

JULY 26, 2020 SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

MASSES FOR THIS WEEK

Saturday, July 25th

St. James

4:30 Special Intention of Maureen and Ron Blizchuk

Sunday, July 26th

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

10:30 Bernadette Swallow by Patricia and Damon Smith

Monday, July 27th

Tuesday, July 28th

Wednesday, July 29th

St. Martha

9:00 Jean Vanier by Joseph Blain

Thursday, July 30th* *No Mass

St. Peter Chrysologus

Friday, July 31st

St. Ignatius of Loyola

Saturday, August 1st

St. Alphonsus Liguori

4:30 Flora and Harold Mathie by Maureen and Ron Blizchuk

REFLECTION

My nostalgia for the summers of my youth is at an all time high. Days spent riding my bike to the state park or to the library to stock up on more books. Eating snow cones during the rest break at the swimming pool. Piling into the station wagon for the cross-country trip to see my cousins. Whenever I would muse that I wish summer could last forever, my mother would remind me to be careful what I wish for. Her response puzzled me yet didn't stop me from romanticizing summer as I conveniently forgot about oppressive heat, bug bites, tornados and lots of time spent with annoying younger siblings.

That pattern of nostalgia for the pre-pandemic days has become very present for me and for several people I encounter. Phrases like: "when things get back to normal" or "hopefully we can all get together

in the spring” are common and leave me feeling a bit heartbroken. Today’s readings help me make sense of my heartbreak in some surprising ways.

In the first reading from Kings, Solomon humbly asks for “an understanding heart to judge your people and to distinguish right from wrong.” He did not pray for a specific outcome but put his trust in God to give him the wisdom he would need to be a servant leader. This challenges to go back to my mother reminding me to be careful what I wish for. How might the future look if I ask God to help me see ways I build an authentic connection with others rather than wishing for a specific social event to take place.

A calming mantra for these unsettling times is in Paul’s letter to the Romans: We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. Rather than be nostalgic for the days before the pandemic or consumed by worry about the health and livelihood of my friends, Paul invites me to explore what St. Ignatius calls disordered attachments...thoughts and responses that stand in the way of my choosing the best way to serve God. I trust if I can “loosen my grip” God will invite me to explore ways I can live my faith that I had never before imagined.

Jesus continues his teaching through parables in today’s gospel from Matthew. As I wonder why Jesus used three distinct images of a buried treasure, a valuable pearl and a net full of fish to describe the kingdom of heaven I think about how Jesus had disrupted so many long standing belief systems and ways of being. I appreciate his teaching style as we grapple to make meaning in these turbulent times and work to find a way forward. As we look to a future in the uncertainty created by the pandemic we are called to face the reality of a history of systemic racism. We cannot face these challenges without God’s steadfast love. And as God helps me accept the reality of pandemic life, I find energy to strive for social justice in my community.

The psalm reminds us to: Let your kindness comfort me according to your promise to your servants. Praying for an understanding heart to serve the kingdom is a prayer I never need to be careful to wish for.

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<https://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/072620.html>