



Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World by Knowing, Loving and Serving God.



The Culture and Christian Outrage

This past week at the opening ceremonies for the Paris Olympics there was one particular scene depicted that could easily be interpreted as a mockery of the Christian faith, and it was by many. There were also those who defended the scene for various reasons. I'm not here to argue either of those positions.

What I want to address is the appropriate response from the Christian community. The natural inclination when seeing something so disrespectful is anger and outrage. And while that is a perfectly understandable reaction, we cannot live there.

Yes, we need our Christian leaders throughout the world to denounce such things, and many have. But where do we go from there? Personally, where I go is a place of sorrow. But perhaps not for the reasons you might think. I'm not sorrowful for how bad the world is or how disrespected Christ and his Church are, at least not primarily.

My primary sorrow is for those who produced, promoted, and participated in such a show. The world is going to do what the world is going to do. Secular culture was on full display in those opening ceremonies and honestly, none of it should have surprised us.

Jesus warned us of as much. From John 15:18-19, "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."

But, what was Jesus' response to that hate? "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Nothing makes this reality clearer to me than the most common defense that I saw in response to the outrage of Christians.

The defense was that the scene depicted was not a mockery of The Last Supper, but instead a celebration of the Greek god Dionysus. Great, so the explanation was that it was not that Christians were being mocked but instead that sex, drunkenness and debauchery were being celebrated. Apparently, this was supposed to be a much more reasonable and acceptable alternative. Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. At this point there are two options, either the depiction was meant to openly mock the Christian faith or openly celebrate moral debasement. Either of these is cause for any Christian to be upset.

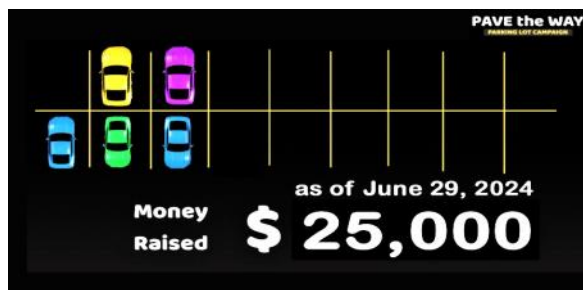
We live in a world that desperately needs the love of Jesus. We can be outraged at such things, but only for a moment. The real work comes in displaying the self-sacrificial love that shows forth the power of the Gospel. We have no power to convict others of their sin, that is the job of the Holy Spirit. Our job is to show them a reason to allow the Holy Spirit into their lives.

The vast majority of those involved with that display are woefully unaware of the depth of their sin. The world they inhabit and the influences around them make sure of that. And our anger won't change that, it will simply reinforce the negative stereotypes they have been fed and cause the chasm to only widen.

Our hearts should break for those who don't know Jesus and our lives should be directed towards doing everything we can to make sure they do.

-Fr. Alan Horton+

PAVE THE WAY MONTHLY UPDATE



BISHOP REED'S VISIT

Sunday, August 4, 2024

Join us for this special service at 9:00 am and for the reception immediately following in Wilson Hall

Invite your family and your friends to celebrate this visit with us!

A WELCOME MOVE FOR OUR ALTAR

After eight years of service, Fr. Alan Horton now has the extra room he and the lay ministers need to better serve mass, thanks to the relocation of the church's altar.

Since Fr. Horton came to St. Gregory's, our altar area has been less than ideal. His leadership preference is to lead our congregation by facing the altar.

To say the tight spacing between the altar and the altar railing caused the worship teams to do a little adjusting is an understatement. Especially at Easter and Christmas, when we have the altar adorned with the flowers of the season. The space to easily serve was simply too small.

First, the project began with Trice Edwards, Bill Griffin, Fritz Barowsky, and John Hamaker, meticulously reviewing the structural support required for the relocation. Their expertise and dedication were instrumental in determining the exact location where the altar could be moved to provide the additional space needed.

While our volunteers were dedicated to seeing this project through, there were parts that needed outside help. Two outside contractors were brought in to do actual moving of the altar and the floor enhancement around the altar.

First, Kiernan Campbell, owner of Campbell Hardwood Floors, cut the existing floor and provided the solution for supporting the altar at it's new location. Once the altar was in it's new position, Mr. Campbell came back and installed oak wood, stained it and finished off the enhancement to the floor pad surrounding the altar.

The second contractor was a team of moving professionals from Element Moving and Storage. This group of four men used state of the art equipment and sheer human strength to move this extremely heavy item. Working with the utmost of care and respect for our sanctuary, these young men worked very efficiently to relocate our altar.

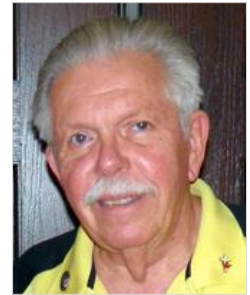


Learning to Pray the Kingdom Way

An answer to 'unanswered' prayer. -by Mike Endicott.

The question of unanswered prayer has been raising its head again lately. This is a big and complex subject and, unhappily, it always will be, until we get to grasp hold of a way forwards. The answer to the question "Why?" lies deep in the foundations of the Kingdom of God so it is only through a Kingdom reading of the Scriptures that answers can begin to dawn.

It is for this reason that I, with quite a few of you, have spent twenty years or more in the Biblical study and ministry on that subject and it has, I must admit, led to a marvellous life. I have published a number of times on the subject, I have been honoured to lecture on various occasions back and forth across the US, Canada, Europe, South Africa and Australia.



Submitted by Heinz Liedke

The Covid era despite all its tragedies did produce some blessings. It introduced Zoom and FaceTime for me as valuable mission tools. Through this I am able to work in new arenas; influencing the training of new pastors for evangelistic mission and running the 'Teach a Teacher' programme of individual tutorials for anyone of any influence in church circles around the world. This year I together with Revd Ray Goddess are planning an in person Kingdom Mission to the churches in Johannesburg and Kimberley, South Africa. Next year I have the honour of being the keynote speaker at a major Christian Conference in New Zealand (remotely, thank heavens!). All this will be on the subject of the Kingdom of God.

My joy is this, that in all this witnessing to the Kingdom, answered prayer becomes for students an everyday reality as the Kingdom grows in their hearts. There is no 'trick' here that enables us to persuade God to 'work'. There is, however, a way of examining the Scriptures (particularly the words and works of Jesus and the centrality of the cross) that can reveal more clearly the objectives and workings of God in creation, beyond earthly precepts. Is that the definition of 'Revelation'? It then becomes relatively possible to teach Christians how to view the world as Jesus sees it. By learning how to work alongside him; to see what he wants for Humanity and then to see those wants turned into reality. That is answered prayer.



Save the Dates for August

03~ 8:00 am Men's Group @ Rosa's
03~ 9:00 am Church Clean up
04~ 9:00 am Bishop's Visit
06~ 9:30 am Women's Bible Study
10~ 9:00 am St. Clara's Meeting
13~ 9:30 am Women's Bible Study
15~ 9:00 am Dominoes & Donuts
17~ 8:00 am Men's Group @ Rosa's
11:00 am OSL Group
18~ Pie Sunday
20~ 9:30 am Women's Bible Study
24~ 10:00 am DHC Meeting
25~ Canned Meat Drive
Childrens Sermon
27~ 9:30 am Women's Bible Study



August Birthdays

05 Paul Jennings
06 Laura Horton
07 Leah McDuff
08 Anahi Gambel
13 Chinenye Okafor
22 Kathy Walker
30 Tate Hightower
30 Thomas Hightower



The Genealogy Group will not have a meeting in August.

Our next meeting will be Thursday, September 5th, at 9:30 a.m. in Wilson Hall.

Be thinking about what subjects you would like to see us discuss when we start up again in the Fall.

Happy Hunting!

Gayle

MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE!

The choir has enjoyed singing hymns/prayers with the congregation in the first half of 2024. We have had so many new hymns to work with as well. We have been able to supplement some of our services with violin accompaniment with assistance from Anne Bressert. We still have our ears open and an open invitation for anyone wanting to help us with singing our prayers through hymns. As you may notice from time to time our male voices seem to outweigh our female voices. All are welcome to join should they feel called. There are NO tryouts since we love to enjoy the hymns with everyone.

We have worked on improving our broadcasting of our service online. Tim is our video and sound board editor with our streaming services. His help allows us to provide those traveling or at home to feel more a part of the service. Tuning our sound and balancing our video to give as in person experience as possible has been his greatest contribution and is greatly appreciated.

Last of all if you don't feel comfortable singing, but have technology skills, we also welcome those who can help, fill in, or participate with our technical solutions that we put on. Especially when we have commitments that take us away from our service times.

So thanks for allowing us to sing with you from the choir. We look forward to the end of 2024 and any member who would like to participate with us.

Fritz Barowsky - St Gregory's Choir

St. Clara's News

St. Clara's Guild will meet at 9:00 on Saturday, August 10, in Wilson Hall to work on the dignity bibs that will be donated to a nursing home.

Sewing machines will be needed and your normal sewing supplies. I hope you can all be there.

We will also take some time to discuss future projects.

-Barbara Edwards

Join Us in Service and Fellowship

Altar Guild

This group maintains the altar for Sunday service, Baptisms, funerals and other special services.

St. Gregory's Choir

The choir is for men and women who like to sing and offer praise to God with their voices.

Daughters of the Holy Cross

This group of women take a lifetime vow of prayer, service, study and evangelism.

Evangelism and Outreach

Planning activities and events, this team shows the love of Jesus in our Mansfield community.

Flower Guild

Learn the art and skill of flower arrangement with fresh flowers for our sanctuary.

Healing Ministry

A group of prayer teams to pray on those seeking healing as directed by Jesus.

Men's Study Group

The men of the church meet on the 1st & 3rd Saturdays for a time of study, service and fellowship.

Women's Study Group

The women of the church meet on Tuesday mornings, enjoying book studies and fellowship.

Children's Religious Education

Help our children learn more about God and his teachings in our children's Sunday school classes.

St. Clara's Guild

This group sews quilts for the sick or to welcome new members at baptism. They also knit caps for newborns in local hospitals and complete other hand done projects for the community.

St. Gregory's Genealogy Group

Explore your family history and heritage with our group. Or learn how to research your family's roots using the knowledge shared by our members.

St. Gregory's Nursery Helpers

This group provides care in our nursery for children under 3 years of age while services are taking place in the sanctuary.

St. Martha's Guild

By providing meals for parishioners and their families during times of illness, bereavement, or even the birth of a child, this group shares God's love.

St. Francis Pet Therapy (Pet Partners)

Through Pet Partners, owners and pets are trained to visit residents of nursing homes and schools, offering God's love through time with a gentle pet. Those without pets may also serve.

St. Gregory's Worship Teams

Our team of Lay Eucharistic Ministers (LEM), Lectors, Crucifers and Oblationers (Ushers) make up this group. Special training is provided for those wishing to serve on this team.



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