

2002 Liturgical Year A

This is only a partial year of lesson – Started when
Jack Vessels went down the college campus in Mississippi.

It has been said that the New Testament lies in the Old Testament and the Old Testament is revealed in the New Testament. The Old Testament Reading and the New Testament readings for the liturgical calendar help us understand the meaning of this statement. The letters and books of the New Testament other than the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) help to guide us in our applications of the messages found in the Gospels.

Scripture for September 15, 2002 Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading [Sir 27:30--28:9](#)

Responsorial Psalm [Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-12](#)

Reading II [Rom 14:7-9](#)

Gospel [Mt 18:21-35](#)

Comments From the banks of the Mighty Mississip - Father Vessels

During the day: When wronged, take another look. What provoked it? What, in his mind, justifies the other? Where lies the truth? Is he so wrong, & you so right? If roles reversed, would your reaction be any different? Be fair in your assessment of the other's behavior, quick to tolerance, generous in pardon. If indeed he erred, let correction be objective & impersonal. Remember, God judges you both.

ABOUT PRAYER: In prayer we're more concerned about our own sinfulness than we are about the burden borne due to the sins of others. Indeed, thru prayer we discover the solidarity of sin: we're all in this together, no one much better or worse than anybody else. Acknowledging in prayer our own human frailty, we commune with the very persons who wrong us. The Christian at prayer is Christ at prayer, come to correct our sinfulness & assume with us its consequences. So too, with him, we beg the Father for strength to shoulder together our common broken heritage. Only thus can the universal code of love Christ inaugurates renew it..

September 22, 2002 Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading Old Testament: [Is 55:6-9](#)

Reading II: New Testament: [Phil 1:20c-24, 27a](#)

Gospel: [Mt 20:1-16a](#)

Comments From the banks of the Mighty Mississip - Father Vessels

During the day: Don't bargain with God. He's in debt to no one. He's the only Absolute - everything & everyone else is relative, gratuitous. He is, & we are his; he owes us nothing. He uses us? Fine; we're grateful. He ignores us? He's got his reasons. Frustrating? Sure is! Grounds for complaint? None. Attitude? He knows his business; move on, do the best you can. Hard as it is to trust him, believe in his fairness. It'll finally turn to love.

ABOUT PRAYER: Pray as though everything depended on you; act as though everything depended on God. Pray his word to discern his plan; ponder it, then choose it, whatever your own inclination to the contrary. Having chosen it in prayer, let it happen. He knows how to work his will & does, using you to the extent you let him. No need to get stressed out; use prayer to relax & get out of the way. You'll be amazed how well he succeeds, even in your failures.

September 29, 2002 Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading Old Testament: [Ez 18:25-28](#)

Reading New Testament: [Phil 2:1-11](#) or [2:1-5](#)

Gospel [Mt 21:28-32](#)

Comments From the banks of the Mighty Mississipp - Father Vessels

During the day: Don't make promises you don't intend to keep. Be cautious in your commitments; be honest, both about competence & time available. Better to exceed the expected than to disappoint the presumed. confidence is based on responsibility, & responsibility is rooted in character. None of us have enough, but all of us can plug into Christ's, & grow.

ABOUT PRAYER: The prayer of petition is the gateway to hope; the prayer of thanksgiving, the gateway to love; the prayer of repentance, gateway to mercy; the prayer of oblation, to intimacy with God; the prayer of trust, to faith - the life outside of time. Prayer is our true self.

October 6, 2002 Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading Old Testament: [Is 5:1-7](#)

Reading New Testament: [Phil 4:6-9](#)

Gospel: [Mt 21:33-43](#)

Comments From the banks of the Mighty Mississipp - Father Vessels

During the day: Yield a rich harvest. Others have sown the good seed, tended it, devoted good labor to it. Education, talents, health, formation, faith – they all zero in now on the people & task at hand. Measure your effort to produce fruit by the purity of your intention; let the values that motivate you ring true. Don't prostitute your unique human instrumentality for any purpose but God's. Make the sowers proud!

ABOUT PRAYER: Tough decisions should be taken to prayer, the pros & cons of alternatives submitted humbly to the judgment of Another. Don't doubt his ability to communicate with you, nor question his reasons for limited clarity – our own growth in wisdom comes through the ups & down of experience. Let your discerning prayer be an authentic 'Thy will be done,' then note the degree of interior peace which accompanies the consideration of each alternative - God's nod that you're on the right track.

October 13, 2002 Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading Old Testament: [Is 25:6-10a](#)

Reading New Testament: [Phil 4:12-14, 19-20](#)

Gospel: [Mt 22:1-14](#) or [22:1-10](#)

Comments From the banks of the Mighty Mississipp - Father Vessels

During the day - Be alert to God's invitations. He expects you to accept them; don't, at your own risk. They are both challenges & opportunities, quite often in disguise. He needs to get the job of redemption done & counts on your cooperation. His plan is workable, but he owes no one an explanation of its details. The minutiae - a smile here, a little more patience there, an extra ounce of kindness occasionally - are, ultimately, the key to its success. Don't renege.

ABOUT PRAYER - The regularity of prayer is the ingredient that assures spiritual maturity. The ups & downs of experience - brief or prolonged - taken to daily prayer provide a rich variety of affective responses to God. Balancing gratitude with regret, dependence with trust, generosity with courage, etc., sharpens the spirit's ability to discern the harmony of God's action in one's life - a beautiful melody indeed!

October 20, 2002 Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading Old Testament: [Is 45:1, 4-6](#)

Reading New Testament: [1 Thes 1:1-5b](#)

Gospel: [Mt 22:15-21](#)

From the Banks of the Mighty Mississippi – Father Jack Vessels

During the day - Render to God what's his: YOU! Made by him, everything you are, have & do belongs to him, problems included. Made in his image--free--make all decisions wisely. The problem's his, not yours. Resolve it, concerned primarily with his interests, not your own - he'll take care of yours. Stay tuned to him & your (his) success is locked-in; even failure serve his purpose.

ABOUT PRAYER - Prayer is rendering; entering into; integrating. Possessing while possessed, assuming as assumed, consumed & consuming. Prayer is purgative, it reduces resistance; prayer is illuminative, it deepens insights; prayer is unitive, it transforms being. Net result: contemplative in action.

October 27, 2002 Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading Old Testament: [Ex 22:20-26](#)

Reading New Testament: [1 Thes 1:5c-10](#)

Gospel: [Mt 22:34-40](#)

From the Banks of the Mighty Mississippi – Father Jack Vessels

During the day – Love God in your neighbor, as you love God in yourself – with reverence, praising, & in service. Use your head; be prudent. Use your heart; be respectful. Use your soul; lift service to another up from the merely human to the divine. Know that God considers it done to him, channeling his holiness to both served & server. Be renewed by the effort.

ABOUT PRAYER – Action is experience, prayer transcends experience, Through experience we mature; prayer expresses what we're becoming. Action 'does'; prayer 'is'. Action is fleeting; prayer is eternal. In prayerful action we are aware of becoming what we will ever be. There's no going back; we may slip into chaos, & remain there if unrepentant. But recognizing the slip for what it is & undoing it makes it just one more experience of holiness. God be praised.

November 3, 2002 Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading Old Testament: [Mal 1:14b-2:2b, 8-10](#)

Reading New Testament: [1 Thes 2:7b-9, 13](#)

Gospel: [Mt 23:1-12](#)

From the Banks of the Mighty Mississippi – Father Jack Vessels

Note: Father Jack is currently on travel through Spain. We should have some great comments from Father Jack when he returns. These will be passed on when we get them.

November 17, 2002 Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading Old Testament: [Prv 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31](#)

Reading New Testament: [1 Thes 5:1-6](#)

Gospel: [Mt 25:14-30 or 25:14-15, 19-21](#)

From the Banks of the Mighty Mississippi – Father Jack Vessels

During the day: Be yourself. Don't try to rival others. You're the only one of YOU He's got! Use the talents he gave you to please him. You know your limitations; so does he. You also know when you can be & do better; make the effort. Don't measure the effort by anything but self-knowledge. Get rid of the negative self-image; he builds his kingdom out of what you are & do - what you aren't doesn't exist.

ABOUT PRAYER: Prayer is floating heavenwards on the 'Well done, good & faithful servant,' we hear at the end of each day. Sure, there are times we suggest he take a second look! We do, prayerfully, each evening, as we reflect on how he's used us to accomplish his work, noting also the ways our efforts could have been more generous. In a final prayer we mingle sentiments of joy & gratitude, humility & sorrow, determination & trust. Then peaceful dreams, hopefully, continue the meditation.

November 24, 2002 The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ the King

Reading Old Testament: [Ez 34:11-12, 15-17](#)

Reading New Testament: [1 Cor 15:20-26, 28](#)

Gospel: [Mt 25:31-46](#)

From the Banks of the Mighty Mississippi – Father Jack Vessels

During the day: Don't play with matches - you might get burned. Be ever alert to the two passions in your heart: one for others, the other for yourself. Both are fire by communication: one thru immersion in the Good Spirit, the other thru the deception of not-so-good spirits. Aflame with the love of God, serve your own needs best by serving the needs of others. The fires of misdirected pride & ambition, envy & jealousy, resentment & hatred burn forever if not recognized for what they are & doused with the living water of love for Christ.

ABOUT PRAYER: Prayer makes us vulnerable to the truths of the Spirit. Helpless, in prayer we surrender to the attraction of goodness. Prayer then flows effortlessly & at times unknowingly into action, & embraces the Christ waiting in the heart of the other. Joyfully he reveals himself; so back we go to prayer for the consuming affection of mutual gratitude.