

32<sup>nd</sup> Sunday  
11/6/2022

## LIVING THE POSSIBILITIES

Today's gospel could be subtitled, a lack of vision. The Sadducees were Jews who only accepted the first five books of the Bible and denied the resurrection. In contrast, each Sunday we say, I look forward to the resurrection of the dead. They think they have a trap to force Jesus to deny the resurrection and so come up with the story based on one of those first five books. Apparently they have it all sewed up but Jesus refutes them insisting that the new life of the resurrection isn't simply the resuscitation of life as we know it today. It will involve the body but on a higher plane.

Jesus cites a passage from one of those first five books of the Bible insisting that God isn't the God of the dead but of the living. The problem was that the Sadducees were using earthly terms to understand heavenly realities. They had a lack of vision and couldn't see the possibilities.

For over a year, we've been talking about Seeing the Possibilities for the future of our parish but even more fundamental is seeing the possibilities in terms of what faith can do and just as important as that, is *living* the possibilities that have been given to us.

The goal of our campaign is to take our parish to the next level but while we do that, we also have to maintain the good work that goes on here everyday. For over seventy years our parish has been sharing the Gospel, celebrating the sacraments, serving others and striving to live lives of intentional faith, whether as a small, remote parish or as the largest parish of the diocese.

My very first job was as an usher in a movie theater where I was paid \$2.865 an hour. Working in a theater was good practice for parish life. Both are open 365 days a year. Both require irregular hours. Both mean that when other people are working less, you are working more. Like a movie theater, we're open every day of the year.

There's so much good that goes on here every day. Mass is offered here 14 times a week. Five days a week our St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry serves Christ in the less fortunate. We work hard to educate children in our school, early education center and religious education program. From scouting to mission sewing, from baptismal prep classes to post funeral luncheons, we seek to accompany people on their faith journey. And in the midst of all these activities, six days a week, people are in our Adoration Chapel praying before Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

What keeps this going can be summed in one word—generosity, your generosity. Your generosity, like generations of people before us, have kept this parish going. We receive no subsidies from the diocese, we depend on you. As Catholic Christians, the Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith and nothing takes the place of the Eucharist. In more ways than one, you could call it our lifeblood.

What the Eucharist is to our spiritual life, regular generous giving is to our financial life. And there is no substitute for that. If tomorrow morning, someone makes a big, one time gift, I will accept it with a big smile but in the long run, what will keep our parish going is regular, generous giving.

Recently, registered households have received or will receive a letter from me asking for your help with our annual appeal that we call, *Living the Possibilities*. I ask you to take the time to read it and then prayerfully consider how with your offering, you can help the good work that happens at St. Therese every day to continue. I ask that every household complete and return your card for the coming year, either the hard copy or online. You decide what you give but I'm grateful for your generosity.

Together, while we take our parish to the next level with the capital campaign, it's also important to keep on doing the good that happens here every day. There's no substitute for regular generous giving and while we reach for the next level, we have utilities to pay, buildings to maintain, ministries to continue, children of all ages and adults with whom to share the faith, the sick to be visited, the dead to be buried, the truth and joy of the gospel to be shared, the sacraments to be celebrated and we need your help. Through your generosity, together, we will be here offering the Eucharist for you, baptizing our children, anointing our sick and doing so many other important works. I am asking for your help.

A few weeks ago we heard Jesus tell the parable of the man who said, “*What shall I do? I am not strong enough to dig and I am ashamed to beg.*” I may not be skilled at digging but when it comes to St. Therese Parish, I am not ashamed to beg for your help. There is so much good that goes on here. I’ve been a priest for 31 years and over half that time has been here. I have been blessed to be assigned here three times. I love this parish. I’m proud of all the good here and we’re able to do all this because of your generosity.

My prayer is that our generosity will lead us, unlike the Sadducees, to see the possibilities and not just to see the possibilities but to live the possibilities for our parish and for the fullness of our faith.