

From the Pastor
July 19, 2020
Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Seventh Sunday After Pentecost

ST. JAMES THE APOSTLE: 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. In every month of the year we keep the Feast of one of the twelve Apostles. Their Feasts 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. (and is it not wonderful to see the exceptionally beautiful and artistic wood cut statues of Sts. Peter and Paul on either side of the sanctuary. Next month (August 24th) we will keep the Feast of St. Bartholomew, in September (the 21st) we will keep that of 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 draw your attention to St. James. His Feast is kept each year on July 25th next Saturday.

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 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. They are often endearingly called, Pili. The Blessed William Joseph Chaminade, the founder of the Marianist Congregation, 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 Apostle. 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 Compostela. 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. Father Brandon O'Brien, a good friend to St. Paul's, made the Camino last summer. 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. Let us make the following prayer our own.

“We have walked out of our lives
To come to where the walls of heaven
Are this as a curtain, transparent as glass?
Where the Apostle spoke the Holy Words
Where in death he returned, where God is close
Where saints and martyrs mark the road...
Holy Saint James, great St. James,
God help us now and evermore”

MR. FRANK CASTAGNA: On Tuesday, July 7th, a long-time parishioner of St. Paul the Apostle was called home to God at the age of 91. Mr. Frank Castagna died in his own home of pancreatic cancer. Mr. Castagna left behind his dear wife Rita. They had been married for close to 64 years (what a beautiful example to us all). Many of the newspapers around the country carried news stories about him at the time of his death. The son of Italian immigrants, he rose to be the CEO of many companies, including the Americana Mall in Manhasset. But what has impressed me the most about Mr. Castagna was his faithful attendance of the 5PM Mass here at St. Paul. He and his wife Rita would come to Holy Mass and like everyone else would sit in the same place each week, right near the Fatima Chapel. They were humble, self-effacing Catholics, who passed unnoticed, but they were great benefactors to the poor, the hungry, the sick, the unemployed and the homeless. They were also great benefactors to St. Paul, and close to Monsignor Costa. God will reward those who love the beauty of His house. One would never know it, because of their humility. That place is empty now. May God Our Lord give unto Frank a place of light, refreshment, and peace, and may the Holy Virgin Mary, the Joy of All Who Mourn, comfort his wife Rita, his daughter Catherine, his son Fred, and his grandchildren.

ST. BENEDICT: On July 11th we celebrated the Memorial of St. Benedict. St. Benedict is the only saint of the Catholic Church whose image is on display in the U.S. Senate building (at least of this writing). He is there because his Rule is the longest extant code of law on earth. May this

great saint be our intercessor as we watch, yet again, the destruction of Western culture and civilization

SCHEDULE: We are pleased that it has been five weeks that our Church has been open for the Celebration of Mass. Bishop Barres has granted a dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass so no one should feel obligated to attend. The Masses are offered at 5PM on Saturday, and 8.30 and 10.30 on Sunday morning. The Church is sanitized after each Mass. We are also blessed with an A/C and Heating system which has a sensor monitoring air quality. It automatically brings in air from the outside so that our air in the Church is healthy. Confessions are 4.00 to 4.45PM on Saturday afternoon. Weekday Mass is celebrated in the Church at 9.00AM on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. Please follow the state and diocesan directives when attending Mass regarding masks and social distancing. I have been so pleased to see that since the time that the weekday Mass has been changed from 8AM to 9AM so many more people are attending. There are more coming to weekday Mass now during the Covid-19 than ever came at 8AM even before the epidemic and quarantine. If one is compromised because of health issues or age, one should not attend Mass. If attendance at Mass is a cause of sin for you, in that it leads to complaining and rash judgment, one should not attend. Thanks to one of our parishioners, Mr. Alan Toth, the Mass from St. Paul's may be seen on our YouTube Channel. Please see the parish website for our parish bulletin. There will be no printed bulletins for the foreseeable future.

Please remember that in these extraordinary times, the Mass may be different from what we knew. This is the case in every aspect of life. Communion is distributed after the conclusion of Mass, as the Bishop has directed. We are aware that in other parishes the directives of the Bishop are not followed. That will never be the case at St. Paul's.

In Jesus and Mary,
Monsignor James F. Pereda