

St. Rafka Maronite Catholic Church

2301 Wadsworth Boulevard,
Lakewood, CO 80214

Website: www.strafkadenver.org

Email: StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com



July 23, 2023

9th Sunday of Pentecost—St. Sharbel-

Schedule of Masses & Services

Sunday Mass 11:00 AM

Tuesday-Thursday Mass 5:00 PM

Friday Mass 6:30 PM

Saturday Mass 11:30 AM

Holy Days on Weekdays 6:30 PM

Confession: Tuesday-Thursday 4:00 – 4:45 PM

**Please call the office to alert us to any
Pastoral Care needs**

(Hospital, Homebound, Etc.)

Office Hours

9am-3pm, Wednesday & Friday
720-833-0354

StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com

Rev. El-Badaoui Habib, Parochial Administrator

Linda Craven, Office & Business Manager

*Philip Kyburz, Grand Knight,
St. Rafka Council of the Knights of Columbus*

Linda Craven, Religious Education
lhalpinraven@gmail.com

Contact the office to register in the Parish

Spiritual Message from Father El-Badaoui Habib

Ninth Sunday of the Pentecost -Luke 4:14-21

Today we are celebrating the 9th Sunday of the season of Pentecost and the passage of the gospel is turning around this question “What is my ministry?” Somebody was speaking to a friend who was searching and frustrated about his ministry, then he asked this question: “What is my ministry?” His friend intentionally wanted to shock him, and he answered. “You don’t have any special ministry.” That man was shocked, and he thought that his friend was criticizing him. Then he said, “You don’t have a ministry, because your ministry is His ministry - the ministry of Jesus Christ.”

If we think of these two friends' conversation today comparing it to Luke 4, we see that Jesus stands in the synagogue. Someone hands Him the scroll which contained the prescribed reading for the day. It was a passage from Isaiah 61, first spoken 400 years before Jesus was born. And it was all about Jesus. (What He would do...what His life would be about...His job description for three years of ministry as He walked this earth. What is His ministry?) Preach the gospel to the poor. Release to the captives. Recovery of sight to the blind. To set free those who are downtrodden; and proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.

What is my ministry? My ministry is His ministry. What is your ministry? His ministry. If we are serious

DAILY READINGS & MASS INTENTIONS

Sunday, July 23

9th Sunday of Pentecost

Book of Offering Page 425 or 492

Is 61:1-4,8-11

Cor 5:20-6:10

Lk 4:14-21

Monday, July 24

St. Christina of Tyre

Book of Offering Page 473, 436 or 502

1 Cor 7:36-40; Jn 15:9-16 or

Acts 18:18-28; Lk 11:33-36

Tuesday, July 25

Book of Offering Page 445 or 512

St. Anne, Mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Acts 19:1-10

Lk 11:37-41

Wednesday, July 26

St. Bridget of Sweden

Book of Offering Page 454 or 521

Acts 19:11-22

Lk 11:42-46

Thursday, July 27

St. Pantaleon (Asya)

Book of Offering Page 473, 463 or 532

2 Cor 4:7-15; Mt 10:28-33 or

Acts 19:23-29,35-40; Lk 11:47-51

Friday, July 28

St. St. Anthusa, Bl. Stanley Rother

Book of Offering Page 473 or 542

Acts 20:6-16

Lk 11:52-54

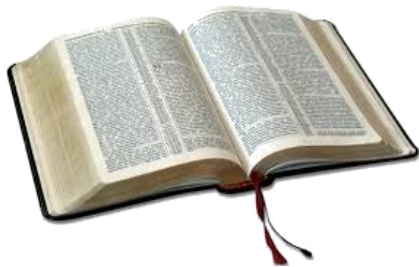
Saturday, July 29

Ezekiel the Prophet, St. Martha—sister of Lazarus

Book of Offering Page 482 or 553

Acts 20:17-24,28,32,35

Mt 23:1-12



Today's Gospel

The Beginning of the Galilean Ministry- Luke 4:14-21

¹⁴Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. ¹⁵He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

¹⁶When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, ¹⁹to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹Then he began to say to them, **"Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."**

Spiritual Message (continued)

about our faithfulness to Jesus Christ, then the ministry of our church must be patterned after the ministry of Jesus?

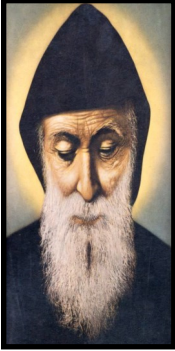
So, if His job description said "preach," we preach! I confess that it's much easier for me. I don't mind standing up in front of a crowd. I write my sermons. I have my very own pulpit in which you give me the privilege to preach. It's a little more difficult for you because you must preach at a moment's notice without any preparation. You say, 'but I'm not a preacher, I'm layman.' No friend, we Catholics believe the Word of God which clearly teaches the Priesthood of all believers! If you are a Christian, then you preach. You are called to speak the word of God to your children, colleagues, friends - spontaneously without any preparation. No one can give something which he doesn't have. So be ready; enrich yourself from the word of God.

Jesus said His preaching ministry had to do with the poor. John Piper, a Presbyterian theologian, says that we typically make two big mistakes with this verse. 1. We interpret the word "poor" only as a financial term, and fail to recognize that there are lots of different kinds of poverty in the human condition. Jesus expanded the meaning of the term in the Beatitudes when He said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." 2. Piper says the second flawed interpretation is when we focus on all the other kinds of poverty in our ministry and forget about people who have no money, and no food, and no adequate housing.

I believe that if we want to be truly faithful in our Christ-like ministry, we must apply Piper's line of thinking to each

NEWS & EVENTS

This week at St. Rafka Church

Sun 23	Mon 24	Tues 25	Wed 26	Thurs 27	Fri 28	Sat 29	Sun 30
St. Sharbel 9th Sunday of Pentecost 11:00am 	<i>St. Christina of Tyre</i>	Mass 5:00 pm <i>St. Anne, Mother of Our Lady the Virgin Mary</i>	Mass 5:00 pm <i>St. Bridget of Sweden</i>	Mass 5:00 pm <i>St. Pantaleon</i>	Mass 6:30 pm <i>St. Anthusa, Bl. Stanley Rother</i> 3rd Council of Constantinople (681)	Mass 11:30am <i>Ezekiel the Prophet, St. Martha—sister of Lazarus</i>	10th Sunday of Pentecost <i>Sts. Abdon & Sennen, Bl. Solanus Casey</i> 11:00am Bible Discussions with Deacon George
The deadline to receive events and articles for the bulletin is Thursday at 12:00 PM Submit them to the Parish Office at StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com							



Festival Work
 Food Prep, Setup, and yard cleanup

Saturday, August 5, beginning at 10 am & Sunday, August 6, after Mass

Saturday, August 19, beginning at 10 am & Sunday, August 20, after Mass


SAINT RAFKA
 MARONITE CATHOLIC CHURCH

LEBANESE & MIDDLE EASTERN
Annual Food & Cultural Festival
SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 2, 2023 | 11AM - 10PM
 2301 WADSWORTH BLVD., LAKEWOOD, CO 80214
 HOOKAH | FOODS | GIFTS | KIDS ZONE | CULTURAL DANCING | LIVE ENTERTAINMENT
 ADMISSION FEE: \$4 | FREE (CHILDREN UNDER 5)





St. Rafka Parish Mission Statement

Faith, hope, and love, reinforcing our family values, promoted through heritage and prayer for the glory of God, the edification of the Holy Church and the salvation of the world.

Spiritual Message (continued)

component in Jesus' job description. Jesus said, "I came to proclaim the good news, release to the captives." Therefore, it should be our ministry to proclaim the good news and release to the captives. There are lots of different kinds of captivity. We need to start ministering to people who are in jail, by giving them the Truth that can set them free.)

There are other kinds of captivities. People behind the bars of addiction, alcoholism, destructive disorders, and all kinds of chains that bind people. But if we bear the name of Christ, if we consider ourselves to be a part of the Body of Christ, if we believe we are disciples and followers of Christ, that we are His hands and feet and heart and mouth and eyes and ears at work in this world, then we must seek to find ways to help people to break those chains and walk out of their own personal prisons through the transforming, life changing power of the Gospel.

Jesus said, "I came to restore sight to the blind." There are as many kinds of blindness as there are pairs of eyes in this world. You can make a difference today in the life of someone who literally has no sight. You can give \$50 to buy a solar powered Bible for someone who has lost their sight. But it doesn't stop there. There are people all around us who are blind. Do you know that 65 to 70 percent of the Catholics in the USA don't go to church? How many of those wonderful people whom the Lord loves don't know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior? How many of them are spiritually blind? How many of them are blinded by selfishness and made of materialism? Jesus said, "I came to bring sight to the blind." His ministry is your ministry, our ministry. Do you care enough about your master's ministry to invite a neighbor to church?

Jesus said, "I came to set free the downtrodden." Do you know what downtrodden means? They are the outcast, the ostracized, the unclean, the unfit, and the unloved. He helped people see that they were truly children of God, loved more than they could ever begin to imagine. He told them stories about their Father in Heaven who runs to embrace them when they finally come home. Jesus helped them not only to hear the Gospel, but to feel it....and the feeling of it, the experience of the Gospel in Jesus lifted up the downtrodden and radically transformed lives: He turned tax collectors into honest men, and ladies of the night into virtuous women, and unclean lepers into picture perfect people, and demon possessed maniacs into missionaries, and a disciple who crumbled in unfaithfulness when he denied Him into a pillar of the Church.

His ministry is your ministry. Encourage somebody! Lift them up. Help some downtrodden soul know that they too are a beloved child of God. Do you know someone who is suffering from depression? You can't heal them. But you can call them every day just to say, "I love you, and I'm praying for you today." Do you know someone downtrodden in grief and loneliness? Lift them up. Most of the time you don't even have to say anything. Just be there.

There is much more to the ministry of Jesus than the Job Description that we are responsible to proclaim in this church. We must Preach the Gospel to the poor, Proclaim release to the captives, Recovery of sight to the blind, to lift up those who are downtrodden, it is to announce the year of favor of the Lord. This year of favor is the year of repentance and forgiveness- in the sacrament of reconciliation and outside the sacrament of reconciliation, as Pope Saint John Paul II said. Are we practicing that?