

23rd Sunday
9/15/2024

A UNIQUE AND UNREPEATABLE GIFT OF GOD

Bishop's video

As non-profits, churches cannot endorse candidates but have a right, and at times even an moral obligation, to speak out on certain issues. On Wednesday September 25 at 7:00 downstairs there will be a meeting explaining more about Amendment 3. Everyone is welcome to attend.

In the gospel today Peter gets it right. He recognizes Jesus as the Christ, the messiah, but then he gets it wrong. He doesn't understand that Jesus is to be a different kind of messiah, a suffering messiah. Peter thinks he's doing something right and actually he's doing something wrong.

One of the most popular films of the Christmas season is, It's a Wonderful Life, starring Jimmy Stewart. He portrays George Bailey who lives in the small town of Bedford Falls and whose dream is to get out of there. Time and again, for one reason or another, he stays until one day he's in big trouble that isn't his fault. He may be ruined and going to jail. Despondent, he wishes that he had never been born and is on the verge of suicide.

George meets an old man named Clarence who is really an angel. Clarence shows him what the world would be like if he had never been born and it's not a pretty picture. He goes to his mother's house. She has fallen on hard times and runs, Ma Bailey's Boarding House. He says, "Mom, it's me." She responds, "You're not my son, I had one son but he died." As boys, George's younger brother, Harry fell through the ice in a pond and George saved him. Clarence shows him the grave of his brother who drowned as a child.

He exclaims, "That's a lie! Harry Bailey went to war! He got the Congressional Medal of Honor! He saved the lives of every man on that transport!" Clarence tells him, "Every man on that transport died. Harry wasn't there to save them, because you weren't there to save Harry".

George comes to realize something: His life matters. His life makes a difference. His life has value. Like St. Peter, what he thought was a good thing, never having been born, was in fact, bad.

Our lives are woven together in a fabric. Pull out one and so many others are affected.

Every human life has value and meaning; whether born or unborn, young or old, good or bad, sick or healthy. Every human person is made in the image and likeness of God. Every human life is a gift and a call to responsibility, to freedom, to love, to holiness. Every human life has an eternal destiny. Every human life is a unique and unrepeatable gift of God.

Like George Bailey, may we see the value of human life. Informed by the word of life and nourished by Jesus who is the Bread of life, with lives of intentional faith, may we value and protect every human life as a unique and unrepeatable gift of God.