

## St. Louis Catholic Church

Tuesday of Holy Week

Isaiah 49:1-6

Psalm 71

John 13:21-33, 36-38

The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. These words describe Peter the Apostle but certainly we all can identify in many ways. Perhaps Lent was a call by the spirit within to sacrifice, deny, change, repent or to grow. We started out strong but time got in the way, we were busy, we slacked off or maybe the flesh was weak. Peter said to Jesus "I will lay down my life for you". While Jesus was later standing trial before the high priest, a servant girl noticed Peter and accused him of being a follower of Jesus. The very man who boldly said he would lay down his life, now says, "I don't know what you are talking about". As predicted by Jesus, before the cock crowed, Peter had denied Him. The flesh is weak.

Peter is so much like us all that we can feel very close to him. He was eager, yet weak, sincere yet faltering, devoted yet disloyal. Courageous enough to go to the courtyard yet too coward to say that he was a disciple.

Judas is the other prominent disciple in today's Gospel. He too was loved by Jesus and called to a unique position as a follower of Jesus. He was chosen but like Peter he too was weak. Convinced that the restoration of Israel wasn't to be affected, he is tempted to betray Jesus for silver. He gives in and leads to the arrest, trial, conviction, sentencing and death of Christ. He leaves the table of the Lord where Christ proclaimed the Bread to be His Body and the wine to be His Blood. Departure from the Eucharist has its consequences. Like Judas we can be tempted to ignore the Eucharist on Sunday. Lack of loyalty to Jesus has its consequences.

Most of us are more inclined to identify with Peter and we hope and pray that we will not end up as Judas did. We are sincere in our zeal for Christ but frequently we falter. We are devoted to Christ, but sometimes we may live as if we did not know Christ and His teachings.

Peter also can teach us the good things in life. Peter knew the great love of Jesus, especially His love for sinners, and therefore Peter was confident of forgiveness. Judas was filled with despair. Leaving the Eucharist has its consequences. Judas has the same opportunity to know Jesus as Peter had. He had heard his teachings and seen His example. He had been offered love and yet squandered his opportunity to respond.

Peter lived to see a day when he could affirm his love and loyalty. Not only did he answer three times "yes Lord I love you", he also suffered a martyr's death on a cross.

Holy Week reminds us who the Lord is that calls us to follow Him. He took our nature upon Himself. He became like us in all things but sin. He walked the walk and talked the talk. He understood and understands the human condition. He knows the potential that we have and yet sees our vulnerability. He doesn't call saints to be disciples; He calls people to be disciples that can become saints. He calls the human sinner and not the righteous. Along the way of His life, He prayed, He discerned, He wept, He ate, He loved, He knew His mission to be the light that

Isaiah spoke about in the First Reading. To show and be God's love was His mission. He showed it and expressed it by giving His very life for us. He was loyal to His call.

He calls us to take up our cross, deny ourselves and follow. Along the way He is there to help us in every step. Especially He reminds us that we are not alone. He is next to us in the Eucharist. It is His gift of self so that we may be strengthened, not falter, and live. There are consequences when we ignore the Eucharist.

This week should awake within us the love of God and the call to follow. Yes the Spirit is probably willing and the flesh is probably weak. He lifts us up and in today's Psalm 71 we hear He is a rock of refuge. He is a stronghold to give us safety. He is our hope, our trust from our youth. On Him we depend from birth. He is our strength. He has taught us and now we, even in our weakness, are to proclaim His wondrous deeds.

Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday are the Highest Holy Days of the year. We proclaim the life, death and resurrection of Christ the Lord of Lords, Ruler of Rulers and King of Kings. We celebrate the Institution of the Eucharist. "I am the Living Bread come down from Heaven, He who eats of My Flesh and drinks My Blood will live forever."

Let me ask a stupid question. I can't figure it out. Were you at Church on Ash Wednesday? If yes, why? I'm delighted that so many were. At St. Louis it was an overwhelming crowd for six different Masses. It began a season that leads to Thursday, Friday and Saturday/Sunday. In all honesty how many of you who came on Ash Wednesday have no intention of going to Church this week until Sunday morning? Why? Just asking. You are all good folks and I hope I'm an okay priest. We can do better! What we will do on these days certainly tops dinner, crawfish boils, Grizzlies, movies, fishing, golf, etc.

We are remembering and re-living and making present the very Act of Salvation and Redemption. It's about faith. Is it inconvenient or tough? Yes. It can make a difference. Just look at Peter. He finally got it.

God Bless,  
Msgr. John McArthur

Key Events This Week:

1. Confessions  
Thursday 5:00-6:30 p.m.  
Friday 5:00-6:30 p.m.  
Saturday 2:30-4:30 p.m.
2. Holy Thursday Mass of Lord's Supper--7:00 p.m.
3. Good Friday  
Stations of the Cross--3:00 p.m.  
Passion of Lord--7:00 p.m.
4. Easter Vigil and Mass of Resurrection--Holy Saturday--8:00 p.m.
5. Come deliver a flower to shut-ins and senior parishioners
6. Bishop's Annual Appeal  
Get your card right now--fill it out please!! Let's reach both goals  
100% participation & \$439,900 goal

Right now we are around 40% participation

Right now we are about 85% to money goal

7. CBC/CBU graduates--please contact the church office with your contact information and any friends who also graduated CBU by emailing [jan.odonnell@stlouis.cdom.org](mailto:jan.odonnell@stlouis.cdom.org) or calling 682-6606.