

# **St. Rafka Maronite Catholic Church**

2301 Wadsworth Boulevard,  
Lakewood, CO 80214  
Website: [www.strafkadenver.org](http://www.strafkadenver.org)  
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## **October 22, 2023 Sixth Sunday after Holy Cross**

### **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**

9:30 am-3:30 pm, Wednesday & Friday  
720-833-0354

[StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com](mailto: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*  
[lhalpincraven@gmail.com](mailto:lhalpincraven@gmail.com)

Contact the office to register in the Parish

## **Spiritual Message from Deacon George**

**Mt. 25:14-30 & Gal. 6:1-10**

You all are wondering why a master would entrust his servants, or slaves in another translation, with his money and allow them to invest the way they see best. Those were ancient days and customs practiced under the Greeks and more especially Romans. These customs were being practiced during the time of Jesus on earth. A little historical explanation about this situation where Jesus mentions servants or slaves as entrusted in the finances of their masters.

The *familia* is a status that the Romans made more of, than the Greeks had made of during those days, and this is the patron-client structure. This is a bit more of a distinctly Roman legal institution. But it's important for understanding both the Roman Empire, as well as early Christianity and its patron-client relations. We understand the word family in the structure of a Roman household, we usually take it to mean the biological family: the father, the mother, the children, maybe the grandchildren, maybe the extended family. That use of the English word "family," although it comes from the Latin, *familia*, means something totally different in Latin. The Latin word *familia* didn't mean that biological kin group. Actually, it was originally used for the slaves of a household. The slaves and the freed persons of a Roman household were legally the ones who were the *familia*. So, when we say, "the Roman family," it means something so different to them than what it means to us.

The Roman household was constructed like a pyramid. At the top of it is the head of the household, the man, the *paterfamilias*. It comes from the Latin, and it referred to the head of the household; *pater*, father, *familias* is the household, the family. The *paterfamilias* is the oldest man of the household. Under him are his sons, his daughters, and then at the bottom are his slaves, and here are his freedmen, freed persons. And then also you consider, in some ways,

## DAILY READINGS & MASS INTENTIONS

**Sunday, October 22**

**6th Sunday after Holy Cross**

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Prov 6:6-11

Gal 6:1-10

Mt 25:14-30

**Monday, October 23**

**St. Ignatius, Patriarch of Constantinople**

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1 Cor 6:1-11

Mt 13:1-9

**Tuesday, October 24**

**St. Arethas (Hares) & His Companions**

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1 Cor 6:12-20

Mt 13:10-17

**Wednesday, October 25**

**St. Chrysanthus & His Wife Daria**

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1 Cor 7:1-3,8-14,17,24

Mt 13:18-23

**Thursday, October 26**

**St. Demetrius**

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1 Cor 7:25-35

Mt 13:24-30

**Friday, October 27**

**Sts. Capitolina & Eroteis of Cappadocia**

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1 Cor 9:13-18

Mt 13:31-35

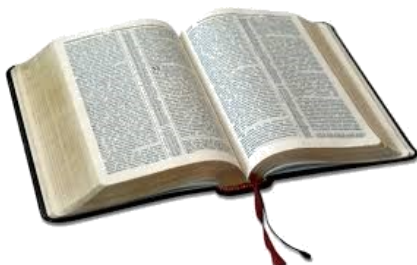
**Saturday, October 28**

**St. Terence & His Companions**

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1 Cor 9:19-27

Mt 13:36-43



## Today's Gospel

### The Parable of the Talents (Mt. 25:14-30)

<sup>14</sup> "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; <sup>15</sup> to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. <sup>16</sup> The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them and made five more talents. <sup>17</sup> In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. <sup>18</sup> But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. <sup>19</sup> After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. <sup>20</sup> Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' <sup>21</sup> His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' <sup>22</sup> And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' <sup>23</sup> His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' <sup>24</sup> Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; <sup>25</sup> so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' <sup>26</sup> But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter?' <sup>27</sup> Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return, I would have received what was my own with interest. <sup>28</sup> So take the talent from him and give it to the one with the ten talents. <sup>29</sup> For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. <sup>30</sup> As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

### Spiritual Message (continued)

free people who may exist as clients. But legally the word *client* in Latin refers to the freed slaves of a *paterfamilias*.

Now slaves obviously are in [the household of] the *paterfamilias*. When a slave is freed--and in the Ancient World, in the Roman Empire, most slaves were eventually freed, unless they just died before long--they became freedmen. They didn't become free men, they became a freedman, and that was legally different. So, the status of slave was lowest, freed persons were next in Roman Law. But even though they became freed, they were still considered members of this person's household, as his clients and his freedmen. And they owed certain duties to him. For example, *paterfamilias*-- would often put a slave up in business, give a slave enough money to run a business. And the slave could keep a lot of the income from that business for himself. He couldn't legally own the money; his master legally owned everything the slave owned. But, practically, and in some legal contexts, what they would do is they'd allow the slave the use of that money, and that's called the *peculium*.

Now when this slave is freed by the owner, the slave could take the *peculium* with him, and then he could set up his own business, but he'd still be a client of the owner, because he's still officially part of his household. The slave might be the business manager, and then you

# NEWS & EVENTS

## *This week at St. Rafka Church*

Sun 22	Mon 23	Tues 24	Wed 25	Thurs 26	Fri 27	Sat 28	Sun 29
<p><b>6th Sunday after Holy Cross</b></p> <p><b>Mass 11:00am</b></p> <p><b>World Mission Sunday</b></p>	<p><i>No Mass</i></p> <p><i>St. Ignatius, Patriarch of Constantino-ple</i></p>	<p><i>No Mass</i></p> <p><i>St. Arethas (Hares) &amp; His Companions</i></p>	<p><i>No Mass</i></p> <p><i>St. Chrysanthus &amp; His Wife Dar-ia</i></p>	<p><i>No Mass</i></p> <p><i>St. Demetrius</i></p>	<p><i>No Mass</i></p> <p><i>St.s. Capitolina &amp; Eroteis of Cappadocia</i></p>	<p><i>No Mass</i></p> <p><i>St. Terence &amp; His Companions</i></p>	<p><b>Sunday of Christ the King</b></p> <p><b>Mass 11:00am</b></p>
<p>The deadline to receive events and articles for the bulletin is Thursday at 12:00 PM Submit them to the Parish Office at <a href="mailto:StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com">StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com</a></p>							

## *Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles*

October 19, 2023

Greetings and Peace!

On October 22, the Universal Church will be celebrating the annual World Mission Sunday. Pope Francis has chosen the theme this year to be "Hearts on fire, feet on the move" which was inspired by the disciples on the way to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-35).

I ask you all to hold a special intention in your Masses on Sunday, October 22 for our foreign missions and share the information with your communities. On this day we will join every parish and mission in the world as a community of prayer and support for the missionary activities of the Universal Church.

For all those endeavors there will be a Second Collection for World Mission Sunday where 91% of donations will go to the Society of the Propagation of the Faith and 9% will go to CNEWA. Please encourage your communities to be generous to this important annual collection.

As the Apostolic Nuncio in the United States, His Eminence Cardinal Christophe Pierre tells us is that when we celebrate World Mission Sunday, we are assisting the Holy Father.

I sincerely appreciate your continued pastoral care for your parishioners and ministry.

With sincere best wishes and prayers, I remain

Yours in Christ,  
+A. Elias Zaidan  
Bishop of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles



## 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)

need someone who can sign contracts, who can lend money, who can borrow money, who can do things like that. Slaves can't do that legally, but freedmen can. So rich Romans were often freeing slaves for their own purposes. It was not like they were giving them a great deal; this was part of constructing their own business expansion.

Now back to the servants in this parable. What was the principle that would produce faithfulness? Observe, first, that it is not providential gifts, or earthly possessions, that are meant here. These are not the goods that Jesus committed to His servants when He went away. They were gifts which fitted them to labor in His service while He was absent.

He gave differently to each, and to each according to his capacity. Faithfulness is in question. It distinguishes the faithful from the unfaithful. What was the use of giving the servants sums of money, except to trade with them? They labored, and they were rewarded. The third servant did not trust his Master, he was contemptuous, hateful, and lazy, blaming what he did on the master, "interpersonal attribution" a psychological description of an act by someone placing himself in the righteous position while showing the master as the bad one.

In contrast to St. Paul's letter to the Galatians, he goes through a variety of ethical admonitions. He talks about the tensions and temptations a community goes through. He talks about the law of Christ which is the principle of love and helping one another. He wants people to examine themselves regarding the self-deception some goes through. Compare yourselves with what you have accomplished, not what you think you are by glorifying yourself. A person is measured by his good deeds and his accomplishments.

The similarity to the parable told by Jesus, the successful accomplishments and the good deeds resulted from the good use of the gifts entrusted to us. The faithful servant was rewarded while the lazy one was cast to the darkness outside. The comparison here is clear; the kingdom of heaven is like the situation described by Jesus in the parable. The faithful use of the gifts will lead to the full participation in the kingdom, while the lack of it will prevent any participation in the kingdom. The distribution of the coins to the servants belongs to the laws of economics. When the coins are invested, they increase and are put in circulation.

While on the other hand, burying the coins in ground does not obey the natural law. One can bury seeds in the ground and expect them to grow and produce because they obey the law of nature, which is contrary to the law of economics, although both produce similar results in different ways. But the lazy servant did not do anything with his gift. He did not help it increase. The lazy servant becomes like stagnant water, does nothing but generate filth and mosquitoes and must be dispersed and dried.

Therefore, God gave us gifts and expects us to make these gifts grow and produce. He entrusted us in the building up of the kingdom. God is not interested in the material things. He is not interested in coins or similar things, but these are examples of what we can do with our lives. How to build up our communities, churches, and families. Helping each other and loving one another as He taught us to do, like Paul explained about the law of Christ, which is love and helping each other.

God shows here the "talents" as the gifts of life he extended to us. Whatever we use, share and work with, are all but gifts extended to us so we can grow and help each other. To squander these gifts is just like burying the coin in the ground. To squander is to lose what God entrusted us to do. We either advance toward God or we slip back, either we get more, or we lose what we have.

What are the gifts you received in baptism? The power to go out and preach the good news to people. Jesus entrusted us all through our baptism to work towards the kingdom of heaven. How do we do this? By trying to bring in people to the Lord and invite them to share in his banquet. Are we doing what the Lord entrusted us to do with His investment? Our numbers are not increasing, yet we are buried underground and growing stagnant. Paul says: "...the one who sows from the spirit will reap eternal life from the spirit." And he continues: "...let us do good to all, but especially to those who belong to the family of the faith."

So, the family of the faith is us the church, and the lazy servant is the one who does not believe, he will be thrown out into the darkness. Matthew here repeats the same warning when Jesus says to the Centurion who asked Him to heal his servant (Mt. 8:11-12). He mentioned the children of the kingdom, He was talking about the chosen people who did not believe, that they will be driven out into the darkness.

So my friends, we want to be the family of the faith and the children of the kingdom. And the only way to accomplish that is by making Jesus' investment grow, first in ourselves and second in other people. Invite other people to come in to hear the Words of the Lord and to see the plan for His mercy and salvation. We certainly have the faith to believe and do not want to be thrown out into the darkness; grinding teeth is very painful. So, have the gifts given to us increased or put in circulation?