

Saint Leo the Great Catholic Church

Very Reverend Justin L. Ward, S.T.L, Administrator

June 13, 2021 The Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B

Mass Intentions	Lector Schedule
St. Leo Church	9:00AM
Sunday June 13 9AM Connie Compton	June 13 Brian Sellers
	June 20 Joe Veres
	June 27 Jan McDonald

Welcome Rev. Mr. Charles Deering!

We welcome Rev. Mr. Charles Deering as our homilist this morning. Deacon Charles as ordained by Bishop Raica to the transitional diaconate on Saturday, June 5. He is assigned at Holy Spirit, Tuscaloosa Church where he will serve before returning to Notre Dame Seminary for his final semester. God willing, Deacon Charles will be ordained a priest next June.

VBS Celebration

Please join our VBS crew on Friday, June 18th at 7pm for our closing celebration to mark the end of Vacation Bible School. All parishioners are welcome! Come enjoy food and fellowship and let our little explorers lead you through the wilderness and show you everything that they have learned!

Thank You Father Ward!

Sunday, June 27 at 9:00 AM will be Father Ward's last Mass with St Leo the Great. Please join us for a celebratory brunch in his honor following Holy Mass. Help us give Father Ward a proper send-off and thank him for all that he has done for our Parish in his short time here.

Diocesan Conference August 13/14

Please "Save the Date" for a Year of the Parish and the Eucharist diocesan conference on August 13th and 14th at the Shrine of the Blessed Sacrament in Hanceville. The theme of the conference will be: "From the rising of the sun to its setting, a perfect offering is made." There will be Eucharist adoration and a Eucharistic procession on Friday night, the 13th, and speakers (including Dr. Scott Hahn and Dr. John Bergsma) on Saturday – with both an English and a Spanish track. More information in the coming weeks.

Last Week's Offertory

6/06/21 St. Leo \$1,363.00

This is how it is with the kingdom of God” So begins the two parables from the Gospel of Mark on this Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time. These parables are addressed to the whole Church and all its members to give us all courage and assurance when our efforts at building up the kingdom of God on this planet seem to produce such meager results.

The first parable contrasts apparently lifeless seeds which, once planted, grow into plants and trees, and the incredible variety of plant life we enjoy on this planet. Biology can tell us why this is so, can explain the genetic processes, the chemical and physical principles that govern growth, and yet most of us are still delighted and surprised when something we’ve planted grows and produces vegetables, fruit and flowers. All human activity in growing things is not excluded, of course: the soil must be tilled, the ground fertilized and watered, and there will always be weeds. You are not a successful gardener if your garden is overrun with weeds. Nevertheless, when growth happens there is still something wondrous, mysterious about the slow, inexorable, silent life that has developed out of our sight.

The hidden yet active power of the seed becomes the point of comparison in the Gospel parable about “the reign of God.” God is the one at work in building up the kingdom on this earth. That kingdom grows mysteriously, is growing even now, inevitably and inexorably, even though we do not always recognize where that growth is taking place, even though we do not know how it can possibly be happening in what we see around us. There is still work for human beings to do in building up the kingdom, work that may be likened to the work of a farmer or gardener, work that is like tilling and weeding and watering (fostering, protecting, nurturing).

All of us are charged with the work of cultivating the growth of the kingdom. We all have work to do. But it is God’s work, and God gives our efforts whatever success results. It ought to be enormously consoling that we are not personally and solely responsible for God’s Church. Like the original band of disciples, we are a motley crew at best. If we are impatient with what appears to be the impossibly slow growth of the kingdom, this is a parable that counsels patience. The “harvest” will come, but in God’s good time.

The second comparison or parable we hear in the Gospel has a slightly different, but related message. The mustard seed is very small, but the plant that results is fairly good size. In the mind of the Semitic storyteller, the size of the produce is unexpected, surprising, miraculous. As Jesus used this parable with his disciples, it is a message of reassurance in the face of what appears to be failure of his mission and message. It might appear to some impatient disciples that the work of announcing the advent of the kingdom had resulted pretty much in complete failure. Little did the disciples, only few in number then, realize that by the time this parable was written in the Gospel one generation later, small communities of disciples of Jesus would have spread as far as Rome. Within three centuries, the disciples of Jesus would become the official religion of the Roman empire, and then they would grow to become as numerous as the sands on the seashore. But that’s not the end of the story. In God’s own good time the disciples of Jesus would become something totally unexpected, something impossible except by the power of God. They would become an actual heavenly Kingdom.

The Gospel parables today call to us to a certain kind of waiting, but not lethargic passivity that lets things go because there is no hope. Where there is no hope, there is no commitment, and therefore no readiness for effort and self-sacrifice. What is essential for us in doing the work to which we have been called is patient waiting, characterized by prayerful discernment of God’s work in nature and history and in us. It is marked by an attitude of gratitude and collaboration. It is a matter of doing the human tasks, knowing that what seems so insignificant as to be hardly worth doing is like the mustard seed of the parable, growing to a harvest proportioned not to the human effort but to the divine intent. May God bring to perfection the good work he has begun! – Father Phil Rask

Don't Worry Be Happy

Don't Worry Be Happy is a 4-week mini-series being offered this summer by Sem. Collins Hess on the subject of happiness and God. Namely, if all men and women [restlessly] seek happiness, and if God is the only thing that can completely satisfy our searching hearts, then how do we come to know and ‘attain’ God? We will examine, for example, Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* (340 BC), St. Thomas Aquinas’s *Treatise on Happiness* (1270 AD), St. Thomas’s arguments for God’s existence, Church teaching, and the Holy Scriptures. Come join us for food, drink, and discussion! **We will NOT be meeting this week, Wednesday, June 16th.**