



Life at the Edge

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

We find ourselves living at the edge sometimes, when life could go either way, up or down. We may experience this as we begin marriage or first become parents. At other times, it may be frightening or sad, but also exciting, such as when graduation nears, or when we are faced with an “empty nest.” Then, we stand at the edge of a new beginning, eager for the onset of what we’ve dreamt of for so long, but also uncertain whether we will be able to navigate it. We also find ourselves living at the edge when someone we love dies.

The other day, someone came by, wanting to talk. She spoke of the chaos of her life, its pain, and of not knowing how to cope. As she was about to leave, she commented how, in spite of it all, it seemed

strange that God was also very much present. Strange indeed, yet chaotic times are when God’s presence is often perceived in our lives, perhaps out of our need, perhaps because we are not distracted by life’s glitter, or perhaps because, at last, we have nowhere else to turn. It was St. James who asked then and asks us now, “Did not God choose those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith?” (James 2:5). There are indeed many different ways of being poor, of being in need. For people of faith, it is often at the edge when we sense most clearly that God is with us. *

Reflect

Do you feel God’s presence differently in hard times than you do in easy times?

Show no partiality as you adhere to the faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ.

JAMES 2:1



ST. MICHAEL’S PARISH

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Weekend Masses: Vigil: 5:00pm, Sunday: 10:15am

Baptisms: by appointment 3 weeks in advance

Weddings: by appointment 6 months in advance

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Mass Schedule & Intentions

We welcome our parishioners and visitors who have come to St. Michael's to worship this weekend. May you be blessed by your presence here today.

MINISTRIES...

SEPTEMBER 7/8th - THE TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

5:00PM Lector: Kathy Anderson EM: Karen Marsh
10:15AM Lector: Pat Robinson EM: Christine DaCosta
Collection: Carlos DeFrias

SEPT.EMBER 14/15th - THE TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

5:00PM Lector: Albert Canonneir EM: Peter Marsh
10:15AM Lector: Pat Robinson EM: Christine DaCosta
Collection: Karen Marsh

MASS INTENTIONS...

SEPTEMBER 7/8th - THE TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

5:00PM For a Safe, Happy, and Blessed School Year
10:15AM Jacqui Barton +

SEPT.EMBER 14/15th - THE TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

5:00PM Mary & Benjamin Botelho++
Adelina & Jose de Frias ++
10:15AM The Intentions of St. Michael's Parishioners

You are welcome to attend Morning Masses at

St. Theresa's - 7:30AM Mon.-Fri.

St. Anthony's - 8:00AM Tues.-Fri. | St. Patrick's - 8:00AM Mon.-Fri.

ST. THERESA'S 7:30am Masses are live streamed via the Diocesan Website and their Facebook Page



Aug 31/Sept 1st : \$835.00

THANK YOU EVERYONE WHO CONTRIBUTED

ELECTRONIC CONTRIBUTIONS CAN BE MADE ONLINE

to St. Michael's Church's

BNTB Account # 2000 6060 081824 100.

YOUR Weekly, monthly or quarterly transaction is appreciated.

When making your online transaction, be sure to include your name and "collection" as your memo on your banking transaction.

Thank you to those parishioners who continue to answer our call for stewardship to St. Michael's.

Bishop's Corner...



Dear Fellow-Catholics,

Pope Francis had a private audience with Beniamino Zuncheddu, the Italian shepherd from Sardinia who spent thirty three years in prison for allegedly murdering three people, but he was acquitted in January 2024. The meeting took place in the Library of the Apostolic Palace. Beniamino Zuncheddu, who was arrested in 1991 at the age of twenty six, is now in his sixties. He says that he has forgiven the person who identified him as the murderer of the three people but later retracted the accusation. Italy's Court of Appeals exonerated Mr. Zuncheddu after thirty three years in prison.

Mr. Zuncheddu co-authored a book, with his lawyer, titled *Io sono innocente* (I Am Innocent), which he presented to the Pope at the audience. In his book, Mr. Zuncheddu recounts the tragic experience he endured for so long. He served time in three different prisons, sometimes sharing a small cell with eleven people, facing great difficulties with washing and sleeping.

Calling it an inhumane experience, he said he was able to help others who were worse off than himself. Mr. Zuncheddu said he drew strength by trusting in God and thinking of his family.

Reading this story, I was asking myself, and what if Italy would have continued to administer the death penalty...?

Have a restful weekend and a good week!

Wes Zuncheddu
Bishop Wes



A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

Let us ask ourselves: how is my capacity to listen going?Think about family life: how many times do we talk without listening first, repeating the same things, always the same things!.... The healing of the heart begins with listening.... We hear the words of Jesus addressed to us: "Ephphatha, be opened!" Open your ears.

ANGELUS, ROME, SEPTEMBER 5, 2021





COLLECT

O God, by whom we are redeemed and receive adoption, look graciously upon your beloved sons and daughters, that those who believe in Christ may receive true freedom and an everlasting inheritance. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING – Isaiah 35:4-7a

Thus says the Lord:

Say to those whose hearts are frightened:
Be strong, fear not!
Here is your God,
he comes with vindication;
with divine recompense
he comes to save you.
Then will the eyes of the blind be opened,
the ears of the deaf be cleared;
then will the lame leap like a stag,
then the tongue of the mute will sing.
Streams will burst forth in the desert,
and rivers in the steppe.
The burning sands will become pools,
and the thirsty ground, springs of water.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM – Psalm 146:6-10

R. Praise the Lord, my soul!

The God of Jacob keeps faith forever,
secures justice for the oppressed,
gives food to the hungry.
The Lord sets captives free. **R.**

The Lord gives sight to the blind;
the Lord raises up those who were bowed down.
The Lord loves the just;
the Lord protects strangers. **R.**

The fatherless and the widow the Lord sustains,
but the way of the wicked he thwarts.
The Lord shall reign forever;
your God, O Zion, through all generations. **Alleluia. R.**

SECOND READING – James 2:1-5

My brothers and sisters, show no partiality as you adhere to the faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ. For if a man with gold rings and fine clothes comes into your assembly, and a poor person in shabby clothes also comes in, and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say, “Sit here, please,” while you say to the poor one, “Stand there,” or “Sit at my feet,” have you not made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil designs?

Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Did not God choose those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom that he promised to those who love him?

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia.

Jesus proclaimed the Gospel of the kingdom
and cured every disease among the people. *Cf. Mt 4:23*

Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL – Mark 7:31-37

Again Jesus left the district of Tyre and went by way of Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, into the district of the Decapolis. And people brought to him a deaf man who had a speech impediment and begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him off by himself away from the crowd. He put his finger into the man’s ears and, spitting, touched his tongue; then he looked up to heaven and groaned, and said to him, “Ephphatha!”—that is, “Be opened!”— And immediately the man’s ears were opened, his speech impediment was removed, and he spoke plainly. He ordered them not to tell anyone. But the more he ordered them not to, the more they proclaimed it. They were exceedingly astonished and they said, “He has done all things well. He makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.”

Dear Padre,

What is the “gospel of prosperity”? Does it mean that being rich is a sign of God’s favor?

That’s a good question, as this month we listen to the challenging words of St. James. If there is a “gospel of prosperity,” Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John didn’t write it, and it isn’t about Jesus. If anything, the Gospels would be called “Gospels of poverty.” Jesus himself was born in poverty. Had he wished to extol riches and prosperity, he would have been born into the lap of luxury. But God chose the poverty of a stable.

Although the subject of riches and poverty appears in all the Gospels, Luke writes about it the most. It is thought that Luke was concerned about this topic because he came from wealth and dealt with people of means. Luke sees money and goods as dangerous to salvation. Although “nothing will be impossible for God” (Luke 1:37), Luke uses the image of a camel passing through the eye of a needle to explain that this impossible task is easier than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven (Luke 18:25). Scary words. Yet, poverty itself is not hailed as good, nor are riches condemned in themselves. It’s what wealth does to people that is the core issue. When we focus on riches and possessions, we risk turning from God and growing deaf to the cries of the poor. Possessions and wealth are to be shared, not hoarded. *



Our Parish News . . .

SUNDAY MASS CONTINUES AT 10.15am

- **EMMAUS BIBLE STUDY** looks at the 3 Scriptural readings for the upcoming weekend with questions for discussion after each reading with those present. It is a very good way to prepare for the Scriptures with other parishioners. This is a free Bible Study and all of the information will be provided. It will be taking place at St. Michael's each Tuesday from 3:00 - 4:30 pm. All are welcome. For further information please phone Fr. Joe at 705-0236.
- **ST. CHARLES "GOING DEEPER" BIBLE STUDY** - which goes into greater detail virtually line by line for the upcoming Scriptural readings at Mass. This is a NEW free Bible Study and all of the information will be provided. It will be taking place at St. Michael's each Thursday from 3:00 - 4:30 pm. All are welcome. For further information please phone Fr. Joe at 705-0236.

Around the Diocese . . .

- **ST. THERESA'S 12:10 MASS** will be celebrated on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.
 - **The 9:00am Portuguese Mass at St. Theresa's on Saturdays** resumes September 14, followed by adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.
- **ST. PATRICK'S:** The Rosary - each Wednesday morning at 10am. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and the Rosary - each Thursday evening at 7pm. Everyone is welcome.
 - There will be **NO** Wednesday evening Portuguese Mass at St. Patrick's during the Summer. This Mass will resume October 2nd
 - Fr. Vivien celebrates Mass in Tagalog at St. Patrick's the second Friday of the month at 7:00pm. All are welcome!
- **ST JOSEPH'S FILIPINO MASS** is celebrated by Fr. Dandy on the third (3rd) Saturday of each month at 11:00am.
- **STELLA MARIS FILIPINO MASS** - Join Fr. Dandy, and our Filipino community on the last Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm .
- **ST. THERESA'S GIFT SHOP: Reopens** Tuesday, 3rd September with regular opening hours each Tuesday and Saturday from 10am - 2pm.
- **LECTIO DIVINA:** Resumes in September.

EVENTS in our Catholic community...

- 29th of September, Sunday: St. Michael's Parish Liturgical Feast
- 1st of October, Tuesday: St. Theresa's Feast, Patroness of the Parish and of the Diocese
- 13th of October, Sunday: 7:00pm - Our Lady of Fatima Feast at St. Patrick's
- 2nd of November, Saturday: 11:00am - All Souls' Mass at St. Theresa's
- 12th of December, Thursday: 6:30pm - Stella Maris Parish Liturgical Feast
- 17th of December, Tuesday: 6:00pm - 8:00pm - Advent Reconciliation Service at St. Theresa's
- 18th of December, Wednesday: 4:00pm - 6:00pm - Advent Reconciliation Service at St. Patrick's



Pastor's Points



Dear Parishioners,

In the Gospel reading, people marvel when Jesus heals a man who can neither hear nor speak, opening his ears and loosing his tongue. Their astonishment is appropriate, since Jesus is fulfilling what the prophet Isaiah foretold: "Then will... the ears of the deaf be cleared...then the tongue of the mute will sing" (Isaiah 35:5,6). The key to understanding the amazement in the Gospel is in Isaiah's word then. When will these things happen? When God comes with vindication and divine recompense to save his people Israel. When they see those signs - the blind see, the deaf hear, the mute speak - they will know, "Here is your God!"

Mark's Gospel shows Jesus performing these signs and declares, "Here is your God!" Mark places Jesus in the role of YHWH, the Savior of Israel. But there's more. The healing occurs in the region known as the Decapolis - ten Roman cities originally settled by Greeks. It's unclear whether the man that Jesus healed is a Jew or a Greek, but Jesus' healing ministry in the Decapolis region hints at his mission to save not only Israel but the world. Can you name a time when Jesus helped and/or healed you? Do you give Him (Jesus) the credit? Have you shared such healing(s) with others?

God bless

Fr. Joe

Fr. Joe

Word of Life:

September 8th

"We pray to you, O Lord, that we always recognize each member of this human family as being made in your image and beloved by you, with worth and dignity."

USCCB, "Prayer to Heal Racial Division"

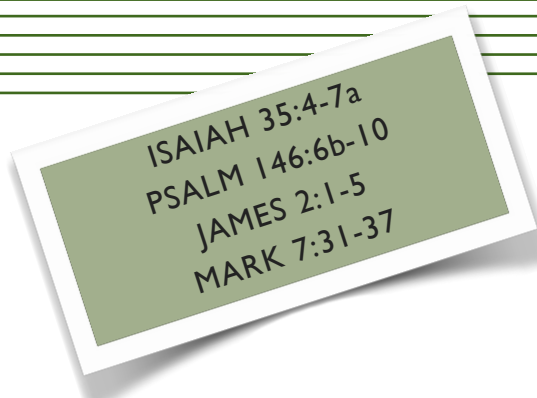
**Whoever follows me
will not walk in darkness,
but will have the light of life**
- John 8.12

THE
Eliza DoLittle NEEDS OUR
HELP!

The Eliza DoLittle Society (TEDs) are open Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 10-2; and on Saturday 10-12:30 to drop off your donation and are located at 64 Middle Road, Warwick. The white building, adjacent to the PHC gas station, ask for Clare Mello.

PLEASE CHECK BULLETIN BOARD FOR ITEMS THEY REQUIRE
ANYTHING you can provide is gratefully appreciated.

Our Sunday Readings



Favored Ones

JAMES 2:1-5

Reading closely

1. In what ways does the life of Christ align with poverty instead of wealth?
2. What are circumstances in which both rich and poor people come together?
3. What are examples from today's times of people favoring the rich over the poor?
4. How do those who favor the rich over the poor act as *judges*?
5. What all could motivate someone to treat a wealthy person better than others?
6. How might people have reacted to this part of James' letter?

Living the word

7. Are you drawn to those who are rich *in faith* or those who are financially rich?
8. Who and/or what shapes your beliefs about particular people and groups?
9. What prejudices and biases do you hold against certain people and groups?
10. What steps can you take to counter false beliefs about certain people and groups?

THE SECOND READING

Partiality for the poor

James wants the Christian community to treat people according to the values of the gospel and not according to the values of their culture. The followers of Christ, therefore, shouldn't privilege the rich over the poor.

Favoring the rich over the poor is the very opposite of what the gospel requires.

- God's preference for the poor is a major theme of the Old Testament – and has become an essential part of the Catholic tradition
- Those who are materially poor are better positioned to trust in God because they have little or no money to depend on instead (v.5)
- Jesus' incarnation, ministry, and death revealed God's readiness to identify with those in need

Currying favor

By *rings* and *fine clothes* James might be referring to members of the Roman aristocracy. If Christians were favoring such powerful people, it meant they were trying to enrich themselves and protect their own interests. Such concern for worldly matters is contrary to the gospel.

MARK 7:31-37

Reading closely

1. Where does Jesus go?
2. Why do you think Jesus visits a region with a large Gentile population?
3. What might be the relationship between the deaf man and those who bring him to Jesus?
4. What might life be like for the deaf man?
5. Why do you think Jesus leads the man away from the crowd?
6. What might the man be thinking and feeling?
7. What all could the healing represent?
8. How do people respond to the healing?
9. How do you think life changes for the man?
10. What might people now expect of Jesus?

Living the word

11. What challenges do people with physical disabilities face?
12. How comfortable are you around people with disabilities? Why?
13. What can you do to be more sensitive to people with special needs?
14. What makes it hard for you to hear Jesus?
15. How can you listen more honestly to Jesus?

THE GOSPEL READING

It's coming true

The first reading from Isaiah for this Sunday is part of a prophecy that God will free his people and restore them to the land he promised them. Isaiah spoke these words when the Israelites were being conquered by the Assyrian Empire.

Isaiah said, "then will the eyes of the blind be opened, the ears of the deaf be cleared..." When Jesus heals the deaf man, people wonder if Isaiah's prophecy is coming true. On two different occasions later in this Gospel Jesus will heal a blind man (8:22f, 10:46f), showing yet again that he fulfills Isaiah's prophecy.

Loudly and clearly

The deaf man is changed physically. The crowd is changed spiritually. Just as the man is now able to hear and speak clearly, so the crowds that have listened to Jesus now proclaim his deeds.

Jesus tells the people not to speak about what happened. Perhaps Jesus simply wants a break from all the attention, but it's more likely that he doesn't want to be misunderstood.

Although Jesus fulfills the prophecy that God's kingdom is coming, he does so in a way that will shock and horrify people: he will be crucified. The crowds think they hear and see Jesus loudly and clearly, but there's much more that they have to learn about who he is and what he offers.

Healing techniques

Jesus begins the healing in a manner that is typical of that era.

- People believed that saliva had healing properties
- Putting one's fingers into a deaf person's ears symbolized the deafness that the healer was trying to cure, just as touching the tongue was a sign of freeing the person to speak clearly
- Looking up to heaven was a gesture of appeal for divine aid

However, Jesus also acts differently from a typical healer. He speaks one word of command: *be opened*. Other healers were likely to rattle off a stream of words as a sort of magical incantation.

Why Jesus groaned, however, is unclear. It might have been part of the ancient healing formula or an expression of anger at the man's disability.

PRAYER

God of compassion,
 your Son expelled evil and suffering and brought
 about your reign.
 He calls us to abandon our self-interest
 and to expand our hearts
 so that we might be filled with love for everyone,
 especially those we most want to overlook.
 Although we worship Jesus as Lord,
 sometimes we close our ears to his word.
 Work miracles in us,
 so that we will listen closely to your Son
 and act boldly for the well-being of all.
 We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.