



St. Mary Magdalen Catholic Parish

Rev. Nicholas Glisson, Pastor. His Excellency, Michael Barber, SJ, Bishop – Diocese of Oakland

Notes from Fr. Nick

***Laudato Si'* – Pope Francis' Call to Action on the Environment**

About 40 years ago I was visiting my aunt in San Diego, enjoying a beautiful morning at the beach, perusing a copy of *Rolling Stone* magazine I'd picked up at a newsstand on the way. An in-depth article on environmentalism distressed me. Nothing was wrong with the author's advocacy for our planet but, rather, the stance it took toward human being's place on it. The article assumed that we exist apart from the environment, have despoiled it and would pay the price for our behavior.

That morning on the beach in La Jolla I concluded I could not fully embrace the environmental movement. I believe God created all beings, including us. Everything God creates is good; thus, essentially, we are good. As a Christian I would have to develop a more nuanced understanding of the stewardship of my world. All these years later I've felt the need to care for earth, but could never fully get on the bandwagon.

More than thirty years later, Pope Francis has offered a way forward for me. *Laudato Si'*, Umbrian for *Praise be to You*, challenges the environmental movement, free market and technocratic forces which put the planet in peril. The Pope also takes Christians to task who buy into consumerism, believe that our human needs are over and above the needs of the rest of creation, or those who think that the Genesis creation story has given us free reign to exploit our planet.

It is a fairly long and complicated document (although, I might add, much more readable than much that comes from the Vatican) so reducing it to the essentials isn't easy. I'm sure many will note I've left out important parts, but I'll try to boil it down to the essentials.

Pope Francis begins by emphasizing the interconnectedness of the common good. Everything and everyone are related because we are part of creation. His argument is out of a faith and scriptural perspective, but also from the empirical evidence science and technology provide. Human dignity is rooted in our createdness. It is only because he made us that we can assume duty as stewards of God's handiwork. Caring for our species and caring for creation are the same thing. Citing the Book of Genesis' instruction "have dominion over nature" is a sinful abuse of that dictum. On the other hand, the Pope rejects those who use religion for environmental degradation from the same scriptural passage.

Laudato Si' criticizes the belief among capitalists that the Free Market is supreme and must be allowed to seek its own equilibrium. This market fundamentalism would allow the brute forces of enterprise to ride herd over innocent people and despoil the environment... on the theory that it would right itself on its own, given complete freedom and time. This is naïvely optimistic, even if it did not play into the greed of rich and powerful people. Pope Francis wants us to reexamine "the creed of individualism, unlimited progress, competition, consumerism and unregulated market." The same applies to a technocracy that brooks no critique.

All this leads Pope Francis to address three problematic assumptions: (1) the belief that everything is here for our use and whoever can find and market it is warranted to do so. (2) the belief that the system that created these problems will somehow also solve them; (3) that consumerism is the foundation of progress, prosperity, freedom and even happiness.

Further, the system has failed in three important ways: A failure of equity – some have access to unimaginable wealth while others are almost completely shut out of prosperity. Additionally, the Pope believes certain needs are not commodities, but basic human rights (e.g., potable water).

(Continued on page 3.)

The Parish Office is Open!

Please call or drop by
(observing social distancing):

Monday – Friday

9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Closed for Lunch: Noon-1:00 pm

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday 4:00 pm

(and by appointment)

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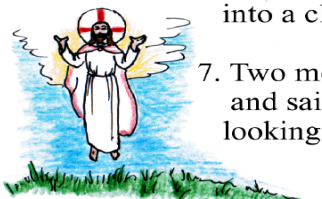
What does today's Psalm say about the Ascension?
Use every other letter from the box of letters above
to fill in the blanks below.

G

_____!

*How well do you know the story of the Ascension?
See if you know which of these are true
and which are false:*

1. Jesus appeared to His disciples for forty days after He rose from the dead. True or false?
2. When Jesus was with His disciples after He rose from the dead, they could only see Him but they couldn't touch Him. True or false?
3. Jesus didn't tell His friends that He was going to leave them. True or false?
4. Jesus promised that He would send the Holy Spirit. True or false?
5. The disciples had gathered together and asked Jesus if He was going to restore the earthly kingdom. True or false?
6. Nobody saw Jesus rise into the sky and disappear into a cloud. True or false?



7. Two men appeared to the disciples and said, "Men of Galilee, why are you looking at the sky?" True or false?

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The Ascension of the Lord, Year A

Collection for May 17th, 2020

Sunday	Actual	Budget	Difference
05/17/2020	\$7,286.04	\$8,829.00	-\$1,542.96
Year-to-Date	\$172,372.63	\$187,751.00	-\$15,378.37

"For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has - not according to what one does not have." - 2 Corinthians 8:12



Scripture Readings for the Week

- 24th *THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD*
Acts 1:1-11 / Ephesians 1:17-23 /
Matthew 28:16-20
- 25th *Easter Weekday [St. Bede the Venerable, Doctor;
St. Gregory VII, Pope; St. Mary Magdalene de' Pazzi]*
Acts 19:1-8 / John 16:29-33
- 26th *Easter Weekday [Saint Philip Neri, Priest]*
Acts 20:17-27 / John 17:1-11
- 27th *Easter Weekday [Saint Augustine of Canterbury, Bishop]*
Acts 20:28-38 / John 17:11-19
- 28th *Easter Weekday*
Acts 22:30; 23:6-11 / John 17:20-26
- 29th *Easter Weekday [Saint Paul VI, Pope]*
Acts 25:13-21 / John 21:15-19
- 30th *Easter Weekday*
Acts 28:16-20, 30-31 / John 21:20-25

Mass Intentions

- | | | |
|-----------|-------|---------------------------------------|
| Sunday | 8:00 | For the People of the Parish |
| | 9:30 | Willi Gamboa RIP |
| | 11:30 | Barbara Banks RIP |
| Monday | 8:30 | Intentions of Fr. Nick Glisson |
| | 5:30 | Steve Hagmark RIP |
| Tuesday | 8:30 | Robert Bellini RIP |
| | 5:30 | Intentions of Fr. Ioane Ono |
| Wednesday | 8:30 | Intentions of Fr. Laurent Okitakatshi |
| Thursday | 8:30 | Guy & Jeanine Le Picart RIP |
| Friday | 8:30 | Pete Hurd RIP |
| | 5:30 | Intentions of Emily Onglatco |

Continuation of Fr. Nick's Pastor's Column from page 1:

Laudato Si' – Pope Francis' Call to Action on the Environment

Finally, climate change is more than just a failure of markets to internalize the true cost to the environment; *it is the failure of a system in which profit is the sole criterion for success.* Moreover, it impoverishes us spiritually. This system claims freedom to consume as the only true freedom.

Pope Francis doesn't simply criticize the current state of affairs. He proposes an "integral ecology" that does not see environmental damage as the cost of progress. Francis notes that markets that benefit from exploiting the environment stimulate greater demand that goes on to promote even more damage. The choice should not be between human progress or a sustainable planet. Policies should combat poverty, restore dignity to the excluded, and protect nature. Good governance sets clear boundaries that will ensure protection of ecosystems. A proper solution will provide a legacy for future generations.

Pope Francis is not advocating an end to free enterprise or reversion to pre-technological world. He simply rejects the logic that insists that only markets can solve the world's problems. He rejects the notion that markets are politically and morally neutral. The Pope believes that markets—like religion—are not above critique.

On the fifth anniversary of the encyclical's publication, Pope Francis has proclaimed May 16th-24th as *Laudato Si' Week*. He asks us to leave a legacy for the future and celebrate the gift of our good Creator God. This coming week we should pray, fast, and do good works in the name of our planet and humanity. If you'd like to find more information about the special events of this week, please click here: laudatosi.org.

Two Ways to Help Our Local Immigrants

Catholic Charities of the East Bay is the essential resource for people in Alameda and Contra Costa counties who do not qualify for federal pandemic aid and who seek assistance from the *California Disaster Relief Assistance for Immigrants* program.

- ◆ Information in Spanish and English about how to access aid: 888-490-3899.
- ◆ **To donate and support all the good work of Catholic Charities**, see ceeb.org

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