

Spiritually Speaking

Spiritual war against ourselves

By Fr. Thankachan Joseph

Last Sunday's scripture readings were about being watchful and vigilant. This coming Sunday's theme is war. We need to fight against the evil inclinations and tendencies that lead us away from God. I am sure these days we have seen what is going on between the US and China over Taiwan. Or what is happening in Ukraine: Russia trying to take control; the control of one nation by outside powers. Recent days' news updates, if we have followed carefully, have witnessed and continue to witness much violence. Hardly any day passes that we do not hear the sad news of violent aggression and brutality unleashed against innocent people somewhere around the world.



Fr. Thankachan Joseph

This week, the first reading, from the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah (38: 4-6, 8-10), depicts what happened to prophet Jeremiah when he spoke out against a particular social situation that was going on in the society. He advocated peace and justice, but always the enemy finds ways and means to throw the righteous person out of sight. Not everyone who speaks against a war is a prophet. And not everyone who advocates a war is advocating something good. Today, war is less acceptable as a way of settling differences or of dealing with perceived injustice. This reading tells how, for speaking for truth, Jeremiah was thrown into the cistern, and how he was rescued from the dangerous situation of starving to death in the cistern. As in any case, to make matters worse, perpetrators of these acts of violence often try to justify these atrocities by claiming that they are fighting a holy war in God's name.

The Gospel reading from St. Luke (12:51-53) picks up this theme of discord. The Gospel begins with threatening words of Christ. Let us listen to these words of Jesus: "Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. From now on five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three; they will be divided: father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law." Most often we think of the Gospel of Christ as a Gospel of Peace—but today's readings make sure that we are not naïve. True peace can only come with the following of the Lord. Today's Gospel reading from St. Luke is indeed a call to war, not a war against other people but a war against sin, against evil, against the devil.

What are some of these evil forces that we are asked to war against? Well, why don't we start with the seven deadly sins such as Pride (superiority complex), Covetousness (greed, seeking material prosperity at the expense of one's soul), Lust (sexual abuse of minors, pornography, treating women as objects of pleasure), Anger (animosity, bitterness, hate), Gluttony (unnecessary eating and drinking), Envy (self-hate, rivalry), Sloth (seeking success without working for it). To these we can add the mother of all evils, Injustice. If we declare war against these, then we are fighting a holy war.

If we are at war, then we should be prepared for some roughness. The enemy is also fighting, against us, and we may have to suffer some harm or hardship. Jeremiah in the first reading was fighting a holy war against the false prophets who prophesied only what the king and his officials wanted to hear. But Jeremiah stuck to the truth. And where did he end up? In a well of mud. But God sent a foreigner, an Ethiopian, to come and save him. God never abandons His people. Jesus, our leader in God's holy war, did not escape the suffering and death on the cross. But on the third day, God raised Him to life victorious. God never abandons His people. He will not abandon us if we fight His holy war — the war against evil in ourselves and in the world.

To conclude the reflections of the day, to come to true and lasting peace, we must follow the Letter to the Hebrews and struggle with the sin that is within us. We must be willing to lay down our life for others. We must be willing to suffer for the sake of others. Jesus must be our leader and our model: He always invites but never compels with force.

**ALL NEWS AND ADVERTISEMENT DEADLINE:
MONDAYS AT 5:00 P.M.**

Cultural Coalition grants awarded

The Morrow County Cultural Coalition, supported by Oregon's Cultural Trust Foundation, has announced the grant recipients for 2022 to Morrow County organizations.

Receiving the grants were Inland Northwest Musicians, to assist local musicians in sustaining their ability to continue to provide free concerts to the citizens of Morrow County following the COVID 19 pandemic shut down; Heppner Community Foundation for collecting, reproducing and displaying historical photographs of ranching, logging, farming and local history in the refurbished historic Giliam and Bisbee building; Morrow County Historical Society to help with the costs of printing the Morrow County Chronicles; Lexington May Day Parade and Festival to help revitalize the town and bring family and friends together; Heppner St. Patrick's Day Celebration to help celebrate the Irish heritage of the community; Heppner FFA Chapter to help students learn to be leaders in their community; Flood Town Books to host an Irish Folk Band for St. Patrick's

Day week; Boardman Park and Recreation District to help fund their summer programs for youth.

Applications for the 2023 culturally based activities in Morrow County are now being accepted. Projects supported in the past have included quilting, art displays, historical library books, cultural entertainment and events, kids' activities in the parks and schools, drama and musical workshops.

For complete guidelines and application forms please contact Jaylene Pappineau 541-676-5630 or jppappineau@co.morrow.or.us or visit the Morrow County web site under the Treasurer's Office, Morrow County Cultural Coalition Information. Applications must be submitted by October 1, 2022. You may also visit the Oregon Cultural Trust site at <https://culturaltrust.org/>

Anyone interested in making a donation to the Oregon Cultural trust or interested in participating in the committee, please contact Andrea Nelson 541-720-4399 or Jaylene Pappineau 541-676-5630. The local coalition is actively seeking volunteers for the committee.

Good News Only

By Doris Brosnan

Heppner's Blane Mahoney, who will continue his rodeo career at Blue Mountain Community College this fall, finished 16th in steer wrestling at the National High School Finals Rodeo last month. Blane finished 14th out of 150 competitors in the first round. In the second round, he placed seventh. He had earlier won the state steer-wrestling title. Kudos, Blane.

And Brock Hisler has been reported as having played a good game last weekend in Baker City, in the tense, tie-breaker loss of the East team to the West team. Kudos, Brock.

Cara Osmin has a couple of tidbits to share this week: Last week was Ida Farra's 105th birthday. "A small group gathered at the nursing home (outdoors) for cake and ice cream. They brought her out with us for a few minutes. She was elated." Cara continued, "And, an article in the GT this week about my grandson Allen explains our happiness for him over his first-place shoot in Little Rock, WA, last month. Only 17 years old and doing so well at an International Trap Association event."

Cara also reports that

she and Jim Monroe (Heppner United Methodist Church minister) recently returned from a three-week missionary trip to Kenya, Africa. Their team of nine also included JJ Osmin. They were able to help build a house for a family, build self-contained gardens for two families, distribute school supplies to five schools, participate in a health clinic and donate approximately \$40,000 in funds for community projects. They ended their tour with safaris on the Masai Mara Wildlife Preserve, where African animals of all kinds were observed. "As you can imagine," Cara says, "A missionary trip of this magnitude is life-changing."

Reports have come this way of a good time at the First-Friday event on Main. Such a great opportunity to meander, enjoy some music, relax, visit, shop, appreciate living here. And Music in the Park will return this Sunday. Another community break from routine (or those preparations for Fair Week), to enjoy the music and the tasty meal that is always available. "The more the merrier," says Claudia Hughes, who reminds us to bring lawn chairs.

Forest Public Use Restrictions increase to Phase B

Umatilla and Wallowa-Whitman National Forest officials implemented Phase B Public Use Restrictions on Friday, August 5, 2022, due to high fire danger, the potential for human-caused fires and concern for public safety. The increased restrictions pertain to the use of campfires, smoking, chainsaws, internal combustion engines and generators.

Beginning Friday, campfires are only allowed in designated campgrounds and recreation sites. Liquefied or bottled gas stoves and heaters are allowed for cooking and heating. A list of designated recreation sites is available on each of the forest's websites.

Operating an internal combustion engine, such as a chainsaw, is prohibited without a valid permit. Commercial and personal use firewood permits are regulated by the conditions of the permit and separate from restrictions under this public use restriction.

Generators will only be allowed in the center of an area at least 10 feet in diameter that is cleared of

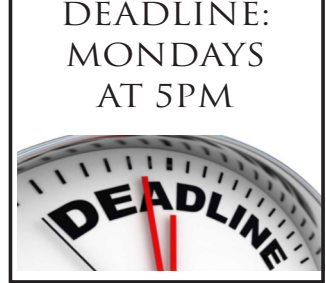
all flammable material, or; when fully contained within a pickup truck bed that is devoid of all flammable material, or; when factory installed in a recreational vehicle and the generator exhaust discharge is located in the center of an area at least 10 feet in diameter that is cleared of all flammable material.

Smoking is only allowed within enclosed vehicles, buildings and developed recreation sites or when stopped in an area cleared of all flammable material.

As a reminder: No off-road vehicle travel is allowed: Possessing a motor vehicle off National Forest roads is prohibited, except for the purpose of parking in an area free of vegetation within 10 feet of the roadway. Motorized travel on roads closed by gates, barricades, berms, rocks or logs is prohibited.

Regulated closures may be in effect on State and private lands protected by Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) in northeast and central Oregon. Please check with your local Oregon Department of Forestry office for PURs on lands protected by ODF. For more complete information, contact a local Oregon Department of Forestry office or visit one of the interagency dispatch center's webpages.

Please remember that it is everyone's responsibility to know what restrictions are in place when visiting public lands.



corner of Main and Church Streets (Lois Winchester's many, many years ago) is available on the internet. A welcome addition to accommodations for our overnight visitors.

Contributions to the Good News column are what make the difference between a long, newsy one and a short read, so readers hope you will share your tidbit and add pleasant moments to their days. Send your upbeat items to dbrosnan123@gmail.com or call 541-223-1490. Please, share.

Here's hoping that some good news comes to everyone reading this.

Eastern Oregon Veterans Benefit Fair
La Grande Armory Conference Center
Friday 8/12/2022 9am-3pm
404 S 12th St La Grande OR

Other Eastern Oregon VSOs will be participating also.

Resources available:
 Health Care enrollment, Education, Claims assistance, VA Home Loan, Long Term Care, Mental Health, Business & Recreation.

Lunch provided

Hosted by Union County Veterans Services For more information contact **541-962-8842**
 Or Morrow County Veterans Services **541-922-6420**