

SUNDAY, JULY 16, 2017
15th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FROM THE PASTOR
THE WORD OF GOD

In the Gospel for this week, we hear the parable of the sower. Jesus explains that the seed that is sown is the word. The word is living and is life-giving for those who are open to receive it. It bears much fruit in their lives and in the world around them.

We, who are surrounded by books and magazines and newspapers, and who are familiar with printed Bibles, hear "word," and we immediately think of the written word. That would not have been true in Jesus' time. Almost 1,500 years before the invention of the printing press, the Scriptures would have been on handwritten scrolls. Only the largest and wealthiest synagogues of the time would have had scrolls for all of what we call the Old Testament. They probably had the Torah (or Pentateuch) only. Also, very few of the people, including most of the rabbis, were able to read and write. This was the job of the scribes, whom we hear about in the Gospels.

As a result, when people of Jesus' time heard "word," they thought, not of the written word, but of the spoken word. In the first chapter of the Book of Genesis, we hear that God "said," "Let there be light, and there was light." On each of the six days, God spoke his Word, and creation was born. The word, then, is a powerful, life-giving word. God's Word was the Big Bang that we hear about today.

The Prologue to the Gospel of John tells us, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.... The Word took flesh and dwelt among us." The living, creative and powerful Word spoken by God is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, who became one of us in the person of Jesus Christ.

When the Church speaks of the Word, then, this is what she means. Not a written word on the page that simply conveys certain information, but the living, creative, powerful Word of God, who is God. When we read or listen to the Scriptures, it is this Word that we receive, and if we allow it to, it will completely transform us by its power. This is why the Church encourages us to read the Bible regularly, and I, as your pastor, will be addressing this topic over and over.

Every one of you should have a Bible. I do not believe in family Bibles. A Bible is like a toothbrush. It is too personal an item to be shared with others. Family Bibles are often very beautiful, and perhaps serve to keep important family information. But they are almost never read. If you have a Bible for more than five years and it is not ready to fall apart, it is doing you absolutely no good. Read your Bible!!!!

Where to begin? If you are just beginning your efforts at reading the Bible, I suggest that you start with one of the four Gospels. We are reading from the Gospel of Matthew on Sunday throughout this year, so that is a good place to begin. Don't try to read it all at once. Read, perhaps a chapter a day, or even a few verses. Read, reread, and reflect on what you have read. Do not worry if you do not understand everything. That is okay. Hopefully, you will be doing this for the rest of your lives.

Put your Bible where you will read it. On your nightstand, for instance. Or, a bit more intimately, in the bathroom.

INSTALLATION MASS

On Sunday, August 20, at the 11:30 Mass, Bishop Foy's will officially install me as the pastor of Mother of God Church. I hope that many of you will join me for that celebration. Usually the Installation would be followed by a reception in the hall, but the Parish Picnic had already been scheduled for that afternoon, so the picnic will serve as the reception. There will be more information in the coming weeks.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES

I am trying to determine what the needs of the parish are concerning religious education classes for those students attending public school. The tradition here at Mother of God has been to only offer sacramental preparation for First Confession/First Communion for second graders, and preparation for Confirmation for students in the seventh and eighth grades. My hope is that we will be able to offer a full religious education for students who are in grades K through 8.

If you have a child who would need religious education classes, please contact me at 859-816-3198. I am also in need of catechists who would teach these classes, so if you are interested in helping out, please let me know.

CONVERT INSTRUCTION CLASSES

We will begin our annual Convert Instruction Classes on Tuesday, September 5, at 6:30 pm in Saint Aloysius Center. (These are also known as the RCIA, or Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, but those who need these sessions have no idea what that means, so I do not call them that.) These are for those who are interested in joining the Catholic faith, or in learning more about our faith so that they can decide whether to join or not. Anyone who is looking for a refresher course is also invited to take part.

Please call me at 859-816-3198 if you are interested. I would like to get to know you and to find if there are any special needs or concerns that you might have.

If you are already Catholic, and are interested in serving as part of a team to present these classes, call me at the same number.

BEGINNING TO READ THE BIBLE

It will quickly become clear to everyone that I believe that reading the Bible is one of the most important responsibilities of every Christian. We Catholics are not well known for our devotion to reading the Scriptures, and I want to begin to change that. My goal is that if a Baptist is wondering where something is in the Bible, their first thought would be, "I need to call one of my Catholic friends, for certainly, they will know." I want the people of Mother of God Church to be the most Bible-reading, Bible-believing, and Bible-living Christians in Northern Kentucky. We have a long way to go, but we want to get started.

On Thursday, September 7, I will begin a series of teachings on Beginning to Read the Bible. I do these twice, once in the morning and once in the evening. There is no registration, no fee, no tests, no teacher's dirty looks. Just bring your Bible and come to as many or as few of the sessions as you can. I will be using the New American Bible translation, because it is the one that is used for the Liturgy of the Word at Mass.

The first sessions will be:

Sept.	7	An Introduction to the Bible
Sept.	14	The Word of God in the Words of Human Beings
Sept.	21	Where Did the Bible Come From?
Sept.	28	A Whirlwind History of Israel

After a few weeks off, we will resume with a study of the opening chapters of the Book of Genesis.

Oct.	26	The Creation Stories
Nov.	2	The Fall of Man
Nov.	9	Noah and the Flood
Nov.	16	The Tower of Babel

After Thanksgiving, as we begin the season of Advent, we will have three sessions on the Infancy Narratives of Matthew and Luke. These will help us prepare for our Christmas celebrations.

Nov.	30	The Infancy Narratives
Dec.	7	The Infancy Narratives
Dec.	14	The Infancy Narratives

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION is available at Mother of God Church every Thursday after the 12:05 pm Mass and concludes with Benediction at 5 pm. Would you be willing to spend time in prayer with Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament? Please call our parish office at 859-291-2288 if we can count on you for a regular time each

Thursday afternoon. Or just come in to spend time with our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

MASS ONLINE from Mother of God Church, either streaming live or on demand, is provided through the website: www.mother-of-god.org. It is a wonderful way to stay connected with the parish.

PLEASE NOTE: Confessions on Saturday, from 11 am until time of Mass at 12:05 pm.

URGENT: Parishioner is in need of a lift chair. Anyone willing to donate one would be greatly appreciated. Please contact the church office at 859-291-2288.

NOTICE: No Children's Liturgy in the month of July. It will resume in August.

HAWAIIAN SHIRT SUNDAY is July 30. Please join us and wear your most colorful, topical clothing to church!

JUST A REMINDER that there are coffee and donuts after both Masses on Sunday. Come to the hall, meet your fellow parishioners, and enjoy time together!

MOTHER OF GOD PICNIC: Mark the date, August 20, 4 pm, with dinner served between 5 and 5:30 pm, at the Villa Madonna picnic grounds. This year's picnic will be an extra special celebration. Father Comer will be officially installed as our pastor on that day, and he has requested that in lieu of a cake and punch reception after Mass, he would prefer to celebrate with us at our annual picnic. Fried chicken, soft drinks, water, plates and utensils will be provided. Participants are asked to bring either an appetizer, salad, side dish or dessert to share. *Loving Life* is this year's photo contest theme and certainly is apropos for our picnic theme. Join the parish fun and help give Father Comer a Mother of God welcome.

2017 MOTHER OF GOD PHOTO WALK AND PHOTO CONTEST: Hey everybody, it's time to start thinking about our **MOG 7th Annual Photo Contest**. This year's theme will be "**LOVING LIFE!**" Details and contest guidelines will be available after both Masses today. Also, please mark your calendars for another fantastic **Photo Walk on Saturday, August 5**. This is always a fun time and a great way to get some fresh air, a little exercise, and make new friends. Details to follow after both Masses July 16. David and LaDawn Ziser will be coordinating both events this year, so please give them a call at 859-250-8855 with any questions.

DPAA UPDATE: The parish goal of this year's Diocesan Parish Annual Appeal was \$49,500, and \$71,285 was actually pledged. That means that \$21,785 will come to the parish as rebate. This is very good, but it is substantially lower than previous years.

If you have not donated to the DPAA this year, there is still time to do so. We have already met the diocesan goal, so everything that is given now comes directly to the parish. One good reason to give to the parish through the DPAA is that your DPAA donations are not taxed by the diocese, so every penny stays with Mother of God Church.

We are very grateful for your generous support of the parish and the diocese through DPAA.

SUNDAY COLLECTION	JULY 2, 2017
Envelopes	\$8,600.00
Loose	\$496.00
Online Giving	\$189.35
TOTAL COLLECTION	\$9,285.35

SUNDAY COLLECTION	JULY 9, 2017
Envelopes	\$7,552.00
Loose	\$605.00
Online Giving	\$189.35
TOTAL COLLECTION	\$8,346.35

*Congratulations to our newly married:
Parker and Stephanie (Highberger) Haynes
We wish you much happiness in your married life.*

2017 HOLY CROSS PARISH SUMMER

FESTIVAL: Come and enjoy visiting with family and friends at the Holy Cross Parish Summer Festival, July 28 and 29 from 6 pm to midnight. Live music, food and drink, cake booth, kiddieland and Grand Prize raffle. Fun and games for all ages! For more information call 431-0636.

GIFT SHOP VOLUNTEERS NEEDED AT ST.

ELIZABETH COVINGTON: St. Elizabeth Healthcare is seeking friendly, detail-oriented individuals who like the combination of assisting others while ensuring that the shelves are stocked and the cash drawer balances. Gift Shop hours are 10 am to 2 pm. If you are interested, please call Volunteer Services at 859-572-3166 or email volunteer@stelizabeth.com. Many other options are also available.

CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK

Thursday, July 20

12:45 – 5 pm, Eucharistic Adoration

Sunday, July 23

9:30 am, Mass Ladies Altar Society

MASS INTENTIONS

July 16	9:30 am Bernard & Marjorie Ralenkotter
	11:30 am Parishioners & Memorials
July 17	12:05 pm Jason Clement
July 18	12:05 pm Billy Wehry
July 19	12:05 pm No Mass
July 20	12:05 pm Mary Lois Thinnies
July 21	12:05 pm Bobby & Joe Pitts
July 22	12:05 pm Sally Glockner
July 23	9:30 am Parishioners & Memorials
	11:30 am Fidel Perez

HYMNS FOR 9:30 A.M. MASS

Processional Hymn:	#705 "For All the Saints"
Responsorial Psalm:	"The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest."
Psalm 65	
Offertory Hymn:	#488 "Jesus, My Lord, My God, My All"
Communion Hymn:	#733 "At That First Eucharist"
Recessional:	#579 "O God, Our Help in Ages Past"

SCRIPTURE FOR JULY 16, 2017: Isaiah 55: 10-11; Psalm 65; Romans 8: 18-23; Matthew 13: 1-23.

OUR SICK LIST: You may have your name or the name of a loved one added to our sick list by calling the parish office, 291-2288. We will normally carry that name for one month unless you call for a renewal. Thank you.

LET US PRAY FOR OUR SICK

Les Miley	Hannah Donoghue
Tom Heidrich	Dan Ries
Rose Sketch	Beth Redwine
Pam Neal	Susan Hodge
Robert Gander	Trudy Koehling
Shirley Hensley	Ralph Kunkemoeller
Fr. Ralph Hartman	Margie Huesman
Barry Price	Greg Scanlon
Mary Jo Schwartz	Makayla Borg
Carol Jenkins	Liz Enzweiler
Pat Ruttle	Mertle Cann
Bill Meyer	Fr. Ray Hartman

