St. Joseph Parish

THE JESUIT PARISH IN SEATTLE

ARE ST. JOSEPH!





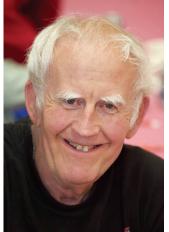
















FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER MAY 19, 2019 Reflection This Week: Roger Rigor Reflection Next Week: Katy Huston

Weekend Mass Schedule Saturday - 5 pm Sunday - 9 am, 11 am & 5:30 pm

Readings for May 26, 2019

First Reading: Acts 15:1-2, 22-29
Second Reading: Revelation 21:10-14, 22-23
Gospel: John 14:23-29

Weekday Mass Schedule Monday - Friday, 7 am, Parish Center Reconciliation Saturday - 3:30-4:15 pm in the Church

or by appointment

Parish Center

732 18th Ave E, Seattle, WA 98112

Monday- Friday - 8 am - 4:30 pm Saturday - 9 am - 1 pm www.stjosephparish.org

Parish Receptionist (206) 324-2522

Pastor x107 Rev. John D. Whitney, S.J. jwhitney@stjosephparish.org Parochial Vicar Rev. Julian Climaco, S.J. x103 jclimaco@stjosephparish.org Deacon Steve Wodzanowski x106 stevew@stjosephparish.org **Pastoral Staff:** Marti McGaughey, Business Mgr x108 marti@stjosephparish.org Tina O'Brien, Stewardship x114 tinao@stjosephparish.org Renée Leet, Admin Assistant x100 rleet@stjosephparish.org Marie Pitman, Director of Religious Ed x112 mariep@stjosephparish.org Theresa Lukasik, Adult Faith Formation x111 theresal@stjosephparish.org Bob McCaffery-Lent, Liturgy & Music x109 rmclent@stjosephparish.org x102 Caprice Sauter, Comm. & Scheduling caprices@stjosephparish.org Lianne Nelson, Bookkeeper x113 liannen@stjosephparish.org Yuri Kondratyuk, Facilities x110 St. Joseph School - Main Office x210

Patrick Fennessy, Head of School

Mary Helen Bever, Primary School Dir

Vince McGovern, Middle School Dir

x218

x215

x219

WE Are St. Joseph

You are there on the table; you are there in the chalice. You are the body within us, for, collectively, we are this body. We drink of the same chalice because we live the same life.

- St. Augustine-

A little over seven years ago, before Francis became Pope, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF)—one of the most powerful of the Vatican offices—issued a report questioning the faith and practices of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR). Prompted by a number of US bishops, who found various women's religious orders insufficiently supportive of the goals of the US Catholic Conference, this report criticized women religious for talking too much about poverty and not enough about traditional marriage, for raising questions about power and authority in the Church, and for failing to cooperate adequately in their own investigation. Though the subsequent probe would eventually fade away, following the election of Pope Francis and thanks, in part, to the leadership of Archbishop Sartain and steadfastness of the LCWR; still, when the report was originally issued, I recall feeling deep sorrow at the injustice of the probe, which brought back to me memories of a similar intervention against the Jesuits during the time of Pope John Paul II. Arriving at St. Joseph the weekend after the CDF report, I remember meeting MHB Conant, one of our cantors, and talking about our shared love for the Sisters and shared pain at this moment. I said to her, "Right now, all I want is a simple button that tells the Sisters I am with them and stand with them." It was an off-the-cuff comment, but less than 48 hours later, MHB was in my office, a bag of buttons, freshly made, in her hands, proclaiming in black-and-white, "I Stand With the Sisters." Suddenly, what had been just a conversation in the nave of the church became a movement, and as women and men from St. Joseph saw the buttons, and shared them across the country, we were suddenly part of a work of justice—voices joined for the sake of the gospel, as it lived in our hearts. We—with the Sisters—are St. Joseph.

It has often been that way during my 10 years at St. Joseph: a small remark, or a reflection on injustice, or a prayer expressing a deep desire suddenly sparks a fire that ignites something in others, until a community of love and labor causes the doors of St. Joseph to be opened wider—sending us out, like medics from the field hospital (to use Francis' image) into the world, or drawing into our midst some part of the world that had previously felt excluded. It happened when a small group of gay and lesbian parishioners asked to host a panel, so that people might tell their stories of navigating a Church in which their very identity was labeled as "intrinsically disordered." On that night, as I sat with other parishioners, we heard the courage and the pain of so many of our brothers and sisters who remained Catholic, though they felt relegated to the shadows. We heard a mother mourn the son who no longer belonged to the Church she loved, and heard a parent from the school tell how she could not stay in the Church anymore, but longed to give her children a faith-filled education, so stayed in St. Joseph School. On that night, I felt something change in our Parish, as though doors long closed were beginning to open and the shadows that surrounded us were a little less dark. Following that night, came the request for St. Joseph's presence in the Pride Paradewhere both straight and LGBT parishioners marched together, not in opposition to some theological or political stance, but in support of one another. And that attitude, I hope and believe, lives on today in our community, where LGBT parishioners feel, for the most part, simply as parishioners: sisters and brothers in this community of sinners loved by a God who makes us whole. We—straight or gay—are St. Joseph.

This spirit of communion amid diversity, of building bridges from the heart of the Church to its frontierswhich I have always believed to be the center of Jesus' message in the gospel and the primary mission of the Society of Jesus—has made St. Joseph a spiritually rich (and sometimes complicated) place. Few communities that I have known could foster a thriving Rosary Group and Sacred Silence, daily Mass in the Arrupe Room and yoga downstairs, solemn and complex liturgies and the beautiful chaos of the Christmas Children's Mass. Drawing on diverse talents and gifts, we are able to try new things and still sustain and revitalize the old. So it is that even as we reexamine the racism that keeps us from fully welcoming new members, we also continuously remake our 30-year relationship with our sisters and brothers in Arcatao, El Salvador—a relationship that has gone from solidarity in a time of war, to sponsorship of water projects, to standing together in opposition to Canadian mining interests, to helping in the education of young leaders, to advocacy for justice towards refugees (while also working to change the conditions that make such migration necessary). At the root of all of these apparently contradictory movements is the recognition of our own commonality and mutual dependence. In all that we as a Parish do, we hope to understand better the identity we share, and to grow in the spirit of communion that opens our doors and draws all to the table of Christ. We-in Salvador or Seattle, praying the rosary or sitting in silence, in a contemplative liturgy or distracted by cries and laughter—are St. Joseph.

For the last decade, I have been privileged to be part of this powerful movement of growth and renewal at St. Joseph. Sometimes, my job has entailed giving the right word or a way of articulating the desires of our community. Sometimes, it has been using the resources given to me by the Society of Jesus to help in the community's discernment. Sometimes I have been the skeptic, who narrowed the focus of some great dream, so that it might grow at a manageable rate. And sometimes I have been the one charged with giving support or protection to those whose call has seemed contrary to what others thought was "normal" for a parish. But most often, my job at St. Joseph has been to say "yes" to the Spirit moving in women and men whose deep desires call them to open the doors wider, so that more of those beloved of God might come into the house Christ has prepared. I

have not always done this job well, I know, but trying to do it, seeking to do it, longing to do it has been my great joy and my unwavering blessing. It has allowed me to see something I have longed to know: We—you and I together—are St. Joseph.

Earlier this week I received a letter from the Jesuit Provincial, Fr. Scott Santarosa, formalizing changes in the Jesuit mission at St. Joseph. As you will see in this letter, besides Fr. Julian's departure for Tertianship (his last stage of Jesuit formation), we will be blessed with the return of Fr. Glen Butterworth. Those of you who know Fr. Glen know what a wonderful gift St. Joseph is receiving in him. Smart, funny, articulate, and filled with a grace and kindness that draws forth the best in others, Glen will be a wonderful partner in the work of St. Joseph. I look forward to the year ahead and to discovering just how the Holy Spirit will use Glen in the mission God has in mind.

Which leads me to the other news enclosed in the Provincial's letter. Next year will be my last year at St. Joseph. Though I had hoped to remain for the full term of 12 years, the Provincial, in speaking with Archbishop Sartain, has decided to mission Glen to succeed me after a year of transition, and to mission me to a year of sabbatical in preparation for my next work. Though it will be hard to leave St. Joseph, after so many wonderful years of grace, my most fundamental being is as a Jesuit: i.e., a man on mission. Thus, I accept this call with the same sense of joy and confidence in the goodness of God as I accepted the blessed call that brought me to St. Joseph in the first place. God will be faithful to us, I know, and in that faithfulness great things will occur.

I know some of you may be disappointed at my early departure from St. Joseph, but I also pray that you will continue to build this community with me-and then with Glen. One of my father's favorite expressions was, "The graveyards are full of indispensable people," and so I know that I am not indispensable to St. Joseph. Rather, what is indispensable is that Holy Spirit who moves in each of us and in all of us: the Spirit that moved those first Jesuits out from Immaculate Conception to care for the Irish and Italian immigrants that had moved onto this part of the Hill; that Spirit that moved those immigrants to build a clapboard church and a brick school, and to bring to that school the Sisters of the Holy Names; that Spirit that opened the doors for poor girls and boys to receive an education and built the church so that whole community could worship and grow together. What is indispensable for St. Joseph is not me, nor even the Jesuits, but the Spirit of Christ Jesus, who unites this community in his love and sends us forth in his service. In him and through him and with him, WE are St. Joseph.

John of

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Welcome to St. Joseph. Please take a moment to silence your cell phones.

Prelude

(9) CHORAL: I Give You A New Commandment

Aston

I give you a new commandment: love one another.

As I have loved you so are you to love one another.

If there is this love among you then all will know that you are my disciples.

Festive Procession

(Please remain seated)

(5) CHORAL: Dios Te Salve Maria

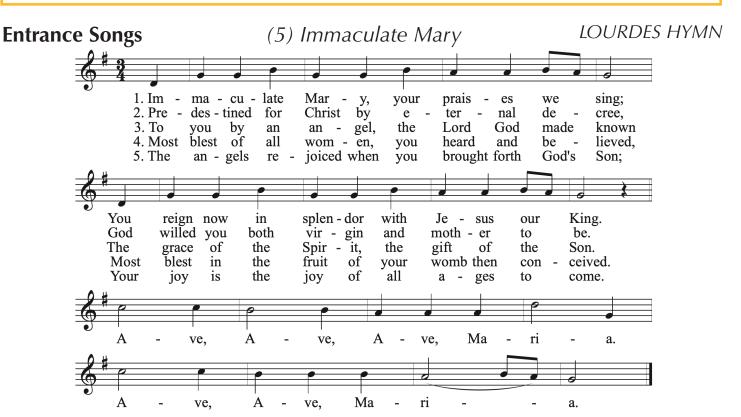
Dios te salve, María, llena eres de gracia, el Señor es contigo. Bendita tú eres entre todas las mujeres, y bendito es el fruto de tu vientre, Jesús. Santa María, Madre de Dios, ruega por nosotros, pecadores, ahora y en la hora de nuestra muerte. Amén

Translation: Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.

Blessed are thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

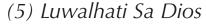
Note about opening procession: The commemorative feast for the Philippines' Patroness Saint, the Blessed Virgin Mother Mary, is held in the month of May. Called *Flores de Mayo* ("flowers of May") because of the blooming scent of flowers like the *sampaguitas, gumamela, kalachuchi, jasmine* among many others at this time of the year, the Blessed Virgin Mother is celebrated through nine days of daily novenas and rosaries, culminating with the *Santacruzan* (The Holy Cross), which depicts the finding of the Holy Cross by Queen Helena (*Reyna Elena*), mother of Constantine the Great. The *Santacruzan*, a long festive procession of young *reynas* (queens) or *sagalas* (maidens in resplendent native attire) with the *Reyna Elena* and her escort, *Constantine*, culminates at the town church, already adorned with the season's flowers, and more are placed at the foot of the Blessed Virgin. The town's *Hermano* and *Hermana mayor* (elder brother/sister), selected by the townspeople for their leadership in bringing forth a festive celebration, is given the honor to crown the Blessed Virgin and offer it a special bouquet of flowers. After the church offering and celebratory mass, everyone is ushered to a town *fiesta* (feast) in the town plaza, where food and drinks, games and music fill in the merry month of May.





Gloria/Sprinkling Rite

See Cards In Pews



EP Hontiveros, SJ



First Reading Acts 14:21-27

After Paul and Barnabas had proclaimed the good news to that city and made a considerable number of disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch. They strengthened the spirits of the disciples and exhorted them to persevere in the faith, saying, "It is necessary for us to undergo many hardships to enter the kingdom of God." They appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, commended them to the Lord in whom they had put their faith. Then they traveled through Pisidia and reached Pamphylia. After proclaiming the word at Perga they went down to Attalia. From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work they had now accomplished. And when they arrived, they called the church together and reported what God had done with them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.



The Lord is full of grace and mercy, who is kind and slow to anger. God is good in every way, and full of compassion. *Ref.*

Let all your works give you thanks, O Lord, and let all the faithful bless you. Let them speak of your might, O Lord, the glory of your kingdom. *Ref.*

The Lord is faithful in word and deed, and always near, his name is holy. Lifting up all those who fall, God raises up the lowly. *Ref.*

Second Reading

Revelation 21:1-5a

Then I, John, saw a new heaven and a new earth. The former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. I also saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them as their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, for the old order has passed away."

The One who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new."





Gospel John 13:31-33a, 34-35

When Judas had left them, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and God will glorify him at once. My children, I will be with you only a little while longer. I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Reflection

Roger Rigor

Offertory Songs

(5) CHORAL: Tanging Yaman/My Only Treasure

EP Hontiveros, SJ

Ikaw ang aking tanging yaman, Na di lubusang masumpungan. Ang nilikha Mong kariktan, Sulyap ng 'Yong kagandahan.

Ika'y hanap sa t'wina, nitong pusong Ikaw lamang ang saya. Sa ganda ng umaga, nangungulila sa 'Yo, Sinta.

Ika'y hanap sa t'wina, sa kapwa ko Kita laging nadarama. Sa iyong mga likha, hangad paring masdan ang 'Yong mukha.

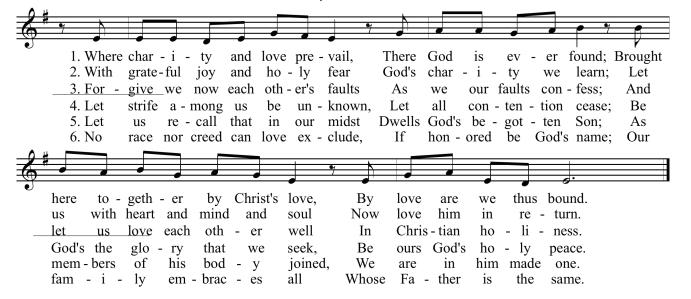
Translation: You are my cherished Treasure, Inexpressively infinite Your magnificent creation is but a glimpse of Your beauty.

You alone are what this heart longs for You, Who alone are its joy The beauty of the morning longs for You, our Beloved God!

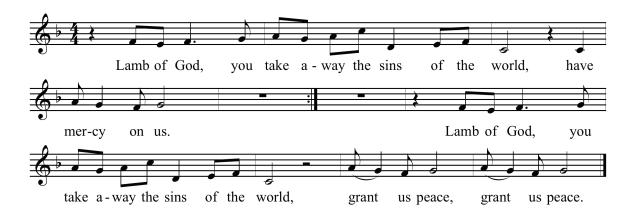
You alone are what this heart longs for in my neighbor I ever feel Your presence In Your creation may I ever behold Your face.

Where Charity and Love Prevail

Benoit



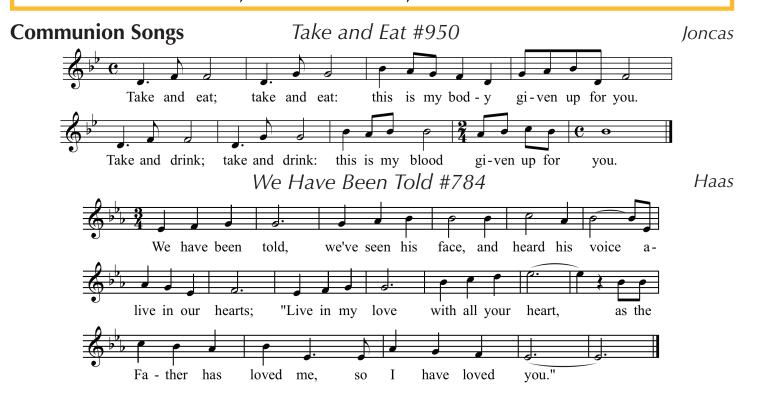




All Are Invited To Come Forward

During communion, we invite all to come forward. If you do not ordinarily receive Eucharist, or choose not to, come for a blessing, indicating your desire by putting your hand on your heart.

IF YOU HAVE A GLUTEN ALLERGY, & NEED A GLUTEN FREE HOST, PLEASE COME TO THE PRESIDER & INDICATE THIS.



(5) CHORAL: Panalangin Sa Pagiging Bukas Palad

J. Arboleda and M. Francisco SJ

Panginoon, turuan Mo akong maging bukas palad.
Turuan Mo akong maglingkod sa Iyo.
Na magbigay ng ayon sa nararapat.
Na walang hinihintay mula Sayo.
Na makibakang di inaalintana
mga hirap na dinaranas
sa twina'y mag sumikap na
hindi humahanap ng kapalit na kagaginhawaan.

hindi humahanap ng kapalit na kagaginhawaan.
Na di naghihintay kundi ang aking mabatid.
Na ang loob mo'y syang sinusundan.
Panginoon, turuan mo akong maging bukas palad.
Turuan mo akong maglingkod sa Iyo.
At magbigay ng ayon sa nararapat.
Na walang hinihintay mula sayo.

Translation: Lord, teach me to be generous; Teach me to serve as you deserve, To give and not to count the cost, To fight and not to heed the wounds, To toil and not to seek for rest, To labor and not to ask for reward, Except that of knowing that I do Your will.

Amen.

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SEEL Invites You to a Transformational Retreat in Everyday Life

The Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life (SEEL) is a nine month retreat format of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola with a retreat community meeting here at St. Joseph. Retreatants commit themselves to praying daily, meeting twice monthly with a Spiritual Director, and to attending monthly Saturday retreat days. SEEL is accepting applications now for the retreat starting in September of 2019. Learn more at our website at www. seelpugetsound.org or call 206-721-3518. There will be a brief information session to give more details and answer questions about this transformative retreat on Sunday, June 2 after 9:00 mass and also after 5:30 mass. If you would like to join us, an RSVP is encouraged, Deacon Steve, stevew@stjosephparish.org or Lisa Dennison, lisa2karl@aol.com (SEEL Executive Director).

Welcome The Newly Baptized!

Alessandra Hernandez
Scarlett McIntyre
Stella McIntyre
Lola Palomino
Harper Rhea
Desiree Swanburg
Elliott Uhl
Holden Van Hoy
Theo Van Nostrand
Lucille Weber

Men's Ministry

Planning Meeting - Tuesday May 28th 7:00pm – 9:00pm in the Parish Center

Newcomers Welcome! Questions or details, contact Deacon Steve at 206-965-1646 or stevew@stjosephparish.org

Seniors On The Go

Friday, June 7th - Anointing Mass at 11:30 am, then join us for our celebratory BBQ in the Parish Center. All are welcome! Please feel free to park in the parking lot and take the elevator up.

Women's Ministry

Fall Retreat Needs a Planning Team! We would like to have a brainstorming/planning session to come up with a theme, a presenter/facilitator, and develop a list of volunteer opportunities. So as not to overburden our already overburdened lives, know that the planning meetings will take one hour and we have the first meeting on June 9 from 4:00-5:00 (before Sunday evening Mass) in the Xavier room. Please email Theresa Shepherd-Lukasik at theresal@stjosephparish.org or call at 206-965-1651 if you would like to be a part of this team.



Dear Companions at St. Joseph,

Greetings of Easter Peace!

After consultation with Archbishop Sartain, I am writing to share some important news regarding the Jesuit priestly ministry at St. Joseph. As was announced previously, Fr. Julian Climaco, S.J., will be leaving St. Joseph at the end of June to complete his Jesuit formation by doing his Tertianship in the Philippines, a preparation for his final vows. I am grateful to Fr. Julian for the wonderful pastoral work he has done in his three years of ministry at St. Joseph, and grateful, as well, for his willingness to receive this new mission towards even greater service to God's People.

With the departure of Fr. Julian, I am happy to announce the appointment of Fr. Glen Butterworth to the role of Parochial Vicar at St. Joseph, beginning in July. Fr. Butterworth is well-known to the St. Joseph community, having served as Parochial Vicar for over a year, before being called upon by the Province to serve as Provincial Assistant for Formation. In his return to St. Joseph, Fr. Glen brings both experience and love of the people and the Parish, and new skills learned through his role for the Province. In the coming year, Fr. Glen and Fr. John Whitney, S.J., current Pastor of St. Joseph, will work closely together, preparing for a transition of leadership in July 2020, when Fr. Glen will take up the mission as Pastor of St. Joseph, while Fr. John begins a sabbatical followed by a new mission.

I am profoundly grateful both to Fr. Whitney and Fr. Butterworth for their willingness to work together for the community at St. Joseph, and am confident that this unique opportunity for transition will bear fruit into the future. In the last ten years, Fr. Whitney has overseen a great deal of growth and a renewal of vibrancy in the St. Joseph community. With a wonderful team of ministers, St. Joseph has grown in numbers and deepened in its commitment to the values of the Society of Jesus and the service of the Church. I am grateful for all that Fr. John has done, and know that the community will celebrate his time, even as you welcome Fr. Glen in his new role of leadership and service.

Please count on my support and prayers as you face the mixed-emotions that always accompany such transitions. I know that Jesus, who has not left us orphans, will continue to bless St. Joseph with new graces in the years to come.

May the Risen Lord continue to bless the people of St. Joseph Parish and School with an abundance of life and hope.

Gratefully yours in Christ,

V. Rev. Scott Santarosa, S.J. Provincial, Jesuits West

got S L or

Fr. Julian - A Celebration!

Join us On Sunday, June 9th after the 5:30 pm Mass for a party to wish Fr. Julian bon voyage! It will be an opportunity to thank him for his wonderful three years at St. Joseph and wish him well as he enters his Tertianship.

We will BBQ and socialize, Please join us and bring a side dish or salad to share. Email Deacon Steve any questions you might have stevew@stjosephparish.org













St. Joseph Adult Faith Formation Presents

A Historical Perspective On Reform In The Church:

As a Lens For Reform Today

Thursday, June 13 | 7:00-8:30 PM

Arrupe Room in the Parish Center
732 18th Ave E, Seattle



We appear to be at a crisis in the Catholic Church with scandals, clericalism, questions of the role of women and laity in the church, but when we look to our church history we are reminded that reforms in the Church have been a constant. Especially after the Second Vatican Council, the Church realizes it is always in need of reform in order to respond more fully and generously to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit.

- What are the major reform periods in church history? Can these reforms shed light on our current crisis?
- What is required to bring about reform today?

Pat Howell, SJ, presenter

Interim Director, Institute for Catholic Thought and Culture

For Information and to RSVP for this event, please contact Theresa at: Theresal@stjosephparish.org or 206-965-1651

JESUIT SEATTLE



SEATTLE UNIVERSITY **SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AND MINISTRY**

presents

SEARCH MEANING

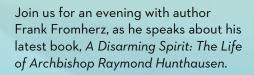
• EMPOWERMENT SERIES •

A DISARMING SPIRIT

the life of -

ARCHBISHOP RAYMOND HUNTHAUSEN

BY FRANK FROMHERZ



Tuesday, May 21 Pre-lecture reception at 6:30 p.m.

(Open to everyone)

Lecture at 7:00 p.m.
SU Campus - Student Center 160

Books will be available for purchase at this event.

For more information contact Jessica Palmer, palmerj@seattleu.edu.





Pope-Pourri

HOMILY OF POPE FRANCIS

"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (Jn 13:35).

Dear young friends, what an enormous responsibility the Lord gives us today! He tells us that the world will recognize the disciples of Jesus by the way they love one another. Love, in other words, is the Christian's identity card, the only valid "document" identifying us as Christians. It is the only valid document. If this card expires and is not constantly renewed, we stop being witnesses of the Master. So I ask you: Do you wish to say yes to Jesus' invitation to be his disciples? Do you wish to be his faithful friends? The true friends of Jesus stand out essentially by the genuine love; not some "pie in the sky" love; no, it is a genuine love that shines forth in their way of life. Love is always shown in real actions. Those who are not real and genuine and who speak of love are like characters is a soap opera, some fake love story. Do you want to experience his love? Do you want this love: yes or no? Let us learn from him, for his words are a school of life, a school where we learn to love. This is a task which we must engage in every day: to learn how to love.

Before all else, love is beautiful, it is the path to happiness. But it is not an easy path. It is demanding and it requires effort. Think, for example, of when we receive a gift. It makes us happy, but receiving a gift means that someone generous has invested time and effort; by their gift they also give us a bit of themselves, a sacrifice they have made. Think too of the gift that your parents and group leaders have given you in allowing you to come to Rome for this Jubilee day dedicated to you. They planned, organized, and prepared everything for you, and this made them happy, even if it meant that they had to give up a trip for themselves. This is putting love into action. To love means to give, not only something material, but also something of one's self: one's own time, one's friendship, one's own abilities.

Look to the Lord, who is never outdone in generosity. We receive so many gifts from him, and every day we should thank him... Let me ask you something. Do you thank the Lord every day? Even if we forget to do so, he never forgets, each day, to give us some special gift. It is not something material and tangible that we can use, but something even greater, a life-long gift. What does the Lord give to us? He offers us his faithful friendship, which he will never take back. The Lord is a friend forever. Even if you disappoint him and walk away from him, Jesus continues to want the best for you and to remain close to you; he believes in you even more than you believe in yourself. This is an example of genuine love that Jesus teaches to us. This is very important! Because the biggest threat to growing up well comes from thinking that no one cares about us - and that is always a sadness - from feeling that we are all alone. The Lord, on the other hand, is always with you and he is happy to be with you. As he did with his first disciples, he looks you in the eye and he calls you to follow him, to "put out into the deep" and to "cast your nets wide" trusting in his words and using your talents in life, in union with him, without fear. Jesus is waiting patiently for you. He awaits your response. He is waiting for you to say "yes".

Dear young friends, at this stage in your lives you have a growing desire to demonstrate and receive affection. The Lord, if you let him teach you, will show you how to make tenderness and affection even more beautiful. He will guide your hearts to "love without being possessive", to love others without trying to own them but letting them be free. Because love is free! There is no true love that is not free! The freedom that the Lord gives to us is his love for us. He is always close to each one of us. There is always a temptation to let our affections be tainted by an instinctive desire to "have to have" what we find pleasing; this is selfishness. Our consumerist culture reinforces this tendency. Yet when we hold on too tightly to something, it fades, it dies, and then we feel confused, empty inside. The Lord, if you listen to his voice, will reveal to you the secret of love. It is caring for others, respecting them, protecting them and waiting for them. This is putting tenderness and love into action.

At this point in life you feel also a great longing for freedom. Many people will say to you that freedom means doing whatever you want. But here you have to be able to say no. If you do not know how to say "no", you are not free. The person who is free is he or she who is able to say "yes" and who knows how to say "no". Freedom is not the ability simply to do what I want. This makes us self-centred and aloof, and it prevents us from being open and sincere friends; it is not true to say "it is good enough if it serves me". No, this is not true. Instead, freedom is the gift of being able to choose the good: this is true freedom. The free person is the one who chooses what is good, what is pleasing to God, even if it requires effort, even if it is not easy. I believe that you young men and women are not afraid to make the effort, that you are indeed courageous! Only by courageous and firm decisions do we realize our greatest dreams, the dreams which it is worth spending our entire lives to pursue. Courageous and noble choices. Do not be content with mediocrity, with "simply going with the flow", with being comfortable and laid back. Don't believe those who would distract you from the real treasure, which you are, by telling you that life is beautiful only if you have many possessions. Be sceptical about people who want to make you believe that you are only important if you act tough like the heroes in films or if you wear the latest fashions. Your happiness has no price. It cannot be bought: it is not an app that you can download on your phones nor will the latest update bring you freedom and grandeur in love. True freedom is something else altogether.

I know that you are capable of acts of great friendship and goodness. With these you are called to build the future, together with others and for others, but never against anyone! One never builds "against"; this is called "destruction". You will do amazing things if you prepare well, starting now, by living your youth and all its gifts to the fullest and without fear of hard work. Be like sporting champions, who attain high goals by quiet daily effort and practice. Let your daily programme be the works of mercy. Enthusiastically practice them, so as to be champions in life, champions in love! In this way you will be recognized as disciples of Jesus. In this way, you will have the identification card of the Christian. And I promise you: your joy will be complete.