

## **HOLY NAME OF JESUS PARISH**

National Catholic Church

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**TODAY, SUNDAY, JUNE 28, 2025**

### **WORD OF GOD SUNDAY**

9:00 am - Holy Mass of the Eucharist to be  
celebrated in the Contemporary Rite

### **OPENING HYMN**

#### **“TO THEE, WE COME, O LORD OUR GOD”**

To Thee we come, O Lord, our God,

Before Thine altar, Father

Thou knowest best our yearning hearts;

This supplication answer.

Lift up from want Thy people, Lord,

Bless us, O God; O Father, bless our toil.

Under Thy cross we stand prepared,

To serve Thee with devotion;

Be it with sweat of blood or tears,

Or humble resignation.

For we Thy people are, O Lord,

Save us, O God; O Father, bless our toil.



### **ENTRANCE HYMN**

(Hebrews 4:12; Psalm 15:1-2)

V. Indeed, the Word of God is living and effective,  
sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating  
even between soul and spirit, joints and marrow  
and able to discern reflections and thoughts of  
the heart.

R. O Lord, who shall sojourn in Your tent? Who  
shall dwell on Your holy mountain? He who  
walks blamelessly and does justice, who thinks  
the truth is in his heart.

C. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the  
Holy Spirit.

R. As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall  
be, world without end. Amen.

### **THE GLORIA**

Glory to God in the Highest,  
And peace to His people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,

Almighty God, and Father

We worship You; we give You thanks

We praise you for Your glory

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father

Lord God, Lamb of God

You take away the sins of the world

Have mercy on us

You are seated at the right hand of the Father

Receive our prayer

For you alone are the Holy One

You alone are the Lord,

You alone are the Most High,

Jesus Christ, With the Holy Spirit,

in the glory of God the Father.

Amen.

### **OPENING PRAYER**

C. The Lord be with you.

R. And also with you.

C. **Let us pray:** Heavenly Father, You have  
entrusted us with the riches of faith to be used to  
expand Your kingdom on earth. May we spend  
our days wisely investing these spiritual gifts for  
the increase of Your kingdom on earth. We ask  
this through our Lord, Jesus Christ, Who lives  
and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one  
God, for ever and ever.

R. Amen.



### **LITURGY OF THE WORD OF GOD**

#### **A READING FROM THE BOOK OF ISAIAH**

(Isaiah 55:6-12)

Seek the LORD while He may be found, call upon  
Him while He is near; let the wicked forsake His  
way, and the unrighteous man His thoughts; let him

return to the LORD, that He may have mercy on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and return not thither but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it. For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

C. The Word of the Lord.

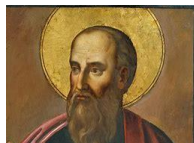
R. Thanks be to God.

### **GRADUAL**

(Colossians 3:16; Romans 10:17)

V. Let the Word of God dwell in you richly.

R. Faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.



### **A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF SAINT PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS**

(1 Thessalonians 2:10-13)

You are witnesses, and God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our behavior to you believers; for you know how, like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to lead a life worthy of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.

C. The Word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

### **ALLELUIA VERSE**

(Psalm 25:10)

C. Alleluia, alleluia.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

V. All the paths of the Lord are kindness and constancy toward those who keep His covenant and His decrees.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.



### **THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT LUKE**

(Luke 8:4-15)

C. The Lord be with you.

R. And also, with you.

C. A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke.

R. Glory be to You, O Lord.

And when a great crowd came together and people from town after town came to Him, He said in a parable: "A sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell along the path, and was trodden under foot, and the birds of the air devoured it. And some fell on the rock; and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns grew with it and choked it. And some fell into good soil and grew and yielded a hundredfold." As he said this, he called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." And when His disciples asked him what this parable meant, he said, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God; but for others they are in parables, so that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, that they may not believe and be saved. And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy; but these have no root, they believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. And as for that in the good soil, they are those who,

hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bring forth fruit with patience.

C. The Gospel of the Lord.

R. Praise be to You, Lord Jesus Christ.



**PROFESSION OF FAITH**  
**THE NICENE CREED**

I believe in One God, the Father, the Almighty,  
Maker of heaven and earth  
Of all that is seen and unseen.  
I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
The only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father.  
God from God, Light from Light, True God  
from true God, begotten not made  
Of one being with the Father.  
Through Him all things were made  
For us and for our salvation.  
He came down from heaven:  
By the power of the Holy Spirit  
He was born of the Virgin Mary  
AND BECAME MAN.  
For our sake, He was crucified  
under Pontius Pilate  
He suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day He rose again  
In fulfillment of the Scriptures.  
He ascended into heaven and  
Is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory  
To judge the living and the dead  
And His kingdom will have no end.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
The Lord and Giver of Life  
Who proceeds from the Father,  
With the Father and the Son  
He is worshipped and glorified.  
He has spoken through the prophets.  
I believe in One, Holy, Catholic  
and Apostolic Church  
I acknowledge one baptism  
for the forgiveness of sins.  
I look for the resurrection of the dead  
And the + life of the world to come. Amen.



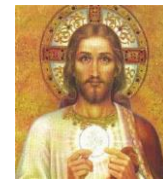
**OFFERTORY VERSE**

(Luke 11:27-28)

- V. While He was speaking, a woman from the crowd called out and said to Him, “Blessed is the womb that carried You and the breasts at which You nursed.” He replied, “Rather, blessed are those who hear the Word of God and observe it.”

**PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS**

Heavenly Father, grant that this holy offering, an expression of Your activity through the incarnation of Your Word, Jesus Christ, may regenerate us in spirit and awaken us to a new life in You. We ask this in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.



**ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION**

**Let us Pray:** Most loving Jesus, I adore You in the Most Blessed Sacrament, in which You are truly present. I love You above all things and I long for You in my soul. Since I cannot receive You sacramentally, I ask You to come spiritually into my heart and heal my soul. I embrace You and unite myself with You; may I never be separated from You. Inflame my heart with the fire of Your love, my Lord and Savior. Amen.

**COMMUNION VERSE**

(Revelation 19:11-13)

- V. Then I saw the heavens opened, and there was a white horse: its rider was [called] “Faithful and True.” He judges and wages war in righteousness. His eyes were [like] a fiery flame, and on His head were many diadems. He had a name inscribed that no one knows except Himself. He wore a cloak that had been dipped in blood, and His Name was called the Word of God.

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

C. The Lord be with you.

R. And also, with you.

C. Let us pray: Almighty Father, as we have heard the Word of God and have received the Body and Blood of Your Son, may we be strengthened in spirit and become more zealous in Your holy Church. As we follow the voice of Your Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, may we continue to build Your Kingdom here on earth. We ask this in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

R. Amen.



## **WORD OF GOD SUNDAY**

The following is a sermon that our First Bishop, Francis Hodur delivered on Sunday, February 1<sup>st</sup> in 1920, in Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Cathedral, Scranton, PA, the first Church of the PNCC, where he served as its first Pastor.

### **“The Seed is the Word of God.” – Luke 8:11**

Mysterious is that process and relationship of a person to God. Nothing in the world has greater power than the Word of God. For the Word of God is the power of the Creator Himself manifesting Himself in the human soul through the voice of the Church, our mother and father, our good friend for it is the inspiration of the Holy Spirit leading us to the good life.

In the Holy Scripture we find much praise for the Word of God: “In the beginning was the Word.” **John 1:1** “Are not my words as a fire, says the Lord, and as a hammer that breaks the rocks in pieces?” **Jerimiah 23:29** “Blessed are thy who hear the Word of God.” – **Luke 11:28** “For it is not you who are speaking, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks through you.” **Matthew 10:20** “I have given them Your Word, sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth.” – **John 17:14, 17.**

God wanted that the seed of this work and influence on the life of a person should be constant, that it might grow and give forth fruit a hundredfold. He instituted Sowers, His vicars on earth, the clergy, parents’ as well as the overseers.

And the seed of God falls upon the human field, but unfortunately not everything is accepted and not everything grows for the benefit of humankind. The Lord Christ himself explains why this happens.

Behold, on [seed] falls on a trampled road, a second on barren land, another among thorns and brambles, and only one on good and fertile soil.”

“The seed falls on trampled ground when people hear the Word of God, but the devil comes and plucks it from their hearts” What do these biblical words mean, who are these people to whom evil and access and ruin God’s seeds.

These are people living for the world and its purposes. These are not the worst people. Indeed, they go to church, they hear the Word of God, but they do not live by Christ’s principles. How much of God’s seeds have we wasted for this reason in our own lives?

The seed that fall on barren ground are those people who hear the Word of God but keep it but for a while because they do not have in themselves the basis for Christian religious life.

When temptations and torment come, they fear struggle and suffering because they lack trust in the help of God.

That seed which falls among thorns are those people who for life’s pleasures, for whom a short, dissipated, profligate life has greater value than a life in accordance with the principles of the God of Jesus Christ,

These thorns which stifle the sprouts and shoots are concern for daily life, about one’s own considerations, the searching for pleasures, the satisfying of the senses, search for wealth as a means and a goal. “Enjoy life” is the motto of the present time.

Finally, the last seed falls on a good field. These are those people who faithfully stand by the standard of their religious convictions, these are those people who do not live for appearances, for the

world only, but who are inspired to the depths of their soul, who live and die by the Christian religion. The just live by faith. Perhaps they do not shine on earth but to them apply the words of Jesus Christ: “Come blessed take possession of the Kingdom of God prepared for you from the foundation of the world.



The Face of “Jesus”  
by Leonardo Da Vinci

## **SOLEMNITY - THE “WORD OF GOD”**

### **THE WORD MADE FLESH**

#### **REFLECTIONS**

It should be noted that the early Christian Church began its roots in Judaism, and rested upon the root of “Jesse,” the father of King David, who the coming of a Jewish Messiah was prophesied in the Old Testament. It is interesting that both Joseph and Mary were from the “house of David.”

We also need to understand that the first Christians believers were Jewish, and Jesus was a Palestinian Jew. Within 30 years after His death, the “Good News” of Jesus, had traveled throughout Asia Minor and Greece and finally found its way to Rome, through the combined efforts of Paul, and his fellow missionaries: Barabas. Luke and Mark as well as the other Apostles.

Both Mark and Luke, two of the four Evangelists, passed the story of the “Word” to the Gentiles through their gospels; Luke to the Greeks and (John) Mark to the Romans, which was considered to be the first Gospels to have been written c.70-75 AD.

Do you know that the “Good News” of Jesus was first told by Paul, who we read in Acts was a persecutor of the early Christians and then through his encounter on a road to Damascus, c. 30-35 AD wrote letters. later known as Epistles to the various churches, which he helped establish. From the cities of Corinth, Thessalonica, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colossae and Rome, he also wrote several “Pastoral Letters.”

These letters came later c. 48 – 67 AD, and mostly given not only as a personal greeting, but most importantly instruction in the Christian faith.

By 60 AD it has been estimated that there were as many as 100,000 Greeks in the Church for every Jew. Though Jewish thought was foreign to some Greeks. we need to understand that there was also a “amalgamation” of cultures, a blending of Greek and Jewish thought. These individuals came to be known as “Hellenistic Jews.”

So how was John, the “Beloved” and Evangelist, to write and present Christ, not to any of the major powers of the known world, but to the world in general, both to the Jewish and the Greek world where it would find relevance?

In 560 BC, there was a Greek philosopher, whose name was Heraclitus. He believed that the “logos” had everything was in constant movement, had order, and was controlled. He believed that not only nature had a controlled time of seasons but also held that man’s ability to understand and have knowledge of the truth to discern right from wrong,

The “Logos,” was nothing less than the very mind of God, controlling the world and every person in it. John used this concept as well as the sacredness of God’s word as found in the Old Testament to present Jesus as that “Logos” the “Word” that was made flesh. John, who while exiled on the small Greek island of Patmos at the end of his life, wrote around 100 AD his Gospel account of the life and times of Jesus the Christ and concentrated on the very words of Jesus.

The first chapter of Saint John’s Gospel is considered by many theologians and biblical scholars as one of the greatest statements of Christian religious thought ever to be achieved in the mind of man. A standard of one’s faith

I think one of the “pieces” of my faith, is found in the Gospel of John. His account of the “Word,” is not only revealed in the opening chapter of his Gospel, but also later came, where he witnessed and heard Jesus said to His Apostles, when asked by his Apostle Philip:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the

beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and without Him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in Him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.” In the John 14:8, we read of a conversation at the Last Supper, instituted by Philip concerning the “Word”:

“Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know Me? Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’ Do you not believe that I am in Father and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own; but the Father who dwells in Me, He does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; but if you do not, then believe Me because of the works themselves.”

#### **WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES US CONCERNING THE “WORD OF GOD”**

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

– John 1:1

[And] Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” – Matthew 4:4

“Then He [Jesus] opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.” – Luke 24:45

[And Jesus said]: “You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that testify on My behalf. Yet you refuse to come to Me to have life.”

– John 5:39

[And Jesus said]: “The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life.”

– John 6:63

And He [Jesus] replied, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it.”

– Luke 11:28

“But the word of the Lord endures forever, and this is the word that was preached to you.”

– 1 Peter 1:25

“Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

– Ephesians 6:17

“And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe.”

– 1 Thessalonians 2:13

“Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

– Colossians 3:16

“For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”

– Hebrews 4:12



#### **JESUS: THE SOWER OF THE SEED**

“This is the meaning of the parable. The seed is the Word of God.” – Luke 8:11

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

On this, the Solemnity of the Word of God Sunday, in the PNCC, I would like to speak about one of the parables of Jesus, the Parable of the Sower. This parable is found in the Synoptic Gospels of Matthew 13:1–23, Mark 4:1–20, and Luke 8:4–15.

Now a “parable” is defined in the dictionary as a “simple story that illustrates a moral or spiritual lesson.”

In the Parables of Jesus, He was to convey to His disciples a greater understanding of the “Kingdom of God, through common concepts known to the people of His day such as the “sowing” of seed. In Luke 8:9-10, we read of His purpose of using parables. “Then His disciples asked Him what the meaning of this parable might be. He answered them, “For the knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of God has been granted to you; but to the rest, they are made known through parables,

so that ‘they may look but not see’ and ‘hear but not understand.’”

You know, throughout the centuries, there have been great biblical scholars and theologians who wrote countless volumes of commentaries, giving their own interpretations on the parables of Jesus. What it must have been like to have been a disciple of Jesus; to walk with Him daily, during His three-year public ministry, and have Him, as the “Word of God made flesh,” as the source of instruction; to share in His wisdom, knowledge and the deeper meanings to these simple stories of spiritual Truths.

I believe that in all of His parables found in the New Testament, there is a common denominator, and that common denominator is the spiritual growth of an individual.

These parables would serve as “templates” of knowing God and His “kingdom.” In the case of the Parable of the Sower, Jesus continues to give definition to this story. In Matthew 13:37-39, we read: “And He [Jesus] answered, “The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. “He goes on: “the weeds are the people of the evil one and the enemy who sows them is the devil.” Weeds?

I have read that there is a weed, found in the Middle East, that is poisonous, and can grow alongside wheat, or the good seed. It is known as the “bearded darnel” also called “fake wheat.”

In Holy Scripture, as found in Matthew 13, we read of the “The Parable of the tares.” It speaks of the next stage of the development of the good seed that was sowed. It is known as “germination”.

Germination is defined as: “the development of a plant from a seed.” It has also been defined as “the process of something coming into existence and developing.” So much for the correlation between the physical and the spiritual seeds of man, both planted and harvested by God among the weeds.

In the beginning stages of the germination of wheat, this weed can be planted by enemies and is undistinguishable from the wheat. As they both grow together, this weed, also referred to as a “tare,” begins to take on a slightly different “sickly”

gray appearance. The problem with removing this weed too soon is that when first noticed, its roots have become so intertwined with the roots of the wheat, that to remove it prematurely would result in destroying the wheat, the good seed.

It was only at the harvest that the two could be separated. The process of removing the “bearded darnel” or “tare” from the wheat in the days of Jesus was very laborious and could only be done by hand. It is also known that anyone deliberately sowing this weed among wheat was a crime, punishable in Roman law.

I believe that Jesus wanted to point out to all that even when the good seed of the Word of God takes root within oneself, and begins to grow, it grows alongside the tares of life. If one does not properly cultivate the good plant with the wisdom and teachings of the Lord, the weeds will eventually choke and destroy that which was planted in man.

So, how can we equate and relate to the Word of God and to the Parable of the Sower? Jesus tells us in this parable, that not all good seed finds good soil, for some seed falls among rocks and thorns.

In distinguishing between the wheat and the tares, we look at the word “discernment.” Discernment is defined as the “act of perceiving, distinguishing or recognizing (something or someone) different.”

In the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians, Paul speaks of different spiritual gifts from God, and among them, found in 12:10, we read that “discernment” is a spiritual gift from God which helps us to recognize different spirits.” It could be said that anyone or anything which seeks to destroy the good seed of the “word of God,” which is sown within the heart of an individual is an “enemy” to that word. As Jesus would say: “Let those who have ears, hear.”

Again, I believe that all these parables of Jesus have a commonality for the positive growth of a Christian and involves faith. Faith is a very strong word and is mentioned in the Gospel of Jesus many times, in His miracles and teachings. We find that faith is defined as “having complete trust or confidence in someone or something.” St. Paul defines “faith” in Hebrews 11:1 as: “the assurance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not

seen.” Paul came to know of this assurance in his faith, with his encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus c. 33 -36 AD, three to five years after the Lord’s death and Resurrection.

Paul would go on to be credited as writing as many as fourteen books of the New Testament. It can be said that the seed of the “Word of God” found its place in the heart and mind of Paul and converted him from being a persecutor of the Church, to a believer and defender in the Lord, Jesus Christ.

In our Christian beliefs, we look to the Lord Jesus and all those who have asked Him sincerely and humbly to come into their lives. It is essential that in Him, we place our complete trust and confidence in His “Good News.” Although we cannot see faith in a physical way, faith is a spiritual gift of the grace of God, offered to all who would seek spiritual enlightenment and sanctification. Jesus was to comment on this, in His Parable of the Mustard Seed as found in Matthew, Mark and Luke, that if one has faith, only the size of a mustard seed, one can do all things.

In the Parable of the Yeast, as found in Matthew 13:33 and Luke 13:21, Jesus again speaks of the process of a transformation that takes place within the individual. It begins with the “life giving agent” of yeast, added to the flour which causes the flour to grow and expand. So, it is in the life of a Christian, who grows in maturity and in the wisdom of the Lord, by allowing the life-giving agent of God’s grace, added to the “good” seed, or His Word, which transforms and shapes one’s character.

In the couple of these Parables of Jesus, we become aware of His Word. In the ‘seeds’ that He sows to us and to others, these “seeds” are cultivated. In the PNCC, the “Word of God” is a Sacrament, which has not only “sanctifying grace” but has its own individual “sacramental grace.” Its purpose, as outlined in the Catechism of the PNCC, is to learn to know the Divine Will of God and become strengthened in our faith. By this we become united with Christ and become better qualified to labor in the vineyard of the Lord and in the kingdom of God here on earth.

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus: may we all have the ears to hear and understand the spiritual truths found in the Parables of Jesus and

may we come to know the wisdom of Jesus as He proclaims in the Gospel of John: “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing.

During His short ministry, we find examples of where Jesus is referred to as “Rabboni” which is translated to “my Teacher.” What better source to understand the “mind” of God than through the teachings of His only begotten Son, Jesus.

St. Paul would write in his Second Letter to the Corinthians 9:10, these words: "Now He who supplies seed to the Sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness."



### **THE POWER & SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WORD OF GOD**

Let us begin, on this **Solemnity of the Word of God**, with the term “word.” It is defined as a “single distinct meaningful element of speech or writing,”

We know that words have power. Words can cause extreme anger and pain, as well as deep love and compassion. A word can be spoken or written. We could speak for hours and give countless examples of the power of the spoken and the written “word,” which has been expressed throughout history by great spiritual teachers, philosophers, professors, poets, historians, theologians, statesmen, and unfortunately, by dictators and despots.

There is in Holy Scriptures, a sacredness of the power and wisdom of the “Word” in all religions; For example: To an Orthodox Jew, they cannot touch the written name of God, using their own hand, but in the reading the Holy Torah, they must use a stylus, known as a “Yad,” translated in Yiddish as “hand.”

Consider the “Word of God,” as found in the Holy Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, from the Torah of Moses through the teachings of the prophets, to John the Baptist; through the Apostles of Peter and Paul, James and John as well as other early Christian writers; all these words, we are taught in catechetical instruction, comes from the

inspiration of the Holy Spirit and are meant for the enlightenment and “sanctification” of man and the “edification” of His Body, which is Church.

Consider the words spoken by Jesus, as found in the four Gospels accounts; from the Beatitudes found in Matthew, to His discourses of the Last Supper as found in John and everything in between. Through these Gospel accounts, Jesus would proclaim the wisdom and the very mind of God.

Think of the power of His words, to heal the sick and even to raise the dead:

**“Ephpheta, be thou opened”** were the words that He spoke, when He cured a deaf man in Mark 7:32-34.

**“Talitha cumi, or “young girl, I say to you arise,”** words spoken when He raised Jairus’ daughter from the dead. - Mark 5:41.

**“When He had said this, He cried with a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come out!’”** - John 11:43.

Think of the power of the words of salvation and redemption as found in the words spoken by Jesus, after six hours of being crucified from His cross:

**“Father forgive them, for they know not what they are do.”** - Luke 23:34

**“It is finished.”** - John 19:30

**“Father, into your hands I commit My spirit.”** - Luke 23:46

I have read that this last scripture passage was an early Jewish passage taught to Jewish children which is found in the O.T. Book of Psalms, Psalm 31:1.

The power of words. Today, in our troubled world, so many people are using “words” to express their hurt, anger and frustration which many times have drown out peaceful as violent protest.

I believe that the “Word of God” spoken by Jesus, came help to heal, amend, strengthen, inspire, enlighten and give hope not only to individuals, but also to the collective society, and to serve as a reminder towards a greater good; if we can only trust in the power and the wisdom of the “Word of God.” as spoken by Jesus.

We read during at the end of Holy Mass from the Gospel of John: “In the beginning was the Word,

and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

As fellow Christians, our belief is that Jesus, the Christos, the Anointed One, was sent to be the emissary by our heavenly Father, to teach mankind the way of peace and love through His words and example.

Do you not see that the “Sower” of the seed is none other than Jesus Christ, the “Word who became flesh?” St. John, towards the end of his life was sent in exile to the island of Patmos, where he wrote the final Gospel account of the Life and Ministry of Jesus. Whereas the Gospels written by Matthew, Mark and Luke tell more of what Jesus did, John’s Gospel tells more of what Jesus said. It could be said that John wrote his account based on the power of the words of Jesus, as the “Word,” who reflected the true transparency of seeing God, hearing God and seeing into the mind of God.

To me, the key to the Parable of the Sower is not just the casting of the seed, but rather where the seeds landed. I believe that there is a deeper spiritual truth which exists between the seed, the soil and the condition of one’s own individual soul to receive these seeds.

I believe that all the seeds which were originally sowed were good but let us look at where these seeds landed.

The first seed fell on a path; the second fell on a rock; the third fell among thorns and finally, some fell on good and fertile ground, where it produced fruit.

I would say that the first seed which was sowed on the road, can represent individuals who have been hardened by life, like a road well-traveled. This seed, through the hardness of heart of an individual finds no softness of understanding to take root. So, as Jesus teaches, the evil one takes it away. In the Gospel of Luke, it is the birds who take this seed away, but in either case, the seed is taken away.

The second seed, which was tossed on a rock, can represent individuals who lack a spiritual foundation to allow the good seed to take root and germinate. I think of the cynics, the atheists, the anarchists and the secular humanists who deny the existence of God or have no need of a God in their lives.

The third seed, which fell among the thorns, are those individuals who live solely in the physical world. To these individuals, as Jesus teaches, are those who go their way, after hearing the “word” and are choked by the cares, riches, and the pleasures of life. I think of all those who have become addicted and enslaved to their own greed, passions, and excesses.

We also hear in this parable that some seed fell on fertile ground. Anyone who has ever planted seeds in a garden knows that the soil needs to be prepared before planting.

In like manner, it is in the preparation of the fertile ground of the individual, that the Word of God takes root, germinates, and grows. During this germination, a plant needs to be watered and protected from weeds; so, must the soul through prayer and devotion be watered and be on guard from having the fruit of that seed lost or destroyed.

The seeds that our Lord Jesus Christ sows through His Good news, are sowed in all our lives, and it is dependent through on our “free will” on whether we choose to hear the Word of God. It is good seed. It is life-giving seed. But today, as we contemplate the meaning of this parable, the question is asked:

What type of soil do we possess? Do we allow the seed of the Word of God to take root in our lives daily and grow? Does the Word of God find depth within ourselves to transform our old selves into new selves? Does the “Word of God” grow strong daily even when we are confronted by the weeds and brambles that life presents to each of us?

My dear brothers and sisters: On this Solemnity of the Word of God, may His Word, as proclaimed by His Son, in Holy Scripture grow stronger in each of you each day, for you have been given “the knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. May this “Good News” of Jesus, direct us of we are to live and treat each another.

Take the time to seek the Lord by reading His word. May we also examine ourselves and the type of soil we possess within ourselves as we cultivate these seeds of God that is sown. May we all, possess the wisdom to see, the ears to hear and the heart to comprehend the message of the Gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ and bear the fruit which in the end glorifies our Heavenly Father.



## **FEAST OF PETER AND PAUL JUNE 30<sup>TH</sup>**

Two important “pieces of our faith,” I believe becomes clearer as we see how the lives and ministries of Peter and Paul were intertwined and came together for I believe God had a purpose in choosing both Peter and Paul to be the leaders of the early church through their writings.

Peter known as the “Apostle of the Jews” was one of the first Apostles to be chosen by Jesus. He is considered the spokesmen to the other Apostles. and Paul known as the “Apostle of the Gentiles” preached mostly to the church he helped establish.

Today, we celebrate both of their lives, for tradition holds that they both suffered martyrdom, under the persecution of the early Christians by Nero c. 67-68 AD. Peter was to be crucified upside down and Paul is believed to have been beheaded.



## **SOLEMNITY OF VISITATION OF THE BVM JULY 2<sup>ND</sup>**

On Tuesday, we celebrate the Solemnity of the Visitation of Blessed Mother Mary,

### **MARY VISITS ELIZABETH** (Luke 1:39-45)

“At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, where she entered Zechariah’s home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed: “Blessed are you among women and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!”

## **THE MAGNIFICANT**

(Luke 1:46-55)

The **“Magnificat”** is taken from Luke’s Gospel (1:46-55) and has been referred to as Mary’s “Hymn of Praise,” or the “Canticle of Mary.”

“My soul magnifies the Lord  
And my spirit rejoices in God my Savior;  
Because He has regarded  
the lowliness of His handmaid;  
For behold, henceforth all generations  
shall call me blessed;  
Because He who is mighty  
has done great things for me,  
and holy is His name;  
And His mercy is from  
generation to generation  
on those who fear Him.  
He has shown might with His arm,  
He has scattered the proud  
in the conceit of their heart.  
He has put down the mighty from their thrones,  
and has exalted the lowly.  
He has filled the hungry with good things,  
and the rich He has sent away empty.  
He has given help to Israel, his servant,  
mindful of His mercy  
Even as he spoke to our fathers,  
to Abraham and to his posterity forever.”



### **JULY 4<sup>TH</sup> – OUR INDEPENDENCE**

**“Give me liberty or give me death.”**

Spoken by Patrick Henry in a speech he delivered at the Second Continental Congress of Virginia on March 23, 1775, at St. John's Church in Richmond, Virginia.

On July 4, 1776, the Declaration of Independence composed by Thomas Jefferson, the third President of our Nation, was approved and signed by the 56 delegates who had gathered at the Second Continental Congress held at Freedom Hall in Philadelphia, PA. This Declaration of Independence explained why the thirteen original colonies, who were at war with Great Britain, regarded

themselves as thirteen independent and sovereign states, no longer to be under British rule. With this Declaration of Independence, these new states took a collective first step toward the forming of the United States of America.

Merriam-Webster defines “independence” as: “free from outside control; not depending on another's authority,” and the word “freedom” is defined as: “the power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint.”

The story of the beginning of our nation is a history filled with much struggle and hardships. From the opening battles of Lexington and Concord, to Bunker Hill; from the hardships of the Continental Army at Valley Forge in the winter of 1777, to the many battles that were fought between the Colonialists and the “Red Coats” over 5 years, it was not until, the surrender of the British General Charles Cornwallis at Yorktown, Virginia on October 19, 1781, that our independence was truly won.

As we celebrate this 4<sup>th</sup> of July, I think of the many “Sons of Liberty” such as Joseph Warren, John Hancock, Samuel Adams, John Adams, Paul Revere, and others who came to believe in the freedom as expressed by Patrick Henry: who said in 1775; “Give me liberty or give me death.”

I do not know how many of you have ever read the Declaration of Independence, but I believe every American should read this great document at least once in their lifetime, for it is the foundation of our democracy.

This document begins with these words: “When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God entitle them.” These opening words would serve as the belief of those who signed this document; that a man’s right to freedom from tyranny and oppression was a God given right.

I believe, that what followed, as found in the Preamble of this document, was the core of this right of independence and freedom: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created

equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

Unfortunately, in 1776 and even to this day, there are many Americans who do not believe that all men are created equal, which is shown in the way that people talk to one another and treat each other. It should also be understood that slavery and the enslavement of people was an accepted economic practice in the south, and the crimes, treatment and bartering of a fellow human beings were one of the darkest marks on our nation. This injustice continued until President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862, at a time when our nation was embroiled in the middle of a “great civil war.” This proclamation officially took effect on January 1, 1863. It is where Lincoln declared “that all persons held as slaves” within the rebellious states during the Civil War are and henceforth shall be free.”

We recently celebrated “Juneteenth” in our country, which marked the end of slavery in America, but unfortunately is known and celebrated by few Americans.

At the dedication of the National cemetery in Gettysburg, PA on November 19, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln, recalls the beginning of this declaration of independence: “Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.”

As a reader and lover of American history, I am saddened and disappointed, that there is so much anger and division in our nation; that we stand at a crossroad of losing the concept of “democracy,” which brought our nation together by our founding fathers.

We must always remember and strive to remember that the early founders of this great democracy, set forth principles and called upon all of us to be the “United” not “Divided,” as the United States of America.

Whatever political affiliation and thought process one may possess, all should stop, put aside politics, even for but a day, come together and celebrate a

mutual freedom and a democracy that so many other nations desire to have.

As a lover of biographies, I read that the 16<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, kept a Holy Bible on his desk, which was a source of his comfort and inspiration. One of his most cherished quotes comes directly from the Gospel according to Saint Mark 3:25 when he spoke: “A house divided against itself cannot stand.” It was in 1858 that Lincoln spoke these words, speaking against slavery that would eventually divide our nation and bring about the American Civil War starting in 1860, seeing over 6 million deaths.

I think about the “non-violent” philosophy of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who patterned many of his sermons and beliefs after the life and times of Mahatma Gandhi of India, another proponent of non-violence. Gandhi began, as a lawyer and a civil rights activist back in 1914 and continued to protest against British colonial rule until India won its independence from England on August 15, 1947. Known as the “Father of India,” Gandhi strove to unite Hindu and Moslems in peace & harmony. Not only Gandhi was assassinated on July 30, 1948, but the common hopes of uniting India, for both Hindus and Moslems died with him.

As we celebrate our 4<sup>th</sup> of July independence, amid all the celebrations, the cookouts and the fireworks, may we never forget the words and thoughts found in the “Pledge of Allegiance” which should serve as an inspiration for each of us, of what it truly means to be an American:

“I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all,

My dear brothers and sisters: The word “indivisible” means “not to be divided.” May we all pray to be enlightened, that in our souls, we may all learn to grow and live in peace and harmony with one another for the greater good. Abraham Lincoln at his second Inaugural speech, delivered on March 11, 1865, coined these words:

“With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right.”



## PARISH CALENDAR AND NEWS

8:45 am Morning Devotionals

9:00 am Holy Mass of the Eucharist

### THIS WEEK'S MASS SCHEDULE

(June 29<sup>th</sup> - July 6<sup>th</sup>)

Mon. 6/30	Feast – Peter & Paul, Apostles Commemoration of Paul, Apostle Bertrand, Bishop Martial, Bishop
Tues. 7/1	Mass for Health and Healing Shenute, Abbot Gall of Clermont, Bishop Carilefus, Abbot
Wed. 7/2	Solemnity – Visitation of the BVM Visitation of the BVM Processus & Martinian, Martyrs Monegundis, Widow
Thurs. 7/3	Mass to the Holy Saints of God Heliodorus of Altino, Bishop Anatolius of Constantinople, Bishop Irenaeus, Dc & M. & Mustiola, M.
Friday 7/4	Independence Day (USA) Flavian & Elias, Bishops Andrew of Crete, Bishop Odo of Canterbury, Bishop
Saturday 7/5	Mass to the Holy Name of Jesus Cyril. Monk & Methodius, Bishop Antony Zaccaria, Priest & Confessor Athanasius the Athonite, Abbot

### NEXT SUNDAY, JULY 6, 2025

#### 14<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY IN THE ORDINARY

9:00 am - Holy Mass of the Eucharist to be celebrated in the Traditional Rite.



### MINISTRY OF LAY READERS

The following is the schedule of our brothers and sisters, who have volunteered to proclaim the "Word of God" on Sundays. As scheduled:

Sunday, June 29 <sup>th</sup>	Jim Winn
Sunday, July 6 <sup>th</sup>	Paula Winn
Sunday, July 13 <sup>th</sup>	Shirley Mietlicki-Floyd

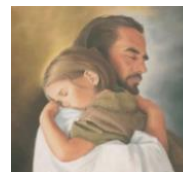


## PRAYERS FOR HEALTH AND HEALING

May we pray for the health and healing for all those who we remember in prayer, especially for:

George and Janet Sadowski, Wayne & Pat Shaw, Richard Foster, Carolyn Rapalye, Karen Herzig, Cindy Benjamin, Mary Jenkanowski, Bill Durkee, Stefanik Gadecki, Marge Sanderson, Brandon Poe, Fernanda Harrington, baby James, Liam & Evelyn Spatcher, Jennie Harrington, Eric Rose, Halina Lukomski, Lori Lukomski, C.J. Panell, Mick Szumski, Tosia & Toka Bara, Laurie Lis, Fr. Sr. Joseph Krusienski, Fr. Sr. Joseph Soltysiak, Todd Odell, David Moskin, Laurie Lis, Jimmy & Paula Winn, Renata Wos, Jan Clark, and Joey De Fayette,

**Let us Pray:** O Lord, God of mercies, in Your kindness, stretch out Your hand and heal all our brothers and sisters who are in any way ailing. Deliver them, according to Your will, from all their present sicknesses and illnessness, and grant them recovery in Jesus' holy name. We ask this through the same Jesus Christ, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.



## OUR PARISH OUTREACH PROGRAMS

**"Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others." - Philippians 2:4**

### Our Food Ministry: "To Feed the Hungry"

**"I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat."**  
- Matthew 25:35

Our next grocery "give-a-way" date will be **Saturday, July 19<sup>th</sup>** from 10 o'clock while supplies last. I wish to thank all those who have donated to our food ministry. Donations of food as well as monetary donations to purchase food will be greatly appreciated.



### **We are still in need of the following:**

- Cereals and packets of instant oatmeal.
- Fruit juices, - V8, Apple and cranberry.
- powder milk / condensed milk.
- Hot chocolate and tea bags.
- Pasta and spaghetti sauce.
- Boxes of Mac-n-cheese.
- Canned tuna in water.
- Canned meats- chicken, salmon, etc.
- Ramen noodles.
- Soups- all varieties.
- Canned veggies and fruits.
- Children's snack packs.



**Please note:** Also, through our Parish ministries, we are continuing to collect “full sized” containers of personal care items and cleaning items to aid others. All items collected, will be donated to the various survival centers in our area. Items needed:

- Bar soaps and body wash, shampoo, toothpaste and toothbrushes, deodorant, hand sanitizers, toilet paper, and personal products for incontinence (pads & panty liners, baby powder, baby wipes and diapers.
- Liquid dish soap, laundry detergent, paper towels, bathroom and kitchen cleansers, dish sponges/scrubbers, trash bags.



### **Collecting plastic tops**

We continue to collect **white or clear plastic bottle tops** that will be donated to aid in the making of prosthetics for veterans in need.

A collection container has been set up in the vestibule of our church. Please help donate your plastic tops to this new ministry. May God bless all our endeavors.



## **THE EASTERN DIOCESE OF THE PNCC**

### **ED MISSION & EVANGELISM COMMISSION** **WEDNESDAYS AT NOON – CALL TO PRAYER**

On Wednesdays, at 12:00 Noon, during the month of July, all are called upon to offer the following prayers:

**O Lord, Jesus Christ**, Who said: “Ask and you shall receive; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you,” give, we ask You, the grace of Your most divine love, that with all our hearts, words and works we may love You and never cease to praise You. Make us, O Lord, have a perpetual fear and love of Your Holy Name for you never fail to govern those whom You establish in Your love. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

**Our Father**, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name; Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen.



### **CATHEDRAL OF THE PINES**

Clergy and members of the Eastern Diocese of the PNCC will gather on **Sunday, July 13<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 pm** at the **Cathedral of the Pines in Rindge, New Hampshire** for services. Following Holy Mass, participants are invited to a complimentary meal will take place at the Woodbound Inn, Ridge, New Hampshire.

### **ONE BREAD, ONE BODY** **Daily Devotions**

The newest edition of the “One Bread, One Body” a daily devotional booklet is now available, free of charge, in the vestibule of our Church. These daily readings are based on the Common Lectionary.

Daily readings can also be accessed on PCs by typing: **“www. uscb.org.”** or by accessing **“laudate”** on smartphones