



CONSOLATA SHRINE

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

23rd JULY 2017 - YEAR A



FIRST READING

Wisdom: 12:13.16-19

"You give repentance for sins."

A reading from the Book of Wisdom

There is no god besides you, whose care is for all men, to whom you should prove that you have not judged unjustly; for your strength is the source of righteousness, and your sovereignty over all causes you to spare all. For you show your strength when men doubt the completeness of your power, and rebuke any insolence among those who know it. You who are sovereign in strength judge with mildness, and with great forbearance you govern us; for you have power to act whenever you choose. Through such works you have taught your people that the righteous man must be kind, and you have filled your sons with good hope, because you give repentance for sins.

The word of the Lord

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 86: 5-6.9-10, 15-16

Response. O Lord, you are good and forgiving

O Lord, you are good and forgiving,
full of mercy to all who call to you.

Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer,
and attend to my voice in supplication. **(Response)**

All the nations you have made shall come;
they will bow down before you, O Lord,
and glorify your name, for you are great and do marvelous deeds,
you who alone are God. **(Response)**

But you, O God, are compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger, O Lord, abundant in mercy and fidelity;
turn and take pity on me. **(Response)**

SECOND READING

Romans 8:26-27

"The Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words."

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Brethren: The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words. And he who searches the hearts of men knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saint according to the will of God.

The word of the Lord



Alleluia

Blessed are you Father, Lord of heaven and earth,
that you have revealed to little ones the
mysteries of the Kingdom.

Alleluia



“Let both grow together until the harvest.”

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew



At that time: Jesus put another parable before the crowds, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. “And the servants of the householder came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then has it weeds?’ He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The servants said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ But he said, ‘No; lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. Let both grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.” Another parable he put before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is like

a grain of mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.” He told them another parable. “The kingdom of heaven is like the leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened.” All this Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed he said nothing to them without a parable. This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet: “I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world.” Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples came to him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” He answered, “He who sows the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world, and the good seed means the sons of the kingdom; the weeds are the sons of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the close of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of the age. The son of man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evil doers, and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears let him hear.”

The Gospel of the Lord

REFLECTION

Of Wheat and Weeds by Dr. Scott Hahn, Ph.D.

God is always teaching His people, we hear in today’s First Reading.

And what does He want us to know? That He has care for all of us, that though He is a God of justice, even those who defy and disbelieve Him may hope for His mercy if they turn to Him in repentance. This divine teaching continues in the three parables that Jesus tells in the Gospel today. Each describes the emergence of the kingdom of God from the seeds sown by His works and preaching. The kingdom’s growth is hidden - like the working of yeast in bread;

it's improbable, unexpected—as in the way the tall mustard tree grows from the smallest of seeds. Again this week's readings sound a note of questioning: Why does God permit the evil to grow alongside the good? Why does He permit some to reject the Word of His kingdom? Because, as we sing in today's Psalm, God is slow to anger and abounding in kindness. He is just, Jesus assures us - evildoers and those who cause others to sin will be thrown into the fiery furnace at the end of the age. But by His patience, God is teaching us—that above all He desires repentance, and the gathering of all nations to worship Him and to glorify His name. Even though we don't know how to pray as we ought, the Spirit will intercede for us, Paul promises in today's Epistle. But first we must turn and call upon Him; we must commit ourselves to letting the good seed of His Word bear fruit in our lives. So we should not be deceived or lose heart when we see weeds among the wheat, truth and holiness mixed with error, injustice and sin. For now, He makes His sun rise on the good and the bad (see Matthew 5:45). But the harvest draws near. Let's work that we might be numbered among the righteous children—who will shine like the sun in the kingdom of the Father.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. A Life in the Spirit Seminar organized by Charismatic group is ongoing. The seminar is being conducted every Sunday from 2pm to 5pm in the tent behind the nursery School. The Seminar is open for everyone. All are welcome.
2. We are all invited to the Archdiocese Family Day on Saturday 29th July at St Mary's School grounds. As a parish we contribute to the financial support of the activities of the Archdiocese (e.g. Support of elderly priests and Seminaries). Our contribution will be presented on the Family Day. Please collect an envelope next to the blue boxes at the entrance of the Church.
3. We began a novena of 9 Saturdays to prepare for the celebration of the Nativity of Our Lady. The rosary with candles is being prayed every Saturday after the evening mass followed by a flowering to Our Lady and a Marian reflection.
4. Next Sunday 30th, the 9.00am Mass is the Children's Mass. All children are encouraged to attend the mass. Parents please note, there is no Sunday School on that day.
5. Those who registered for their Parishioner Cards are now available at the parish office and at the Desk outside the Church. Kindly pick your card.
6. On Going Formation for Children who have received 1st Holy Communion but are not in lessons for Confirmation will meet next Saturday 29th, from 10 am to 1 pm.
7. The Construction of the Allamano Centre to build a new block of pastoral offices, hall and parking is on-going. We kindly request you to stop by the tables at the entrances of the church and get detailed information about the project. We also invite you to give your contribution or make a pledge towards the project.
8. Consolata Shrine Raffle DONATE and WIN is still ongoing. The grand draw of the raffle will be on 31st July 2017. Two smart phones and two Brand New Renault Kwid are to be won. The more you participate the more chances of winning! Remember the code is *369*2# or M-pesa Pay Bill 804877 and Account WIN.

WEEKLY MEETING

- Executive Committee will meet today at 10.30am
- Next Sunday Pastoral Committee will meet at 10.30am

FOURTH PRECEPT:

“You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church”
The background to this Precept is the idea of Penance. Sometimes we call Confession the “Sacrament of Penance”, but here we're speaking of Penance in a slightly different way:

Penance as a virtue. This virtue flows over, derives from sorrow for our sins. Penance takes the form of concrete acts (individual things we decide to do, often difficult ones) which, offered in love to God, purify us from the effects of our sins, so as to make us new in his likeness. Crucially, Penance includes accepting the sufferings we experience in everyday life – even big ones – by uniting them with the sufferings of Christ on the cross. It is an act of penance to put up patiently with a headache; it is an act of penance to show love to someone we don't like. This is actually a central feature of our faith that today can be a bit overlooked: in fact, it is the ladder on which we climb to heaven. So, what of “fasting” and “abstinence”? Right from the early days of the Church, Christians placed great importance on denying themselves food and drink as a particularly effective form of penance. Our Lord himself said of his followers: “The days will come, when the bridegroom (Jesus) is taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days.” (Luke 5:35). Spiritual masters have shown that by frequent self-denial in this way, the body, somewhat “tamed” in its desires for food and material things, allows the spirit to rise up more easily to heavenly things: the soul becomes a little freer, prayer becomes easier, the truths of faith are more striking. Penance, then, is something we should all give serious attention to. To help us, the Church has established certain common times, in which all Christians should give more priority to penance than usual (experience shows that we easily try to shirk it!). First, Lent. In this season especially, the Lord calls each Christian to “deny himself and take up his cross and follow me” (Matt. 16:24): readying our souls for the momentous events of Holy Week. We each think of whatever penance we can do. Traditional practice (for many centuries) was to eat nothing in Lent until the evening; later it was relaxed to allow a bite for lunch and a snack even at breakfast time. Could we do more? Now: the Precept itself. It covers every Friday of the year (unless a major feast day falls on a Friday). On Fridays, all Catholics of 14 years or more must abstain from meat, in honour of the Lord's passion. In South Africa, and in other countries it is permitted to replace this with abstinence from something else (e.g. dairy products) or even to adopt some charitable practice (e.g. visiting the sick) or time of prayer, but we must do some special penance each Friday to fulfil the Precept. Many bishops (including the late Bishop Coleman) have indicated that abstaining from meat is to be preferred. Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of both fasting and abstinence. Abstinence from meat is obligatory on these days; those under 59 should fast by eating only one full meal and (if desired) one or two snacks. Those with very good reason are of course dispensed where necessary (e.g. the sick or pregnant women). The Precept is binding: if we “substantially” set it aside (e.g. ordering a steak on Good Friday; ignoring the Precept totally on other Fridays) it would be material for confession. Unfortunately in recent decades this Precept has not always been well explained. Especially, many have been left with the impression that there is no such thing as Friday abstinence. This is by no means the case. However, if you were under this impression, you certainly were not at fault if you haven't been observing this part of the Precept. Now however is the time to start! Let's remember its meaning is positive: as Lent prepares us for Easter, so Friday prepares us for the celebration of the Resurrection each Sunday. Finally: we should not choose to fast in such a way that it seriously affects our work, studies or health. If in doubt about the Precept on a given occasion, ask a priest.

Parish Website: www.consolatashrine.org • **Parish E-Mail:** info@consolatashrine.org

Parish Priest's E-Mail: parishpriest@consolatashrine.org  @ConsoShrine

 Consolata Shrine, Westlands, Nairobi

Parish Mpesa Business Number: **508702** • P.O. Box **14930 - Nairobi**

Cell Phone: **0722 615 105**