

## Fr. Simon Sez

Last Sunday, I talked about discernment. This is the process we should take in making decisions, at least life-changing ones that can be personal conversions to Christ. A life-changing one you could make is to volunteer to serve in our parishes. Obviously, my years of volunteering in my parishes, turned out to lead to a life-change vocation to the priesthood! That was in part due to my volunteer experiences forming my heart to be a heart of service unto the Lord!

It is part of our missionary purpose to provide these opportunities. Every one of us needs to be giving of our time and talent in service to our Lord and His Church parish to the extent possible. I know of people who retired from secular jobs and then volunteered full time for the Church mission in Sioux Falls! Anyone called by God to volunteer are welcome to give it a try. Since it is volunteer, you can quit at any time.

In Sacred Heart Parish we have many opportunities as in any parish. Specifically, we need people with IT, minor maintenance, and project skills. We could use help periodically with cleaning assistance and Youth Faith Formation in various ways. We need sacristan help which is typically provided in parishes. It's most needed when we have a substitute priest. We could use more volunteers at Christmas time and Holy Week too.

In St. Pius X Parish, we have many opportunities. We have many more now, because Lisa Guthmiller resigned her job position and ended her decorating contract as of August 31, 2022. The easy way out which is not the Lord's way would be to rehire her position as is. All of her duties are being done by volunteers in other parishes to some extent or all. It can be done! See the modified job description on the church gathering space bulletin board (parish office secretary/receptionist; maintain and provide records by files, books, and computer; parish accounting with and without a computer, bookkeeping, posting to the parish website, scheduling, prepare and distribute liturgical volunteer lists, make available appropriate materials in the church gathering space, and do mandated reporting)

We can be creative and flexible to help accommodate people. These can be family activities that help form our young disciples into servants of the Lord, a parish activity after Mass, or based on a rotating volunteer list or groups of volunteers. No one person has to commit to any volunteer duties. Pray about it, over it, and through it. Is God calling you to serve him in his parishes?

**Update on my Sister Lynette Singleton:** Lynette had been running a low grade fever since she threw up and aspirated Wednesday night. Her condition was ominous so I gave her Last Rites including the Apostolic Pardon removing all punishment due to sin. This morning she ate all of her breakfast. Thank you for your prayers and concern!

## Seeking the Lost: Scott Hahn Reflects on the Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time



Exodus 32:7–11, 13–14  
Psalm 51:3–4, 12–13, 17, 19  
1 Timothy 1:12–17  
Luke 15:1–10

The episode in today's First Reading has been called "Israel's original sin." Freed from bondage, born as a people of God in the covenant at Sinai, Israel turned aside from His ways and fell to worshipping a golden calf.

Moses implores God's mercy, just as Jesus will later intercede for the whole human race. Just as He still pleads for sinners at God's right hand and through the ministry of the Church.

Israel's sin is the sin of the world. It is your sin and mine. Ransomed from death and made His children in Baptism, we fall prey to the idols of this world. We remain a "stiff-necked people," resisting His will for us like an ox refuses the plowman's yoke (see Jeremiah 7:26).

Like Israel, in our sin we push God away and reject our divine sonship. Once He called us "my people" (see Exodus 3:10; 6:7). But our sin makes us "no people," people He should, in justice, disown (see Deuteronomy 32:21; 1 Peter 2:10).

Yet in His mercy, He is faithful to the covenant He swore by His own self in Jesus. In Jesus, God comes to Israel and to each of us—as a shepherd to seek the lost (see Ezekiel 34:11–16), to carry us back to the heavenly feast, the perpetual heritage promised long ago to Abraham's children.

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," Paul cries in today's Epistle. These are the happiest words the world has ever known. Because of Jesus, as Paul himself can testify, even the blasphemer and persecutor can seek His mercy.

As the sinners do in today's Gospel, we draw near to listen to Him. In this Eucharist, we bring Him the acceptable sacrifice we sing of in today's Psalm—our hearts, humbled and contrite.

In the company of His angels and saints, we rejoice that He has wiped out our offense. We celebrate with Him that we have turned from the evil way that we might live (see Ezekiel 18:23).