We Welcome You To
St. Teresa of Avila Catholic Church
A Warm, Welcoming, Inclusive Faith Community
Served by the Carmelites

NOVEMBER 10, 2019
THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1490 19TH STREET (CHURCH)
LOCATED ON THE NE CORNER OF 19TH & CONNECTICUT STREETS

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ON-LINE GIVING
To make a one time gift, scan the QR code, scroll past the log in, click on Quick Give
To register for the program, scan the QR code and complete the log in, etc.

FEED THE HUNGRY
There is a wonderful opportunity to feed the hungry in our community. An Interfaith Church group provides a winter shelter program for homeless men. The men are housed in various religious buildings. Many different religious communities take turns providing a hot meal for the 75 to 100 men that are housed for the night.

A prayer group at St. Teresa’s has been doing this ministry for several years now. It has been an eye-opening, and heartwarming experience. The meal is sometimes prepared as a group at the Church kitchen, sometimes individuals prepare food at home and meet to serve. Save these dates January 29, 2020 and February 12, 2020 both beginning at 5 pm.

We sure could use your help!

For more information, please contact Lynn Jacklevich—kg6cev@yahoo.com, or Jeanne Burns—jeanne@thornleypitt.com
Some Sadducees came forward (the ones who claim there is no resurrection) to pose this problem to Jesus: ‘Master, Moses prescribed that if a man’s brother dies . . . .’

...gious controversy with the Sadducees, one of the contemporary religious groups of his day. Jesus frequently finds himself entangled in such debates, and additional groups mentioned in the Gospels include the Pharisees and the Scribes. Today’s gospel speaks of the Sadducees, and in this week’s column I’d like to write about this now-extinct sub-group in Judaism.

The Sadducees emerged following the Babylonian Captivity, which took place from 587-538 BC. When the Babylonians conquered Israel, they destroyed the temple and exiled the entire Israelite nation to Bagdad, a city a thousand miles east of Jerusalem (yes, it’s the same Bagdad, Iraq). The exile lasted fifty years, affording the Israelites plenty of time to reflect upon their recent catastrophic history. The monarchy – established four centuries earlier when Saul united the twelve tribes of Israel – no longer existed; the Jerusalem Temple – built by Solomon – was destroyed; and the promised land – given to Moses and the Israelites by Yahweh – was now under the domain of a foreign entity. The exile ended in 538 BC with the Edict of Cyrus, and Jews were allowed to return to their homeland. Those who returned were known as the remnant.

Returning from exile, the remnant began to rebuild the Temple in 516 BC, and over the next five centuries Jerusalem became the religious center of Judaism. The Sadducees emerged as the religious and political aristocracy, becoming the priestly class and assuming responsibility for the Temple. Sacrifice could be done only at the Temple in Jerusalem, and it had to be done by a Sadducee priest. And – given that Jewish Pilgrims from all over the empire traveled to the holy city to offer sacrifice – there certainly was no shortage of “work” for the Sadducees. By the time of Jesus, the business of Jerusalem was religion, and the Sadducees had a political, economic, and religious stranglehold on the city. The high priest was almost always a Sadducee, with Caiaphas and Annas (high priests mentioned at the trial of Jesus) most certainly being members of the Sadducee party.

The Sadducees exhibited a strange combination of beliefs and values in that they were politically liberal because, since Israel was usually under the control of a foreign power, the Sadducees had to cooperate with and accommodate the occupying forces. Resistance, revolution, or political unrest would lead to instability and violence, both of which disrupted the “business” of religion. The Sadducees were religiously conservative because they advocated a strict, somewhat literal interpretation of the Scriptures. They believed that breaking any of the commandments or laws was tantamount to breaking the entire law. (Note that, by the time of Jesus, the original Ten Commandments had expanded to over 600 laws!) The Sadducees also rejected the “liberal” view of resurrection and life after death, views that put them at odds with the Pharisees.

Notice that a question regarding the resurrection is at the center of the controversy in today’s Gospel.

In 70 AD, the Romans sacked Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple, and on that date both the Jewish state and Jerusalem Temple ceased to exist. The Jewish state would not be reestablished until 1948 and, with the destruction of the Holy City and its Temple, the Sadducees ceased to exist as well.

Michael Kwiecien, O. Carm.