



ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

THIS SUNDAY November 10 & BEYOND



For Real??

In our society we have used a variety of short phrases to question the sincerity, the seriousness, or the prankish questions and statements that come our way. For instance, someone comes up to you and says, “The price of gas is going down today by \$2 per gallon.” Of course, if your only mode of transportation is your feet and your legs, or a bicycle, that example might not get a rise out of you. But for people who drive a car, such an extreme drop in price would probably elicit, “Are you serious??!”, or “Really?!?!?”, or “For reals, man?”

The same responses – but with a slight change in inflection – can come when responding to what would otherwise be an absurd question or statement that might actually be based in a serious curiosity. The slight inflection might also be combined with a rolling of the eyes. More often than not, these are hypothetical questions, or unnecessary scenarios.

Such is the first part of the story from the Gospel (the Good News brought by Jesus Christ) for this coming Sunday, November 10, 2019, where Jesus is asked a question by members of the religious/political group called the Sadducees. You may remember that the Sadducees did not believe in certain super-natural points regarding the interaction between God and Man. They didn’t believe in Angels, for instance. And they didn’t believe in resurrection. So, guess what the subject was of the question they asked? The Resurrection.

They attempted to cloak the real subject with an inane scenario about marriages and the Jewish Law. They present a story about a woman whose husband died while she was still alive. Deuteronomy 25:5 states: “*the wife of the deceased shall not be married outside the family to a stranger. Her husband’s brother shall go in to her, taking her in marriage, and performing the duty of a husband’s brother to her.*” The woman has an obligation to keep the family line going, raising up children for her husband. But, the Sadducees ask, what if this woman marries all seven brothers in succession,

whose wife will she be in the resurrection? To whom will be her greater allegiance? And for goodness sake, who will do the cooking, cleaning and serving?"

That's exactly the point where we would say, "For Real, man?" Add: Eyeroll.

You know, people ask these kinds of questions, and make these kinds of "Are you serious?" statements for a variety of reasons. One reason is just to be humorous. But mostly, I think, the purpose is to confuse and then test a person's beliefs, or to mock them, or attempt to discredit them.

Those of us, if we had been there, who might have been the eye-rollers might have started to tell Jesus, "Don't do it, Jesus! It's a trap!" And Jesus would have looked over at us, smiled gently, gave a head nod, and said, "I got this..."

What I love most about this story is that Jesus does not admonish them, try to trick them back; he didn't even say to them, "Silly rabbit...." What he did do was address the main concern of anybody who doesn't believe in the resurrection of the dead in Christ, and that concern is about the nature of heaven and eternal life as compared to here on earth.

Understanding the motives of people when they make strange statements, or try to trap YOU into saying something you don't need to say, or when people attempt to simply ridicule you, is a major life tool. I'm not saying its easy to learn, although there are some people who just have a gift for being able to read right into an otherwise arcane statement or question. The main thing is that it is a function of the ability to listen, and listen well. This is what diplomats and negotiators learn to do. It's what peacemakers of any stripe need to learn in order to be more effective peacemakers.

And here is some particularly good news for you – no question you have cannot be answered by God right at the heart of what you need to hear, and no question will be rejected. If you have a sincere heart and have a burning question, even a conundrum, God the Father wants to hear it, and He wants to answer it for you. That's because He loves you, and wants you to enjoy eternity with Him, no matter what about the land of the earthly living has caused you confusion.

I believe Jesus wanted each and every Sadducee to share eternity with him. And so he ended his answer by saying to them what they DID know correctly, that God IS. As revealed at the burning bush with Moses, God IS the God of Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob. So Jesus said, "Now he is God not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all of them are alive."

The Orders of Earth and Heaven are different. Will you be living with Him in eternity? Or stuck in death here on earth? Jesus wants us with Him.

Fr, Robert G. Eaton, Interim Rector

Readings for this Sunday – The Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost
Job 19:23-27a Psalm 17:1-8 2 Thessalonians 2:13-3:5 Luke 20:27-38

CALENDAR

SUNDAY: The Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost

8:30am Low Mass (Church)

10:30am Solemn Mass (Church)

AA Meeting

7:00pm Little Apple Group (Parish Hall)

—The entrance to the church is on 6th Avenue—

Note: Coffee Hour & Fellowship follow the Mass in the Parish Hall.

MONDAY Veterans Day *Office Closed*

TUESDAY: Noon Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)

FRIDAY AA Meetings
8:00p Ladies' Group (Fireside Room)
8:15p Men's Group (Parish Hall)

SUNDAY The Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost
8:00am Low Mass (Church)
10:30am Solemn Mass (Church)
9:00am – 3:00pm All Saints' Annual Arts & Crafts Show
& Sale & Music (Parish Hall)
AA Meeting
7:00p Little Apple Group (Parish Hall)

An Anglo-Catholic Parish in the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego
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