

My Dear Parishioners,

In today's Gospel Jesus says: "Learn from me for I am **meek** and **humble of heart**." **Meekness** and **humility** were virtues that Jesus embraced and exhibited while He preached, taught and ministered to the people of His time. Obviously they are virtues that Jesus wants all His followers to accept and embrace whole-heartedly. Unfortunately, for some people in our present society, the virtues of **meekness** and **humility** are no longer highly esteemed. These virtues are often despised as they are confused with being someone's doormat, lacking a backbone, or being unable or unwilling to stand up and speak for and fight for one's self or one's rights. In today's world self-assertiveness and aggressiveness are virtues that are more highly prized.

When we envision the virtues of **meekness** and **humility** we often think of the child in grade school who stands in the corner of the playground while the other children make fun of and or pick on him/her. Or perhaps we envision the enslaved worker or the despised immigrant or refugee who passively and quietly accepts his or her fate (innuendos, derogatory and degrading insults or unfair and unjust reprimands from an authoritative figure). These are not true pictures or examples of **meekness** or **humility** because in each case a person is being taken advantage of and being hurt by someone else. A person is being stripped of their human dignity and the respect they deserve by another individual. So what is the **meekness** and **humility** that Jesus is speaking about and why does He want us to embrace these virtues?

In the movie **Gandhi** there is a poignant and dramatic scene that shows us a good example of the virtues of **meekness** and **humility** that Jesus was speaking about. The Muslims and Hindus who have migrated to South Africa are protesting the new law that requires them to carry a passport at all times even if they are citizens. In a protest to this unjust law and in defiance to the government Mahatma Gandhi invites his fellow citizens to a "passport-burning meeting". Gandhi lights the fire and begins tossing in his and other's passports. Each time he throws another passport into the fire he is beaten. His only reaction to the beatings is to toss another

passport into the fire. Gandhi's response to his oppressor's actions models the same picture of Jesus' **meek** and **humble** response to His oppressors. Gandhi's reaction to the government's abuse is a picture of the same **meekness** and **humility** that Jesus exhibited. It is the same kind of **meekness** and **humility** that Jesus wants all His followers to embrace. Gandhi's response is an example of **meekness** and **humility** that is centered in the principle of not running away and pretending that evil does not exist. It is based on the principle of not remaining silent before the face of evil. It is based on Jesus' beatitude of not returning evil for evil. Gandhi's response is a good example of **meekness** and **humility** that never hesitates to speak up and stand up for the truth. It is a kind of **meekness** and **humility** that challenges oppressors and unjust authoritative figures; whether they are the bully on the playground, government or community officials, church leaders, or employers.

Our Scripture readings for today give us a clear picture of what the concepts of Christian **meekness** and **humility** are all about. Our first reading is from the Book of the Prophet Zechariah. The prophet Zechariah was a contemporary of Alexander the Great who conquered the known world when he was 21 years of age and was (despite having been educated under the famous philosopher and teacher Aristotle) brash and arrogant. Alexander arrived and conquered Palestine around the year 332 B.C. and began what is known as the Hellenistic (Greek) period in Jewish history. It was a period of great misery, terribly bitter persecution, and upmost devastation for the Jews. It was during this time of misery, persecution and devastation that God's prophet Zechariah spoke up and prophesied that "better days" would be coming for the Jews. He invited the young Jerusalem to rejoice and shout for joy because God would provide for them and free them from their misery.

Today's prophetic passage from Zechariah spells out God's saving plan for the Jews. God will send them a true king who will bring them freedom and peace. God will provide them with a "just savior" as their king; one who would be mindful of the poor and lowly. Previous kings were less than ideal as they ignored the ways of God and forgot the poor and

lowly. They used their royal power for their own advantage, destroying Israel in the process. But now an ideal and true king would arrive bringing peace to the land and hope for the poor. This king would arrive riding on a donkey (a beast used for farming and the transport of goods.) The king's very approach announces peace and prosperity. This is in contrast to the last of the kings of Judah and Alexander the Great (who rode proud and war-like on horses and chariots aggressively using weapons of war.) The true and ideal king will be the Messiah ("the anointed one") and he will arrive **meekly**. This does not signify humiliation, but **humility**, serenity and peaceful intentions. Unlike other conquerors, the Messiah will establish peace by first establishing justice and he will unite all the kingdoms of the world! The Jewish people would remember Zechariah's prophecy when Jesus arrived riding **meekly** and **humbly** on a donkey into Jerusalem during the Passover.

In today's Gospel St. Matthew puts together a collection of Jesus' sayings along with His observation that the **meek** and **humble** were God's special kind of people since Jesus was one of them. Previously to today's Gospel passage Jesus had been describing Israel's non acceptance of its Messiah. In the beginning of today's passage Jesus acknowledges the sovereignty, wisdom and grace of God who hides all this from the wise and learned while revealing it to the childlike. What is revealed to the childlike is the significance of Jesus' preaching and miracles which the wise and learned totally missed. By "the learned and wise" Jesus was clearly referring to the Pharisees and scribes who were smug in their knowledge of Scripture and the law. They felt there was nothing they could learn from Jesus. They who thought they knew all about God and His revelation failed to recognize Jesus as the Word of God and the perfect manifestation of the Father. By "mere children" Jesus was not referring literally to toddlers but to **all** who were willing to learn from those who could help them advance their knowledge and love of God. This category included the poor and the lowly, the **meek** and **humble**, and tax collectors and other public sinners.

Jesus then comes to the greatest claim He ever made. In language very similar to John's Gospel Jesus discloses His intimate relationship between the

Father and Himself. He claims that: "no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son." This principle that only God the Father fully comprehends Jesus' mission and only Jesus fully understands God the Father's saving plan is at the heart of Christianity. Since Jesus knows the Father completely Jesus is able to understand the will of the Father as it is being revealed in and through the kingdom of God. Jesus' significance is a matter of divine revelation. All of this is aimed at revealing Jesus' Messianic identity which the Pharisees and scribes rejected. The intellectually **humble** and **meek** and those who are open and trusting will see and accept Jesus as their Messiah.

Finally Jesus extends an invitation to all who "labor and are burdened" by the law as it has been interpreted by the scribes and Pharisees. In Jesus' time sincere seekers were hog-tied by the legal and moral prescriptions of rabbinic Judaism. They were burdened by the "yoke" which in the Old Testament was a symbol for the Mosaic Law and the precepts of God made known through revelation. This needed to be balanced by a prophetic vision in order to give joy to the Mosaic tradition. Good people were conscious of the burden of sin which the Mosaic Law could not relieve. Therefore they pictured their lives as always being burdensome and weary. Jesus invites them to "come to Him" and He will refresh them by making their life's journey less burdensome and less weary. He promises to help them so they can more easily bear one's responsibility in following God's will. The way they can accomplish this is by learning from Jesus Himself. Jesus too bears a "yoke" and His invitation is to share His "yoke" and thus learn from Him. Here the key to bearing one's "yoke" is by imitating Jesus' **meekness** and **humility**. In doing so two things will happen. First a heavy burden **can** be managed and secondly that burden will be lightened because Jesus will provide assistance. As "yoke-mates" with Jesus one's own "yoke" is made easy and one's burden is made much lighter.

The heart of Jesus' message in today's Gospel is "Come to me." It is a call to all of us to have a personal relationship with Him. The shift from the Judaic concept of "Keep the Law" to Jesus' invitation "Come to me" is a very significant one.

Any religion or faith system which is experienced **only** as adherence to legalistic impersonal norms and not as a joyful, loving, life-giving relationship with God is enslaving and controlling. In coming to the person of Jesus we discover that far from being burdened, we are truly liberated and free. That same Jesus will give rest to our souls only if we speak the truth with a quiet **humble** heart. In accepting Jesus' invitation to follow Him we are capable of living a life of the "spirit" with Him and we can test ourselves on the degree to which we have overcome our pride and arrogance. We can also test ourselves on whether or not we have acquired the **meekness, humility, openness** and **childlike trust** that Jesus showed us and asks us to embrace. Have a blessed week.

Love & prayers,

Fr. John

### PARISH OFFICE

Please note that **this week** the Parish Office will **only** be opened **Monday to Thursday** from **9 am till noon**. Thanks

### MASS INTENTIONS

#### Monday, July 10

7:00 Raynelda Mondesir

#### Tuesday, July 11, St. Benedict, Abbot

7:00 ☩ Betty Paquette

#### Wednesday, July 12

7:00 ☩ Intention of the donor

#### Thursday, July 13, St. Henry

7:00 ☩ Jim Mondo

#### Friday, July 14, St. Kateri Tekakwitha, Virgin

7:00 ☩ Intention of the donor

#### Saturday, July 15, St. Bonaventure, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

9:00 ☩ Intention of the donor

5:00 ☩ Kay Spang

#### Sunday, 16, July 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

7:30 For the Parishioners

9:00 ☩ Mike Kizeik

11:00 ☩ Richard Dieckhaus

**There are quite a few Mass times available for your intentions, over the next several weeks. Most are week days.** Stop in after Mass today or call the office at 733-9641.



### IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

We will be publishing the names of your dear loved ones who are seriously ill or injured. *We will keep them in the bulletin for one month.* After the period of one month their names will be removed. For example, names announced in the bulletin the third week of the month will be removed the third week of the following month. If at that time prayers are still needed, please feel free to contact the parish office, and we will be more than happy to re-publish your loved one's name.

#### July 2:

Bill Hecker, Melissa Kurtz, Janet Tomko Alex Masluk, Elizabeth & Jack Farnquist Sr., Jean Givler, Abigail Lowe-Critchfield, Richard Warner, Brendan Holbriiter, Anthony Tassa, John Griffis, Duane Hartman, Byron Gift, and Jack McGowan, Declan Morgan, and Phyllis Schmook, Ramon Stief.



Date	Amount	Needed	Difference
7-2-17	\$	\$14,326.00	(\$)
YTD	Amount	YTD Need	Difference
7-2-17	\$	\$.00	(\$)

[Going on vacation? Please use online giving to catch up on offertory contributions. Go to \[www.omph.org\]\(http://www.omph.org\) and click on the Online Giving link it's quick and easy! Your support during the summer months helps sustain our parish.](#)

**ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT** Following Jesus should be simple and adventurous as well. For instance, we might try using our imagination in prayer by picturing ourselves in biblical times. We can imagine Jesus as he multiplies the loaves or walks on water. We can cross the Red Sea and journey to the Promised Land with the Israelites. We can place ourselves on the battlefield and witness David slaying the mighty Goliath. Using our imagination this way, we can imitate an inquisitive child and ask all manner of questions: "How can Jesus be everywhere at the same time? What does an angel look like?" Don't settle for the same old routine! Be bold, and launch yourself on a new adventure.

#### SANCTUARY LAMP

You may have the Sanctuary Lamp burn for a sick or deceased loved one for a donation of \$5 to defray the cost of the candles. This week the candle burns for Richard & Frances Redcay.

#### ALTAR SERVER TRAINING

Any girl or boy in grades fourth and up that would like to become an altar server should contact Ben Hoover at 808-1115. We will start training in August and will get them on the schedule that comes out in September.



#### HELP WANTED

OMPH Church cleaners are looking for a couple of volunteers to clean

the windows in the doors to the church. If interested call Sandra at 733-9453.

#### VOLUNTEERS WITH TRUCKS NEEDED!

The OMPH Benevolent Society has some needs that



involve needing a pickup truck driver. We have teams



of people who go to **Lancaster on Tuesday** mornings to pick up food and another group who picks up from **Target and Redners each Wednesday**. It is **NOT a weekly commitment but perhaps once or twice a month on these days**. If you would like to work with an incredible group of volunteers, this just may be the job for you! Please call Bonnie Brown at 824-1054 or email [bbjnb@ptd.net](mailto:bbjnb@ptd.net) for more details.

Also: our food bank is in need of instant potatoes, canned pasta, jello/pudding, cake mixes, and frosting! Please consider picking up one of these items next time you are in the grocery store. Place items in the food bank crate in the narthex of the church! We are always humbled by the generosity of the OMPH parishioners.



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We Are o Running Our Kindergarten Home-Study  
Program Again For The 2017/2018 RE Year.

This Program Is Intended For Families Whose  
Oldest Child Will Be Attending Public  
Kindergarten This Year.

To Register For This Program Please Complete The  
Pink Registration Papers Found In The Narthex  
Of The Church On The Small Blue Table  
And Return Them To The RE Office.

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Every Year the Religious Education Program is in  
need of Catechists, Aides, and Occasional  
Substitutes for the up-coming Religious Education  
year.

There are three different grade levels in which  
to volunteer and they are as follows:



A Woman's Concern is seeking a  
part-time receptionist for our N.  
Duke St. location. The

receptionist is the first connection person  
for individuals seeking pregnancy help and support  
and must be passionately pro-life and have excellent  
communication and computer skills.

We are also seeking a Marketing & Events intern  
from September-November. This person must be  
either a current college student or recent graduate.

Please contact our office for a full job description and  
application for either position at 394-1561.

### SENIORS 55 AND OLDER

Would you enjoy a 5% discount on your car  
insurance for the next three years? Who wouldn't!  
Well, in Pennsylvania it is mandatory that if you take  
the AARP Smart Driving Course, the insurance  
company must give you a 5% discount. To get the  
discount, all you have to do is show up at the course,  
spend two four hour sessions and at the end you will  
get a completion certificate to give to your insurance  
company, There are no tests. You cannot fail. It is  
all in the classroom — NO on the road driving. The  
cost per person is \$15 for AARP Members and \$20  
for non-members. If both husband and wife are on  
the insurance policy, both must take the course. For  
example, if your insurance cost for the year is \$1000  
you would get a \$50 Discount for each of the next  
three years. So, for an investment of \$15 or \$20 you  
would save \$150. If you are interested in saving some  
money and learning about ongoing changes in  
yourself, vehicles, the roads, the driving laws and  
refreshing your memory on some safety strategies  
you might have forgotten, call the number below to  
register. We have now set up an eight-hour course for  
OMPH on Saturday, July 29, 2017 and Saturday,  
August 5, 2017 from 8:00 am to 12 noon. You must  
attend both days. If interested call Charlotte and Bob  
Galgon at 717-733-4369

### OMPH COMMUNITY MEALS





OMPH will be hosting our second Community Meal of 2017. We are once again looking for volunteers to help. Our Community Meal Program provides free, freshly prepared and nutritious meals, to hungry residents of the Ephrata area. This meal will be held on

**July 20 at Bethany United Church of Christ, 140 East Main Street, Ephrata, PA.**

There is no special expertise required. Volunteer will have varied duties from helping to set up the dining area, serving meals to our guests and of course cleaning up after the meal. Our meal program serves anywhere from 120 to 180 people so we usually need around 25 volunteers. Without our volunteers it would be difficult if not impossible to accomplish our mission. Whether you have helped in the past or this is your first time we would love to have you join us for this worthwhile and rewarding experience.

For those individuals who are unable to volunteer some of their time but still want to help out, monetary donations are always welcome for the “*OMPH Community Meals*“. If you are interested in volunteering or want more information please email Tara Montgomery at [jazzcat9@ptd.net](mailto:jazzcat9@ptd.net) or contact Pat or Georgia Hogan at 738-0825.

### OMPH SCHOOL REGISTRATION 2017-18



WE ARE ENROLLING! Registration is now open to all parish families for Preschool through Grade 8 for the 2017-2018 school year. The Preschool program, for children who are 3 and 4 years old by September 1st, provides developmentally appropriate activities in a Catholic environment and offers an after-care program. Our full day Kindergarten program, for children who are 5 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup>, provides daily Religion class along with skill development in Language Arts and Math and special classes in computer, library, physical education, art, and music. Students in grades 1 through 8 experience an education noted for academic excellence in an environment which reinforces our Catholic identity. An on-site after school program is also available.

Come see why so many families choose OMPH Catholic School for their children! Personal tours

can be scheduled by calling the Development Office at 738-2414.

To learn more about our school, please visit our website at [www.omph.org](http://www.omph.org) or call the school office at 738-2414 for further information. Find us on Facebook at OMPH Ephrata!

### YEARLINGS

Join us at 11:30 on July 11 for lunch at Funks Restaurant at 365 W. Main St. in

### OMPHALUMNI

We will be having a school reunion Saturday, September 16 in the gym for anyone in the classes of 1960-2009. This is a 21 and over event. Flyers are available in the narthex. More information can be found on our Facebook page: OMPH Reunion or by calling Lauren (DePaul) Caramenico (Class of '94) at 314-1806.



### THE HOLY SPIRIT - FOUNTAIN OF GRACE

On **September 16<sup>th</sup>** the Diocese of Harrisburg will offer a Charismatic Day of Renewal from **8 AM - 4 PM** at the Cardinal Keeler Center in Harrisburg. The **KEYNOTE SPEAKER** will be Fr. Bill Cosgrove, Liaison for the Charismatic Renewal in the Diocese of New York, NY. **REGISTRATION FORMS** and additional information are in the parish office. There will be a collection of non-perishable food items for a local ministry, the Silence of Mary Home.

