

St. Boniface

Catholic Church

stboniface@rrt.net

230 1st St. NW - Lidgerwood, ND 58053

Also Serving St. Martin of Tours, Geneseo and Sts. Peter & Paul, Cayuga

Weekend Mass Schedule

Saint Boniface

Saturday - 5:00 p.m.

Sunday - 8:30 a.m.

St. Martin of Tours - Geneseo

Sunday - 10:30 a.m.

(June and August)

Sts. Peter & Paul - Cayuga

Sunday - 10:30 a.m.

(July and September)

August 2, 2026 - 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

The Power of a Simple Action

I remember seeing a story on a morning news program about a little girl who wanted to give an elderly man in a grocery store a hug. She had no way of knowing that this man had just lost his wife of many years and now felt so very alone and depressed. Her reaching out to the man seemed odd to her mom at first, but the girl was so insistent about giving a hug she moved the shopping carts close together so the exchange could take place. No one knew that from that moment on the little girl would ask to visit her new friend at least once a week for the next four years until he passed away. In an interview soon after the initial encounter, the man said, "I haven't been this happy in some time." Imagine the joy that relationship brought to them both over the years!

It was just a moment. It was a simple gesture. Yet, it had a large impact that no one could have predicted. You never know what will result when we give just a little of ourselves. That uncertainty too often leads us to hold back or refrain from the simple actions of love or gestures of generosity that could come so easily for us if we wanted. We should never doubt the power of a simple random act of kindness. Generosity does not need to be grand to make a big difference. The time is now, and the opportunity presents itself often to plant a small seed that God can water and nourish so that something beautiful can grow.



18TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

He said the blessing, broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds. They all ate and were satisfied. - Mt 14:19c-20

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD

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**Isaiah 55:1-3 | Romans 8:35, 37-39
Matthew 14:13-21**

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Weekly Mass Schedule



Sunday Liturgies		
Saturday, Aug. 1	5:00 pm (St. B.)	† Gail Hann
Sunday, Aug. 2	8:30 am (St. B.)	† Bob Fust
	10:30 am (St. M.)	Pro Popula
Weekday Liturgies		
Monday, Aug. 3	NO MASS	
Tuesday, Aug. 4	NO MASS	
Wed., Aug. 5	NO MASS	
Thurs., Aug. 6	10:00 am (St. B.)	† John & Josephine Gettel
Friday, Aug. 7	10:00 am (St. B.)	Lorraine Reinbold
Sunday Liturgies		
Saturday, Aug. 8	5:00 pm (St. B.)	† Johnny Ahrens
Sunday, Aug. 9	8:30 am (St. B.)	Pro Popula
	10:30 am (St. M.)	† Tom Kaczynski

Reconciliation Schedule

St. Boniface: Saturday & Sunday – Before/after Mass

Thursday – after Mass

St. Martin: Sunday – Before and after Mass

Sts. Peter & Paul – Before and after Mass

Prayer Requests

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Tracey Monson - Lawrence Heley - Fr. Chad Wilhelm

Avery Trittin - Baby Weston - Anne Heley

Joan Moerke - Shirley (Art) Heley - Dan Frolek

Shirley Ahrens - Peggy Harles - Dan Schmit - If you have any imminent prayer requests, please call or text Cindy at 701-640-1401.

All Parishes

Eucharistic Adoration - Please come and spend time with Jesus on Thursdays in adoration, anytime from 5am – midnight. We need adorers to share the 2-3, 3-4 and 5-6pm slots. Please contact Sharon at 612-790-1211 or 538-7010 if you are able to help.

KC Blood Drive - Tuesday, Aug. 4 from 8am to 1:45pm at the KC Hall. New donors welcome. To schedule a time call Mike at 538-7396 or Dave at 538-4343.

Our Lady of the Prairies – All are welcome to the 70th Annual Pilgrimage to Our Lady of the Prairies outside of Wahpeton on Sunday, Aug. 16: Speaker at 2pm, Rosary/Confessions at 3pm, Holy Mass at 5pm and picnic at 6pm with Bishop Folda.

Come & See - Do you sometimes wonder: What is it like in a convent? Am I called to religious life? What is the Franciscan charism? Come & See with the Franciscan Sisters in Hankinson on **August 21-23, 2026**. contact Sr. Mary Ruth at srmmaryruth@sfcaretreats.org / (701) 242-7195 or visit ndfranciscans.org/vocation-events.

Six Crucial Lessons for Our Time from Christopher Nolan's The Odyssey – Tom Hoopes

Imagine a world where men are acting like pigs, the ties to God and family that once rooted society are gone, and people have become crass and violent. Now imagine you are a young man unable to start your life in that world, feeling abandoned by your father and uncertain of your very purpose.

That is the story of the world outside your door — and the world of Christopher Nolan's new movie *The Odyssey*, and the answers the movie proposes are insightful and important.

The film is Nolan's adaptation of the ancient epic poem, and while Nolan's casting choices have raised hackles, his story choices are very much in the spirit of Homer. Here are five lessons (including spoilers!) from the film.

First: The film shows how fatherlessness destroys the moral order and family commitments restore it.

The movie is a parable about fathers.

As the story begins, the hero Odysseus, played by Matt Damon, has won the Trojan War after 10 years of fighting, but fierce obstacles prevent him from coming home to Ithaca, where he is king. His wife, Penelope, played by Anne Hathaway, and son, Telemachus, are home dealing with men who have taken advantage of their culture's tradition of hospitality to overstay their welcome and draw down the family's resources.

Both the poem and the movie focus on the coming-of-age story of Telemachus, played by Tom Holland, who finally does find his meaning and purpose — by finding his father. After discovering his father's nobility, he is reinvigorated, telling his mother, "I don't know *where* he is but now I know *who* he is."

The men who are taking advantage of his household are themselves fatherless because of the war, and Odysseus blames himself for breaking "the fragile bonds between men" by trapping himself and others into a long absence from home.

Triumph in the movie means a father coming home at last and protecting his family.

Second: The film says sticking to your marriage is hard, and can feel hopeless, but pays off.

The movie also gives us a heroine and hero of marriage. Penelope has opportunities to stray from her vows, but stays faithful, even when straying seems very much in her best interests.

And the movie's Odysseus is also true to his wife. In the poem, he is unfaithful with at least three women, the last of which is practically involuntary, when he is kept stranded on Calypso's island. Some argue that Nolan

implies the infidelity with Calypso, but his groggy, drugged scenes with her didn't suggest that to me. Instead, in the film, both spouses' fidelity to their marriage vows seems to fill their reunion with deeper meaning.

The movie's script meticulously sets up the powerful ending that delivers on both of these characters' heroism. At the same time, longtime readers of the epic will love how the movie resolves the hard-to-imagine plot points of Odysseus "shooting through axes" and enemies sneaking into the armory.

Third: Choosing psychological escape over responsibility destroys you (and others).

The movie even gives us a model for how to deal with addictions to scrolling, working, drinking, social media, or entertainment as means of escaping the difficulties of real life. The movie smartly compresses two incidents Odysseus faces in the poem: the drug-like lotus flowers that make men forget themselves and the captivity of Odysseus by the quasi-divine Calypso.

In the movie, the lotus flower blots out Odysseus's emotional pain for a long time and he only sets himself and his family free when he chooses fidelity to his responsibilities over escapism.

As a side note: Matt Damon's performance in the film is so good it made me forget I was watching Matt Damon — except when his loss of memory made me think I was watching Jason Bourne.

Fourth: In the film, victory is no good if it is won dishonorably.

The way Odysseus won the Trojan War haunts him in the movie. He gave the Trojans the gift of a giant horse with warriors hidden in it to pull into their walled city, claiming it was a token of Greek surrender.

Millennia of readers have seen the dishonor in that — Dante even puts Odysseus in hell over it. In the movie Odysseus comes to see this sin as the root of the moral rot that followed. The movie offers a new facet to the story by featuring the lying Greek Sinon. He is played by Elliot Page in the movie, who plays a man here but was a female lead in *Juno* and Nolan's *Inception*, because she is biologically female. While Sinon is a liar when he is depicted in Vigil's Aeneid (he is not mentioned in Homer), he isn't here, and Odysseus's Trojan Horse sin is exacerbated by making Simon complicit in it.

It is significant that Nolan includes another crime that shocked antiquity, the rape of Cassandra in the Temple of Athena. In the movie the rape is suggested, rather than shown, but this double crime of violating a woman in the virgin goddess's shrine is infamously evil.

Repentance has to proceed Odysseus's redemption, and his people's in the movie — which is also true in real life.

Fifth: The movie shows that when men don't check their appetites, they become animals.

The fact that men become like beasts over women and food is a recurring theme in the movie — from the grand

hall of Odysseus's home in his absence to an incident on the island of Helios, the Sun God.

But the point is made most literally when the men meet the witchlike Circe on their travels. The meaning of what she does to the men was not lost on Greek boys who read the poem as moral instruction in school, and it should not be lost on us.

Fifth: Most surprisingly, the movie is all about the consequence of breaking God's law.

The laws of Zeus are referenced again and again in the movie, particularly the law of hospitality — the compulsory gift-giving and welcome owed to strangers. Those who break it suffer dire consequences, including the cyclops, overeager suitors, and Odysseus's crew. Of course, Zeus is far from the God we worship — but Aristotle's First Cause is far from our God too. Though their theology is lacking, the Greeks' anthropology is good, and Christians for centuries have learned from both Homer and Aristotle about how human beings should treat the divine.

Odysseus identifies his own violation of Zeus's law as the cause of the cascading problem his homeland faces — and his ultimate victory comes only after he abandons himself to Zeus, surrendering his life to save it.

There is even a great little dialogue in the film that serves as apologetics for belief. Odysseus says, "Why can't gods speak in ways we understand?" And Athena answers, "Who doesn't understand thunder? Fire? A child's smile? A good harvest?" A great point — and one St. Paul also makes about how nature clearly points to God.

Sixth: The movie reminds us that self-sacrifice is the only true expression of love.

"The power of the sacrifice is the cost to the person making it," Odysseus says early on in the movie. It is a statement of Nolan's theme, and it means the sacrifices depicted in the movie are *extremely* powerful: Odysseus's sacrifice for his men and his family, Penelope's sacrifice for her husband, and Telemachus's sacrifices for his home.

All six of these lessons are themes we don't get to see much anymore, and that means *The Odyssey* is an inspiring, important, and gripping movie perfect for our cultural moment.

Jonathan Pageau was right. After its trailer signaled DEI excesses, critics feared Nolan was using an ancient story as window-dressing to deliver a "woke" narrative. He did the opposite. He used DEI window-dressing tells the traditional story we desperately need right now.

