

REFLECTION

Jesus often does not give straight answers to questions posed to him. Today's Gospel story, for instance, starts with someone asking him, "Will only a few people be saved?" It seems like a straightforward question about numbers. But Jesus perceives that the questioner and the others whom he was teaching were not really as concerned about the final headcount as they were about whether they themselves would be included among the redeemed.

The first part of Jesus' answer is about what you must do to position yourself for admission into the final gathering of the saved. The person who asked the question rightly recognized that salvation is God's work. The passive voice of the verb "be saved" implies that one does not save oneself; the redeeming action is done by God. However, as Jesus' response makes clear, one must engage in rigorous training in order to be in condition to accept the gift of being saved.

Jesus advises that one must "strive to enter the narrow gate." The verb *agonizomai*, "strive," is used to describe what is required in athletic training (similarly, see 1 Cor 9:25). Just as an athlete must gradually build up strength through daily disciplined exercise, so spiritual fitness takes consistent effort and training. Jesus notes that many who attempt to enter will not be strong enough. The second reading from Hebrews also focuses on the discipline necessary to build up spiritual strength. Five times the author uses words derived from the Greek *paideuo* and *paideia*, which have to do with "discipline." The primary meaning is "instruction, training for responsible living."

The author makes an analogy between the training a child receives from a parent and the guidance God provides us for deepening in the spiritual life. The Greek noun here means not so much punishment for wrongdoing as training for life. Some discipline consists in self-imposed, chosen actions that strengthen the spirit and enable one to follow the path of faithfulness. Other modes of life-shaping experiences are not purposely chosen, but how we deal with them forms us spiritually.

The author of Hebrews focuses on the latter kind of formation. He speaks of how God, like a loving parent, can help us learn from the difficulties that befall us and can guide us in how to become stronger through them. In the author's worldview everything that happens, both for good and for ill, is caused by God, so the writer suggests that God imposes trials as discipline.

His analogy of God as a loving parent, however, leads us also to think of God as never purposely inflicting suffering on us. The end result is that our spiritual "gymnastic" efforts (the verb *gymnazo* in v. 11, is a term for athletic training) lead to peace, joy and right relation, with our drooping hands and weak knees healed and strengthened.

In the Gospel Jesus speaks about what can happen to those who do not put any effort into "working out" spiritually. When the final moment comes, they will be on the outside pleading to get in, thinking that just having been present where Jesus was teaching would be enough. It is like someone who goes to the gym but only watches other people train. Such a person is not considered a member of the company of athletes or prepared to make it to the finish line, the "narrow gate," and it will be too late then to start training. Jesus returns to the original question and, echoing the first reading from Isaiah, envisions masses of people from all directions who will be included among those saved. We may be surprised by who gets there first

—America Magazine, August 2010

FAITH FORMATION



Faith Formation Open Enrollment for new students, Kindergarten through 8th Grade continues now through September 15th. Avoid the rush and register early before classes are filled. Call the Parish Office if you have questions.

All Faith Formation registration forms are located in the Narthex or the Parish Office.

***Kindergarten (5-6 yr olds)** – children attend classes during the 10:00A mass throughout the year. Classes are held in the Parish Center Meeting Room (next to the gymnasium). Children must be 5 yrs by December 2010 to enroll in this class.

***First Holy Communion (2 yr program – 1st & 2nd grades)** – Children attend classes on scheduled Wednesday's throughout the school year from 4:00-5:00P to prepare for the Sacrament of First Holy Communion.

***Faith Formation (3rd-5th grades)** – Children who have received First Holy Communion will be meeting on Thursday's at 4:15-5:15P

***Confirmation (2 yr program – 6th and 7th grades)** – Children attend classes on scheduled Tuesday's throughout the school year from 5:00-6:15P to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

***OCIC (Non Baptized children 8 yr or older or older baptized children over the age of 8 yrs who have not received their First Holy Communion or Confirmation)** – Children meet on Thursday's throughout the school year at 5:30-6:30P to prepare for their Sacraments.

Love working with children? We are always looking for enthusiastic and dedicated Catechists willing to learn and deepen their faith. Faith Formation classes are held just once a week for about an hour. If interested in answering God's call, please contact Josephine at 447-2354 x 833. Ongoing training will be provided.

Youth Group SJC (Spiritual Junior Catholics) Youth Group starts September 12 from 1:15-3:00P (after 12P Youth Mass) in the Church Meeting room. If you're in the 7th grade to College age, stop by and join us. We have so much in store this year, including our first Youth Rally, ON FIRE! at Six Flags Marine World on 10/16. Come and share your Faith and meet new friends. Looking forward to seeing you soon! Any questions, contact Josephine at 447-2354.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank you to Denise Jones for her service over the past three years as our Parish Secretary/Office Manager.

Welcome to Roxann Beck-Foley who has joined our staff as our new Parish Secretary/Office Manager.

Peer Counselors needed for the Elderly - Do you have a good ear for listening? Do friends and family admire you for your ability to give out good advice? Faith in Action is looking for volunteers who would like to become Peer Counselors for some of the elderly care recipients who are a part of our programs. Faith in Action is presenting a series of free training modules to prepare you to become a Peer Counselor. The training is scheduled to begin on Wednesday, August 18th from 1-4:30 p.m. at the Fairfield Seniors Center. Faith in Action serves seniors residing throughout Solano County, so volunteers will be matched with someone from their own community. People with open hearts who enjoy giving of themselves to others are encouraged to apply. Call **(707) 469-6675** for additional information and to register. **Someone out there in your community is waiting for YOU!**

Lost and Found—Please visit our lost and found in the church meeting room to claim any items you may have lost while at church. After September 15, all unclaimed items will be donated.

Fund Raiser for St. Patrick Succeed Academy—Concert by Anthony Kearns “Irish Lyric Tenor” accompanied by Patrick Healy concert pianist/humorist. Music from Broadway, Opera and Ireland. Saturday, September 25, 2010 7:30 p.m. at the Msgr. Kavanagh Community Center, 5905 Franklin Blvd, Sacramento, CA. \$25.00/person For more information or tickets call St. Rose Church (916) 421-1414.

Lifeline Ministry—Losing a job, the loss of a loved one or family struggles can be overwhelming for many of us. Sometimes talking about our difficulties can ease our troubles and help us move beyond our pain or relieve our stress. We at the Lifeline Ministry can help you during this difficult time. We offer one on one confidential meetings with you which are a free service offered through the parish. Please contact the Lifeline Ministry at (707) 447-2354.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A Taste of Italy! Enjoy a food and wine tasting gala at Christ the King Passionist Retreat Center on September 24, 6:30-9:30 p.m., 6520 Van Maren Lane, Citrus Heights. Auctions, music and more. Help raise much-needed funds and have fun in the process. Honorary chair is Msgr. Edward Kavanagh, who was the first to welcome Passionists to the area. Tickets to the benefit are \$75 each, and advance purchase is required. A dozen wineries and a similar number of restaurants are participating. Overnight accommodations with breakfast also available for \$125 double occupancy. (Call 725-4720, ext. 343 to make credit card reservations, or download a ticket order form at passionist.org/christtheking/Italy and mail with payment.)

RCIA

Becoming a Catholic - Are you interested in exploring the Catholic faith or do you know someone who has an interest?

- Please join us for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) inquiry sessions. There will be 3 sessions on consecutive Wednesday evenings, beginning on September 1 and continuing on September 8 and September 15. They will be held in the Parish Center Meeting Room at 7PM.
- **Confirmation for Adults** – If you have received baptism and First Communion, but have missed confirmation, please join us for adult confirmation classes beginning on September 1 at 7PM in the Parish Center Meeting Room.



QUESTION OF THE WEEK

21st Sunday in Ordinary Time - Week of August 22, 2010

Step One: Listen to the Word

When you hear this reading today, what image or idea strikes you most strongly? What word or phrase catches your ear?



Theme: Following Jesus calls us to risk and not always take the easy road.

Step Two: Look into Your Life

Question for Children: How do you show that you are a follower of Jesus?

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Mon. 2 Thes 1:1-5,11-12; Ps 96:1-5 ; Mt 23:13-22
 Tues. Rv21:9-14; Ps 145:10-13,17-18; Jn1:45-51
 Wed. 2 Thes 3:6-10,16-18; Ps 128:1-2,4-5; Mt 23:27-32
 Thurs. 1 Cor 1:1-9; Ps 145:2-7; Mt 24:42-51
 Fri. 1 Cor 1:17-25; Ps 33:1-2,4-5,10-11; Mt 25:1-13
 Sat. 1 Cor 1:26-31; Ps 33:12-13,18-21; Mt 25:14-30
 Sun. Sir 3:17-18,20,28-29; Ps 68:4-7,10-11; Heb 12:18-19,22-24; Lk 14:1,7-14

MASS INTENTIONS

Mon. 8/23 - 7:00 AM ----- Intentions of Siaki Family
 Tues. 8/24 - 7:00 AM -----Anthony Gomez, R.I.P.
 Wed. 8/25 - 8:15 AM -----Robert Creedon, R.I.P.
 Thurs. 8/26 - 7:00 AM----- Jane Yancoskie, R.I.P.
 Fri. 8/27 - 7:00 AM----- Beverly Dodge, R.I.P.
 Sat. 8/28 - 8:15 AM-----Prudencio Viernes, R.I.P.
 Sat. 8/28 - 5:00 PM-----Peter Gravin, R.I.P.
 Sun. 8/29 - 7:00 AM----- Members of the Parish
 Sun. 8/29 - 8:30 AM-----Sick Members of the Parish
 Sun. 8/29 - 10:00 AM -----Peace
 Sun. 8/29 - 12:00 PM -----Vocations to the Priesthood