

February 6, 2022
Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 6: 1-2a, 3-8
Ps. 138
1 Corinthians 15: 1-11
Luke 5: 1-11

Stewardship
God Prepares Us for Ministry

The Prophet Isaiah (Is.6:1-2a, 3-8) has a vision of the Lord on his throne. Seraphim were crying praises. The sight brought Isaiah much trepidation. It was thought to see the face of God would bring death. That did not happen though. Rather, God cleansed and prepared Isaiah for the ministry he was being called to. God prepared the prophet.

In 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 St. Paul gives instruction to the people. He teaches the core of the Faith. That is, Jesus Christ risen. Paul gives the basic knowledge necessary to live the life of the way of Christ.

The gospel story is a call to service in the Lord. The call may come at any time and in any place to anyone. Moreover, the passage foreshadows what will happen over time. That is, there will be a great response to the preaching of the Apostles. There will be an abundant harvest of people who respond to the Good News.

Responding to God's call is both personal and communal. We become aware of God's closeness to us. We can feel his gnawing at our hearts and conscience. We sense God is calling us for some specific role of service in the community.

Then the personal encounter with God must be tested. One must appeal to the authority in the Faith Community to confirm the call lest it be merely a whim. After that the person who is called must be prepared through education and formation before serving publicly. A person, no matter how pious, may go out on his or her own proclaiming to know all that God told him or her to tell everyone else.

Brothers and sisters, we are the Church founded by Jesus Christ on Peter the Rock. We join together with the Apostles and their successors. As a community of Faith, with each of us having his or her special role, we carry on the spread of the Good News. In the Church we find the knowledge, wisdom, and strength to fulfill our ministry to God. God prepares us for ministry.

I remember my own path into ordained ministry. I am aware of its course presently. From the beginning I have been aware of my zeal to "go out and tell all the nations". I have also been aware of trepidation realizing the responsibility that comes with ministry. I therefore submitted to the teaching authority of the Church. I had

to be taught and formed. And, the reality in ministry is that the learning and formation is ongoing all lifelong.

In the weeks to come I may tap some of you on the shoulder to serve in some way. Like Paul, I will make sure you are prepared to serve. We will walk the path of ministry together.

<p>Archbishop's Charities and Development Drive ABCD Disciples in Faith. Missionaries of Hope. Servants for Charity. Please make your pledge. Make sure your pledge card designates your pledge originates from <u>Blessed Sacrament Parish</u>. We must claim our quota. Our Goal \$62,000.00 Let Us Do It!</p>

STEWARDSHIP	
Attendance last week:	252
Tithes Collected:	\$4,897.00
Online Giving:	\$412.00
Total:	\$5,309.00

Stewardship Recognition, 2022
Damien and Olga Priestman

Each year we recognize someone for his or her Stewardship. It is NOT an award. We do not get awarded for doing what we ought to do. Rather, the person or persons, in humility, stand before us as examples of what we all may do to serve the Lord and His Church.

This year we recognize the Priestman Family. The family is led by Damien and Olga. They have four children.

Damien and Olga came to the U.S. seeking asylum from the Russian Putin regime. They were daring to become Roman Catholics and then practice the faith boldly. Furthermore, they espoused and worked for Democratic reform in Russia. When their work and practice of the Faith so threatened Mr. Putin, they found it best to come to the U.S. and ask for asylum.

Already, they had traveled to the U.S. to give birth to each of their children. With the exception of the fourth child they would return to Moscow. They knew they had to do something to protect their children. All along since the birth of their first daughter Blessed Sacrament Parish has been their spiritual support. Being aware of their needs the parish has quietly provided what was necessary along the way.

There was a moment in recent history democratic reform looked good in Russia. Originally it was President Carter who brought the Catholic Church, under St. Pope John Paul II, together with our governmental efforts to change the Soviet Union. President Reagan then continued this alliance with the Church that eventually "brought down the wall".

At that moment Mikhail Gorbachev's leadership was making strides to bring Russia into alignment with the West. A greater freedom of Religion and Rule was on the move. Actual members of the Priestman family who had been jailed for the practice of the Faith were freed. As young people Damien and Olga were involved in organizing democratic reforms. Both became lawyers in their system. Damien specialized in Civil Rights. His theses was "Religious Civil Family". However, Damien and Olga were still not "aware" of one another.

In 2002 Damien explains the most important thing happened in his life. He made the move from being a Baptist to entering the Roman Catholic Church. The next most important thing was he met Olga.

Olga and Damien met in 2010 at a meeting of TAIZE. They married February 12, 2013, in Israel at the Church of the First Miracle in Cana. In their young marriage they participated together in many protests. You see, when Vladimir Putin come into power in 1999, before they had even met, things were already changing for the worse. "Security Services" returned to public management of the country. Russian foreign policy became more isolationist. Democratic institutions were banned. Corruption and bribery became the norm.

Religious freedoms were not what one would expect or hope for. There was toleration of only certain religions. The Russian Orthodox Church became the overt State Religion. The Roman Catholic Church was not tolerated. The organization that Damien worked for was now in big trouble and the only thing to do was to permanently move his family back to the U.S. in October of 2015. Given the support the parish was giving the family in the past the Priestman's joined Blessed Sacrament permanently.

In recent years our nation pivoted to a stance that people wishing asylum were not so favored. At one point it was proposed people seeking asylum should do so while still in their home country. Needless to say, such would be very dangerous to such families as ours.

While Damien and Olga have worked at any job available their goal professionally is to study Law in the U.S. Mostly, they wish to raise their American born children to be responsible faithful Roman Catholics for which Damien and Olga fought so hard to be.

All of this parish should know the Priestman's are not the first family this parish has sponsored. Surely, they will not be the last. All of us born in the U.S., especially we Roman Catholics, must be vigilant to be sure all people of Faith may be able to practice their faith not only in this country but around the world.

We give respect to this family for the witness they give to us of Faith in a most loving God.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK: Joe Alfaro, Jordan Almendral, JoAnn Anderson, Angiolina Armenti, Michael Beard, Karen Becker, Mary Benivegna, Margarita Bogle, Tom Carver, Sean Chin, Robert Clark, Mary Collis, John Cooper, Logan Costante, Gregoria Daen, Sam DeMarco, Ines DeSalle, Roseanne DeSimone, Lisa DeStasio, John Dooney, Nelson Douaihi, Peggy Duff, Susan Fabbri, Lisa Findlay, Megan Forrester, Joshua Freeman, Richard Gossett, Ana Gilajota, Stephen Goch, Keri Greenan, Richard & Cathy Harper, Tyler Harrison, Dil Hatchett, Cindy Hogman, Tiffany Kentosh, Butch Klinger, Judith Kolo, John LaNeve, Tamika Lee, Bernie Ligget, Gail Martin, Sean Martin, Mary McKelvey, Clare McMahan, Frank McNeil, Rylee Mertz, Dan Murphy, Teresita Nazareno, Lauren Nicole, Thomas O'Brien, Barbara Perry, Della Mae Reblin, Lucy Reitano, Coleen Riley, Paul Riley, Dee Ripple, Matilda Rivier, Charles Rousseau, Anthony Ruggiero, Theresa Schluter, Brad Schroder, Ellen Seaman, Roger Sherman, Jim Smullen, Vivian Spasiano, Rick Steffan, M. Stoufer, Richard Taylor, Antoinette Teresi, Constantino Thomas, Margarita Verano, Peggy Weiss, Ed Wrisley, Nancy Zakem, Marie & Jeff, Lucas Zaky

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, February 5

4:00pa.m. † Raul Perales by Benitez Perales Family
Those Committed to the Stewardship of the Parish by Fr. Bob

Sunday, February 6

9:00 a.m. † Jean Yves Dartois by Catherine & Donald Dunn
10:45 a.m. † Terry Lew by Martin & Frank

Monday, February 7

8:00 a.m. NO MASS

Tuesday, February 8

8:00 a.m. † Bernard & Eileen Flood by Flood Family

Wednesday, February 9

8:00 a.m. Those Committed to the Stewardship of the Parish by Fr. Bob

Thursday, February 10

8:00 a.m. Angelo & Patricia Orlando (50th Anniversary) by Angelo Orlando

Friday, February 11

8:00 a.m. † Brian M Hudak by Martin Casanova & Frank Belina

Saturday, February 12

4:00 p.m. † Dottie & Joe Ducato by Nancy, Marylou, & Paul
† Yedda Paradela by Paradela Family

Sunday, February 13

9:00 a.m. Blessed Sacrament Parish
10:45 a.m. † Lawrence A. Cinque, Jr. by Elaine Hall
† Robert Harris by Meadows Family