn and let them hit the other. Our love must look like the love of God. God is Love, God is Grace, God Abides in us.

“Be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect!”

[\(Love In Action Vision Point: Presence & Solidarity\)](#)