



Society of African Missions

23 Bliss Avenue
 Tenafly, NJ 07670
 Phone: 201-567-0450
 Visit our website
www.smafathers.org



Administration:

Fr Ranees A. Rayappan,
 Provincial Superior
Fr Dermot Roache,
 House Superior

Mass Schedule

Sundays
 11:45 am
Weekdays & Holy Days
 11:45 am

Confessions

By appointment. Contact
 Fr Dermot Roache 201-567-0450 Ext 212

Bereavement & Visit to the Sick

Contact Fr. Dermot Roache
 201-567-0450 Ext. 212

Perpetual Mass Association

Office open Monday-Friday
 from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

S.M.A. Vocation Office

Fr. Julien Esse, SMA
 551-449-4357

Sunday Collection: \$753

Thank you for your support.
 Please remember to support
 your local parishes.

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME Masses for the week of September 6— September 12, 2020

Date	Time	Intention	Requested by:
Sun.-Sat.	8:00	Liv & Dec Benefactors of the SMA	
Sun. Sept. 6	10:00	Elena Egay Arabia (Liv.) Willie Padaloy (Liv.)	Linda Rubio
	11:45	August Ine Rubio Armando Rowan Lara (Liv.)	Linda Rubio
Mon. Sept. 7	9:30	John & Edythe Sheehy and Family+	
	11:45	Joan Naida+	Pat Higgins & Manuel Katz
Tue. Sept. 8	9:30	Carmelo Gonzalez+	Ben & Mely Ramirez
	11:45	Janeth Aberde (Liv.)	Rosanne Ambulo
Wed. Sept. 9	9:30	Madeline Halley+	Susan Murphy
	11:45	Antonio S. Fernandez (Liv.)	Sister
Thurs. Sept. 10	9:30	Virginia Villarosa+	
	11:45	Reynaldo T. Malaluan, Sr+	Angela & Roger Gussoni
Fri. Sept. 11	9:30	Virginia Villarosa+	
	11:45	Victims of Terror	Neary Family
Sat. Sept. 12	9:30	Dec. Members of Guiney & McCarthy Families	
	11:45	Esther Lozada+	Julie Torres

Please note that the Mass Intentions are being honored in private by our Priests.

Today's Readings: *Ezekiel 33:7-9*

Ezekiel is told something which is crucial for an understanding of prophecy; the prophet has responsibility for passing on God's word to God's people.

Second Reading *Romans 13:8-10*

Love and debt are not normally equated with each other, but Paul insists that Christians have the debt of mutual love, which is the answer to each commandment.

Gospel *Matthew 18:15-20*

In the community of Jesus' followers its members must take responsibility for each other. The purpose is to rescue a sister or brother from being a wrongdoer.

REFLECTION

You will find few times during our liturgical year that the Sunday readings are aligned towards one theme so completely, so unequivocally, and as clearly as this Sunday. It is our duty as Christians to point out to others their sinful ways. There is no way around it, we have to do it. The question is how to do it. Sometimes it is not what we say but how we say it that is the key.

St. Paul teaches us today to love one another and that this is the fulfillment of the law. However, love is not just a mushy sentiment but implies action. The more difficult side of love is to let someone know that they are not doing things right, particularly when it involves criticizing someone's behavior. In today's Gospel, Jesus tells us that if someone sins against you to confront them and then if they do not agree with you, to bring brothers and sisters of the Church with you and confront them again. In the first reading today, Jeremiah was told by the Lord to tell the house of Israel of their sinfulness...guess what, they didn't take it well. The Lord also told Jeremiah that if he didn't prophesy toward them, then their sins were on Jeremiah. Jeremiah did the right thing and told the people of Israel what the Lord thought of their behavior and the Lord at the end of the day rewarded and protected Jeremiah.

Often times when we do confront loved ones and dear friends about sinful elements of their lifestyle, they will not take it well, just like the house of Israel didn't take well to reprimand either. However it is our job to do so, just like Jeremiah. In today's culture of sexual promiscuity, there are a lot of things going on that upset our God. Using fire and brimstone tactics in relaying God's message to others may or may not be ideal, particularly in this arena. Often times, people will close their ears when you talk of eternal punishment. Perhaps the message needs to be couched in love first.

When we point out to others that they are living lifestyles that are not in accord with God, the message should be conveyed in a loving manner. For example, mentioning some of their positive graces and charisms first can be helpful. Mentioning how God loves them so much and loves them unconditionally can also be helpful. How God understands how they think and how God would appreciate so much if they were to live by His teachings and not society's teachings. Not only would it make God happy, but by following Jesus' teachings about human sexuality, their own lives would become much happier if they would commit to it. One of my favorite Psalms is Psalm 128 which talks of the happiness of family life that is rooted in God. It is so true; life is so good when Christ is the centerpiece of our life. So much family dysfunction is caused by a misuse of our sexuality. There are so many things in today's culture that lead us to misuse our sexuality like pornography and the endorsement of impure relationships by the media. Something that is inherently so very good that God created for us can be the downfall of so many souls when used outside of the sandbox that God has designated for our sexuality; which is within the context of Christian marriage.

Keep in mind that it is our job to instruct others when they are living a life of sin. There is no way around it. Yet lead with love and always with love. How many times to remind them of their sinfulness is something that the Holy Spirit can guide you with. There is a fine line between badgering and loving instruction, loving guidance. Where that line falls is dependent on each situation. Remember St. Monica who followed her son all over the world in trying to convert him. She was successful! God heard her constant prayers and tears; He hears ours as well.

I can't emphasize enough the importance of prayer for your family and friends who are not living Godly lives and for you to live a Christian life with joy, people see that. Yet prayer is the key. As the Evangelist Luke teaches us so clearly, all prayers are answered, specifically when they are God's will. However, keep in mind that prayers are answered in God's time not ours. He doesn't put a spiritual gun to our head or the head of others. Think of your prayers like a bank account with grace to be withdrawn at a timely moment or a coiled spring that is ready to explode at the appropriate time. Only God knows the right moment for people regarding conversion. So we need to let God be God and for us, lovingly correct or reprimand in love, those who are not living a Godly life and then pray, pray, and pray some more. Amen.

Fr Michael Bova, SMA