

# Our Lady of Victory Church

1607 Birch Street, Whitehorse YT, Y1A 3X1

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**Bishop:** Most Reverend Héctor Vila, DD; **Pastor:** Fr. Marc Lalonde

Our Lady of Victory parish is part of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Whitehorse, Canada

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## Pre registration is still required for Saturday 7.00 pm & Sunday 10.00 am Mass.

This is a weekly obligation for all and failure to do this makes extra work for others so please be considerate. Drop-ins must register on site. Weekday Masses @ 6.00 pm require self registration on site. After September 1 there will be no Wednesday Mass until further notice.

The SHC 5.00 pm Saturday Mass will be available on:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTLpdEQBFzvybDXnIEMYqwg>

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## September 13, 2020 Twenty-fourth Sunday of the Year



Dear OLOV parishioners:

In today's liturgy, the marvelous announcement of the parable is that the God of Jesus loves even the last ones and not only the first, as the Pharisees used to say. Also, God wants that we all be first! The justice of which Jesus talks about is something else, and goes down deeper, surpassing that of proportionality, bringing even the last ones to the level of the first. Following this logic, we, disciples, can understand something of God and of us also. Yes, certainly, justice is part of the building, but does not constitute the corner stone!

Before this overabundance, this wise madness, one breaths air of conversion...

The sinners convert themselves, understanding that they are not the last.

The just convert themselves, who do not close God into the cage of justice.

It is not because of our merits that we are loved by God. But for our needs. And this love opens us wide to amazement...

This will be last time I communicate with you, since my departure for my new mission to which I was asked to render service at Rimouski, in Quebec, will be next Monday, September 14. Today's Word confirms me in what I tried to convey to you all during this brief period of time I spent among you - a little less that three years -, that of the amazing mercy the Lord has for each and everyone of us.

I am grateful to the Lord for this pastoral experience in our parish of *Our Lady of Victory*, even if the conditions were not always easy, and especially for the fact that there were few parishioners attending the liturgical celebrations. But I appreciate the few who were constantly present and showed great patience and charity in my regards. May the Lord render them a hundredfold for their generosity!

I am sure that Fr. Leo who will substitute me, will be glad to accompany you and to respond to your requests. I pray that the Lord sustains him as head of the Parish. Please pray for me and for my new mission.

Yours sincerely in Christ, **Fr. Marc**

Illustration: **The Parable on Forgiveness.** Artist **Jim Padgett.** Source: **Wikimedia**

## Fr. Roger Karban's essay for September 13, 2020: 24th Sunday of the Year

There's a frequently overlooked line in Genesis 39 that conveys an essential biblical belief.

When the wife of Joseph's Egyptian master demands he "lie" with her, he refuses, reminding her initially of the loyalty he owes her husband. But then he says something unique: "How could I commit so great a wrong and thus stand condemned before God?" Though the sacred author doesn't give the rejected woman's response, I presume it would have been something like, "What are you talking about? The gods don't give a darn about what we do on earth."

Most people in the ancient world believed their only obligation to the gods was to keep them satisfied with the proper ritual sacrifices they expected several times a year. Once they did so, they were free to do whatever they wished. They had responsibilities to one another, but not to the gods.

But, flying in the face of this "laissez faire" theology, the God of the Israelites so identifies with people that what one does to those around him or her is looked upon as being done to Yahweh. Quite a novel belief. Yet it's the linchpin of our moral theology.

That's why the author of Sirach can ask the biting question found in today's first reading: "Could anyone nourish anger against another and expect healing from Yahweh?" When we're relating with others, we're also relating with God. Even more, God's forgiveness of us is dependent on our forgiveness of others. "Forgive your neighbor's injustice," Sirach writes, "then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven." Nothing could be clearer.

As a good Jew, Matthew's Jesus is also convinced of that process. His well-known story about the king's two indebted servants hits home. If God's already forgiven each of us an astronomical debt, how can we still demand repayment of the minuscule debt others owe us? (By the way, getting back to Genesis again, Jesus' "seventy-seven" instances of forgiveness is simply a reversal of Lamech's chapter 4 boast of being avenged "seventy-sevenfold.") Jesus' God can always be counted on to forgive those who forgive.

But probably the most important reading today is Paul's Romans pericope.

Normally the older we get, the more we realize the implications of our actions. It's one thing for a three-year-old child to tell its mother, "I hate you!" It's another thing for a thirty-year-old to say those same words. The latter sees implications the former has yet to learn.

As we get older in our faith, we also discover more implications of our actions; we more deeply understand Paul's insight that "none of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself." Whatever we do somehow affects others. More than anything, it affects our relationship with the risen Jesus among us.

We can never forget that the basic message of the historical Jesus revolved around God's kingdom being at hand. He went town to town, synagogue to synagogue pointing out that Yahweh is already among us, working effectively in our lives.

There's just one "kicker." To surface God's presence we must "repent:" turn our value system upside down. What we once thought important, we now regard as insignificant, and vice versa. The needs of others, not our own needs, are now at the center of our lives, the focus of our actions. That value switch is the death all other Christs are expected to experience.

No one expresses that experience better than Paul. "If we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's." More people than the Egyptian's wife would be befuddled by such a unique theology.

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### **Sunday Gospel reflection with Father William Grimm 5.47 mins**

The way out of the paradox is to realize that forgiving and being forgiven is not a parade of activities that happen in order — God forgives, then I forgive, then God forgives. God's forgiving me and my forgiving others go on together. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wUvQ-JmuOY&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wUvQ-JmuOY&feature=emb_logo) or [https://www.ucanews.com/video/sunday-gospel-reflection-with-father-william-grimm/89466?utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=UCAN+Evng+Newsletter+11+Sept](https://www.ucanews.com/video/sunday-gospel-reflection-with-father-william-grimm/89466?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=UCAN+Evng+Newsletter+11+Sept)

This week we have a parable unique to the Gospel of Matthew; the parable of the merciless servant. Following on from last week's passage about forgiveness, slap happy Peter asks Jesus how many times does he have to forgive? Is it seven times? He is reversing the seven times vengeance of Cain in Genesis 4 and obviously thinks that should be enough. Forgiving seven times is difficult for us to understand. If a neighbour destroys your fence, backing up a truck, he may receive forgiveness the first time, but if he does it seven times .... To the first century Jewish people, familiar with the Old Testament, Jesus' reply would have had a different significance. The response of Jesus differs, depending on the Biblical translation. Our lectionary uses seventy-seven times, again a reference to Genesis 4.24; other translations say seventy times seven which may refer to Daniel 9. 25-27. Whether it is 77 or 490, it is still a lot of forgiveness and a concept that escaped the merciless servant. 10,000 talents that he owed the king would take him 160,000 years to pay off and he was forgiven, but he immediately goes to another servant who, in turn, owes him 100 days wages and he refuses to forgive him. Along with the contrast in the size of the debts, there is also a contrast in the mercy shown. The king's mercy was huge while the merciless servant showed no mercy at all. What Jesus is saying is, even if we forgive 490 times, our forgiveness will never come close to that of God. *'Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.'*

### **Archbishop denied entry to his country warns of civil war**

THE PRESIDENT of the Belarusian Catholic bishops' conference has been barred from re-entering his country from abroad, after warning in a pastoral letter read out in churches on Sunday that the nation's left without shelter worsening crisis could spill over into civil war.

"Returning to Minsk, I was not allowed in at the Kuznica-Bialystok border crossing [with Poland]," Archbishop Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz, 74, of Minsk-Mohilev told the Catholic Information Agency, KAI, in Poland on Monday.

"No explanation was offered," said the archbishop. "Even though I'm a citizen of Belarus, I was told I was banned from entering Belarus, nothing more."

Church sources in Minsk confirmed the exclusion of the archbishop from the country.

In his letter, Archbishop Kondrusiewicz said Belarusian society was "spiritually ill". He had arranged for a statue of St Michael the Archangel to be carried through the church's four dioceses, seeking divine help to settle the country's conflicts.

Last week, Catholic leaders in Minsk protested after law enforcement agencies blocked the entry to Sts. Simon and Helena church and later arrested protesters who had fled inside to avoid police.

Auxiliary Bishop Yury Kasabutski said police actions late on 26 August were "inadmissible and illegal", adding: "The church is a sanctuary of God that is open to everybody. Blocking the entry and exit of people contradicts the right of citizens for freedom of conscience and religion guaranteed by the Belarus constitution. Moreover, it insults the feelings of believers and goes beyond the laws of mankind and God.

Archbishop Kondrusiewicz was out of the country when the incident occurred, but issued a statement of support for his auxiliaries and noted that the armed forces are supposed to protect citizens' rights, not hinder them. He also called for reconciliation and dialogue to resolve the dangerous political instability in the country.

### **Do you know? Why the words "I do" are included in the marriage ceremony.**

Around 597 AD., Pope Gregory I dispatched an expedition to England to convert the Anglo-Saxon king of Kent and his subjects. The leader of the mission, a monk named Augustine, had orders to shoehorn the new Christians into Church-sanctioned marriages. That meant quashing pagan practices such as polygamy, arranged marriages (Christian matrimony was notionally consensual, hence the formula "I do"), and above all, marriages between relatives, which the Church was redefining as incest. Augustine wasn't sure who counted as a relative, so he wrote to Rome for clarification. A second cousin? A third cousin? Could a man marry his widowed stepmother?

He could not. Pope Gregory wrote back to rule out stepmothers and other close kin not related by blood—another example was brothers' widows. He was lax about second and third cousins; only the children of aunts and uncles were off-limits. By the 11th century, however, you couldn't get engaged until you'd counted back seven generations, lest you marry a sixth cousin. The taboo against consanguineous family had expanded to include "spiritual kin," who were, mostly, godparents. (It went without saying that you had to marry a Christian.) Pope Gregory and Augustine's letters document a moment in a prolonged process—begun in the fourth century—in which the Church clamped down, and intermittently loosened up, on who could marry whom. Not until 1983 did Pope John Paul II allow second cousins to wed.

Monday, September 14: **The Exaltation of the Holy Cross** Feast

Tuesday, September 15: **Our Lady of Sorrows**

Wednesday, September 16: **Saints Cornelius, Pope, and Cyprian, Bishop, Martyrs**

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### Fr. Roger Karban's essay for September 14, 2020: Exaltation of the Cross

Early Christians wouldn't have understood our practice of displaying crucifixes depicting a suffering Jesus. It wasn't that they didn't believe Jesus suffered and died for us. But, when they wanted to create a symbol which conveyed the meaning of that unique event, putting a suffering Jesus on a cross didn't really do it. During the first four or five centuries of Christianity, a "*crux gemmata*," not a suffering Jesus cross, was the norm; they couldn't come up with a better way to express their belief in Jesus' death and resurrection. One need only Google the 5th and 6th century churches of Ravenna Italy to find multiple examples of this kind of crucifix.

In its most common form, a *crux gemmata* has the shape of the traditional cross, but instead of a suffering Jesus, the cross is covered with jewels. The cross is an obvious symbol of Jesus' suffering and death; the jewels convey our faith in his resurrection. The perfect Christian symbol, a *crux gemmata* is an outward sign of our belief that by dying with Jesus, we rise with Jesus. Years ago, when I showed some grade school students an example of a *crux gemmata*, a little girl raised her hand and spontaneously blurted out, "That's a happy cross!" It's against this background that we must hear today's three readings.

The irony of Yahweh's command to Moses in today's first reading to "make a seraph and mount it on a pole," and have the stricken people "look at it," revolves around the fact that such seraph snakes are actually killing the Chosen People. Contrary to popular wisdom, in this situation focusing on the instrument of death brings life, not death.

The first followers of Jesus could certainly testify to this reality. The very thing which brought death to Jesus also brought him life. John's Jesus, in instructing Nicodemus on what it means to be "reborn," refers back to this Numbers pericope. And he employs one of his double and triple meaning phrases "lifted up" - to convey his meaning. "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life." Lifted up can easily have three meanings: simply to be raised up above others, to be exalted above others, or in an ancient middle-East context, a colloquial way of referring to crucifixion: he or she was lifted up on a cross. Which meaning does John expect us to take away? All of them! When Jesus is lifted up on Golgotha on Good Friday, he's literally put above others, and action which will cause his death. But it's also an action which brings about his exalted new life, the life he now shares with all his imitators.

The essential question for those who carry on Jesus' ministry is how are we to carry on his dying and rising? Only the most radical would encourage someone to actually be physically crucified.

As frequently happens, Paul supplies the answer. But he reverses John's lifted up image. For the Apostle, Jesus' road to divinity revolved around "going down," not going up. "He emptied himself, taking the form of a slave." He became one with those whom people in his day and age regarded as expendable. A real death even in our own day and age.

Women can testify how difficult it is to identify with men; men with women. Straights can find it rough to put themselves in the place of gays: gays have the same problem putting themselves in the place of straights. In the midst of this, it's essential to know that one way Jesus found life was to become one with all of us. GW Maybe it would help if we lobbied for more *crux gemmatas* in our churches.

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**"Please, let us breathe! Over the past four months, we have collaborated entirely with the authorities. Do not abuse our patience!"** Cardinal Gérald Cyprien Lacroix on the Quebec government's disregard for faith communities in the lifting of pandemic lockdowns.

## The Pope's Prayer Intentions: for September 2020: Respect for the Planet's Resources

We pray that the planet's resources will not be plundered, but shared in a just and respectful manner.

### The Season of Creation, Sept 1 – Oct 4

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#### Rachel's Corner

*"Jesus Christ came to the lowly, to heal the brokenhearted, release to the prisoners, and comfort all who mourn. To me, that is what Rachel's Vineyard is all about. . . I tried to hold on in my own strength but inside I was 'mourning,' I became the 'brokenhearted,' and I thought that I could never be forgiven of this grave sin. I was a 'prisoner.' The Lord sent me Rachel's Vineyard. -Testimonial*

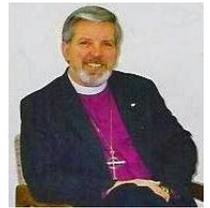
Join us on a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat and let Our Lord set you free and heal your broken heart.

[www.RachelsVineyardKelowna.com](http://www.RachelsVineyardKelowna.com) [info@rachelsvineyardkelowna.com](mailto:info@rachelsvineyardkelowna.com) 250-762-2273

For local information email: [rvwhitehorse@gmail.com](mailto:rvwhitehorse@gmail.com)

#### Your prayers are asked for:

The repose of the soul of The Most Rev Terrence Buckle D.D. Terry was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Archbishop and 10<sup>th</sup> Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Yukon (1995-2010) and Metropolitan of British Columbia & Yukon (2005-2009.) Terry left us to be with our Lord on September 10. Well known for his missionary work with the Street Hope program, he was a friend to many and will be sadly missed by all who knew him and experienced the joy of working with him.



Please also pray for the health of **Gerry Whitley**.

All those who are ill.

The repose of the souls of all the faithful departed who are unknown to us.

All those suffering from Covid – 19. The families of those infected and those at risk of Covid – 19.

Those who are suffering from severe environmental events, especially those who have lost homes and lives in the California wildfire, and the refugees on the Island of Lesbos. Lesbos refugee camp was built to house 3,000 refugees, but on Sept 8 a fire destroyed the camp and 13,000 refugees are left without shelter.

The deceased and homeless victims of monsoon rains and floods, in Pakistan.

All those who lost their lives on 9-11, 2001.

#### Local News



**\* New: Welcome to Fr. Leo Llames** - Bishop Vila asks you to join him in welcoming Fr. Leo Llames who will be the new Pastor of Our Lady of Victory Parish in Whitehorse. He will also be celebrating Sunday Masses in Carcross. Fr. Leo is originally from the Philippines. He has been serving in the Archdiocese of Toronto for the last thirteen years in parishes, and more recently as Spiritual Director at Redemptorist Mater Seminary in Toronto. You may have met him in the last couple years when he has come to serve in our Diocese during Christmas and the Easter Triduum in the Missions, and in the summer at Our Lady of Victory. **Bishop Vila will be installing Fr. Leo as Pastor on Sunday, September 20th at the 10:00 am Mass at Our Lady of Victory** in Porter Creek. We wish him a fruitful ministry during his time in the Diocese of Whitehorse.

**Farewell to Msgr. Marc Lalonde** - Bishop Vila would like to thank Fr. Marc for his dedicated service as Pastor of Our Lady of Victory Parish. He will be leaving this week and beginning a new ministry with the Archdiocese of Rimouski in Quebec. We are grateful to God and to him for serving in our Diocese for the last two and a half years. Please keep him in your prayers.

- **New: Catholic School Council Elections** - Nominations for school council positions will be **open on Sept. 14th and closing on Sept. 24th, 2020**. We invite all parishioners and parents who are 18 years of age & older and Canadian citizens to consider running for council for any of our three Catholic schools: Vanier Catholic Secondary School, Christ the King Elementary or Holy Family Elementary School. School Council Forms and information are available on the Elections Yukon website (<https://electionsyukon.ca/en/content/school-elections>) or by contacting their office at 867-667-8683. A dedicated and faithful school council will help ensure a robust Catholic Education system in our community. Please consider putting your name forward. *(Polling date will be Oct. 5th if required)*
- **Saturday 9.00 am Mass:** In order to make it possible for more people to participate in the Saturday morning Mass which has been at Maryhouse, Fr. Slawek has accepted to celebrate Mass at the Cathedral Saturday morning, September 12th. at 9 AM. We believe this will be ongoing, the first two Saturdays of each month. We will send out emails the first few times. With love and prayers, Beth and Dawn.
- **Taize:** Because singing is an important part of Taize and COVID prevents singing, there will be no Taize this fall. When singing is allowed without the fear of COVID spread, Taize will resume.
- **WUC news from Bev: TRUNK/YARD SALE - Sept 12, 9-noon.** All proceeds to the church. Bring your own mask. Appropriate distancing will be observed. Many books for sale, donated by Well Read Books.
- Hospice Yukon staff are still available to help by e-mail and telephone. Please check [hospiceyukon.net](http://hospiceyukon.net)
- Fr. Marc can be reached over weekend by telephone at 633-2647 as it is automatically forwarded to his cell. Information on how to contact Fr. Leo will be provided later, but for now please still call 633-2647.
- **OLV Food Bank Outreach:** Suspended until further notice but our program will resume later. Monetary donations may be made at: [www.whithorsefoodbank.ca/donations](http://www.whithorsefoodbank.ca/donations)

**Late News:** Philippine Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples and president of Caritas Internationalis, has tested positive for Covid-19, the Vatican confirmed. In a statement Sept. 11, Vatican spokesman Matteo Bruni said the result was discovered after Cardinal Tagle, 63, was administered a swab test upon his arrival in Manila on September 10. "His Eminence does not exhibit any symptoms and will remain in self-isolation in the Philippines, where he is located," Bruni said. He also confirmed that Cardinal Tagle had previously tested negative for the coronavirus after he had "undergone a swab in Rome" on September 7. The cardinal last met privately with Pope Francis on Aug 29.

