

Reading II

James 5: 1-6

A reading from the letter of James

Your wealth is rotting.

You rich, weep and wail over your impending miseries. Your wealth has rotted, your fine wardrobe has grown moth-eaten, your gold and silver have corroded, and their corrosion shall be a testimony against you; it will devour your flesh like a fire. See what you have stored up for yourselves against the last days. Here, crying aloud, are the wages you withheld from the farmhands who harvested your fields. The shouts of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. You lived in wanton luxury on the earth; you fattened yourselves for the day of slaughter. You condemned, even killed, the just man; he does not resist you.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Gospel

Mark 9: 38-43, 45, 47-48

A reading of the holy gospel according to St. Mark

Anyone who is not against us is for us.
If your hand should cause you to sin, cut it off.

John said to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw a man using your name to expel demons and we tried to stop him because he is not of our company." Jesus said in reply, "*Do not try to stop him. No man who performs a miracle using my name can at once speak ill of me. Anyone who is not against us is with us. Any man who gives you a drink of water because you belong to Christ will not, I assure you, go without his reward. But it would be better if anyone who leads astray one of these simple believers were to be plunged in the sea with a great millstone fastened around his neck.*"

"If your hand is your difficulty, cut it off! Better for you to enter life maimed than to keep both hands and enter Gehenna, with its unquenchable fire. If your foot is your undoing, cut it off! Better for you enter life crippled than to be thrown into Gehenna with both feet. If your eye is your downfall, tear it out! Better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to be thrown with both eyes into Gehenna, where 'the worm dies not and the fire is never extinguished.'"

This is the gospel of the Lord.

Thoughts from the Pulpit:

[Mark 9: 38-43, 45, 47-48]

Tolerance, Avoidance of Scandal and Occasions of Sin

Today's Gospel makes the following very important and practical points:

1. The apostles tried to stop a person who was healing people in the name of Jesus. Why? Because that person had not belonged to the apostles' company, and they were jealous! They thought that only they had a monopoly on Jesus. And Jesus said: 'Do not stop him.' Try to see and rejoice all the gifts and talents that God gifts his people around the world! We should welcome every little goodness that flowers this earth!
2. Jesus said that any little kindness will be rewarded (the 'cup of cold water' given to the little ones). Every small act of kindness that comes from a warm heart can have very powerful consequences. Let's do them! Only kind deeds count for heaven!
3. Jesus issues a grim warning against the sin of scandal, causing others to sin. Think of the crimes committed against children today, whether through neglect or abuse. The words of Jesus in today's Gospel are a warning that we should take very seriously.
4. Jesus also urges people to make the costliest sacrifices in order to avoid sin. Occasions of sin need to be ruthlessly cut off. He uses the metaphor of 'cutting off a hand or foot, or plucking out an eye.' The point Jesus is making is that serious sin must be avoided at any cost. The root of sin rests not in a hand, or a foot, or an eye; it rests deeper in human soul. We have to make even the most serious cuts in order to eliminate evil from our lives. The Kingdom of God is worth any sacrifice!

5 And finally Jesus talks about hell and compared it to Gehenna - a metaphor. Gehenna was a ravine south of Jerusalem used as a dump for offal, refuse, and smelly waste. As a site of ill-omen, it came to symbolize the place of future punishment.

As always, the words of Jesus in today's Gospel give us much food for thought. We would do well to heed them! Amen!

The Communion

Welcome to participation in the Holy Eucharist. By receiving Holy Communion, the Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, we fully participate in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

We are encouraged to receive Communion devoutly. In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, participants should be baptized, should not be conscious of grave sin, and normally should fast for one to two hours. A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to receive Communion without prior Sacramental Confession.

We always welcome our fellow Christians to this celebration of the Holy Eucharist and Holy Communion. We pray that our common Baptism and the action of the Holy Spirit in this Eucharist will draw us closer to one another and begin to dispel the sad divisions separating us.

Announcements for September 27, 2009

Children will begin Bible Study class this morning at 10:30 am. Jeanie Klix will lead the class from 10:30 to 11:00 and Father Senior will meet with the children after mass every other week or so.

After Holy Mass, please join us for coffee hour. If you haven't yet claimed your old mug from the baker's rack near the kitchen window, choose one from the bottom shelves today.

The cemetery committee will meet next Sunday following the first YMS of R Breakfast of the fall.

Only 3 days remain for the PNU Special Offer of 10 Paid Life Insurance. See Joe today if you are interested in this opportunity.

Weight Watchers is coming to Holy Cross starting on Thursday, October 8. Weigh-in begins at 5:30, with the meeting at 6:00. Spread the word of this opportunity to your neighbors, family, and friends.

We will hold our first community event of the fall on October 18, when we will offer a free spaghetti dinner to anyone bringing in an item for the Food Bank. We hope in this way to show the community that we live our faith and will reach out to the community in ways that will benefit us all. Money-raising community events will begin in November.

If you have names of individuals in need of our prayers and support as they heal, please let Pat know by Thursday of each calendar week. Thank you.

Weekly Calendar

Tuesday, September 29	6:00	Choir practice
Sunday, October 4	27 th	Sunday of Ordinary Time with Benediction to the Blessed Sacrament
Intention: +		
11:00 am		Holy Mass
12:15 pm		YMS of R Breakfast

Monthly Financial Summary

Week of	Weekly Income	Weekly Income Needed	Balance
September 6	\$463	\$642	-\$179
September 13	\$920	\$642	\$278
September 20	\$689	\$642	\$47
TOTAL	\$2072	\$1926	\$146