

From the Pastor

August 1, 2021

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time – Tenth Sunday After Pentecost

Dear Parishioners of our Beloved St. Paul:

Praised be Jesus Christ and His Most Holy Mother! The *Apostles' Creed* has twelve articles of faith. From the most ancient times it has been the tradition of the Catholic Church that each one of the Twelve Apostles contributed one of the twelve articles of faith. During the Church's Liturgical Year of Grace we celebrate the Feasts of each of the Apostles. Generally speaking, in every month we keep the Feast of one of the twelve Apostles. Their Feats are usually kept toward the latter part of each month.

Thus, in June (June 29th) we kept our own patronal Feast, the Solemnity of the Holy Apostles Saints Peter and Paul. Next month (August 24th) we will keep the Feast of St. Bartholomew, in September (the 21st) we will keep St. Matthew, in October (the 28th) we will keep Saints Simon and Jude, and then in November (the 30th) we will keep the Feast of St. Andrew, the First-Called of the Twelve. Since the end of November is the beginning of the Liturgical Year which starts on the First Sunday in Advent we keep the Feast of the First-Called Apostle St. Andrew at the very beginning of the Liturgical Year.. And each month we keep the Feast of an Apostle. But for this week's meditation I would like to think of St. James, whose Feast is kept each year on July 25th just last week.

Like his brother St. John the Apostle and author of the fourth Gospel, St. James was a fisherman. Their father was Zebedee and their mother was Salome who was one of the holy women who stood with Our Blessed Mother at the foot of the Cross.

After Our Lord's Ascension into Heaven, St. James preached the Gospel at what was then considered the very end of the earth, the *Finis Terrae*, Spain. St. James labored arduously and yet was unable to make even one convert in the vast Iberian Peninsula. One day he was so discouraged that he sat at the bank of the River Ebro weeping copiously. Suddenly he heard the sound of beautiful signing and saw a bright light. Our Lady appeared to him standing on top of a pillar. She is the Joy of All that Sorrow, the Consolation of the Afflicted, and the Comfort of those who mourn. Just her appearance gave him the courage to continue his great work of the evangelization of the Spanish people. Today on that very spot where Our Lady appeared in the city of Zaragoza there is a great Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar. Many Spanish women bear the name *Maria Pilar* in her honor. The Blessed William Joseph Chaminade, the founder of the Marianist Congregation who are so much a part of our parish family, received his inspiration to found the Marianist Congregation while praying at that very shrine.

After his great work of evangelization in Spain, St. James returned to Jerusalem and there became the first of the Apostles to be martyred.

But the Spanish people would not be deprived of the presence of their beloved missionary. The body of St. James was brought from Jerusalem to Spain in the fourth century. However, in the

seventh century the Moslems crossed the Straits of Gibraltar and conquered Spain, putting many Christians to death and enslaving many others. The body of the Apostle was hidden so that it would not be desecrated.

Many had forgotten where the body had been hidden but in the tenth century a great miracle occurred. Above a field in the extreme northwest of Spain (the province of Galicia) the stars began to shine brilliantly leading the faithful to discover the body of their beloved father and teacher St. James. This Field of Stars (in Latin *Campus Stellarum*) is today the great City of Compostella. There so many Christians throughout the centuries have come to pray before the tomb of that Apostle who witnessed the glory of the transfiguration and witnessed the bloody sweat of Our Lord in the Agony in the Garden. Many people even to our own day walk the Way of St. James or *El Camino de Santiago*. It is on that journey that many promises have been made to God and where many graces have been given. Let us pray that St. James will ever lead us along the way of salvation and protect us from all dangers of body and soul.

Our Lady's Lent: In many places of the Church it is the custom and tradition to keep a fast beginning on August 1st until August 15th. It is given the charming name of *Our Lady's Lent*. It is a fast in honor of Our Lady as we celebrate her principal feast of the year on August 15th, the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. I would encourage our parishioners to follow this ancient spiritual practice.

ST. PAUL'S PICNIC: Our annual parish picnic will be held on **Sunday, September 12th**. It will begin at 12 noon and all parishioners are most cordially invited to attend. How nice it will be to greet our friends and fellow parishioners after we were unable to have the picnic last summer of 2020. September 12th is the Feast of the Most Holy Name of Mary and so we trust Our Lady to provide good weather that day.

THE SOLEMNITY OF THE ASSUMPTION: This year the Solemnity of the Assumption falls on a Sunday Augusts 15th. Beginning that weekend (14th and 15th) the Obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holydays will be reinstated. The dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass on Sunday and Holydays was dispensed in March 2020. That is now rescinded in a sign that things are returning to normal. What a wonderful way for all of us to return to Mass as we honor Our Blessed Mother. Nonetheless, it is my fond hope that many of our people will come to holy Mass that day to honor Our Lady on her principal Feast. I would encourage all of you to fast and pray from August 1st until the 15th. This is a very ancient tradition and is often referred to as Our Lady's Lent.

PARISH GOLF OUTING: Please save the date of Thursday August 19th for our annual Parish Golf Outing and Awards Dinner. Our honorees this year are Thomas and Irene Principe. As many know the Golf Outing, along with the Gala Casino Night, are the two major fundraisers for our parish. In 2020 we were unable to have either of these events, and, as a result, our parish suffered a budget deficit. This year we will only be able to have the Parish Golf Outing and Awards Dinner. The Gala Casino Night will not be held this year because it would only be separated from the Golf Outing and Awards Dinner by only six weeks. It is our fond hope that in 2022 we will be able to have both events once again.

Since there will be no Gala Casino Night this year, I am making a special request. I would like as many parishioners as possible to attend the Golf Outing and Awards Dinner on Thursday August 19 . Even attending the Awards Dinner only (without golfing) would be a wonderful thing for St. Paul's. The outing and dinner are at the Engineers Club in Roslyn and outdoor dining will be available. St. Paul's depends on this for our financial health.

Many of the events from the Casino Night (50/50, raffles, prizes) will be available the day of the Picnic. The parish picnic is a way to thank all parishioners. Admission is a gift, but we hope many parishioners will enjoy themselves and purchase the raffles.

St. Philip Neri: *To begin and end well, devotion to Our Blessed Lady, the Mother of God, is nothing less than indispensable.*

St. Josémaría Escrivá: *Do not make excuses by saying that is my character. It is really your lack of character. Be brave and be a saint!*

Pope Francis: *Look at the face of the other...Discover that he has a soul, a history and a life, that he is a person and that God loves this person...*

May God bless you and Mary keep you,

Nos cum prole pia, Benedicat Virgo Maria!

In Jesus and Mary,

Monsignor James F. Pereda