

of oral tradition, emphasizing acceptance of the written Law alone. They used only the Torah. This was contrary to what was held by the woman who had to endure her sons' torture and death.



Here, Jesus gives a beautiful way to manage a conflict, which is a normal part of our daily life as rivalry, competition change, differences of dogma or traditions. What Jesus does is not engage in a "me versus they" but he changes the question and puts forth another level of analysis. What a respectful way to dissipate the conflict! Because the question changes the emphasis changes and another view is presented. Not only does Jesus dissipate the conflict but he encourages thinking to occur regarding the resurrection. It is a challenge to us to reflect on the question of "what is the meaning resurrection from the dead?" How we live on this earth is very different then how we shall live are resurrected life.

*Holy Spirit,  
Giving life to all life,  
Moving all creatures,  
Root of all things,  
Washing them clean,  
Wiping out their mistakes,  
Healing their wounds,  
You are our true life,  
Luminous, wonderful,  
Awakening the heart from its ancient sleep.*

- Hildegard of Bingen

Taking time with the Liturgy of the Word for today there are many points for reflection that we can use during the week ... *death, conflict, questions of difference, hope in the days to come, our own immortality and that of those we love.*

Since the month of November began with the Feast of All Saints, followed the next day by the Feast of the Holy Souls, we can pray regularly during the month:

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord  
and let perpetual light shine upon them.  
May the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.*

On Tuesday, November 8, since it is Election Day we can offer prayers for our nation and for all our newly elected officials so that we are able to deal with conflicts and that all divisions are healed.

Thirty-second Sunday of Ordinary Time

November 6, 2016



*Almighty and merciful God,  
graciously keep from us all adversity,  
so that, unhindered in mind and body alike,  
we may pursue in freedom of heart, the things that are yours.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who live and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

Collect for the Thirty-second Sunday of Ordinary Time

This weekend we know that the days are shorter, and we have changed our clocks back to Standard Time. On Tuesday we will go to the polls to elect local and national leadership, as well as dealing with various proposals. This election season has been extremely divisive within each person, in families, in our state and nationwide. We know that whatever happens, our world has been touched by this. Looking at our world we can see that what is happening in the readings today also has this divisiveness. There are many who feel that there is only one way of looking at an issue or candidate.

A way to view all that divides us also is the way to see how we are united. Consider holding a diamond in your hand. We can see that there are many facets of viewing this precious stone. Our view also depends on the light in which the stone is seen. Basically, we need to examine all that is on the ballots and ask God what will be for the greater glory of Him, and what will make the world a better place so that we can all get a glimpse of heaven. We need to keep in mind the great commandment: *Love God with your whole mind, your whole heart, and your whole soul and love your neighbor as yourself.* This means that we are to love all people from the time of conception to the time of natural death.



The Liturgy of the Word, which is centuries old, shows great divisiveness of violence, particularly in the first reading from 2 Maccabees. The whole book focuses upon the insult to the Temple and its cult, for which it holds the Jewish Hellenizers primarily responsible. Judas Maccabeus is honored as the sole leader of the resistance. The narrative concludes with his defeat of Nicanor, the Syrian governor of Judea (14:12), ending a major threat to the sanctity of the rededicated temple, and Judas is even described at one point as a leader of the Hasideans. The period covered by 2 Maccabees is about 180-161 B.C.

In the reading for today we see the development of theology, particularly, how we are called to pray for the dead, and a hope for life after death, which we call heaven. This

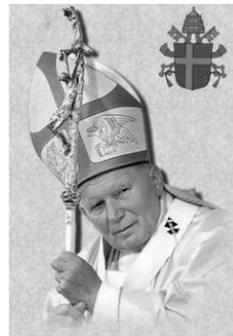
whole chapter describes the horror of a mother watching her seven sons being tortured and not giving into the demands of their characters. It truly speaks of the value of redemptive suffering and there is much more than our earthly life. This reading gives us a prospective of viewing life not as a limited existence but our life reached beyond the grave.



In the Twentieth Century, the author Victor Frankel in his book *Man's Search for Meaning* describes his horrifying experiences in Nazi concentration camps. He notes that although all the prisoners were in the same material circumstances—the most horrible imaginable—they did not all react in the same way. Some prisoners killed themselves by walking into electrified fences; others clung to life and even found joy despite the atrocities occurring around them daily. What made the difference? One way to put it is that man can endure anything if he has a reason to live. Conversely, man can endure nothing if he does not. A great movie (*Life is beautiful*) that shows the humor and horror of life in Italy during the Nazi occupation. The film falls into two parts. One is pure comedy. The other smiles through tears. In 1945, near the end of the war, the Jews in the town are rounded up by the Fascists and shipped by rail to a death camp. Guido (the father) and Joshua (the son) are loaded into a train, and Guido instinctively tries to turn it into a game to comfort his son. He makes a big show of being terrified that somehow they will miss the train and be left behind. Dora (wife and mother), not Jewish, would be spared by the Fascists, but insists on coming along to be with her husband and child. The sadness and utter horror is played out through the end of the movie.

In 2016, we need to just watch the evening news to see the Civil War in Syria and all the horrors that are happening there. It is happening in the land of Syria where the Book of Maccabees is set. The unnamed woman, the mother of seven sons, is being played out today throughout the world.

St. Pope John Paul II wrote in 1984 *"A source of joy is found in the overcoming of the sense of the uselessness of suffering, a feeling that is sometimes very strongly rooted in human suffering. This feeling not only consumes the person interiorly but seems to make him a burden to others. The person feels condemned to receive help and assistance from others and at the same time seems useless to himself. The discovery of the salvific meaning of suffering in union with Christ transforms this depressing feeling. Faith in sharing in the suffering of Christ brings with it the interior certainty that the suffering person "completes what is lacking in Christ's afflictions"; the certainty that in the spiritual dimension of the work of redemption he is serving, like Christ, the salvation of his brothers and sisters. Therefore, he is carrying out an irreplaceable service."*



(On the Christian Meaning of Human Suffering) #27  
(See <http://www.catholic.com/magazine/articles/a-pope%E2%80%99s-answer-to-the-problem-of-pain>)

Little did Saint Pope John Paul II know the physical, spiritual and intellectual suffering he would endure at the end of his life.

One of the major issues at this time of election is the question of abortion. Each of us must hold to the sanctity of life from conception to the time of natural death. Fortunately, the Catholic Church is a community filled with mercy. For a woman facing a pregnancy, within any variety of circumstances, is filled with fear. Many questions can be in and the heart and mind in all involved:

- ❖ How can we take care of this child?
- ❖ How can we finish our education?
- ❖ What will people think?

The questions are as numerous as people faced with this situation. As people of faith we need to teach and support the whole question of chastity. We need to help people understand the responsibility and the gift of bringing children into the world and the importance of a stable family of a married couple, a man and a woman, which needs to precede the question of abortion. These issues speak of the need to understand and live redemptive suffering, too. We also need to help people see the gift of adoption rather than abortion. Catholic Social Services (Mary Sparapani, 906-282-4605, can aid with couples who wish to adopt or become Foster parents.) Locally, we are blessed with Life Outreach Center, ([www.houghtonpregnancy.org](http://www.houghtonpregnancy.org); 906-482-8681) and on the MTU Campus, a Respect Life group led by Alec Clark, [alecc@mtu.com](mailto:alecc@mtu.com).

Understanding the tragic situation of abortion, the Catholic Church's Project Rachel is a ministry to those who have been involved in abortion. It is a diocesan-based network of specially trained priests, religious, counselors, and laypersons who provide a team response of care for those suffering in the aftermath of abortion. In addition to referring for Sacramental Reconciliation, the ministry provides an integrated network of services, including pastoral counseling, support groups, retreats and referrals to licensed mental health professionals. It's normal to grieve a pregnancy loss, including the loss of a child by abortion. It can form a hole in one's heart, a hole so deep that sometimes it seems nothing can fill the emptiness. We need to reach out in love to all those that have been in involved in this fundamental tragic time.



The Gospel for today (Luke 20:27-28) was written over two centuries after the Books of Maccabees. At this time there were two groups of Jews, the Sadducees and Pharisees, who held differing views on the resurrection of the dead. The Sadducees were a Jewish sect who denied the resurrection of the dead, the existence of spirits, and the obligation