

## 26<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – by Father Dave

The parish to which the new pastor was assigned was large, but demographically it favored the retired parishioners. What the pastor saw gave him some concern for the future of the parish. Those who held leadership positions in the parish – while very good and faith-filled people – had not allowed much turnover in leadership positions to younger parishioners. It's not that younger is better. Rather it was that there was a danger of having no replacement in the wings when age did finally catch up with those who had been doing the same tasks for many years. The situation became worse when the men's club decided to host a Friday Lenten Fish Fry. Having pushed to involve younger blood in the activities of the parish, the pastor was able to convince some younger men to come and help set up the school cafeteria and to assist with cooking and serving. The younger men were pleased and excited to have been asked. They took off from work early, arrived at the church, only to be shocked and dismayed that the "old guard" had arrived even earlier to set up, cook and serve – thus leaving the younger men with nothing to do. It would take years before the pastor could once again convince the younger parishioners to join in activities.

Quite often this is the story in many churches, as well as non-church organizations. There are those who either will not or cannot relinquish leadership. Today's Scripture stories warn us against such exclusivity. Moses had endured the burden of leadership of the Israelites for many years, and it had gotten to be more than he could handle. The people were incessantly complaining about their plight in the desert, and just prior to our passage for today they were complaining about the lack of meat. The Book of Numbers tells us that Yahweh instructed Moses to pick leaders from the various clans to share 'the burden of the people.' Once appointed, the new leaders 'prophesied.' This was not predicting the future. Prophecy in ancient Israel was seen as ecstatic singing, dancing and chanting, much like the experience of modern day charismatics or Pentecostals. To find Eldad and Medad prophesying, but not having been duly appointed, created an interesting moment that was quickly filled with jealousy of the existing leaders. They did not want to share power. They also could not believe that God would call someone not of their number. Moses, the leader for years, was himself not the least bit jealous. He was neither jealous nor bitter about sharing leadership with the new 70, nor was he concerned about Eldad and Medad. Moses recognized Yahweh's call and will when he saw it. Moses was like any modern day pastor saying – "If only we had more volunteers just like them!"

Jesus is likewise unconcerned. John made an error which Jesus corrected. John was not so much concerned that there was someone effectively using the name of Jesus, his concern was that "he does not follow us," meaning the disciples. Jesus pointed out that the power

the man demonstrated was not his own nor did the disciples themselves have power. God was the source of healing. If anyone has faith enough to utilize God, then that person ultimately is a friend. Exclusivity is a real danger. It is a scandal in the real sense of the word. "Scandal" literally described a stone or object in a path that caused a person to trip and fall. Discipleship is seen as a journey, and a scandal would be anything that would cause a disciple to discontinue or interrupt this journey. The "little ones" Jesus refers to are not, in this case, children. They are the newest followers of Jesus, the Neophytes. Nothing must interfere with their new journey of faith. Jesus' call to take out an eye, or to cut off a hand or foot is not meant to be taken literally. Instead – whatever causes us to sin – it is precisely those things that we are to eliminate from our lives. Exclusivity to the point of preventing members of our churches from helping is a horrible and dangerous sin, one that interrupts our shared journey to the Kingdom.

Let us pray for the Conversion of the World  
& for Peace.

### Saints / Celebrations for this week

**September 29 – Feast of the Archangels, Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael** – Holy Scripture speaks of angels as ministers of God in human affairs. St Michael defends the honor of God against Satan. St Gabriel announced to Mary the coming of Jesus. St Raphael guided Tobias on his journey and brought healing to Tobit, his blind father. As servants of God, the angels are instruments of God's hidden providence. They preserve us from harm, give god's wisdom and strength to humanity, and accompany us on our journey through life.



**October 2 – Feast of the Guardian Angels** – Both the Old and the New Testaments recognize that God gives each person born into this world an angel guardian. Jesus, calling a little child to Him, said that the angels in Heaven watch over children such as this one. By a loving providence God reaches into human life to guard, protect and to lead us on our way to salvation. We may recall the prayer that we were taught when we were youngsters: *Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day (night) be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide.*

**BULLETIN REFLECTION by Father Rody**  
**SEPT 26 2021, 26<sup>TH</sup> SUN YR-B...MK 9; 38-43,**  
**45, 47-48**

**FIRST READING**

**27** So, when a young man ran and reported to Moses, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp,”

**28** Joshua, son of Nun, who from his youth had been Moses’ aide, said, **“My lord, Moses, stop them.”**

**29** But Moses answered him, **“Are you jealous for my sake?** If only all the people of the LORD were prophets! If only the LORD would bestow his spirit on them!”

**GOSPEL**

**38** John said to him, **“Teacher, we saw someone driving out demons in your name, and we tried to prevent him because he does not follow us.”**

**39** Jesus replied, **“Do not prevent him.** There is no one who performs a mighty deed in my name who can at the same time speak ill of me.

**40** **For whoever is not against us is for us**

**Let us reflect on the following:**

1. Is doing an apostolate...ministry for God...an exclusive act for an exclusive set of people? Generally, it is not. In fact Jesus knew that the 12 could not cover enough the ministry that His Father has told him to do, so on...

**LUKE 10, 1** After this the Lord appointed seventy [-two] others whom he sent ahead of him in pairs to every town and place he intended to visit. **2** He said to them, “The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest.

The work for the proclamation of the Kingdom of God has been **handed to** the 12 and **at the same time extended to** the 72 **down to** modern time.

2. Moses mentioned the term JEALOUS...**Catechism of the Catholic Church #1866 enumerates the 7 deadly sins (capital sins) and one of them is ENVY** (synonymous to JEALOUSY). Rather than being envious

with what they have or what they can do, let us be appreciative of them and thank God for He could have another instruments to continue His work here on earth.

3. Jesus told His apostles, ‘Just allow them to do their things for they are not against us, they are with us.’ By way of participation, parents why not introduce your children first to attend mass and tickle their minds about the things of the mass (e.g. bread, wine, community, priest etc.) then ask them later ‘Do you want to serve our church as altar server, reader or cantor?’

In the end, we need to remember that we are doing this for God so that our fellow ones will enjoy the company of God....**MK 15, 15** He said to them, “Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature. **16** Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved;



*Prayer to*  
**ST. MICHAEL  
THE ARCHANGEL**  
St. Michael the Archangel,  
defend us in battle.  
Be our defense against the wickedness  
and snares of the Devil.  
May God rebuke him, we humbly pray,  
and do thou,  
O Prince of the heavenly hosts,  
by the power of God,  
thrust into hell Satan,  
and all the evil spirits,  
who prowl about the world  
seeking the ruin of souls.  
*Amen.*  
www.PsalmsandthePilgrimDaughter.com  
www.TheBestCatholic.com