PASTOR’S MEANDERINGS 30 SEPTEMBER - 1 OCTOBER 2017
TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME (A)

STEWARDSHIP:  The first son in today’s Gospel said he would do his father’s bidding, but did not. The second son balked at first, but then repented and did as he was asked. What service is God calling me to do? Which son am I more like?

READINGS TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY
8 OCT ‘17

Is. 5:1-7:  The prophet likens God’s people to a carefully tended vineyard that disappointed its owner by producing sour fruit rather than good fruit.

Phil. 4:6-9:  Paul urges the Philippians to aspire to all that is true, good and beautiful, as revealed by God.

Mt. 21:33-43:  Jesus tells a parable to show that just as the people of God often rejected God’s messengers, the prophets, for selfish reasons, so they will also reject Jesus.

PAPAL UNIVERSAL INTENTION FOR OCTOBER
Workers and the Unemployed. That all workers may receive respect and protection of their rights, and that the unemployed may receive the opportunity to contribute to the common good.

BISHOPS Continued
As we continue to await the appointment of a new bishop for the Diocese of Richmond, we continue with discussions on pertinent topics that apply to this position in the Church’s hierarchy. In the past weeks we have looked at the role of the bishop as well as to how a bishop is selected. Today, why do they wear the distinctive items that comprise their vesture?

Certain items such as regalia, and furnishings serve as symbols and are associated with bishops and their office. These are distinctive of the order of bishop, the fullness of the sacrament of holy orders – the pectoral cross, ring miter, crosier (staff), pallium, ring,

Pectoral Cross
The pectoral cross is worn by the Holy Father, cardinals, bishops and abbots. The word pectoral derives from the Latin pectus, meaning “breast.” This cross is attached to a chain (or cord) and is worn on the chest, near the heart. In the earliest times, the pectoral cross contained a relic of the true cross or even of a saint. While not all pectoral crosses today continue to contain a relic, the tradition remains.

Ring
Bishops also wear a ring, in the past, a distinction was made between the pontifical ring (which would have a gemstone, traditionally an amethyst) and the ordinary ring (which would have this bishop’s coat of arms or some other design engraved on it). The ring, like a wedding band, symbolizes that the bishop is “wedded” to his diocese. Also, the ring would be used, at least in days past, to make the imprint of the bishop’s seal in hot wax to authenticate documents. Moreover, in Catholic tradition, to reverence or kiss the ring of the bishop as a sign of respect
for his authority is still proper; interestingly, a partial indulgence was attached to the reverencing of the bishop’s ring.

Other regalia – miter, crosier and pallium – are worn for liturgical functions.

**Miter**

The miter is a “headdress.” The word miter derives from the Greek *mitra*, which signifies a headband or diadem. In the Old Testament, the high priest and other priests wore distinctive garb that included a miter: “For Aaron and his sons, there were also woven tunics of fine linen; the miter of fine linen; the ornate turbans of fine linen; drawers of linen (of fine linen twined); and sashes of variegated work made of fine linen twined and of violet, purple and scarlet yarn, as the Lord had commanded Moses. The plate of the sacred diadem was made of pure gold and inscribed, as on a seal engraving: ‘Sacred to the Lord.’ It was tied over the miter with the violet ribbon, as the Lord had commanded Moses” (Ex. 39:27–31; cf. Lv. 8:7-9).

Exactly when the church adopted the miter as part of the vesture of bishops is hard to pinpoint. One tradition holds that the miter’s usage dates to the time of the apostles; other traditions place its first usage about the eighth or ninth centuries. Of course artists have taken the liberty to depict the apostles and the earliest saints who were bishops as wearing miters. The first written mention of the miter is in a bull issued by Pope Leo IX in the year 1049, when he granted Bishop Eberhard of Trier “the Roman miter” as a sign of his authority and of the primacy of the Diocese of Trier. By 1100, a bishop customarily wore a miter.

In the Latin Rite, the miter originally was a headband with a veil, and eventually appeared more in its present triangular form pointing upward with two *infulae* or fans (two strips of cloth hanging from behind). Some suggest that the *infulae* originated from the sweatband that Greek athletes wore, which was wrapped around the forehead, tied behind the head in a knot with the two ends hanging down the back; since the victorious athlete was crowned with a laurel wreath, the whole headdress soon was seen as a sign of victory. The miter took on a similar symbolic meaning. Such symbolism arise from St. Paul’s analogy: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on a merited crown awaits me…” (2 Tm. 4:7-8). Surely, the bishop should be leading his flock in the race to salvation to final victory in heaven.

Over the centuries, miters were elongated or embellished according to the times. For example, during the Baroque period, miters were very tall and were embellished with jewels. Also, in the Eastern rites, the bishops wear a miter that looks like an ornamented round hat with a cross on top.

**Crosier**

The crosier or pastoral staff symbolizes the bishop’s role as the Good Shepherd. In the Gospel of St. John (10:1-21), our Lord identified Himself as the Good Shepherd. The word translated as “good” in the original Greek text is *kalos*, which also means “model.” Our Lord is the model shepherd for the apostles and their successors, the bishops, who are appointed as shepherds. The bishop, like a good shepherd, must lead his faithful flock along the path of salvation, disciplining and protecting them as needed.

The shepherd’s staff is therefore a most appropriate symbol for the office of bishop. St. Isidore explained that a newly consecrated bishop received the crosier so “that he may govern and correct those below him or to offer support to the weakest of the weak.” Since the time of Pope Paul VI, the Holy Father’s crosier has a curved cross at the top, which symbolizes his
special office as not only bishop of Rome, but also the vicar of Christ who is entrusted with the leadership of the universal church.

Pallium
Finally, the Holy Father, metropolitan archbishops and the patriarch of Jerusalem also wear a pallium. A metropolitan archbishop is one who governs an archdiocese and heads a province. The pallium is a strip of white wool worn around the neck like a collar, over the chasuble, with two strips, one hanging down the front and one hanging down the back. Predating Christianity, the pallium was about 12 feet in length and worn for warmth. Christians adopted this garment and viewed it as a sign of their fidelity to Christ. The usage of the pallium evolved over time. By the third century, it was worn by both the laity and clergy; by the fourth century, by the pope and eventually exclusively by him alone; by the fifth century, by the pope and those important clergy who had received it as a gift from the pope; by the ninth century, exclusively by the pope, metropolitans, archbishops a bishops of special distinction; and by a decree of 1978, by metropolitan archbishops and the patriarch of Jerusalem as well as the pope.

Presently, the pallium is much shorter and is embroidered with six black crosses. The pallia are made each year from lamb’s wool freshly sheared on the feast of St. Agnes (Jan. 21), a tradition originating during the pontificate of Pope John XIII (965-972). The woven pallia are then kept in a small silver box in the crypt area under the high altar at the Basilica of St. Peter near St. Peter’s tomb. On the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul (Jun. 29), the Holy Father blesses the pallia and presents them to metropolitan archbishops.

These different regalia all give a certain distinction to the order of bishop. They also inspire respect for the office and its authority. While “the clothes do not make the man,” the man must strive to fulfill what the clothes signify.

Other items associated with the office of bishop include the Bishop’s Chair, Coat of Arms, Zucchetto, and of course the Cathedral Church.

Coat of Arms
A bishop’s coat of arms is distinguished by a sign of his rank. That sign, placed over the shield, is a particular version of an ecclesiastical hat that was worn in procession, as late as 1870. The hat is low-crowned, flat, and wide brimmed. On a bishop’s coat of arms, the hat is green and hanging from it are 12 green tassels, six on each side. There’s also a processional cross above the shield. The cross on a bishop’s coat of arms has one bar; an archbishop’s cross has two. The design of the shield itself differs from bishop to bishop.

Zucchetto
The zucchetto is a skullcap worn, particularly by prelates, since the thirteenth century. The pope wears a white zucchetto, cardinals, a red zucchetto, and bishops, a purple zucchetto. Everyone else wears black.

Bishop’s Chair
In ancient times, a chair was a sign of authority to teach. The bishop’s chair is called a cathedra from the Latin word for chair and it is the presence of the bishop’s cathedra in a church that makes it a cathedral. The bishop’s chair, then is a symbol of the bishop’s teaching office and pastoral power in his diocese. It is also a sign of the unity of believers in the faith that the bishop proclaims as shepherd of the Lord’s flock.

Cathedral The Bishop’s Church
Each bishop is assigned to a cathedral from which he is pastor to the people of his diocese. The cathedral is the primary church of a diocese. Although the bishop, generally, presides at the more solemn liturgies in this church, the day to day head of the cathedral parish is the rector – equivalent to pastor.

In the canon law of the Catholic Church the relationship of the bishop to his cathedral is often compared to the relationship of a parish priest to the parochial church. Both are pastors over an area (the diocese for the bishop and the parish for the parish priest) and both are rectors over a building (the cathedral for the bishop and the parish church for the pastor).

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE 2 – 7 OCT**

Weekday Masses: with the beginning of October this week (as stated previously) we return to regular schedule of Masses; Monday through Saturday 8:30 a.m.

Wednesday also 6:30 a.m.

Thursday also 6:30 p.m.

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings prison ministry

Thursday evening following the 6:30 p.m. Mass we will have the first class on Prayer

Friday is First Friday. Adoration will begin following the 8:30 a.m. Mass and continue through to Saturday’s 8:30 a.m. Mass.

EXALT will take place at 7:00 p.m. immediately following the 6:30 p.m. Mass.

**FIRST FRIDAY FIRST SATURDAY DEVOTIONS**

For most Catholics there is, at least in a peripheral sense, some degree of knowledge about devotions to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Sacred Heart of the Virgin Mary and that associated with this is the accompanying spiritual observance of First Friday and First Saturday prayer cycles.

What is the significance of this type of prayer, of the imagery of the Sacred Hearts and how did they originate? This week we will start with a very brief explanation of the practice and go into better detail in the future.

The First Friday devotion and the First Saturday devotion are both reparatory devotions in the Catholic Church that arose from separate private revelations. The First Friday devotion is associated with the Sacred Heart of Jesus while the First Saturday devotion is associated with the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Incidentally, these are two of the most widely popular devotions to Jesus and Mary.

Both devotions involve receiving Holy Communion on a certain number of consecutive first Fridays or first Saturdays of the month. You can think of it almost like a novena which is prayed on consecutive days for a particular intention, but instead, these devotions are performed on consecutive months for the particular intention of reparation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, respectively.

The devotions are similar in that they call on the faithful to “stand in the gap” by doing penance for sinners, and both give a special promise of Divine assistance at the hour of death, that is, the promise of dying in a state of grace and therefore obtaining heaven.

**FIRST FRIDAY DEVOTION**
This devotion consists in nine consecutive Fridays in reparation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Our Lord appeared to St. Margaret Mary Acoque (1647-1690), a French nun in the Visitaiton Order, and gave her the special task to spread devotion to His Most Sacred Heart at a time when religion was growing cold in the hearts of mankind.

He said to her:
“Behold this heart which, notwithstanding the burning love for men with which it is consumed and exhausted, meets with no other return from most Christians than sacrilege, contempt, indifference and ingratitude, even in the sacrament of my love [the Eucharist]. But what pierces my heart most deeply is that I am subjected to these insults by persons especially consecrated to my service."

Jesus asked for special prayers and practices to make amends (reparation) for this great neglect to the proper reverence owed to God. For those who did this faithfully, he made what St. Margaret Mary referred to as the “Great Promise” which was the last and greatest of the Twelve Promises of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

“I promise you in the unfathomable mercy of my heart that my omnipotent love will procure the grace of final penitence for all those who receive communion on nine successive first Fridays of the month; they will not die in my disfavor [the grace of final repentance], or without having received the sacraments, since my divine heart will be their sure refuge in the last moments of their life.”

**FIRST SATURDAY DEVOTION**

This devotional practice consists of five consecutive Saturdays in reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The practice of the First Saturday devotion was requested by Our Lady of Fatima, who appeared to three shepherd children in Fatima, Portugal, multiple times starting in 1917.

She said to Lucia, the oldest of the three children:
“I shall come to ask... that on the First Saturday of every month, Communions of reparation be made in atonement for the sins of the world.”

Years later she repeated her request to Sr. Lucia, the only one still living of the three young Fatima seers, while she was a postulant sister living in a convent in Spain:
“Look, my daughter, at my Heart, surrounded with thorns with which ungrateful men pierce me at very moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. You at least try to console me, and say that I promise to assist at the hour of death, with the graces necessary for salvation, all those who, on the first Saturday of five consecutive months, shall confess, receive Holy Communion, recite five decades of the rosary, and keep me company for 15 minutes while meditating on the 15 mysteries of the rosary, with the intention of making reparation to me.”
Reflection / PRAYER OF JOHN HENRY CARDINAL NEWMAN

God has created me to do Him some definite service:
He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another.
I have my mission — I may never know it in this life,
but I shall be told it in the next.
Somehow I am necessary for His purposes.
I have a great part in His work
I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons.
He has not created me for nothing.
I shall do good. I shall do His work:
I shall be an angel of peace,
a preacher of truth in my own place, while not intending it,
if I but keep His commandments
and serve Him in my calling.

WELL! I MUST SAY, THAT WAS CERTAINLY AN UNUSUAL BLESSING!