

SCHEDULE

MASS

Sunday, 11 AM and 8 PM
Monday-Friday, 7 AM and
12:10 PM
Saturday, 11 AM

CONFESSION

Monday, 7:30-8:30 PM
Sunday, *half hour before
Masses*

CONTACT US

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St. Clement Eucharistic Shrine

1105 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02215

The Nativity of St. John the Baptist

It is very rare for a feast day to be observed on a Sunday, but the celebration of the birth of St. John is one of the rare occasions. Note that the readings and prayers for the vigil and Mass during the day are proper.

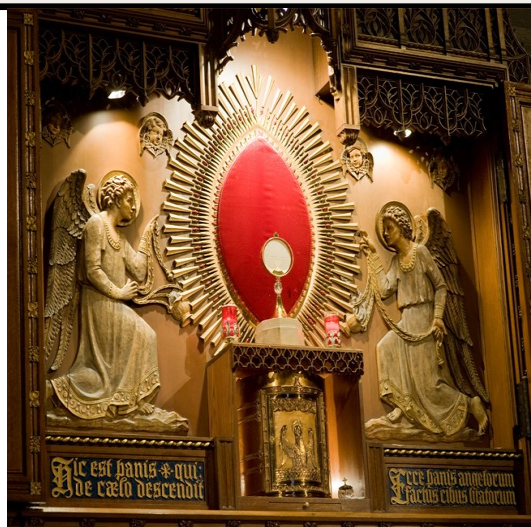
How to sign up for the St. Clement bulletin:

After this week, St. Clement's bulletin will be online only. You can still receive all the news, announcements, and homilies via the weekly e-blast, a mobile-friendly, clickable e-mail that can keep you connected to the Shrine.

Go to stclementshrine.org and click "bulletin." Enter your e-mail address and you will be on the St. Clement mailing list.

Perpetual Adoration in Boston

St. Clement is the only place of perpetual adoration in Boston and we rely on men and women from all over the area to sustain this powerful spiritual initiative. One hour of eucharistic adoration each week or month is a concrete and attainable commitment that is sure to deepen your spiritual life. For information, email AdorationBoston@gmail.com. To see available hours, sign up, and find resources for a holy hour, visit stclementshrine.org and click "adoration."



June 24, 2018 | Nativity of St. John the Baptist

Spiritual Thought from Fr. Peter Grover, OMV



By the way, what is a mustard tree? It is a big oversized weed. If you have a mustard tree in your yard, you will want to replace it with hydrangeas. Mustard trees are big, thick, and unsightly. Why does Jesus use a weed to talk about the Kingdom of God? You would think that Jesus would come up with something a little more majestic like the great cedars of Lebanon or the glorious Redwoods of California. Why a mustard tree? Because in the Kingdom of God, even a weed has potential for greatness.

So there is an eagle chasing a small sparrow. Just before the little bird becomes someone's lunch, it sees the mustard tree and darts inside. The eagle says, "I'm not going into that mess." Look at a rabbit. It has nothing to protect itself. It doesn't have any wings to fly, it can't climb trees, and it does not appear to be threatening to predators, it has no defense, but it does have a mustard tree. Even a weed

has potential to greatness.

At the end of Genesis, Jacob has several sons. He favors the youngest son and makes it known to the other sons. The other sons now have a father wound, and there is sibling rivalry. The younger son tells his older brothers that one day they will bow to him. That, of course, does not go over very well with the brothers and they sell their younger brother into slavery. It is a dysfunctional family. Still, despite the flaws, they save nations. How is that possible? In the kingdom of God, even the flawed can do great things.

Zacchaeus was very rich. He was rich because he was the chief tax collector. He got some of his wealth by threatening to throw people in jail. I am sure some had to sell themselves to slavery to pay the debt. So you can see why the people were upset when Jesus chose to dine with the chief tax collector. Why him? In the kingdom of God, even tax collectors and sinners can do great things. During the dinner, Zacchaeus promised to give half his wealth to the poor.

Ezekiel was in a concentration camp in Babylon, and he told a parable to his fellow prisoners. Here is the parable: God took a healthy branch and cut it. Technically, the branch has no chance of survival apart from the roots. But this branch is in God's hand. God plants the branch in the ground, and it grows to be a great tree and bears much fruit. The key to understanding the parable is noticing where God planted the branch. If He planted the branch near the Charles River, some jogger would probably step on it, or the crowds at the fourth of July celebrations would trample on it. If God plants the branch in a forest, the larger trees will block sunlight and fight for the water supply. We have an empty spot in our courtyard, but it is empty for a reason. Everything we ever planted there always died. God planted the branch in the best location, on top of a mountain where it will get full sun, plenty of rain and no overhanging plants to compete with, and no joggers to squish it. When Ezekiel's fellow prisoners hear that parable, they will say, "If a branch that is cut off from its life source can grow into the most fruitful tree, imagine what God can do with a few faithful prisoners. He could re-build a nation. And that is exactly what happened."

I was thinking about Jesus after the Resurrection the other day. If I were the Lord, the first thing I would have done after the resurrection was to get a new batch of disciples. Get rid of the old ones because they left me to hang. They denied me, betrayed me. I need better disciples. But that is not what Jesus did. He went back to them because in Kingdom of God, even flawed disciples can achieve great things. He gave them the Holy Spirit. A good decision, because they made a difference. The reason we go to church is not because we are perfect, we go because we are flawed, but in God's hand like a withering branch, we have potential for greatness.



The Oblates of the Virgin Mary are an order of priests and brothers who work to bring about a rebirth of spirituality in the modern world through giving the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, making the Sacraments available, and encouraging people to trust in God's merciful love. Learn more at omvusa.org.