

# THE AMAZING GRACE OF JESUS CHRIST BE WITH YOU!

Twenty-first Sunday  
in Ordinary Time

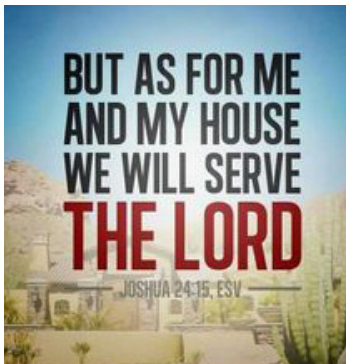


San Ignacio de Loyola Parish

August 23, 2015

## REFLECTION ON THE WORD

Just as Joshua sets a choice before the Israelites (first reading)—“decide today whom you will serve”—so, too, does Jesus set before us a choice (“Do you also want to leave?”). Staying with Jesus is a choice for “eternal life”. It cannot be a half-hearted choice. It is a choice that must be backed up by who we are and the way we choose to live. Choosing to stay with Jesus is a



way of living modeled on Jesus’ own way of self-giving living.

Choosing Jesus and his teaching requires letting go of what we know of God and allowing God to act in a whole new way toward us. Never before had Israel heard of a God who becomes incarnate

and dwells among the people. Never before had God demanded so much of the people—to give one’s life for others. To share in Jesus’ Body and Blood demands of us this same kind of sacrificial self-giving and continual dying to self. The gift transforms us but also makes harsh demands on us. Remember that Jesus is the Bread of Life and self-giving always leads to new life. This is why we are able to make the choice to stay with the Master—he has “the word of eternal life”.

**Words to reflect upon: a choice for “eternal life” cannot be a half-hearted choice**

**The PARISH GALA is set for Saturday, August 29th. Your purchase of tickets will help defray the costs of much needed repairs to OUR Parish Church!**

*First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people,*  
1 Timothy 2:1

**Let us pray together today for the chronically ill:**



Sylvia Tasner, Jerry and Albert Vega, Fr. Vega, Rudy & Sonia Méndez, Maggie and Don Maziarz and Peter and Leida Fiorito.

## The Nonviolent Principle of Agape

*As Understood by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Ancient Greek philosophy recognized three distinct types of love: **Eros**, the love between lovers, **philia**, love for friends and family, and **Agape**, love in the sense of understanding and redemptive goodwill. Dr. King based a great deal of his nonviolence philosophy on the latter.

Agape means understanding, redeeming good will for all men. It is an overflowing love which is purely spontaneous, unmotivated, groundless and creative. It is not set in motion by any quality or function of its object...Agape is disinterested love. It is a love in which the individual seeks not his own good, but the good of his neighbor. Agape does not begin by discriminating between worthy and unworthy people, or any qualities people possess. It begins by loving others for their sake. It is an entirely “neighbor-regarding concern for others”, which discovers the neighbor in every man it meets. Therefore, agape makes no distinction between friends and enemy; it is directed toward both. If one loves an individual merely on account of his friendliness, he loves him for the sake of the benefits to be gained from the friendship, rather than for the friend’s own sake. Consequently, the best way to assure oneself that love is disinterested is to have love for the enemy=neighbor from whom you can expect no good in return, but only hostility and persecution.

Agape springs from the need of the other person—his need for belonging to the best in the human family. Agape is not a weak, passive love. It is love in action...it is a willingness to forgive, not seven times, but seventy times seven to restore community...if I respond to hate with a reciprocal hate I do nothing but intensify the cleavage in broken community. I can only close the gap in broken community by meeting hate with love.

**Francis of Assisi and Francis of Rome would agree with these words, don’t you think?**

**Great and loving God,  
I would like with all my heart to experience  
your immense love and to be changed—  
made new — so that I can see your hand  
in all things. Thank you for the gift of faith.  
Through it, may I see  
my life with new eyes. Amen.**

## Laudatum Si'

### Why Pope Francis' encyclical matters III

What impact will the encyclical have? The pope is calling the world to a conversion that will have a huge impact on how we live, how our economy works, and how governments operate. "Revolutionary" is almost too weak a word. It will require an extraordinary change in human vision and behavior to accomplish this peaceful revolution. It will require sacrifice from everyone, especially those who are rich and powerful, who are enjoying the fruits of the status quo.

Doing what the pope asks will not be easy, but the pope encourages us to trust in a loving God and a powerful Spirit that can renew the face of the earth. His encyclical is remarkable in that it does not depend primarily on fear to motivate people to care for the earth. Rather, he emphasizes love as the motivating force.

We cannot expect the encyclical to miraculously change human attitudes and behavior overnight. Rather, the encyclical is the beginning of a process that will go on for years. It requires that each of us get involved for the long haul. This is a marathon, not a sprint.

As a social scientist, I am very pessimistic that we can avoid an environmental catastrophe, but as a Christian, I have to have hope. Francis' encyclical strengthens that hope.

— Thomas Reese, S.J.

## A Word for our 9:30 Community

Given our present water crisis situation in Puerto Rico, these words of Fr. Reese seem particularly pertinent to our 9:30 community, don't you think?

Have you read the encyclical? The world—on many levels—is reading it, commenting on it, and already applying its revolutionary teachings to their particular situations. Of course, many are responding negatively, especially to the pope's criticism of laissez-faire capitalism. At any rate, positively or negatively, the discussion is now international and continues to increase in frequency and intensity.

If you want to be an informed observer of the Pope's historic trip to our side of the world in September, there is still time to read and digest *Laudatum* in preparation.

Pope Francis will begin visiting and speaking truth to power in Cuba from September 20th to 22nd. He arrives in the U.S. on September 23rd and will address a joint session of Congress on September 24 and the U.N General Assembly September 26th with several additional public activities programmed. I hope we'll be ready.



**Pope Francis is seeking nothing less than a huge change in the social order, (which is nothing more or less than a return to the original Gospel message of Jesus Christ) and he asks the Catholic community to lead the way. It is a ringing call for justice that lands, unsettling as it is, on our doorstep. There is no avoiding it. It's here for the long haul.**

*"Be doers of the word and not hearers only..."*

James 1: 22



### LET US PRAY!

All Together, 24/7

**FOR** the success of the Bishops Synod on the Family in Rome in the fall,

**FOR** relief for the terrible sufferings of Christians throughout the Middle East,

**FOR** an end to the drought conditions causing so much suffering in Puerto Rico and

**FOR** the thousands of panicked North African refugees risking their lives daily on the Mediterranean in overcrowded unsafe boats.

## SITTING QUIETLY IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Be still and know that I am God.

Be still and know that I am.

Be still and know.

Be still.

Be ...

## PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE



*First Reading* Joshua 2 -4:1-2a, 15-17, 18b

Both the First Reading and the Gospel are concerned with choice. The Israelites gave reasons for choosing to serve the Lord. "For it was the Lord our God who brought us and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, ...performed miracles... and protected us." What is your reason for choosing God?