

SAINT ANNE OF THE SUNSET

Religious Education Weekly Newsletter
For the Week of November 19, 2023

FROM CARMEN PERLAS
COORDINATOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

HAPPY THANKSGIVING TO ALL! On behalf of the parish community of Saint Anne's Catholic Church, our pastor, Fr. Dan Nascimento and from the Catechists of Saint Anne's Religious Education program, I wish you all a very Happy and Blessed Thanksgiving. May you and all your loved ones continue to receive the blessings and abundance of graces from God who will never be outdone in His generosity. Today, we can all reflect on the history of that first ever Thanksgiving celebration. Imagine for a moment that you were there in November of 1621 among the Pilgrim settlers from England and with the Native Americans upon the invitation of then Governor William Bradford, one of the 102 settlers who crossed the seas in order to find religious freedom. In my mind, it is an image of a celebration but perhaps with some form of tension as two differing cultures were meshed into one place and shared a meal together for the first time. The thanksgiving meal was a feast to celebrate a bountiful harvest and it lasted several days with feasting and as some historians would account, and military exercises.

We can learn many great lessons from these men and women. First, while their cultures were diverse, they all set that aside to give thanks and 'feel each other out' in an unfamiliar environment -foreigners and natives together on common ground. Second, they found something very familiar with each cultural experience, food. Yes, as trivial as it might sound, food became the common element by which unity was achieved in spite of the difference in their education, race, culture and even religious beliefs. The Pilgrims recognized and professed Christ as God. The Native Americans worshiped an "All Knowing Creator" called "Master Spirit."

At the earliest part of our history, the spirit of unity and inclusiveness were established as seen from this thanksgiving celebration. Today,

but in a more profound and meaningful way, especially for us Catholic Christians, the same spirit permeates in our faith. We are an evangelizing and missionary church inviting everyone to partake in the Eucharist. And yes, while all are invited, only the many would accept Jesus Christ and His bride, the Church. Here we give thanks to God for our blessings (our bountiful harvest of spiritual graces) but the food that we share does not come from the harvest of the earth, but from heaven above. This food is Christ Himself, in the Holy Eucharist! What a beautiful gift He has given us. Each Mass, each Holy Communion is a Thanksgiving celebration which takes place every day, every hour and in every part of the world. Thus, while Thanksgiving Day is officially celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November, our thanksgiving day is a daily celebration where we partake of the Body of Christ and drink of His Precious Blood.



The Holy Mass - A Sacrifice - "A Thanksgiving of Celebration" - The Last Supper

*"The day before he suffered he took bread, and looking up to heaven, to you, his almighty Father, he gave you **thanks and praise**. He broke the bread, gave it to his disciples and said: Take this and eat it, all of you; this is my body. When supper was ended, he took the cup. Again he gave you **thanks and praise**, gave the cup to his disciples and said: Take this and drink from it, all of you; this is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant - the mystery of faith. 65 This blood is to be shed for you and for all men so that sins may be forgiven. Whenever you do this, you will do it in memory of me." (From the Roman Canon)*



UPCOMING EVENTS

THANKSGIVING MASS AND FOOD BLESSING - November 23, 2023 - 8:45 a.m. - It would be a beautiful start for your Thanksgiving day celebration with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Please bring your children to the Mass at 8:45 a.m. There will also be food blessing, so, please bring food items to be blessed.

NO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES ON NOVEMBER 26 (SUNDAY)



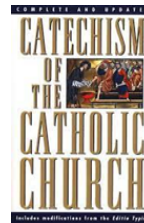
CLASSES RESUME ON DECEMBER 3, 2023 - FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

REFLECTIONS ON TODAY'S GOSPEL Matthew 25:14-30

Today's Gospel reading is another parable told by our Lord Jesus to his disciples. In this parable, Jesus gave a story of a master who gave his three servants talents (a measure of money). To one, he gave five talents - to the other, two talents and to the last servant, one talent. After being gone for a while, the master returns home, calling his servants to account for the talents that he gave them. To the servant that received

five talents, he added another five more. To the servant that received two talents, two more were added. The Master was pleased with these results and thus he said to them, "Well done, my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities." However, calling upon the last servant, the master found out that he buried his talent into the ground and thus did not yield any profit for him. Disappointed and sad, the Master said to him. "You wicked. Lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I did not plant and gather where I did not gather? Should you not then have put my money in the bank so that I could have got it back with interest on my return?" Reflecting on today's Gospel, let us not forget that God has given us natural abilities and gifts that are meant not for our glory but for Him, the source of all our blessings. These gifts are to be used wisely to spread His Kingdom on earth. As we gather our thoughts at the end of our day, we must then ask ourselves how we had used these gifts (today) to bring about God's reign here on earth and in heaven. Some day, when we face our Divine Judge, we, like these three servants, would have to account on how well we have used these gifts in living the Gospel message of love and mercy and sharing it with our brothers and sisters along the journey of life.

Lessons from the Catechism of the Catholic Church



As a part of our continuing Faith Formation, this section of the Weekly Newsletter will be dedicated for the doctrinal teachings of the Church based from the Catechism of the Church (or other approved resources). Please find the time to read, study or reflect upon them and share with your children.

Paragraph 1360 The Eucharist is a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Father, a blessing by which the Church expresses her gratitude to God for all his benefits, for all that he has accomplished through creation, redemption, and sanctification. Eucharist means first of all "thanksgiving."