



Processing our Parable.....

*Thank you for joining me on the journey of our Parable,
and for your reflection on the progress at Murphy, Barney & Bull LLC.*

*I appreciate Eddie & Lori for sharing their unique perspectives
on the dynamics in the office with Norma, Bridget and their co-workers.*

I encourage to continue sending in your thoughts to me.

What does the future hold for them? What can we learn from this Parable?

Let's continue the valuable dialogue! — Fr. Gerry

Submitted by Eddie Borne —

Reflecting on this parable, I actually think it is not about Norma and Bridget at all. I think it's actually about us..... as a congregation. We are the cast members of this play. Some of us are Norma (newcomers), some of us are Bridget (feel like we don't fit in), and some of us are the co-workers (feel like this is our house, and we determine who we let in the "click" and who we don't).

So, we need to honestly ask ourselves, who we are in this parable.

Am I a "Norma" who is new to the Parish, trying to find my place? Whose lead will I follow? Will I make an effort to encounter others individually, and not be swayed by others opinions of them? It's easy to say that Norma should befriend Bridget, and make her feel comfortable..... but how often do we do this to the person sitting next to us in the pew, or across the aisle? If Norma follows the lead of the "Co-workers" she will simply avoid Bridget.

Am I a "Bridget" who feels out of place and uncomfortable? Do I feel there is no one who wants to be my friend? No one who cares to help me? Am I pre-judging others? Do I close in on myself and not attempt to connect with others? Perhaps I need to trust that the Lord has given me a Church Community, so that I can grow out of this perspective. I am not alone on this journey. We are Companions — at least, we can be.

Am I a "Co-worker" sitting in my comfortable space without much personal growth? Unfortunately, too many of us are the co-workers in this story. It's easier to talk about each other, and pre-judge one another than it is to reach out, and get to know each other. Maybe we are just content with our own group and don't feel the need to change anything especially if we think change is not good.

Each of us has a decision to make every time we enter Church. Will we encounter someone new, or simply engage those we feel most comfortable around? We can pre-judge others, or we can reach out to them and make them feel welcome and wanted. The pews are filled with Bridgets. Will we reach out to them and make them feel welcome? Or, will we turn our heads and pretend we do not see them?

Who am I?

Who will I be

(read Lori's letter on the back)



February 18, 2018 First Sunday of Lent

Submitted by Lori Bechtel —

When you first told the “Norma/Bridget” parable, my knee-jerk reaction was to wonder why Bridget was too stubborn to join the group. I mean, come on, Bridget, jump on in there with your co-workers and be part of the status-quo already. Why should the whole group adapt its thinking to address the trepidation of the one? And Norma! The audacity to come in as an outsider and question the way things are done!

Then I thought about it more deeply and realized that was my own pride talking—my reluctance to face a little self-examination. The Bible talks about the good shepherd leaving the herd to retrieve the one lost sheep, and how Heaven rejoices in even one lost soul that finds its way to Christ.

So, I THINK what your parable was saying is that Bridget represents those who have retreated from the Church for whatever reason—past hurts, guilt, disagreements—and the co-workers represent the greater Church, which (admittedly) sometimes is too comfortable in it’s week-to-week existence, waiting on lost sheep to find their way back on their own.

That leaves Norma. When you ended the parable, we were left wondering what choice Norma would make—to take the advice of the co-workers and avoid the trouble, or to go out on a limb and be the one to invite her back to the lunch table. So maybe, Norma represents the potential that each one of us have to be like the good shepherd, approaching a seeking soul to offer patient friendship and a guiding spirit.

Thankfully, it’s been my experience that St. Paul is full of folks with the hearts of good shepherds who are up for the challenge to bring folks back to our own table—the Eucharist. I believe that if necessary, we can examine the way we “Norma-ly” do things, and if there is a gap between us, we will “Bridget.”

Sorry, I couldn’t resist. :)

Mass Intentions ~ February 19-25, 2018

Monday @ 7:30 am — People of the Parish

Tuesday @ 7:30 am — U.S. Armed Forces (Sp Int)

Wednesday @ 6:00 pm — Michael Hehir (RIP)

Thursday @ 7:30 am — Suzanne Woody (RIP)

Friday @ 7:30 am — Agnes Null (RIP)

Saturday @ 5:30 pm — Ruth Diana Barr (RIP)

Sunday @ 8:00 am — Cash Medders (RIP)

Sunday @ 10:30 am — Florence Cerami (RIP)

more on our website www.saintpaulcatholicchurch.com

New Prayer Requests

Special Intentions:

Jimmy Curley, cousin of Jane Free

Cinda Sexton & baby Teddy

Jeanne Daussin, godmother of Jennifer Henry

Repose of the Soul:

Gary Peacock, uncle of Jason Richardson

Wayne Bridges, friend of Cecilia Carlton

Church office @ 601-992-9547

Stations of the Cross; every Friday during Lent @ 6:00 pm in the Sanctuary; followed by a parish fish fry; contact Jane Hipp @ 601-946-6970 to help with desserts

Feb 25th — Altar Server Training; 2-4 pm in the Sanctuary; all ages are welcome to join this ministry; must have received the Sacrament of First Holy Communion. Contact Dawn Clancy: dawn.clancy@rcsd.ms

Feb 27th — St. Dominic Ministry; Please sign up today to provide lunch items for families of ICU patients; need drinks, fruit, chips, cookies, sandwiches; leave in FLC before 10am

Travel with Fr. Frank Cosgrove to Austria, Germany & Switzerland; June 23-July 4, 2018; \$4,600 (includes airfare from anywhere in the U.S.) Trip #4891 with Proximo Travel. Full color brochures on the back counter.

CSA — your gift supports the education of our seminarians, promotes the lifelong formation & education for Catholics involved in youth and adult ministry, helps this served by Catholic Charities, & other important ministries for our diocese. To date, our Parish has raised \$32,673. Pledge envelopes can be found on the back counter.