

Spiritually Speaking

Holy Spirit as the key to obtain the kingdom of God

By Fr. Thankachan Joseph SDB, St. Patrick Church

When you reach a house or an office there are two things you can do: either ring the bell and wait for the person from inside to open the door for you, or, if you have the key, put it inside the keyhole and open the door. Entrance to a locked house requires that it be either unlocked from inside or unlocked from outside. (Or else you are committing a burglary; which is evil.) The scripture reading of the sixth Sunday of Easter is actually speaking of Jesus as the person who opens for us the kingdom of God and allows us to receive and Holy Spirit, the consoler and comforter.

The key from outside: Jesus Christ. The lord Jesus has shown us how to live and reach the Father in Heaven. He has said, "He is the bread of life" (John 6: 48). "I am the good shepherd that lays down the life for the sheep" (John 10:11).

The key from inside: Holy Spirit. Gospel of John, chapter 16:7-8, speaks about the Holy Spirit in these words: "I am telling you the truth: it is for your own good that I am going, because unless I go, the Paraclete will not come to you. And when he comes, he will show the world how wrong it was about sin and about who was in the right and about judgement and about sin." The subsequent tension, anxiety, and fear over His departure to Heaven are calmed by the Lord in his priestly prayer. The spirit will show what is sin and the malice of sin. Jesus actually presents the Holy Spirit as the Advocate who can, in fact, intervene on our behalf. He is the comforter/helper when we face difficulties of life. The Holy Spirit is presented as the counselor. A counselor is the one whom we can approach for help in times of anxiety, worry, desperation etc., such as now when the whole universe is shaken due to rampant spread of Covid-19. The Lord Jesus leaves with us the counselor who can really soothe all our anxieties.

What we need to do to obtain these keys: The gospel reading of the sixth Sunday of Easter is taken from St. John, chapter 14:15-21, which starts with Jesus saying to his disciples, "If you love me you will keep my commandments" (15). It is, in fact, a moral instruction. As parents, we instruct our children to follow what I tell you. Similarly, Jesus is addressing the sheep of his flock to adhere to him in love and to listen to his voice and follow him. Jesus asks everyone to follow the commandments in order to have a spirit-filled life. For example, we see how a football match degenerates into a fight if the rules are ignored. We see accidents on the roads when people ignore the safety measures and road rules are disregarded. Jesus in today's scripture readings asks the disciples to do two things: to love him and to obey his commandments.

First condition - Love: "Love" is one of the most commonly used words in the world. But love is not just what we say; it is beyond words. It is not what we feel; it is beyond feelings. It is not what we sing; it is more melodious than any song. For love to be what it really is, it must have its foundation in God because God is love

(1 John 4:8). To love truly and comprehensively is to have a strong and steady connection with God as the defining support, for without God, love does not exist.

Second condition - Obedience: Not once, but several times during the last supper, Christ said these or similar words: "If you love me, keep my commandments." What commandments was he talking about? Life is, in fact, governed by rules and regulations. Effective survival depends largely upon responses to those rules and regulations. But apart from the natural and human laws, there are divine laws that are God's directives and regulations for wholesome living. Obedience to God's commandments is the pathway to the life one really wants to live. Jesus reminds us that obedience is listening and acting on what we hear. Jesus says, "I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me" (John 6:38). God's language of love is obedience, so, as Jesus obeyed Father's will, He pleads with us to keep His commandments, to have beautiful lives.

If we take a close look at the Gospel of the day, we will find certain Dos and Don'ts the Lord talks about. However, we must understand one thing. We are not talking about clearly defined rules and commandments, but about guidelines and signposts He left His followers. We are talking about a new spirit. Keeping this in mind, looking at some of the Dos and Don'ts the Holy Spirit teaches would not only seem to be helpful, but even necessary.

Don'ts: Do not return evil for evil. Nothing is achieved by retaliation, except to pile darkness upon darkness. Similarly, do not judge your neighbour. No one knows all the facts in any particular case except God. Therefore, leave judgement to him. The Holy Spirit will inspire us to not condemn our neighbours. This follows from the last. If you are not allowed to pass judgement on your neighbours, neither are you allowed to pass sentences on them. The spirit within you will inspire you daily not to worry about food, and drink, and clothes, as if these were the most important things in life. Make it your first concern to live a life worthy of a child of God, and all the rest will fall into place. When faced with corona and pandemic, when times are tough, and friends can't be found, do not give up hope. Keep on trusting in the Holy Spirit and in the Father.

Dos: Love your enemies. Not just friends and cronies, because that's easy and everybody does it, but practicing kindness towards those you do not like or those who may have been unkind to you is hard. But if you do it, you will be special - the very salt of the earth. The Spirit will be inspiring you to forgive everyone who sins against you. Forgive, not just in words, but from the heart. If you do, then you have nothing to fear in regard to your own sins. God has already forgiven them. Finally, the commandment, "If you love me you will keep my commandments."



Fr. Joseph

Guest Editorial

Questions and answers regarding PPP and EIDL funding

By Greg Smith

Many business owners have applied for or received funds from the Paycheck Protection (PPP) and/or Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL). We have received the following questions and want to share information we hope will be helpful.



Greg Smith

1. Q: I've applied for the EIDL or the PPP and have heard nothing back yet. What do I do?

A: You may call the customer service line but be aware there are long wait times. The number is: 800-659-2955. For questions regarding PPP applications you may try contacting your lender. Unfortunately, you may just have to wait as there are tens of thousands of applications, limited staff and amounts of money.

2. Q: I did not apply during the first go-round of applications for the EIDL. Can I apply now?

A: At this time the EIDL is accepting applications only from agriculture businesses. Keep monitoring the website to see when (and if) they open it up again to other businesses.

3. Q: I applied during the first round of funding but did not hear anything from SBA. Do I need to reapply?

A: No. Existing applications will be processed on a first come, first-served basis.

4. Q: I've applied for the EIDL and the loan amount I've received requires collateral. I already have assets mortgaged or with a UCC filing. Do I still qualify for the loan?

A: Yes, the SBA will take a subordinate position and if there is no collateral available, borrowers will not be denied the loan.

5. Q: I heard the maximum EIDL loan has been decreased. Is this true?

A: Yes, the most current information we have is that the maximum loan amount for the EIDL has been reduced to \$150,000.

6. Q: I received no notification from the EIDL regarding the loan advance (grant), but the money just showed up in my account. Is this normal?

A: Yes. They are just depositing the loan advance into your account so monitor it frequently.

7. Q: I obtained a PPP loan and want to hire back my employees. However, they are collecting more on unemployment and don't want to return. Those collecting unemployment who turn down work stand a strong chance of losing their benefits except under certain circumstances. As long as you have documented their refusal to return to work you should not be penalized and can hire new employees to meet the required 75% threshold for loan forgiveness.

8. I've not received either the PPP or EIDL and am self-employed. Can I apply for unemployment? Yes. Under the new Pandemic Unemployment Insurance Program (PUA), those who are self-employed, are independent contractors, or "gig workers" can apply for unemployment benefits. Visit www.workinginoregon.org and click the Cares Act link in the yellow banner at the top of the page to learn about the program and to apply.

9. What documentation does the PUA require to apply? You are not required to provide documentation at the time of application but will complete and sign a certification stating the information you provided is true and correct. However, in case your application is reviewed, you will need to have proof of your income. This would include your tax return, 1099's, etc.

10. As the economy opens, where can I find information on the guidelines required for my business? Visit <https://govstatus.egov.com/or-covid-19>. It will provide you all the latest information specific to your business.

We will continue to provide business owners the most up to date information we have and are here to assist you.

Greg Smith is the director of the Eastern Oregon University Small Business Development Center located at 1607 Gekeler Lane, Room 148 in La Grande, OR. If you are seeking free, confidential business advising, please call 541-962-1532 or email eousbdc@gmail.com.

HES to hold Virtual Kindergarten Roundup this year

Heppner Elementary School is hosting a virtual Kindergarten Roundup this year due to COVID-19. Parents of students who are five years old by September 1, 2020 will find a video of the teachers and staff offering a short virtual tour and

a link to online registration at the school's website, <https://hes.morrow.k12.or.us/>.

Once students are pre-registered online, parents should contact the school office and arrange to pick up or have delivered by

bus route, a summer activity packet. The link for registration opened Tuesday, May 19 and will remain open through Thursday, May 28.

Mr. Waite, the principal at Heppner Elementary School, says, "All of the staff at HES are looking forward to the time when we can have students in our building once again. We are so excited to welcome our new students to the Colt family this fall as they enter kindergarten. We have the best teachers, the best students and the best families

in the state."

Waite asks that students please take the time to visit the website with their parents for the virtual tour and a chance to meet the teachers. Parents can then complete a simple online form for registration.

There will also be full registration in the fall. Parents will be asked to provide to the office at HES their child's birth certificate, immunization records, phone numbers, emails and other emergency contact information.

BRUCE YOUNG LOGGING LLC

BRUCE YOUNG LOGGING LLC
FIRE DIVISION
HEPPNER OREGON

-Timber Management -Consulting
-Harvesting Services
-Fire suppression

For all your heavy equipment needs!
-Excavator -Dump Truck
-Lowboy -Backhoe
-Water Trucks -Grader

Bruce and Luke Young Partners
80963 Black Mountain Lane, PO BOX 98
Heppner Oregon 97836
Office phone 541-676-5309, Fax 541-676-5189

Effective June 15, 2020, the Fire Chief of the City of Heppner is imposing a BURN BAN.

This also includes Burn Barrels.

Residents can request Natural Vegetation and Debris Piles be burned by the Fire Department at this time.

Sign up list for Fire Department burning assistance is at Heppner City Hall or call Fire Chief Steve Rhea @ 541-980-4232 or Assistant Fire Chief Eric Chick @ 541-701-4910

The closed season will remain in effect until further notice this fall as per ORS 478.960.

ZOOM & FaceBook

To Church!

Jone Community Church

(Worship and Bible Study available online!)

The Wired Word Bible Study via Zoom Sundays at 9:30 am

(call Pastor Jeff Clabaugh at 971-517-0548 for link)

Sunday Morning Worship on FaceBook

(search for Jone Community Church on your FaceBook page)

THIS WEEK'S NEWS AND ADVERTISEMENT DEADLINE:
(DUE TO HOLIDAY SCHEDULE)
FRIDAY AT 5:00 P.M.