



St. Catherine of Siena

Catholic Church and Student Center

The Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time • January 28, 2024

Do We Have It Backwards?

Reflecting on the Parable of the Sower

I hear it as a challenge to improve my life, so that if the same parable were ever told about me, it would have a happier ending, with all of the seed falling on rich, fertile soil. But there is something wrong with that reading, because if that is what it is about, then it should be called the parable of the different kinds of ground.

Instead, it has been known for centuries as the parable of the Sower, which means there is a chance that we have got it all backwards. What if it is not about our own successes and failures and rocks and thorns but about the extravagance of a sower who does not seem to be fazed by such concerns, who flings seed everywhere, wastes it with holy abandon? If this is really the parable of the Sower and not the parable of the different kinds of ground, then it begins to sound quite new. The focus is not on us and our shortfalls but on the generosity of our maker, the prolific sower who does not obsess about the condition of the fields, who is not stingy with the seed but who casts it everywhere, on good soil and bad, who seems willing to keep reaching into his seed bag for all eternity.

Barbara Brown Taylor, *The Seeds of Heaven: Sermons on the Gospel of Matthew*, pp. 25–26. Lightly edited for length.

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Fr. Emmanuel Offiong
Weekend Pastoral Associate

Rev. Mr. Rick Condon
Deacon

Lyrio Cloma-Read
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Jan Blessum
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Campus Minister

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MASS TIMES

WEEKDAYS

Monday: 5:15 PM
(Communion Service)

Tuesday-Thursday: 5:15 PM

Friday: 12 NOON

WEEKENDS

Saturday: 5 PM

Sunday: 10:30 AM

African Mass: 2 PM
3rd Sunday in English;
other Sundays in Kiswahili

Student Mass: 5 PM

ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA Catholic Church and Student Center

1150 28th St., Des Moines, IA 50311

office@stcatherinedrake.org • 515.650.8646

Welcome to St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church and Student Center

New parishioners and students are invited to register online at stcatherinedrake.org or by contacting the parish office. Please notify the parish office when moving or with change in phone number, address or email.

Campus Ministry

Reflection by Megan Schultz, Campus Minister

January is often dark and dreary, and I have felt this especially within the waiting for students to return to campus. This winter I have been drawn especially to the idea of seasons; nature needs the cold to re-emerge in the spring. Death is necessary to rise. St. Francis de Sales paints a beautiful picture of this in his explanation of Jesus as a gardener, and it encourages my heart to trust during a season of pruning. We can have hope through hurt when we trust that what the Lord cuts away will only provide space for more fruit in the future. St. Francis de Sales' feast day is Wednesday the 24th, and I'll allow his more eloquent words to take over now:

"Do not be anxious. Rouse yourself to serve the Lord with steadfastness, attentiveness, and meekness. That is the true way to serve him...Lovingly kiss the crosses that our Lord himself lays upon your arms, without looking to see whether they are of precious or aromatic wood. They are more truly crosses when they are made of a wood that smells dirty and is considered useless.

You see, it is our Lord garbed as a gardener whom we meet day by day, here and there, in the ordinary mortifications that present themselves to us. We want more noble-seeming ones. But the ones that seem the most noble are not the best. Before we see him in his glory, he wants to plant many humble flowers in our garden, according to his plan. Our task is to let our hearts be ever united to his, and our wills to his pleasure.

Let us make our way through the low valleys of the humble little virtues. There we will see roses among thorns: charity shining forth amid interior and exterior affliction, lilies of purity, and violets of mortification. We ought to love above all others these three small virtues: meekness of heart, poverty of spirit, and simplicity of life, together with those common labors of visiting the sick, serving the poor, and consoling the afflicted. Yet let it all be done freely and without anxiety." - Saint Francis de Sales

Parish Life & More

Ministry of Faith Formation

February 4th after 10:30 Mass: All are invited to Encounter (parish-wide intergenerational faith formation). The theme will be the Liturgy of the Word, Part 3 (not a prerequisite to have attended Parts 1 and/or 2). Come grow in your faith while in community!

Ministry of Liturgy, Music, and Prayer

Adoration Hours & Sunday 8 PM Mass

Adoration hours will resume on January 29, 2024.

The Sunday 8 p.m. mass will resume on January 28, 2024.

Ash Wednesday Mass and Soup Supper

This year, Ash Wednesday falls on Wednesday, February 14. Mass will be held at 5:30 p.m. A Soup Supper will follow after the mass. An ASL interpreter will be made available for this mass.



Ministry of Stewardship

Financial Blessings Ending December 31, 2023	
YTD Actual Collection Plate -----	\$109,530
YTD Budget Collection Plate -----	\$100,000
Dec. YTD collection plate was up -\$ 9,530	
YTD Net Cash Flow -----	\$3,758

Solidarity Fund Collection - February 4

This newly established fund will help the Diocese of Des Moines, in partnership with Catholic Charities, respond to the immediate needs in our community in the aftermath of any unfortunate disaster-related event. This fund strives to meet critical needs in our local and at times, global communities, regardless of religious, social or economic backgrounds.

Ministry of Service

Collection for Catholic Worker House

Please bring used or new blankets, hats, gloves, and socks to Mass on Jan. 27/28 to be taken to the Catholic Worker House. There they will be given to people experiencing homelessness and other challenges to staying warm.



Souper Bowl of Caring Sunday, February 11

Please give what you can to the DMARC Food Pantry to fight hunger in our community. Donations will be collected at the doors after 10:30 a.m. Mass. Please put money in the pots so others can have soup in their bowls.

Des Moines Catholic Worker House Beg List

They are in need of travel size lotion, shampoo, toothpaste, razors, shaving creams, wash cloths, deodorants, tea bags, hot sauce, toilet paper, laundry detergent, cooking oil, and peanut butter. Wash cloths are especially needed as they have none to give to those taking showers. If you have any new or used wash cloths to donate, please drop them off at the Church office. Hats and gloves are also badly needed. Thank you.

Bulletin announcements are due by noon of Wednesday each week. Submit to: office@stcatherinedrake.org

Around the Diocese

Buddies Needed for Night to Shine

Sacred Heart Parish in West Des Moines will host 120 special needs guests at our Night to Shine event on February 9th. We are excited for this amazing event. We are in need of volunteer buddies of all ages, 16 and over, to accompany each guest at the dinner and dance. The Tim Tebow Foundation asks that we pair each guest with a buddy of the same gender and approximate age as the guest. Our guests range in age from 15 to 79! We need 40 more people to be buddies! Please consider volunteering to be a buddy to one of our guests and you will enjoy a wonderful evening of dinner and dancing with a very special person. To volunteer, please visit <https://sacredheartwdm.org/night-to-shine-volunteer>

Man-Up West - February 9 Lent 2024

Fr. Nick Smith, Parochial Vicar at Christ the King in Des Moines, a Des Moines native, and host of the daily Gospel reflection on Iowa Catholic Radio, will provide us with disciplines we can adopt as we prepare for the season of Lent. Fr. Nick, the oldest of 7 children was ordained to the Priesthood in 2022.

Lunch from Chick-fil-A is available for a free will offering. Program: High Noon, Friday, February 9th, St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church- 7075 Ashworth Rd, West Des Moines, IA 50266. Register for this event at: www.iowacatholicradio.com

Disciple Experience Weekend (DEW)

A meaningful weekend to study and reflect on the Catholic Social Justice Teachings will be held at Prairiewoods Retreat Center at 120 Boyson Road in Hiawatha, Iowa 52233. An opportunity to enrich one's spiritual life will be held March 15-17, 2024. The retreat begins Friday evening at 5:30 pm through 1 pm on Sunday. Cost is \$180 for the weekend (includes lodging, speakers and meals). Daily commuter rate: \$50 per person per day. Retreat includes 7 speakers, meals, Mass and Reconciliation. All are welcome. A team of lay people will conduct the weekend. For more information and for a registration form, please contact: Deanna Pietryga or Ted Pietryga at (319) 541-6303 or email us at: deannaollendick@gmail.com.

Upon Further Review

From The Word Among Us

Let us not again hear the voice of the Lord. (Deuteronomy 18:16)

Addressing the Israelites as they are about to enter the Promised Land, Moses recalls what happened when God was about to give them the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. God announced his presence with lightning, thunder, a deafening shofar blast, and menacing dark smoke (Exodus 20:18-19). Terrified, the people backed away, saying, "Let us not again hear the voice of the Lord!" (Deuteronomy 18:16). They begged Moses to go and bring God's word back to them!

Now, knowing he was not going to be with them much longer, Moses promises that God will send them someone to take his place, "a prophet like me . . . to whom you shall listen" (Deuteronomy 18:15). What a relief! God promises they will never have to endure the trauma of hearing him directly.

And so it was. In every generation, God raised up prophets for the people. Deborah, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah: these and others heard God directly and proclaimed what they heard.

But now, through Jesus, the living "Word" of God, everything has changed. By destroying sin and death, he has opened the pathway for us sinners to come before the all-holy God. Now, every single person can know God personally. Every single person can hear his voice—in Scripture, through the Church, and most important, in the depths of their hearts.

You don't ever have to be afraid of coming into God's presence! In fact, he is already present in you! Through his Spirit, he is urging you to call out to him, "Abba, Father!" (Romans 8:15). He is waiting to receive you with open arms, to wash you clean in his mercy, and to fill your heart with his joy and consolation.

Your heavenly Father has a message that he wants to speak to you today—a message meant only for you. So quiet your heart, calm your fears, and listen.

"Here I am, Lord! I long to hear your voice today!"

Donations

Please assist St. Catherine's by mailing a check to the office or giving online by clicking on the DONATE button on our website or by completing an ACH form for automatic withdrawals.

Thank you for your generosity.

OUR MISSION

St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church and Student Center at Drake University is an inclusive and supportive community of resident parishioners and students striving through liturgy, community, service, and faith formation to grow as servant leaders for the Catholic church and broader community.

OUR VISION

St. Catherine of Siena, a Newman community, is an inclusive "home away from home."

[Around the Diocese continued](#)

Job Openings

St. Ambrose Cathedral

St. Ambrose has an opening for a Family Faith Formation Director. Click [HERE](#) for a full job description. To apply, please send your resume to nmccarthy@saintambrosecathedral.org.

St. Boniface

St. Boniface Parish is currently seeking applicants for the position of fulltime accounting/bookkeeper. To view the full job description, please click [HERE](#). If you are interested, please send a cover letter and resume to Cathy Bellis: cbellis@stboniface-church.org.

Did You Bring a Can in each Hand?

Food insecurity continues to be a problem in the metro in 2024, especially during these cold, winter months. Let's help our neighbors in need by bringing a can in each hand to Church each Sunday. With your support, we can make a difference.

