

Edmonton Catholic Latin Mass Community



served by the Priests of the Fraternity of St. Peter (fssp)
for the Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton

Quinquagesima Sunday



DUCCIO di Buoninsegna, Healing of the Blind Man, 1308-11

February 15th, 2015

Hymns:

Mass	<i>XI</i>
Processional	<i>To be announced</i>
Offertory	<i>To be announced</i>
Recessional	<i>To be announced</i>

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The Christian meaning of love

Deus Caritas est – God is Love, excerpts from the Encyclical of Benedict XVI.

We have come to believe in God's love: in these words the Christian can express the fundamental decision of his life. Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction. Saint John's Gospel describes that event in these words: “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should ... have eternal life” (3:16). In acknowledging the centrality of love, Christian faith has retained the core of Israel's faith, while at the same time giving it new depth and breadth. The pious Jew prayed daily the words of the Book of Deuteronomy which expressed the heart of his existence: “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord, and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your might” (6:4-5). Jesus united into a single precept this commandment of love for God and the commandment of love for neighbour found in the Book of Leviticus: “You shall love your neighbour as yourself” (19:18; cf. Mk 12:29-31). Since God has first loved us (cf. 1 Jn 4:10), love is now no longer a mere “command”; it is the response to the gift of love with which God draws near to us.

The world of the Bible presents us with a new image of God. In surrounding cultures, the image of God and of the gods ultimately remained unclear and contradictory. In the development of biblical faith, however, the content of the prayer fundamental to Israel, the *Shema*, became increasingly clear and unequivocal: “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord” (Dt 6:4). There is only one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, who is thus the God of all. Two facts are significant about this statement: all other gods are not God, and the universe in which we live has its source in God and was created by him. Certainly, the notion of creation is found elsewhere, yet only here does it become absolutely clear that it is not one god among many, but the one true God himself who is the source of all that exists; the whole world comes into existence by the power of his creative Word. Consequently, his creation is dear to him, for it was willed by him and “made” by him. The one God in whom Israel believes loves with a personal love. His love, moreover, is an elective love: among all the nations he chooses Israel and loves her—but he does so precisely with a view to healing the whole human race.

The first novelty of biblical faith consists in its image of God. *The second, essentially connected to this, is found in the image of man.* The biblical account of creation speaks of the solitude of Adam, the first man, and God's decision to give him a helper. Of all other creatures, not one is capable of being the helper that man needs, even though he has assigned a name to all the wild beasts and birds and thus made them fully a part of his life. So God forms woman from the rib of man. Now Adam finds the helper that he needed: “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh” (Gen 2:23). The biblical account concludes with a prophecy about Adam: “Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh” (Gen 2:24).

The real novelty of the New Testament lies not so much in new ideas as in the

figure of Christ himself, who gives flesh and blood to those concepts [of the Old Testament]—an unprecedented realism. In the Old Testament, the novelty of the Bible did not consist merely in abstract notions but in God's unpredictable and in some sense unprecedented activity. This divine activity now takes on dramatic form when, in Jesus Christ, it is God himself who goes in search of the “stray sheep”, a suffering and lost humanity. When Jesus speaks in his parables of the shepherd who goes after the lost sheep, of the woman who looks for the lost coin, of the father who goes to meet and embrace his prodigal son, these are no mere words: they constitute an explanation of his very being and activity. His death on the Cross is the culmination of that turning of God against himself in which he gives himself in order to raise man up and save him. This is love in its most radical form. By contemplating the pierced side of Christ (cf. 19:37), we can understand the starting-point of this Encyclical Letter: “God is love” (1 Jn 4:8). It is there that this truth can be contemplated. It is from there that our definition of love must begin. In this contemplation the Christian discovers the path along which his life and love must move.

Jesus gave this act of oblation an enduring presence through his institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper. He anticipated his death and resurrection by giving his disciples, in the bread and wine, his very self, his body and blood as the new manna (cf. Jn 6:31-33). The Eucharist draws us into Jesus' act of self-oblation. The imagery of marriage between God and Israel is now realised in a way previously inconceivable: it had meant standing in God's presence, but now it becomes union with God through sharing in Jesus' self-gift, sharing in his body and blood.

Love of neighbour consists in the very fact that, in God and with God, I love even the person whom I do not like or even know. This can only take place on the basis of an intimate encounter with God, an encounter which has become a communion of will, even affecting my feelings. Then I learn to look on this other person not simply with my eyes and my feelings, but from the perspective of Jesus Christ. His friend is my friend. Going beyond exterior appearances, I perceive in others an interior desire for a sign of love, of concern. Seeing with the eyes of Christ, I can give to others much more than their outward necessities; I can give them the look of love which they crave. Only my readiness to encounter my neighbour and to show him love makes me sensitive to God as well. Only if I serve my neighbour can my eyes be opened to what God does for me and how much he loves me. The saints—consider the example of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta—constantly renewed their capacity for love of neighbour from their encounter with the Eucharistic Lord, and conversely this encounter acquired its realism and depth in their service to others. Love of God and love of neighbour are thus inseparable, they form a single commandment. But both live from the love of God who has loved us first. No longer is it a question, then, of a “commandment” imposed from without and calling for the impossible, but rather of a freely-bestowed experience of love from within, a love which by its very nature must then be shared with others. Love grows through love. Love is “divine” because it comes from God and unites us to God; through this unifying process it makes us a “we” which transcends our divisions and makes us one, until in the end God is “all in all” (1 Cor 15:28).

Announcements

Envelopes for 2015—are available now at the entrance to the Church.

Tax Receipts – are available at the entrance to the Church.

Latin Class – will begin again TODAY Sunday, 15 February 2015 between 2:00 and 4:00 pm at the Parish House of St. Andrew's Church at 12810 - 111 Ave. The Parish House is a small bungalow in the Church parking lot to the west of the Church and Rectory. Entry is on the parking lot side. See you there.

Archbishop Smith's Letter regarding the Supreme Court of Canada's decision on physician-assisted suicide – is available at the archdiocesan website. A copy is also included with this bulletin.

Summer Camp - The Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter is hosting a two-week, outdoor summer camp for boys ages 13 to 15 years old, at Custer State Park, located an hour south of Rapid City, South Dakota from August 14th to the 26th. The camp will be staffed by one priest and seminarians from the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter. Located in the rugged Black Hill mountain range, this camp challenges the spiritual, physical, and mental readiness of the boys in preparation for their roles as Catholic men, both now and in the future. For more information on Camp St. Peter, or if you are interested in sponsoring a boy to attend or contributing to the camp, please visit seminarycamps.wordpress.com.

Sunday 8th February 2015: attendance 95 ♦ general collection \$1,629.10

Weekly Mass Schedule

DAY	DATE	TIME	FEAST DAY
Sunday	15 February	8:00 a.m.	Quinquagesima Sunday (2 nd class)
Monday	16 February	No Mass	Feria (4 th cl.)
Tuesday	17 February	No Mass	Feria (4 th cl.)
Wednesday	18 February	7:00 p.m.	Ash Wednesday (1 st cl.)
Thursday	19 February	No Mass	Thursday after Ash Wednesday (3 rd cl.)
Friday	20 February	6:00 p.m.	Friday after Ash Wednesday (3 rd cl.)
Saturday	21 February	8:00 a.m.	Saturday after Ash Wednesday (3 rd cl.) <i>Confessions: 6:00 p.m. – 7:20 p.m.</i>
Sunday	22 February	8:00 a.m.	1 st Sunday in Lent (1 st cl.)