

From the Pastor:

If there was any specific and unique trait that characterized the teaching of Jesus, it was his widespread use of parables. Even those who do not profess faith in Christ, or know much about the Bible, will have at least a vague knowledge of the parables of the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, or the Sower in the Field. Though Jesus did not originate the parable form, he used it more than almost anyone before him, or since. In fact, our Gospel lesson today, which is comprised of two parables from Jesus concludes with the sweeping statement, "***With many such parables Jesus spoke the Word to them, as they were able to hear it; he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.***"



So what is a parable? It is an extended metaphor, often in narrative form. In other words, a parable uses everyday images to illustrate a profound insight or heavenly truth. It lays the ordinary beside the extraordinary, and invites comparison to evoke insight and illumination. In today's gospel, we see two of Jesus' "***seed parables***" as describing the amazing growth process of the reality called "the Kingdom God." Seeds and the Kingdom of God both begin very small but grow substantially into something much bigger. Jesus compares the Kingdom of God to a mustard seed. Again, something very small grows into something very large. The reality of God's Kingdom can be found in the ordinary things of everyday life, like mustard seeds and shrubs. We are surrounded daily by ordinary things. Jesus encourages us to see the extraordinary in the ordinary.

Thank you to **Dr. William Gray** who has provided us with music at daily mass throughout the pandemic. It began with our streaming only masses and then carried on when we opened up last June. As things wind down and return to whatever normal will be, we return to daily mass without music. We are so grateful for how generously you share your exceptional talents Dr. Gray!

For those of you just returning to Sunday masses, please remember that **reconciliation** at Immaculate Conception has returned to the confessional. We have also resumed the practice of approaching the altar for communion.

Today at 9 am mass at Immaculate Conception we had our **annual Graduates' Mass**. It is such a joy to bless these high school students who are part of our parish family and wish them well. We will have a graduation mass on Sunday, June 20 at 10:30 am at Our Lady of Grace. Blessings as you all head forth!

It is with sadness that I share the news that **Debbie Griffith** will be retiring. Debbie served the community of St Joseph's for many years and in many capacities, primarily as the financial secretary. When Fr. Russo retired, Debbie became the Administrator of St Joseph's and Our Lady of Grace, where she worked tirelessly for our communities. Debbie was a good servant who guided the community through some turbulent times. We wish her only good things in her retirement and she will be missed. Luckily we will be seeing her at mass on the weekends and elsewhere around the parish!

For all of you who are parishioners of St. Joseph's, we thank you for your patience and ask for a little more as we resettle after moving the parish offices from MacArthur Drive to the Rectory. Things always take longer than we plan for! Thank you to so many helping hands – **Lisa Hall, Debbie Griffith, Carol Reynolds, Tom Neals, Scott Sutherland, Eric Yeager, Tim Caldwell, Patty Johnson, Mark and Ryan Dolen, Tom Bigos, and Paul Buckley.**

Until next week, be well, do good deeds, and say your prayers.

Fr. Jerry

OUR PRAYER: Loving God, be present to us and grant us wisdom, so that we, who may feel anxious about change, might trust in Your love and rest in the Changelessness that is You.