



THE PARISH OF ST. VINCENT FERRER AND ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA

CHURCH OF ST. VINCENT FERRER: 869 Lexington Ave, New York, NY 10065

CHURCH OF ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA: 411 East 68th Street, New York, NY 10065

www.svsc.info | (212) 744-2080 | parish@svsc.info

March 19, 2017 — 3rd Sunday in Lent

FOOD SUNDAY

Money for the NY Common Pantry will be collected today, March 19, at all Masses of our Parish. The Pantry can buy food in bulk at a lower cost. So please do donate money in place of the food. Whatever amount you choose to give will be put to good use feeding the hungry.

PARISH STUDY: PRAY WITH UNDERSTANDING

Our Spring Parish Study program continues this Tuesday at 6:45 PM in the Parish Hall at St. Vincent Ferrer. Fr. Innocent Smith, O.P. will speak on the Readings of the Mass.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Stations of the Cross will continue this Friday, March 24. The Stations of the Cross will be held every Friday of Lent after the evening Masses at St. Vincent Ferrer (6 PM) and St. Catherine of Siena (5:15 PM).

PARISH COFFEE

Join us for coffee (tea), cake, and conversation next weekend March 19 after the 10 AM Mass in the St. Catherine of Siena Vestibule.

SOLEMNITY OF ST. JOSEPH

There will be a Sung Mass and Procession on Monday, March 20, at 5:15 PM at St. Catherine's to celebrate the Solemnity of St. Joseph

SOLEMNITY OF THE ANNUNCIATION

The Solemnity of the Annunciation will be celebrated with a Sung Mass and Procession at St. Catherine's on Saturday, March 25, at 9 AM.

LECTOR'S RETREAT

The retreat for Lectors will be on Saturday, March 25 at 10 AM in St. Dominic Hall at St. Catherine of Siena.

DOMINICAN RITE MASS FOR ST. VINCENT FERRER

On April 5, 2017 at 7 PM, a Solemn Dominican Rite Mass will be offered in commemoration of St. Vincent Ferrer.

MASS AND CONFESSIONS ST. VINCENT FERRER

SATURDAY VIGIL: 6:00 PM

SUNDAY: 8:00 AM, 12:00 PM,
6:00 PM

WEEKDAYS: 8:00 AM, 12:10 PM,
6:00 PM

SATURDAY: 8:00 AM

Confessions

SATURDAY: 5:00–5:50 PM

WEEKDAYS: 5:20–5:50 PM

Parish Vespers

SUNDAY: 5:30 PM

ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA

SATURDAY VIGIL: 4:00 PM

SUNDAY: 10:00 AM, 5:00 PM

WEEKDAYS: 7:00 AM, 5:15 PM

SATURDAY: 9:00 AM

Confessions

SATURDAY: 3:00–3:50 PM

WEEKDAYS: 4:40–5:05 PM

LITURGY OF THE HOURS & OTHER PRAYER ST. VINCENT FERRER

MONDAY–FRIDAY:

7:40 AM (MORNING PRAYER)

5:30 PM (OFFICE OF READINGS
AND EVENING PRAYER)

WEDNESDAY:

6:30 PM (ROSARY)

7:30 PM (HOLY HOUR)

ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA

MONDAY–FRIDAY:

5:00 PM (ROSARY)

OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP
PRAYER GROUP

WEDNESDAY: 6:30 PM

QUEEN OF PEACE PRAYER GROUP

SATURDAY: 9:30 AM

PARISH OFFICE

St. Vincent Ferrer
869 Lexington Ave, NY, NY 10065
(212) 744-2080 | parish@svsc.info
Office Hours: Monday–Friday:
9 am–1 pm, 2–5 pm

St. Catherine of Siena
411 East 68th Street, NY, NY 10065
Office Hours:
Monday – Friday: 10 am–3 pm

PARISH STAFF

Very Rev. Walter Wagner, OP
Pastor

Rev. Joseph Allen, OP
Vicar

Rev. Innocent Smith, OP
Vicar for Formation

Bro. Damian McCarthy, OP
Sacristan

Deacon John M. Powers

Lee Ann Rubino
Business Manager

James D. Wetzel
Director of Music and Organist

Lisa Harrelson
Director of Catechesis and
Youth Ministry

Rachel Miller
Administrative Assistant

Sr. Padraic Mary McGuinness, OP
Receptionist

Tony Hicks
Church Custodian

Tracey Hicks
Church Custodian

ST. VINCENT FERRER

HIGH SCHOOL

(212) 535-4680
Sr. Gail Morgan, OP
Principal

DOMINICAN SHRINE OF

ST. JUDE

(212) 249-6067
www.dominicanshrineofsaintjude.org

PARISH INFORMATION

REGISTRATION

Please register as a member of our Parish if this is where you regularly attend Mass. Registration forms are available in the Parish Office, or online at www.svsc.info/register.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

To arrange for the baptism of a child, call the Parish Office. Baptisms are usually celebrated on Saturdays, but other arrangements may be made depending upon the circumstances. Please call the Parish Office to schedule a meeting with a priest.

SACRAMENTS OF FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AND FIRST RECONCILIATION

Youth participate in the sacramental preparation program coordinated by Lisa Harrelson (lharrelson@svsc.info).

SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

Youth participate in the sacramental preparation program coordinated by Lisa Harrelson (lharrelson@svsc.info). Adults who have not been confirmed should inquire with the Parish Office about preparing for confirmation.

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

To begin making arrangements for a wedding at St. Vincent Ferrer or St. Catherine of Siena, contact the Parish Office to arrange a meeting with a priest. More information is available at www.svsc.info/weddings.

SACRAMENT OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Please contact the Parish Office if you or a loved one would like to receive the Anointing of the Sick at the Parish, at a nearby hospital, or at home (for those who are homebound).

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS (RCIA)

RCIA is a class for adults interested in becoming Catholic. To learn more, contact Fr. Innocent Smith, OP, at the Parish Office.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN

For information and/or registration for classes held at St. Vincent Ferrer or St. Catherine of Siena, contact Lisa Harrelson (lharrelson@svsc.info).

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR ADULTS

Parish Study is a program for adults interested in learning more about the Catholic faith. It meets on Tuesday evenings in the Fall and Spring. To learn more, contact the Parish Office or check our website at www.svsc.info.

YOUNG ADULTS

St. Vincent Ferrer often hosts events of the New York Frassati Fellowship. For more information, visit www.frassati.nyc.

MASS INTENTIONS**ST. VINCENT FERRER**

SUNDAY, MARCH 19

6:00 pm (Vigil) Charles & Marjorie Barrett (D)

8:00 am Dennis Flanagan (D)

12 pm Florence Schwede (D)

6:00 pm Martin & Joseph Foye (D)

MONDAY, MARCH 20

8:00 am For the Living members of the Martin Family

12:10 pm Joseph Gorski (D)

6:00 pm Plunkett Foye (D)

TUESDAY, MARCH 21

8:00 am For the Christians in the Middle East

12:10 pm Walter Kacik (D)

6:00 pm Mauro F. Giuffrida (D)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22

8:00 am For the Deceased members of the Parish & the Order (D)

12:10 pm Edward C. Perry (D)

6:00 pm Clarita B. George

THURSDAY, MARCH 23

8:00 am Russel Frost Graham & Virginia Lancing Graham (D)

12:10 pm Frank Shields (D)

6:00 pm Bayard G. Schaeffer (D)

FRIDAY, MARCH 24

8:00 am Maureen McCarthy (D)

12:10 pm Rene Concepcion (D)

6:00 pm Julia Monaco (D)

SATURDAY, MARCH 25

8:00 am Lydia Ogaldez (D)

MASS INTENTIONS**ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA**

SUNDAY, MARCH 19

4:00 pm (Vigil) For the People of the Parish

10:00 am For the patrons of the Shrine of Saint Jude

5:00 pm Edgar Brandau (D)

MONDAY, MARCH 20

7:00 am For the Province of St. Joseph

5:15 pm Fr. Fitzsimmons, OP,
Fr. McHenry, OP,

& Fr. Conroy, OP (D)

TUESDAY, MARCH 21

7:00 am Rosalia Pernice

5:15 pm Renato S. Ventigan (D)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22

7:00 am Yolanda Childress

5:15 pm Marina Spani Molella (D)

THURSDAY, MARCH 23

7:00 am Mrs. Anne Boland (D)

5:15 pm Fr. Thaddeus Murphy &
Fr. George Concordia (D)

FRIDAY, MARCH 24

7:00 am St. Catherine of Siena
Purgatorial Society (D)5:15 pm Fr. Thaddeus Murphy &
Fr. George Concordia (D)

SATURDAY, MARCH 25

9:00 am Joseph Pline (D)

PARISH PRAYER**INTENTIONS***Contact the Parish Office to add a name to this list*

Nancy Falconer, Caroline Grant, Rev. Chris Johnson, O.P., Carolyn Kelly, John Kelly, Anthony Mendola, Marie Dolores Rivera, Yuri Yeom, & Aquila Zacharilla.

Please pray for the repose of the souls of Bishop Martin, Donna Martinez, Charlene Payne, Ann Peabody, Fr. Oswald Reyes, & Nicholas Romanelli, and the souls of all our recently deceased.

We continue to pray for the sick, the dying, and their families in Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, the Hospital for Special Surgery, and Rockefeller University Hospital.

CANDLE INTENTIONS

The seven-day candles are available for an offering of \$15 each.

St. Vincent - Sanctuary Lamps

Tom Chestario (d); Rene Concepcion (d); Ramon & Fernando Gonzalez (l); Patrick McCarthy; Anthony Mortelli (d); William J. Schwede, Sr. (d); For the People of the Parish

St. Vincent - Sanctuary Madonna

Jack Ryan Keegan

St. Vincent - Pieta Lamp

Well-being of Christians in the Middle East

St. Catherine - Mary Candle

Priscilla Ventigan

Mass Intentions may be reserved in the Parish Office Monday through Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, and in the Church Office of St. Catherine of Siena Monday through Friday, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm.

SO MANY WORLDS

I write these lines on Monday, March 13, and by all accounts you will have had a challenging week of weather by the time you read them. I say “you” with some embarrassment because I write you from Sarasota, Florida, which looks to feel this storm only by way of highs in the sixties rather than the seventies. My father winters here in Sarasota and I take a turn accompanying him. As you may imagine the time is precious for its climactic and personal warmth. I find also that that by living according to a different rhythm for a few days I appreciate the gift of my own life and companions.

Of course, while technology has made it easier to travel quickly to a different world, it has also blunted the effect of travel so that one can keep tabs on multiple worlds at the same time. So this morning WYNC kept me up on all the storm preparations even as I was looking out the window at palm trees. As I think of New York I am more alive with concern for those who are there, guilt at not being there myself, and glee for being here. I find this multiplicity of experience to be a fascinating gift of our time.

I receive it as a privilege of nature as well. Living in the fifties of life confers a windfall on me, for I connect to multiple generational worlds as well. My father is thirty years my senior and it startles me that on the one hand we share much in common, but on the other, age has carried him bodily to a different world, a voyage he has managed with extraordinary humor and good grace. At close quarters lie a world of shared tastes and experiences, and a gulf of time that cannot be crossed, save by empathy.

From my sunny perch I can look north and see the multiplicity of worlds as gift to my life at home. Consider the three Friars with whom I work most closely. Fr. Joseph Allen is 79, and Br. Damian McCarthy is 77, a few years short of my dad’s 84 and Fr. Innocent is 30. The four of us have much in common by way of our Dominican life and training, but we also represent three generational worlds of the Church. That means three perspectives on all kinds of issues, ranging from worship to administrative priorities.

For the guy in the middle this offers some challenge, but mostly exhilaration, as the combination keeps one profoundly in touch. Of course the life of our Parish staff offers a microcosm of the life of our parish as a community of generations, and to look at the procession of these in a local place offers a glimpse into the very vast movement of people through time that is the Church.

One’s generation provides so much belonging. Events, fashions, and the arts support a unity of perspective that grows with time. When I speak with people my age about the 1980 election it’s almost like we are sharing a family secret. To be in a generation is to inhabit a world, and to recognize another generation is to discern another world. As a I watch the kids on spring break enjoy the sand and the waters of the Gulf, I see that the men favor swim trunks that reach their knees. Walking along with my pale middle aged calves showing proudly I am mystified by these young people. Why would anyone come to the seashore on an 80 degree day and wear that much clothing in the water? My incomprehension notwithstanding, they are having a great time, perfectly comfortable with each other in their world. (They probably look at me and think that someone with such legs should cover up.)

But with hemlines, tie widths, and favorite actors, each generation also seems to craft a narrative of its own uniqueness, seeing in itself the long awaited answer, or the fresh start the world needs. In the strength of this conviction it makes its contribution to every field of endeavor, until it perceives the tsunami in the rearview mirror. All of a sudden there are people coming from behind with different answers and different norms. In the procession of generations time affirms in part and rejects in part, and it’s a happy old age that befriends the inexorable flux in things.

With pondering, the passage of generations reveals one of life’s quietest joys. Contempt for the past and war against the future never repay the effort, but striving to make a contribution in the present offers a double reward when it builds on the past and gives scope to the needs and insights which must come after. I believe that the more I maintain awareness that I live within the movement of time, the more I achieve both fruitfulness and humility. I can even turn things around so that time becomes an opportunity rather than a constraint, and the chance to contribute a gift rather than an episode in a culture war.

Consider that since Vatican II the Church has received the Pastoral Care of Paul VI, John Paul I and II, Benedict XVI, and Francis. We can analyze this history politically as a series of pendulum swings, or we can see the Spirit at work in the continuity of the Church. On the “micro” level, I have had the joy of observing three different generations apply themselves to the renewal of the Church. In this ongoing work creativity and conflict have each have served an underlying and discernible continuum.

At Easter, in the Risen Christ, I glimpse humanity living beyond time in the state of glory, but I can only prepare for this by observing the law of time now. As with so much of mortal existence living well in time means being amazed to see how much I do not see.

Lenten Peace!



Fr. Walter



A Message from the Social Concerns Committee



Cost per Choice Pantry meal is under one dollar



15,454 volunteers performed 48,236 hours of service



For every dollar spent on our Project Dignity and Help 365 staffing, \$11.39 in resources were acquired for our guests



Volunteers saved us \$1,330,831 in labor costs



Over **90%** of labor hours in our Choice Pantry program were performed by volunteers



\$250 provides milk for 235 families for 1 week



69% of our pantry members reduced their visits after their first year of using the pantry



\$2,500 provides 2,577 Choice Pantry meals including fresh produce

The New York Common Pantry (NYCP) served 3,028,168 meals to 70,007 clients from 183 zip codes in NYC during the year 2016.

Among the many served by the NYCP are:

Jeff, after going through personal and business problems, used the Hot Meals Program for breakfast after riding the #2 train during the night. Through the Project Dignity program, Jeff would shower, get his mail and travel to his menial job. Now, with the help of his NYCP case Manager, Jeff has secured benefits, an apartment and is putting his Bachelor's Degree in Horticulture to work as a curator of greenery in our city.

Rafael, 82 years old, goes to the Nourish Program for seniors in the Bronx twice a month. He feels respected here and says, "with this program I don't have to buy milk. I make the vegetables last and it helps me."

Sandra visits twice a month. She likes the fact that the "groceries are well distributed and I choose my own. I get what my two daughters like to eat, especially the fruit."

Since September 2016, our parishioners have donated approximately \$11,000 to the NYCP. This is outstanding. How wonderful that your generous contributions have provided food for about 11,000 meals!

We have three more Food Sunday collections until the summer. Thank you for your continued generous support of the men, women and children who depend on the NYCP for nutritious meals at a time when they need it most.

FRASSATI SPRING RETREAT

Young adults in their 20s and 30s are invited to participate in the Frassati Spring Retreat from April 7-9 at the Sisters of Life Retreat Center in Stamford, CT. There are still spots available for men and for women who are first-time attendees. Please visit cometothefeast.eventbrite.com for details and to register.

LAY FRATERNITY OF ST. DOMINIC

Our Lady of the Assumption Chapter of the LFSM meets on the third Thursday of each month for approximately two hours, directly after attending the 6 PM parish Mass in St. Vincent Ferrer Church (meeting in the Parish Center, at street level, to the left of the Priory stairs). Dominican Laity share deeply the spiritual charisms of the Dominican Order while remaining in the lay state. More information is available at <http://www.laydominicans.com>.

LITURGY OF GOOD FRIDAY SEMINAR

Join Fr. Matthew Ernest, S.T.D., Professor of Liturgy at St. Joseph's Seminary and Director of the Archdiocesan Liturgy Office, for an informative discussion of the history, theology, reforms, and pastoral implementation of the solemn celebration of the Friday of the Passion of the Lord during the Sacred Triduum. The seminar will be held on Friday, March 24 at 7 pm at St. Joseph's Seminary, Yonkers, New York. For more information visit <http://nyliturgy.org/workshops/>.

ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK MEN'S CONFERENCE

All men are invited to the 2017 Archdiocesan Men's Conference on Saturday, April 1, at St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers. The lineup of speakers includes Mr. Alfred Kelly, CEO of Visa and Director of the 2015 Visit of Pope Francis to New York City; Fr. Jonathan Morris, pastor, author and media personality; and Mr. Ryan Young, director of the well-renowned Camp Veritas – a youth ministry retreat program. In addition to Mass, there will also be the opportunity to experience God's mercy in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The theme for the conference is "Faith Every Day."

For more information about the conference and to register, please visit www.ArchNYMensConference.eventbrite.com. It is my prayer that your Lent be filled with many graces as we focus our gaze on Jesus Crucified sent for our salvation!

COLLECTION

MARCH 12, 2017

Regular Offertory: \$16,834

Operating Deficit: \$6,633

Attendance: 1243

SIGN UP NOW!

ONLINE FAITH FORMATION COURSES

The Archdiocese of New York and Fordham University have partnered to offer new online courses for those in parish ministry and those who simply wish to learn more about their faith. Courses which are: **Relevant** to contemporary people, **Convenient** for busy schedules, and **Faithful** to the Church.

For a limited time, these courses are being offered for FREE! To learn more and sign up visit www.nycatholicfaith.org/learn.

CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICE COLLECTION

By participating in the *Catholic Relief Service (CRSC)* collection, you are responding to Jesus in disguise in some of the most marginalized communities in our world. *Catholic Relief Service* collection provides services for immigrants, humanitarian aid in the wake of natural disasters, refuge for the displaced, and advocacy for peace and justice around the world. Let us join together in this special collection to support those who are suffering and are on the margins of society.

For example, in Niger, changes in climate in Western Africa are adversely affecting poor and rural farmers. No matter how hard these farmers work, droughts are shortening the rainy season, leaving harvests too small to support families and communities. Your support of the *Catholic Relief Service* collection is helping connect businesses that provide drought-resistant seeds to these communities. These new relationships are providing hope to these communities for a sustainable future.

Your support of the *Catholic Relief Service* collection makes a difference for so many around the world. Please prayerfully consider how you can support it this year. If you want to learn more about the collection and the people who benefit, please visit www.usccb.org/catholic-relief.com.

SAVE THE DATE

This year is the 100th Anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady in Fatima Portugal. On May 13, 2017, the feast of Our Lady of Fatima, there will be a special Mass, Holy Hour and Eucharistic Procession at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Please save the date! For more information visit: <https://archny.org/events/100th-anniversary-of-our-lady-of-fatima>.

PURGATORIAL CANDLES

St. Catherine's remembers our deceased with a weekly Mass celebrated at 7 AM on Friday for those who have been enrolled in the Purgatorial Society. In conjunction with these remembrances, we have restored 6 Requiem candlesticks, which allows the burning of memorial candles for our beloved dead. These candles are now available for \$10 each, and can be arranged through the parish office.



DFHCM of NY

DOMINICAN FRIARS HEALTH CARE
MINISTRY OF NEW YORK

Reflections on Ethics, Faith & Health Care

EDITOR: FR. JONAH POLLOCK, O.P., S.T.L.

GOSPEL ETHICS: *both* COMMANDMENTS FOR US *and* PROMISES FROM GOD

By Fr. Jonah Pollock, O.P., S.T.L., Associate Director, Dominican Friars Health Care Ministry of New York

We have already considered how the ethics of the Christian gospel embrace *both* rigorous moral standards *and* extravagant forgiveness of sin. Let us now consider another *both/and* of gospel ethics: its moral precepts are *both* commandments *and* promises. The precepts of the gospel, like, “Bless those who curse you” (Luke 6:28), “[Forgive] not seven times, but seventy-seven times” (Matt 18:22), and “Love one another as I love you” (John 15:12), are *both* obligatory commandments that we must keep *and* promises of life-giving grace that God will bestow.

Let us consider the moral precept we just quoted from the Gospel of John. Jesus explicitly calls it a commandment: “This is my commandment: love one another as I love you” (John 15:12). Yet Jesus gives this commandment within his discourse about the vine and the branches. “I am the vine and you are the branches,” he says, “whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). The commandment reveals what it means to “remain in me.” He says, “If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love” (John 15:10). He then sums up his commandments in verse 12, which we have quoted. So, how are we to understand Jesus’ commandment? Is loving one another as Jesus loves us something *we* must do to remain in his love? Or is it something *Jesus* promises to enable us to do, since without him we can do nothing? It is *both/and*. The moral precept, “Love one another as I love you,” is *both* an obligatory commandment for us *and* a gracious promise from God.

We can recognize the same *both/and* gospel ethic in Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount. There Jesus issues demanding precept after demanding precept, culminating in the seemingly impossible, “Be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matt 5:48). As with Jesus’ commandment in John 15, however, Jesus’ complete discourse invests his individual precepts with fuller meaning. In this case, Jesus’ precepts are part of a sermon that begins with his beatitudes, followed by his words about his own fulfillment of the law and the righteousness required of his disciples. “Do not think,” he says, “that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill” (Matt 5:17). He goes on, “I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matt 5:20). Jesus says he is the one who will fulfill the law. How? Surely, by his own righteousness. How are Jesus’ disciples to be righteous? Surely, not by their unaided ability, but by relying on the gracious care of their heavenly Father (see Matt 6:25-34),

whose righteousness fulfills the law in the humanity of His Son and promises to fulfill the law in his disciples also. The moral precept, “Be perfect,” is *both* a commandment *and* a promise.

The same gospel ethic is evident in the writings of Saint Paul. “Obedient as you have always been . . . work out your salvation in fear and trembling,” he tells the Philippians, “for God is the one who, for his good purpose, works in you both to desire and to work” (Phil 2:12-13). The Philippian disciples are to work in obedience to God’s commandments; God is at work in the disciples to fulfill His good purpose for them. The commandments are *both* for them to obey *and* for God to fulfill in them. In his first letter to the Corinthians, Saint Paul assures them, “God is faithful and will not let you be tried beyond your strength; but with the trial he will also provide a way out, so that you may be able to bear it” (1 Cor 10:12). Trials will require the Corinthian disciples to be strong and endure, but their strength will not be enough. *Both* their endurance *and* God’s provident care will be necessary.

Saint Thomas Aquinas develops this *both/and* gospel ethic in his treatment of “The law of the gospel, called the New Law” in his *Summa Theologiae*. He asks, “Whether the New Law is a written law?” and answers, “We must say that the New Law is in the first place a law that is inscribed on our hearts, but secondarily it is a written law” (ST I-II q.106 a.1). Saint Thomas says, “The New Law is chiefly the grace itself of the Holy Spirit, which is given through faith in Christ.” Secondarily, it is about “certain things that dispose us to receive the grace of the Holy Spirit, and pertain to the use of that grace.” The Law of the gospel is *both* about what human beings do in response to written commandments of God, which dispose them for God’s grace and help them make use of it, *and* – even more so – the Law of the gospel is about what God does in bestowing the grace of the Holy Spirit upon his people.

The ethical precepts of the Christian gospel are *both* commandments for us *and* promises from God. This insight not only helps us to understand God’s commandments better. It also helps us to understand God better. God does not fit Jesus’ description of the “scholars of the law [who] impose on people burdens hard to carry, but . . . do not lift on finger to touch them” (Luke 11:46). When God commands, He not only demands something of us. He also promises to help us with His gifts of grace. So, unlike those scholars of the law, Jesus faithfully represents his Father when he says, “Come to me . . . for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matt 11:30).