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

FEBRUARY 16, 2020  
SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME  

Weighed Down with Socks  

Our final tally is in—we collected a grand total of 2,662 pairs of socks!!!  
Due to your generosity, there will be warm, dry feet for those served by The Presentation Day Labor Program, Martin de Porres and The Catholic Worker Hospitality House.  

We are at 32% of our goal! Thank you to all who have donated & pledged. Last year we had AAA wrapped up in 6 weeks (including pledges to be paid over the year) and received donations from 75+ parishioners/families. We would like to receive pledges from 100 people this year. So far we have received donations from 30 individuals/families.  

Please check with your employer to see if they provide matching funds for charitable donations.  

You can donate through the Archdiocesan website:  
https://sfrarch.org/aaa  
Choose St. Teresa Church or by scanning this QR code  

---

We extend our hands and hearts in Christian fellowship to you here celebrating with us. Whether long-time residents or newly arrived in our parish, we thank God that you are with us. If you are not registered or have changes to your registration, please fill in the form below, or complete the form on our website.  

Name:  
Address:  
City:  
Zip:  
Email:  

☐ New Parishioner  
☐ New Address and/or phone  
☐ Send Sunday envelopes  
☐ On-Line Giving  

---

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.
“Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill.” (Mt 5:17)

Jesus reflects on law, citing examples as they pertain to murder, adultery, divorce, and oaths. In doing so, Jesus challenges us to look at law and sin in a new and different light.

Essentially, Jesus takes the interpretation of law to a new level. In the teaching on adultery, for example, he expands the sin of adultery to include thoughts and desires of infidelity. In a similar way, Jesus expands the notion of killing to include anger against another human being. In other words, Jesus does not limit sin to actions. Instead, he expands the notion of sin to a level which includes motives, attitudes, and intentions of the heart.

As we celebrate Mass together, we include in our prayers:

- Faith Formation, 9am, Hall
- Sandwich Sunday, 11am, Hall
- Office Closed
- Choir Practice, 7pm, Church
- AA Step Meeting, 6:30pm, Hall
- AA Meeting, 7:30am, Avila
- SVDP Sandwich Tuesday 9am, Parish Kitchen
- SVDP Grocery Distribution 1pm, Hall
- Young Adult Scripture Study 7pm, Priory
- AA Meeting, 7pm, Hall
- AA Meeting, 7pm, Avila
- SVDP Sandwich Tuesday 9am, Parish Kitchen
- SVDP Grocery Distribution 1pm, Hall
- Young Adult Scripture Study 7pm, Priory
- Faith Formation, 9am, Hall
- Sandwich Sunday, 11am, Hall

The Parish Office will be closed on Monday, February 17th in observance of Presidents’ Day

THE BABYONIAN CAPTIVITY AND THE ISRAELITE UNDERSTANDING OF LAW

So speaks Jesus in today’s gospel, part of the Sermon on the Mount. In this passage, Jesus reflects on law, citing examples as they pertain to murder, adultery, divorce, and oaths. In doing so, Jesus challenges us to look at law (and sin) in a new and different light.

Notice, at the onset, that Jesus intends, “…not to abolish, but to fulfill. [the Law]” Essentially, Jesus takes the interpretation of law to a new level. In the teaching on adultery, for example, he expands the sin of adultery to include thoughts and desires of infidelity. In a similar way, Jesus expands the notion of killing to include anger against another human being. In other words, Jesus does not limit sin to actions. Instead, he expands the notion of sin to a level which includes motives, attitudes, and intentions of the heart.

In today’s homily I intend to focus on this deeper level, but in today’s column I’d like to focus on a different, underlying issue. Why is Jesus—and his Jewish audience—so focused on law in the first place?

To answer this question, we have to go back about six centuries to what is known as the Babylonian Captivity, a catastrophic event which took place between 588 BC and 537 BC. To put it succinctly, the Babylonians defeated the Israelites in 588 BC, and exiled the religious, economic, and political leaders to Babylon (roughly 1000 miles East of Israel to what is now present day Baghdad, Iraq). The Babylonian Exile was devastating, not simply because the Israelites were exiled to a foreign land, but because of what was lost in the process:

- the Land, known as the Promised Land, given by God to the Israelites following their liberation from slavery in Egypt, was now in the hands of a foreign power;
- the King: who was God’s anointed, chosen one, and representative on earth, no longer reigned; and
- the Temple, which was built by Solomon and located in God’s Holy City of Jerusalem, was destroyed by the Babylonian conquerors.

The Exile lasted approximately fifty years, which gave the Israelites plenty of time to reflect upon what happened. During the exile they pondered one, burning question: What did we do to so offend God that, to punish us, he not only took away our land, our king, and our temple but also exiled us to a foreign land?

For fifty years the Israelites pondered this question, and after a half-century, they came up with an answer: We don’t know what we did, but we better not do it again!

And how do we ensure that we don’t do it again? We develop a system of regulations and laws that govern every aspect of our lives. It is in Babylon that the original Ten Commandments are expanded to over 600 laws (see the books of Leviticus and Numbers), and this preoccupation with the minutiae of law still prevailed in Jesus’ day (remember when they ask, “Which law is the greatest?”). This understanding of law is the context for today’s Gospel, and what Jesus does in the Sermon on the Mount is to shift the focus from the number and detail of laws to the underlying intention and purpose of law.

Michael Kwiecien, O. Carm.