

January 29, 2017

Do You Hear The Bells ?

Last week, we experienced one of those **aha** moments. At the end of our weekly discussion of Scriptures (Tuesday morning, after the 9 am Mass). I asked all 14 participants to close their eyes for three minutes, asking them to allow the Holy Spirit to speak to them in the silence of their hearts. I also suggested that for the first few seconds they focus on what they had heard through their ears (any noise)...then they could focus on what they had heard in the earlier discussion of the three Scriptures of the coming Sunday...and then, in the silence they could let the Holy Spirit move their hearts!

As we began to share how God had been inspiring us individually on that morning of Scripture Prayer. I also asked that everyone indicate any unusual noise they may have heard initially. What amazed all of us was that **one half** of the participants **heard the bells ringing**, and **the other half did not hear the bells at all!** How come? We were all sitting around the table in the Social Hall. During week-days, the bells of our church ring right on the hour every hour, and they can always been heard clearly in the Social Hall. I was among the ones who heard the bells clearly that very morning. None of us are deaf or hearing-impaired.

So, what happened? I believe that there is one plausible explanation: those who had already focused their minds and hearts on the Scriptures of the day were no longer able to hear the noises surrounding them; they were totally focused on something more important for them. The other half, like me, had spent a longer time to pay special attention to those surrounding noises, and could hear not only the bells loud and clear, but also low-level noises like the breathing of someone sitting close to them... this, prior to their beginning to focus their minds and hearts on the Scriptures of the day.

This **aha** moment reminded all 14 participants that in our society today we are bombarded by all kinds of noise, all kinds of voices, and that it is very hard to enter into the **silence of our hearts** and to be able to listen to **God** whispering to us -- **God** keeps calling us! But we keep listening to other sounds, including the voice of our own personal desires, of our personal ambitions. Sometimes **God** speaks to us through simple signs. On that Tuesday morning last week, **God** spoke to us through the **bells!** The bells are always a reminder that something special is happening. It may be the traditional call inviting villagers to go to Mass, or it can be the simple reminder that we are passing close to a church and that **God** is present in the Tabernacle of that church! As children, many of us were asked to make the Sign of the Cross whenever passing by a church.

The question God is asking each of us today: "**Do you hear the bells? Do you hear my voice?** You are **my child**, you are my beloved child since your baptism! Like Peter and

Mass Intention

Saturday, Jan. 28, 5:00 PM: OLHOC Parishioners

Saturday, Jan. 29, 8:30 AM: Jessica Curry Miller

Sunday , Jan. 29, 10:00 AM: All Expectant Mothers

Sunday, Jan. 29, 11:30 AM: Peter Nikolai +

Wednesday, Feb. 1, 9:00 AM: Karl Lass +

Prayer Requests

We are asked to pray for: Theresa Beinert, Mike Connolly, Mae Hawkins, Jessica Curry Miller, Julieta Bool, James Knapp, Wilbur Etbauer, Fr. Thomas Crowley, Zach White, Lisa Rullo, Susan Walker, Janina Sidorska, Bill Newman, Jordan Hamacek, Elijah Larson, Sunni Park, Mireille Obas, Joan Etbauer, Joseph Cheseldine, Sr., Consuela Velasquez, John Lohman, Wilhelmina Franck, Robbie Atchinson, Tabitha Barton, Isabel Smith, Michael Sofield Jr., Elinore Fortney, Ron Chilcoat, Patricia Moffat, Errol Randall, Dorothea Johnson, Vanessa Barrett, Jean Erick Joassaint, Graham Baldwin, Jane Watson, Shirley Williams, Caroline Buoy, Ollie Johnson, Kathy Baumgaertner, Baby Kaden, Dennis Archible Jr. Emiliano Hilario, Phillip Green, Doris Chesley, Betsy Kiss, Patricia & James Robey, Dick White, Ada Johnson, James Thompson, Sean Guido, Marcus Williams, Valerie Eddy, and all our military and civilians serving in harm's way.

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Mass Readings for February 5, 2017

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading- Isaiah 58: vs. 7-10

Second Reading- 1 Corinthians 2: vs. 1-5

Gospel-Matthew 5: vs. 13-16

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All Are Welcome

You are invited to **join us** for a Sunday morning Bible Study **at both 9:30 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.** in the Social Hall, as we "**Unlock the Mystery of the Bible**".

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(cont.) Andrew, **come and follow Me. I will make you fishers of men.**" We are all called to be **disciples of Jesus!** I challenge each of you to respond to that call of discipleship! We now have over **350 volunteers at OLHOC.** If you are not one of them, come and join them! By giving, you will receive more! By becoming an intentional disciple of Jesus, you will encounter the **joy of giving, the joy of true discipleship.** If you are interested in joining us as a volunteer in any capacity, come and talk to Deacon Rich, Deacon Bill, Fr. Lopez or me after Mass, and we will try to guide you in the right direction!

May God help each one of us to hear the bells!

*One in Christ,
Fr. Alain*

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

CCD Class Schedule

Our Lady Help of Christians 2016-2017 CCD Registration is open online: www.olhoc.org.

Jan. 29/30- CCD

Feb. 5/6- CCD

Feb. 15/18- 1st Communion Workshop #1 (6:45 pm/9:30 am)

Feb. 16- Conf. Yr. 2 Workshop (parents/students) - (7 pm)

Contact **Therese Thiedeman** at 301-645-7112 or dre@olhoc.org

Parish Youth Night !

Life Teen: high school youth ministry (Sun., 5-6:30 pm, Feb. 12; Mar .5, 12, 26; Apr. 2, 9, 30; May 7)

Edge: middle school youth ministry (meets monthly)

FIAT: elementary school Faith in Action Team (meets monthly)

Attention Families!!

The next **All-Youth Night (FIAT, Edge and Life Teen)** will be **February 26** and will begin with 4:00 PM Mass! See the website at: olhoc.org/ym.

" Seek First the Kingdom of God" (Matthew 6:33)

Many of our parishioners have received a mailing from Cardinal Wuerl in early January. He has asked that you make a pledge to the **2017 Cardinal's Appeal**.

The Cardinal's Appeal not only funds the operations of the archdiocese, it funds services that are of great support here in our parish area, such as the Southern Maryland Food Bank, Angels Watch Shelter, and the Catherine Foundation. As in past years, the theme of the Appeal is, "Seek First the Kingdom of God." (Matthew 6:33). As we seek first the Kingdom of God, we have the capability of helping it to be present in our lives and in the lives of those around us through our works of charity, our works of love, our works of love and compassion. Contributions to the Cardinal's Appeal offers each of us the opportunity to respond to the needs of others by enabling ministries and services that touch thousands of lives.

Please prayerfully consider a generous pledge to the **2017 Cardinal's Appeal**.

Angels Watch Shelter

The women and children at the shelter were treated to a delicious dinner including ham, fried chicken, turkey tetrazzini, stuffed peppers and sweet & sour kielbasa, a variety of side dishes and fruit dessert. Many thanks to OLHOC volunteers Doreen McCallister, Kim Forinash, Pat and Dave Viets, Ali Nikolai, and Dave and Dolores Cacciaglia.

Entering Canaan Men's Day of Prayer and Healing

Have you been impacted by abortion? Did you pressure someone to abort or you were against it? PRM of the ADW is sponsoring a day of prayer- Feb. 4, 2017, 9 am-5 pm. Info: call PRM: 301-982-2008. Location and contacts confidential.

OUR LADY'S LITTLE CHRISTIANS

<http://www.olhoc.org/preschool.html>

- Fall registration began **January 3, 2017**, for **parishioners and families of former OLLC students**.
- Our Lady's Little Christians Preschool has **one full day opening for the current school year, available immediately**. The hours are 8:30 am to 3:30 pm and the tuition is \$575/month. Flexible payment plans are available. Call the office for more information.
- Please call 301-645-7112 or email preschool@olhoc.org for information.

Community Outreach

The next Community Outreach Meeting is on **Feb. 1, 2017 at 7 pm**. All are welcome! The next **Shepherds' Table Dinner** will be held on **Thursday, February 16, 2016** at Good Shepherd Church.

Volunteers go to: www.olhoc.org and click on the Community Outreach link. or sign-up at: www.SignUpGenius.com/go/60B044FABAD2DAA8-olhc

The January Shepherd's Table dinner had 60 plus diners served. Many thanks to Dolores Cacciaglia, menu coordinator and Pat Hudson and Terry Kiss for dessert, our many volunteers.

Sharing Sunday

All non-perishable donations may be placed in the marked box in the Social Hall. The items are donated to the local food pantry for those in need and given out to people who come to the office looking for food.

Supporting Families with Special Needs

Join us for a special day of reflection led by the **Archdiocese of Washington Department of Special Needs Ministries** on **March 11, 2017 from 9 a.m. 1 p.m. here at OLHOC**. Let us gather together to pray, reflect, and continue to learn about supporting our families with special needs in faith formation and beyond. All are welcome to attend. Catechists and parents of children with special needs are especially encouraged to attend. Childcare and lunch will be provided. Registration is required: 301-459-7464.

Upcoming Child Protection Classes

Go to VIRTUS.org to register. Call Nieda or Therese with questions at 301-645-7112.