



Society of African Missions

“The Mission”

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



Mass Schedule

Sundays

10:00 am; 12 noon

Weekdays & Holy Days

11:45 am

Christmas & New Year’s Day

10:00 am; 12 noon

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 9:30 am to 3:00 pm

S.M.A. Vocation Office

Fr. Eliecer Sandoval, SMA
551-449-4357

Sunday Collection: \$806

Thank you for your support.

Please remember to support
your local parishes.

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Masses for the week of August 29, 2021 – SEPTEMBER 4, 2021

Date	Time	Intention	Requested by:
Sun.-Sat.	8:00	Liv & Dec Benefactors of the SMA	
Sun. Aug. 29	10:00	Diane DelFavero+	Closter Women’s Cornerstone
	12:00	Maria R. Valdes+	Friend
Mon. Aug. 30	9:30	Liv. & Dec. members of the Desrochers Family	
	11:45	Adelaida Manansala+	Arsenia Perez
Tue. Aug. 31	9:30	Liv. & Dec. Mem of Paradis Family	
	11:45	Franco Pastore+	Family
Wed. Sept. 1	9:30	Rev. Raymond C. Plourde+	
	11:45	Eric Sarner (Liv.) Birthday	Victoria Costa
Thurs. Sept. 2	9:30	Fr. Noel Gomez + & Filotea Mada+	Linda Rubio
	11:45	Sean McCabe	Sister-in-law
Fri. Sept. 3	9:30	Special Intentions Neill & Forgrave Families	
	11:45	Special Intentions Stoever & Mongiello Families	
Sat. Sept. 4	9:30	Special Intentions Neill & Forgrave Families	
	11:45	Sheamus Feeney+ Kevin Shanks+	Mary Quinn & Family

Today’s Readings:

First Reading Deuteronomy 4:1-2. 6-8

The laws of God are a sign of God’s presence and offer us God’s life.

Second Reading James 1:17-18. 21-22. 27

Goodness is all gift, because all goodness comes from God as a gift.

Gospel Mark 7:1-8. 14-15. 21-23

The Gospel is concerned with uncovering what is hidden, especially the secrets of the human heart.

MEMORIAL DONATION.- The Altar Candles this week are in memory of Diane DelFavero requested by the Closter Women’s Cornerstone.



“Their hearts are far from me.”

Illustration

There are some signs which we share with the other animals. Cries of pain, or sighs of pleasure, which are a bit like the purring of a cat, are examples. Some physical signs belong to human beings alone: waving our hand, shaking hands, nodding in agreement. Some signs seem more natural than others, so smiling means the same thing all over the world. Other signs are clearly invented, such as the warning sign for radiation, or red for stop and green for go in traffic lights. We can see the use of these signs, but sometimes the signs seem to be for their own sake and it is hard to see what they are signifying.

This is the case with the huge range of symbols, the dietary rules and the elaborate rules for worship in the Jewish world, a world that Jesus was very familiar with. What was the point of these rules and signs? The book of Deuteronomy answers this quite simply. They are signs that God had given the people of Israel so that they would be near to God. Many of the practices seem strange, but they were meant to be strange, unique to Israel, so that by obeying them, the people would retain its identity: an identity which was quite simply being the people of God. Before we start criticising the ancient Jews, we might consider how many symbols we use in our life to mark out the many tribes to which we belong. To be human is to be a symbolic being.

Gospel Teaching

The Old Testament allowed signs but not images. What is the difference between a sign and an image? An image may be a sign, like a traffic sign, but it is not the resemblance that makes it a sign. It is the fact that the sign points to something other than itself that makes it a sign. All the signs of the Old Testament, however odd and demanding they might seem, pointed to God. With the coming of Christ, the signs became irrelevant, because he himself in his humanity was the greatest sign of all, a sign that pointed to God. The humanity of Christ, his human words, human actions and his human birth and death are all one great sign which reveals the presence of God. So the many signs by which Judaism lived became irrelevant. Instead we have Christ. Since his humanity is perceptible to our senses, we use images to represent his humanity. At the same time, Christ is risen into a world beyond our imagination, so we use signs in the sacraments to make the presence of both his humanity and his divinity visible and indeed tangible to us. We can imagine Christ in his earthly life but the resurrection stories make it clear that we can't quite imagine the risen Christ except inasmuch as he allows himself to be seen as an ordinary human being.

This does not mean that the criticism of the Jews in the Gospel does not apply to us. We can use the sacraments while our hearts are far from God, or we can pray and preach but not really allow God to be close. The unclean heart is the heart that does not allow God to enter.

Application

*If the humanity of Christ is the prime sign of the presence of God through the incarnation, then our common humanity is the sign of the humanity of Christ. We know his humanity through the humanity of others, especially in their suffering. As the Second Vatican Council's Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, says, "For, by his incarnation, he, the Son of God, has in a certain way united himself with each individual" (22).*

The sacraments are teaching us to recognise God in our humanity, so that we may see that humanity as it is in God. The sacraments enable us to be nearer to God than the old symbolic life could, because it is God that we touch in touching the humanity of Christ, receiving that humanity into ourselves and with it the divinity. The well-lived sacramental life makes every life precious to us, because every life is an image of God. This is true by nature since God made us in God's own image as rational beings. Yet it is even more true by the fact of the incarnation, as we are shaped in the image of Christ.