

Saint Anthony of Padua Parish

With the Eucharist at the centre, we are a community desiring to be saints, sent out to love like Jesus and proclaim Him in every circumstance.

SOLEMNITY OF CHRIST THE KING

NOVEMBER 24, 2019

Explaining Christianity

God is calling us to understand the big story of our faith today. In other words, what's the essence of Christianity? We're going to answer this using a very practical scenario which builds upon years of talking about our relationship with God, the reality of free will and consequences. [...] We've talked before about the reality of mortal sin, which has three conditions: a gravely wrong action that we know is wrong and still freely choose to do. If we choose this, by definition, we separate ourselves from God, and, if we die in this state, we don't get sent to hell, we choose hell—God just ratifies our choice.

The only way our relationship with God can be repaired is by Confession, because, when we're spiritually dead, we need someone else to spiritually resuscitate us, just like in baptism.

The best way to understand this is with the analogy of a marriage. I knew a husband who, in his forties, left his family for a younger woman. His wife and three children were devastated, but he said he had to find himself. But that marriage is completely broken. That's the reality of choices and action: He did something gravely wrong, knowing it was wrong, and still chose it. Can it be repaired? Only if he confesses, if she forgives him, and he does penance, and rebuilds trust and love.

Now here's the practical scenario: Let's say I commit a mortal sin. I've freely chosen hell. But, with God's grace, I want to reconcile with Him. But on my way to confession, one of you bad drivers hits me and I die. Question: Do I go to hell? By analogy, let's say that husband I mentioned wants to apologize to his wife, decides to go to Confession, but gets hit by car on the way, and dies. Is he reconciled to his wife?

To answer this scenario, we need to know the essence of the story of Christianity, of which we get a snapshot in today's Gospel. In the Gospel, there are three ways we learn the essence of Christianity, and they all have to do with who Jesus is.

First, did you notice that three groups of people all tempt Jesus in the same way? They all tell Him to come down from the Cross and save Himself. "The leaders scoffed at Jesus saying, 'He saved others; Let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, his chosen one! The soldiers also mocked Jesus... saying, 'If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!...' One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, 'Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!'" (Lk 23:35-37,39). By tempting Him, they're getting to the root of Jesus' identity: is He God? Humans always save themselves at the expense of others. But Jesus is God, and God is love, and love gives, and love sacrifices for others. He loves even



The Crucifixion with Two Thieves by Jan Snellinck

when He's surrounded by evil—that's proof that He's God. Only God would completely love people who don't love Him. He also proves the extent of His love for us by going to extremes. He could have died for us in a less gruesome way. But the Cross shows how much we're worth. He did all that for you and me. Do you realize how infinitely precious you are? And He shows how bad sin is. We take sin lightly; we're so naïve. We don't realize how devastating adultery is, how harmful pornography, sex outside of marriage is, getting drunk is. They seriously harm the human person.

Second, "There was also an inscription over him, 'This is the King of the Jews'" (Lk 23:38). This is a humiliation, a king who's naked and executed—who would follow such a king? But He accepts it without any thought of revenge. He even prays for His persecutors' forgiveness, a prayer which

changed the world, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Lk 23:34). But Jesus is a king: He's king of the universe; instead of a throne, He rules from a Cross; instead of being served, He serves; instead of robes, His nakedness shows His vulnerability, which is actually power, because not even nakedness can stop His mission. He's a king who rules with love, and shows that obedience to truth and goodness are His law.

There are two criminals crucified with Him. One derided Him, "but the other rebuked him, saying, 'Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong'" (Lk 23:40-41). There's been so much written about the fear of God. Modern people don't talk about it because it's true that it can be misunderstood and harmful, but it's also true that we've sanitized God of anything that might be remotely displeasing. [...]

But God is a Father who's serious about loving us, so serious that He sent His only Son to save us, and we should have a healthy fear of hurting our Father, and a fear of punishment. St. Hilary, in the 300s, noted three things about fear of the Lord according to the Bible: 1) It must be taught, because it's not ordinary fear, like fear of animals or suffering; 2) It consists in love, and is shown by obedience to God; 3) There are always blessings attached to fear of the Lord.

This criminal, often referred to as the good thief, recognizes the seriousness of his own sin and takes responsibility. He doesn't make excuses: He says he's condemned justly, is getting what he

...continued inside

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Parish Registration

Our parish family warmly welcomes new parishioners. Please register by filling out a registration form located in the vestibule or the Parish Office. If you are registered and moving, please advise the parish office.

Sunday Masses

Saturday 5:00 pm
 Sunday 8:00 am, 10:00 am, 12:00 pm

Weekdays	Masses	Confessions
Monday	8:15 am	8:00 to 8:10 am
Tuesday	7:30 pm	
Wednesday & Thursday	8:15 am	8:00 to 8:10 am
Friday (school months)	8:00 am	7:45 to 7:55 am
Saturday	9:00 am	9:45 am

Confession

Saturday afternoon 3:45 pm to 4:45 pm
 1st Saturday each month 9:45 am to 1:00 pm;
 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm;
 7:00 pm to 9:45 pm

Eucharistic Adoration enter at 1365 West 73rd Avenue

Daily: 6:00 am to Midnight
First Saturday of each month: 9:30 am to 9:30 pm in the church during all-day confessions.
First Friday of each month: 8:45 am to 10:00 am in the church followed by **Benediction**.

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS (RCIA) Please call the parish office for more information on RCIA classes and other Sacraments.

Weekday Masses & Intentions

Monday, November 25	Ferial	Holy Souls
Tuesday, November 26	Ferial	Holy Souls
Wednesday, November 27	Ferial	Holy Souls
Thursday, November 28	Ferial	Holy Souls
Friday, November 29	Ferial	Holy Souls
Saturday, November 30	Feast St. Andrew, Apostle	Holy Souls

Prayers for the Sick At Holy Mass we remember the sick including: Nita Carvajal, Nung Chum, Isobel Clancy, Nick De Vos, Tamara Dixon, Elaine dos Remedios, Kathleen Francis, Feli Hempl, Cecile Hernandez, Yvonne Kharoubeh, Molly Loui-Ying, Susan Panican, Huguette Piché, Barney Rousseau, Therese Rozario, Christina Sayo, Teresa Tche, Cynthia Wing.

Spiritual Care Volunteers needed at Columbus House Can you spare a couple of hours to sit with residents indoors and/or outdoors (weather permitting)? Would you like to be a meal companion to assist someone with dementia? Training will be provided. If you can volunteer your time, please contact the Parish Office.

Upcoming Homily Themes

November 30 & December 1
New Season: Alpha as Culture
The Gift of Wake-up Calls



December 7 & 8
Welcoming as Christ Welcomed



December 14 & 15
Guest Preacher: Fr. Francis Ching

December 21 & 22
Overcoming the Fear of Rejection



December 28 & 29
Preacher: Fr. Pierre Leblond

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CWL Coffee Shop and Bake Sale

Tis the season to be jolly! We invite every parishioner to join us for fellowship at our upcoming December 8th bake sale. There will be activities for children, so bring the entire family! The CWL members are also requesting donations of Christmas baked goods that can be sold at the bake sale. If you can help, kindly bring your treats downstairs in the kitchen before Mass at 5:00 pm on Saturday, and on Sunday at 8:00 am and 10:00 am. Thanks to all supporters of the CWL!



UPDATE! Thank you to our 191 parishioners for supporting this year's Project Advance Campaign!! As of October 31st, our generous parishioners have given **\$99,742.10**.

**PROJECT
ADVANCE**



Rosaries for Sale: in support of our Grade 7 Class at this Weekend's Masses.

Here's a great opportunity to buy some Christmas gifts and support our school graduating class! Our elementary students will be selling assorted rosaries for \$10 each after all Masses on Saturday, Nov. 23, and Sunday, Nov. 24 at the same time! The students thank you for your support!



Advent Parish Mission "Equipping for the Harvest" with Fr. Francis Ching

7:00 PM, December 15 - 17

Sunday, Dec. 15: Seeking Virtues
Monday, Dec. 16: A Listening Heart
Tuesday, Dec. 17: Mentoring Group

NOTE: There will be no morning Mass or Novena during the Parish Mission. Daily Mass will be at 7:00 pm on Monday & Tuesday.

Drive to Help the Victims of Apartment Fire

There is an immediate need to help those impacted by the recent fire on Marine Drive & Heather Street. Two of the victims are our parishioners who lost everything in the disaster. A drive to help them, and their neighbours is being organized by Annie Dee. Right now the victims require assistance with temporary (or permanent) accommodations. If you or someone you know has an available rental unit, please contact Annie Dee at isainvancouver@gmail.com. Many have asked if donations of clothing, furniture, etc. are needed. An update in the bulletin will be posted next week.

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deserved for his actions.

Now we have the answer to our original question. If I commit a mortal sin, and die on the way to confession, my sins are not forgiven. I separated myself from God and die separated, and so I'm eternally separated—that's the reality of freedom and sin, and we should take it seriously; we only have one life. This is the first part of the answer. If we can accept this truth of reality, then the second part of reality will make sense as well. In fact, if we don't get the first part, we won't get the second.

Now here's the third way we know the essence of Christianity. "Then [the good thief] said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' Jesus replied, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise'" (Lk 23:42-43). The good thief makes a prayer, an act of faith, trust, and hope. He recognizes who Jesus is, that He's God that He's so serious about sin that He's dying for us and is ready to forgive up to the last moment! Jesus reveals that He's the king of mercy, and guarantees heaven to the thief.

So, if we commit a mortal sin, go to Confession as soon as possible. But, in the meantime, make an act of perfect contrition with the firm resolution to go to Confession as soon as possible, as this will restore to a state of grace, meaning, it will restore our relationship with God (CCC 1452; cf. CIC 916).

There are two conditions to this: 1) A perfect act of contrition. Imperfect contrition means we're sorry because we're afraid of hell whereas perfect means we're sorry for our sins because we've hurt our Father. Both are good, but one's better.

Archbishop Sheen says it's like a child who lies, and then says, "I'm sorry, Mom, I guess I can't go to the picnic," while another runs up to her parents and says, "I'm sorry for hurting you, Mom, Dad!" 2) A firm intention to go to Confession as soon as possible. The Church doesn't specify a timeframe, but it seems to me that within a week is reasonable. Obviously, we need to make time for this.

If we do these two things, then we will be in a state of grace. This is something I've never taught here before because there's a huge risk of abuse: Many Catholics hear this, and then never go to Confession, take Communion liberally, and never overcome their sins. And every time they take Communion in a state of mortal sin, they commit another mortal sin and harden their hearts. They don't get the first part of the story, and so the second part is no use to them. Remember: If we've committed a mortal sin, we still don't take Communion. [...]

Also, the Church teaches that, even if we're restored to sanctifying grace by an act of perfect contrition, we should still not receive Communion until going to Confession (CIC 916). The two acts of perfect contrition and Confession should be completed first before taking the Eucharist, and it seems to me that waiting is a good penance to atone for our sins.

This practical scenario that most of us have encountered or do encounter points to the big story of Christianity. For the past three months, we've been talking about Made for Mission. We share in Jesus' mission, to help people know this story.


- excerpt of Fr. Justin's homily, November 24, 2019

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