

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

August 20, 2023

*O woman,
great is your faith!*

MATTHEW 15:28



Saint Mary 14 Park Street + Sacred Heart 58 Church Street + Saint Mark 105 Stanley Street
North Attleborough, Massachusetts

Transfiguration of the Lord Parish

Rev. David A. Costa, Pastor
Rev. Deacon Joseph E. Regali, Parish Deacon
Sister Kathleen A. Corrigan, S.U.S.C., Pastoral Associate
Rev. Kenneth R. Sicard, O.P. & Rev. R. Gabriel Pivarnik, O.P., Weekend Assistants
Mrs. Jean Howard, Business Manager
Mrs. Elaine Corvese, Director of Religious Education
Mrs. Lisa Serak, Principal, Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School
Mr. Miguel Peixoto, Buildings Supervisor
Mr. James Kitsock, Building Maintenance

Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School

Mrs. Lisa Serak, Principal
57 Richards Avenue,
North Attleborough, Massachusetts 02760
(508) 695-3072 FAX (508) 695-9074
smsh@smsh.dfrcs.org www.smshschool.com

Saint Mary Cemetery

Mr. Jarrod Ward, Superintendent
Towne Street
North Attleborough, Massachusetts 02760
(508) 695-1173 or email ripco@comcast.net

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Summer)

Saint Mark Church • Saturday 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Sacrament of Baptism

Baptisms are celebrated on designated Sunday afternoons at 12:30 pm, with a limit of four families at each baptism. Please contact the office at stmaryna@noozi.com for more information and available dates/locations.

Sacrament of Marriage

Marriage is usually celebrated on Saturday morning and afternoon. Please contact the Parish Office at least nine months in advance to begin preparation.

Sacrament of the Sick

Pastoral care to those in need of the sacrament of the sick is arranged through the parish office. Please call to arrange a visit.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is offered on the first Friday of each month in **Saint Mark Church** beginning at 9:00 am and ending at 6:00 pm with Benediction.

Parish Offering

If you are attending in person, you may drop your contribution in the collection basket. You are welcome to mail your budget envelope to the parish office, at 14 Park Street, North Attleborough, MA 02760. You may also leave your envelope in the drop box located outside the parish office door, to the right on the landing. Or you can use this link for online giving:

<https://app.gabrielsoft.com/guest/mafrdiocese/31>

Thank you for your ongoing support!

Weekend Masses

Saturday 4:00 pm **Saint Mark Church (Summer)**
Sunday 8:00 am **Saint Mark Church**
Sunday 9:30 am **Saint Mark Church (Summer)**
Sunday 11:00 am **Saint Mark Church (Summer)**

Weekday Masses

Monday 4:30 pm **Saint Mark Church**
Rosary for Life 4:00 pm each Monday prior to 4:30 pm Mass
Tuesday 8:00 am **Saint Mark Church**
Wednesday 4:30 pm **Saint Mark Church**
Thursday 8:00 am Communion Service
Saint Mark Church

Links to: Transfiguration of the Lord Facebook page
<https://www.facebook.com/Transfiguration-of-the-Lord-Parish-North-Attleborough-106529317647894/>

YouTube at <https://tinyurl.com/ysfaxaty>

Parish Office

14 Park Street, North Attleborough,
Massachusetts 02760
Parish e-mail • stmaryna@noozi.com
Parish website • www.saintmaryna.com
Phone 508-695-6161 Fax 508-695-5248
Faith Formation • TransfigurationRelEd@gmail.com
Faith Formation • 508-695-3823

MASS Intentions

August 19/20- 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saturday	August 19 – Vigil (St. Mark)
4:00 pm	Mike Malone
Sunday	August 20 (St. Mark)
8:00 am	Edward A. Rogers
Sunday	August 20 (St. Mark)
9:30 am	T. Leo LaBossiere
	Alexandra LaBossiere
Sunday	August 20 (St. Mark)
11:00 am	People of the Parish

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Monday	August 21 (St. Mark)
4:30 pm	Aurore Sirois
Tuesday	August 22 (St. Mark)
8:00 am	Albert Pion
Wednesday	August 23 (St. Mark)
4:30 pm	People of the Parish
Thursday	August 24 (St. Mark)
8:00 am	People of the Parish

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August 26/27- 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saturday	August 26 – Vigil (St. Mark)
4:00 pm	Joseph Schultz
	Grace Schultz
Sunday	August 27 (St. Mark)
8:00 am	Leo Dery
	Camilla Dery
Sunday	August 27 (St. Mark)
9:30 am	Dr. Domenic E. Leco
Sunday	August 27 (St. Mark)
11:00 am	Robert J. Healey, Sr.

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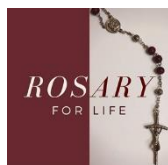
Parish Contributions

Collection for August 12/13: \$11,649.20
Home Missions Collection: \$1,150.00

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Rosary for Life

The Respect Life Committee of Transfiguration of the Lord Parish is pleased to announce that every Monday we will lead a Rosary for Life at 4:00 pm, prior to the 4:30 pm daily Mass in **Saint Mark Church**. The communal Rosary is also livestreamed each week for any participants who wish to join us remotely.



Mass Schedule Updates

Beginning the weekend of **September 9 and 10**, we will return to using our three churches for the weekend Mass schedule. The schedule and locations will be as follows:

Saturday Vigil Mass: 4:00 pm at Saint Mary Church

Sunday morning Mass: 8:00 am at Saint Mark Church

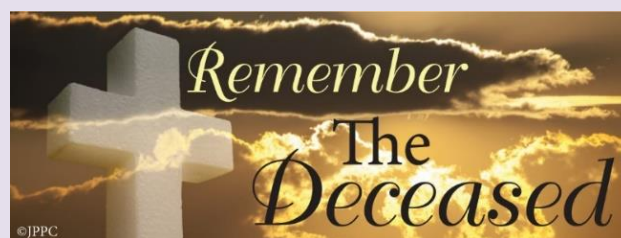
Sunday morning Mass: 9:30 am at Saint Mary Church

Sunday morning Mass: 11:00 am at Sacred Heart Church

The weekday Masses, Communion Service, and First Friday Adoration will remain at Saint Mark Church.

Prayer Chain

We all know, that intercessory prayer can be very powerful. Recently a few people approached me about reforming the “Prayer Chain” that was in place for a good number of years. The “Prayer Chain” is made up of individuals from our parish who offer prayer for particular intentions from the quiet of their homes, and at their own schedule. This prayer could include the Rosary, certain devotional prayers, and/or eucharistic adoration. “Captains” are assigned to groups of people. These individuals share particular intentions that are sent in (email, phone call, word of mouth) to either the parish office or to the captains. This is a wonderful ministry for all of our parishioners, and most especially our older folks and our shut-ins. If you would like to be a part of this prayer ministry, please call the parish office.



Please Pray for our Deceased:

Eleanor G. Bertino

Joan E. Murphy

Erin K. (Carroll) Capotosto

*Eternal rest grant unto our beloved dead, O Lord.
Let perpetual light shine upon them.*



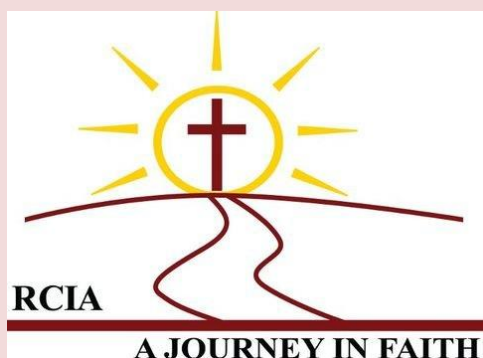
Archbishop Fulton Sheen once said:
"A Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration is a sharing in the work of Redemption."

Please join us at **Saint Mark Church**, Friday, **September 1st**, beginning at 9:00 a.m. and ending at 6:00 p.m. with Benediction. Remember, as we share in the work of Redemption, so will we be rewarded with our own redemption.

For more information call Joanne Regali (508-643-3821) or Arlene Hall (508-801-2243). Please leave a message if the call is not answered immediately.

The Sacrament of the Sick

If an ill family member is desirous of or in need of the comfort and grace of the Sacrament of the Sick, please call the parish office to make an appointment for Fr. Costa to visit. With the present vocation crisis in our Diocese, priest chaplains are not available at Sturdy Hospital. Pastoral Care of the Sick is provided ably and graciously by Deacon Del Malloy. If a family member is at Sturdy and would like to celebrate the Sacrament of the Sick, please call the parish office in order for Fr. Costa to visit as soon as he is able. The hospital does not send out notifications to the parishes when parishioners are admitted.



Are you or someone you know interested in becoming Catholic? The RCIA program will begin in early October. For more information, please see Father Costa after Mass, or call Arlene Hall at (508) 801-2243.

FAITH FORMATION

Director of Religious Education ~ Mrs. Elaine Corvese

508-695-3823

transfigurationreled@gmail.com

Faith Formation Program 2023-2024

Faith Formation Office hours:

Monday – Thursday

10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

The students currently enrolled in the Faith Formation program will be promoted to the next grade level. Parents/guardians will receive information regarding their child's grade in August 2023. Registration for students entering first grade or are new to the program is now open. To register, contact the Faith Formation office at: 508-695-3823 or transfigurationreled@gmail.com.

PARENTS OF CATHOLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN:

If your child attends Catholic School and is a candidate for Confirmation (Grade 9) you need to register your son/daughter into the parish sacramental program. For more information, contact the Faith Formation office.

~Mrs. Elaine Corvese

SAINT MARY-SACRED HEART SCHOOL - JOIN NOW!

Flourish with FAITH, Family and Fundamentals!

Celebrating 100 Years of Catholic Education in the town of North Attleboro!



This is the time to give your little one the gift of a faith-based education!

Contact us at www.smshschool.com, and enroll your student today!

Transfiguration of the Lord Parish Saint Vincent de Paul Society

Inspired by Gospel values, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, a Catholic lay organization, leads women and men to join to grow spiritually by offering person-to-person service to those who are in need or are suffering, in the tradition of its founder, Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, and patron, St. Vincent de Paul. The Society meets on the 2nd Thursday of the month in the parish hall in Saint Mary Church. Please join us!

Call for Assistance If you need assistance, please call the help line for our parish Saint Vincent de Paul Society. They can offer information about the types of assistance available. Please call 508-212-4755 for help or more information.

Memorial Prayer Service for Aborted Children

On Saturday, September 9th, pro-life Americans throughout the country will gather at memorial sites for the 11th annual National Day of Remembrance for Aborted Children. Prayers services will be held at these sites to commemorate the more than 60 million children who have lost their lives to abortion since 1973. Even though Roe v. Wade has been overturned, we still need to mourn those precious babies who have been lost and remind our society of the humanity of the unborn. Please join us for this sweet memorial service in our local community!

When: Saturday, September 9th, 9:00-10:00 am

Where: St. Mary's Cemetery, Towne St., North Attleboro, MA

For more information, please contact **Kathy Hill** at:
Kathyfinnhill@yahoo.com

Transfiguration of the Lord Respect Life Group

The next meeting of the Respect Life Group will take place on Monday, **September 11, 2023 at 6:30 pm in Saint Mary Church Hall**. In the meantime, please mark your calendars: the Secretariat of the New Evangelization's Family and Respect Life Office of the Diocese of Fall River will be hosting two Respect Life events on Sunday October 22, 2023 to mark Respect Life Month. The Annual Respect Life Mass with Bishop da Cunha will be held at Cathedral of St Mary of the Assumption in Fall River at 10:30 AM. Following this Mass, there will be a Respect Life Conference at White's of Westport for \$35 (lunch and speakers). It is sponsored by the Knights of Columbus. Tickets can be purchased by contacting Joanna Wissler: 508-243-5307 or wissler5@verizon.net.

Transfiguration of the Lord Parish Women's Guild Opening Banquet

We are excited to kick off our 2023-2024 Women's Guild Program starting with our Opening Banquet scheduled for Monday, September 11, 2023. The Women's Guild Program at Transfiguration of Lord Parish is a fantastic opportunity for our women to come together, strengthen our faith, build connections and friendships, and enjoy social, spiritual, and educational activities. Details of our opening Banquet are as follows:



Date: September 11, 2023

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Place: Vilorio's Italian Bistro, 6 N. Washington St,
North Attleboro

Cost: \$38.00 per person

All women of the parish are welcome. Please contact Karen Smith at (508) 212-7377 or Diana Gray at (508) 695-1143 **no later than September 1st**.

You can always find complete information on our website at: <https://nawomensguild.weebly.com/>

WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE BIBLE AND YOUR CATHOLIC FAITH?

An invitation to join one of these Women's Spirituality Groups:

- *Tuesday night via Zoom weekly (6:15pm to 7:30pm)
- *Wednesday morning in person weekly (9am to 10:30am)
- *Wednesday nights via Zoom twice a month (6:45pm to 8:30pm)

Meet like-minded women to help you live your faith. Increase your knowledge about Catholicism and the Bible (No experience necessary!) Make new friends. The groups will be starting after Labor Day. We don't meet between Thanksgiving and Christmas, during Holy Week, or over the summer. No need to attend every session (but you'll want to!) Come join us! Try us out and see if it's a good fit. The groups are open to women outside of our parish, so please invite your friends and relatives--all are welcome!

For more information and to get on our email list:

- *For the twice a month Wednesday night group contact Colleen Ford at: Colleenjuliaford@gmail.com
- *For the Tuesday night group contact Kim Simmons at: simmons_kima@gmail.com
- *For the Wednesday morning group contact Diane Garrow at: dianegarrow@comcast.net
- *If you aren't sure which group fits you best, or just want more information contact Colleen Ford at: Colleenjuliaford@gmail.com

Hoping you will join us! These sessions really helped our knowledge and our faith to grow, and will help yours. No preparation is required.

Saint of the Week: Saint Rose of Lima

Wednesday, August 23rd

The first canonized saint of the New World has one characteristic of all saints—the suffering of opposition—and another characteristic which is more for admiration than for imitation—excessive practice of mortification.

She was born to parents of Spanish descent in Lima, Peru, at a time when South America was in its first century of evangelization. She seems to have taken Catherine of Siena as a model, in spite of the objections and ridicule of parents and friends.

The saints have so great a love of God that what seems bizarre to us, and is indeed sometimes imprudent, is simply a logical carrying out of a conviction that anything that might endanger a loving relationship with God must be rooted out. So, because her beauty was so often admired, Rose used to rub her face with pepper to produce disfiguring blotches. Later, she wore a thick circlet of silver on her head, studded on the inside, like a crown of thorns.

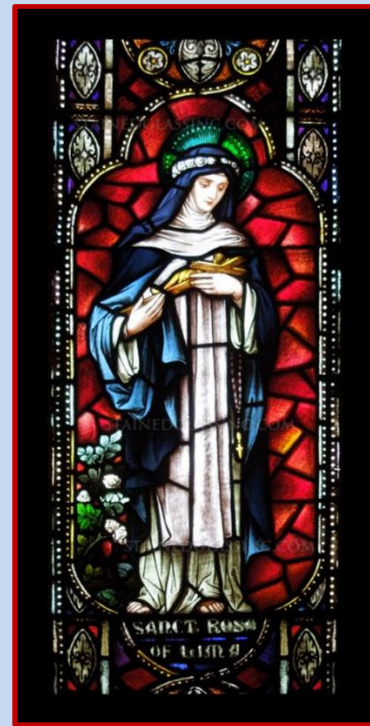
When her parents fell into financial trouble, she worked in the garden all day and sewed at night. Ten years of struggle against her parents began when they tried to make Rose marry. They refused to let her enter a convent, and out of obedience she continued her life of penance and solitude at home as a member of the Third Order of Saint Dominic. So deep was her desire to live the life of Christ that she spent most of her time at home in solitude.

During the last few years of her life, Rose set up a room in the house where she cared for homeless children, the elderly, and the sick. This was a beginning of social services in Peru. Though secluded in life and activity, she was brought to the attention of Inquisition interrogators, who could only say that she was influenced by grace.

What might have been a merely eccentric life was transfigured from the inside. If we remember some unusual penances, we should also remember the greatest thing about Rose: a love of God so ardent that it withstood ridicule from without, violent temptation, and lengthy periods of sickness. When she died at 31, the city turned out for her funeral. Prominent men took turns carrying her coffin.

It is easy to dismiss excessive penances of the saints as the expression of a certain culture or temperament. But a woman wearing a crown of thorns may at least prod our consciences. We enjoy the most comfort-oriented life in human history. We eat too much, drink too much, use a million gadgets, fill our eyes and ears with everything imaginable. Commerce thrives on creating useless needs on which to spend our money. It seems that when we have become most like slaves, there is the greatest talk of “freedom.” Are we willing to discipline ourselves in such an atmosphere?

Saint Rose of Lima



“When we serve the poor and the sick we serve Jesus. We must not fail to help our neighbors, because in them we serve Jesus.”

-St. Rose of Lima (August 23rd)

Prayer and Pizza

Are you looking for another way to deepen your spirituality? Do you have “knots” in your life that you need help undoing? Please join us on the third Wednesday of each month for “Prayer and Pizza.” Following the 4:30 pm Mass on **Wednesday, September 20**, we together will pray the rosary, which will be offered up to Mary, Undoer of Knots (maryundoerofknots.com). Whether you pray the rosary daily or have never prayed it before, please consider joining us for “Prayer and Pizza.” All are welcome! Please contact Rick Leco (508 930 9264) or Vicky Curran (508 930 3306) with any questions.



Knights of Columbus®

Council #330 of the Knights of Columbus has been serving the Catholic Community of North Attleborough for 125 years. The Knights meet on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7pm, in the St. Mary Church Hall. Please drop by on meeting nights if you'd like to learn more about the Knights. Council #330 is committed to assisting local charities that align with the values of our Faith such as the Parish, the Parish school, and Abundant Hope. Contact Jim Schromm with any questions: jim.schromm@verizon.net.

Reflections for the Week beginning Sunday, August 20, 2023

Sunday, Aug 20, 2023

That all may be one

The spirit of division is about being right. The spirit of unity is about embracing Christ. In which direction are we heading? Ecumenism seems an almost quaint idea in the 21st-century church. Other issues seem to have become more critical for many than getting Christians on the same page. Yet a divided church is a scandal to a world that questions our sincerity if we can't even agree on Jesus. Dialogue with others without the need to criticize beliefs or change minds. Create opportunities to pray, study, work, and mission together with local Christians. They will know we are Christians by our love.

TWENTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 56:1, 6-7; Romans 11:13-15, 29-32; Matthew 15:21-28 (118). *"For my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples."*

Monday, Aug 21, 2023

Look beyond the wardrobe

The saying "Clothes make the man" was certainly not true for Pope Pius X. He was born poor, teased at school for his tattered clothes, and sometimes carried his shoes to make them last longer. When he became pope in 1903, remaining as humble as his origins, he said the only thing that had changed about him was the color of his cassock from black to white—a fact he sometimes forgot since he had to be reminded not to wipe his pen on his clothes anymore. Let Pius X remind you to stay true to your authentic self by keeping your life simple.

MEMORIAL OF PIUS X, POPE

TODAY'S READINGS: Judges 2:11-19; Matthew 19:16-22 (419). *"If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven."*

Tuesday, Aug 22, 2023

Eight days a week

The Queenship of Mary doubles as a liturgical bookend, concluding eight full days since celebrating her Assumption. In liturgical language, these eight days form an octave. Most simply, an octave extends the celebration of a church feast from a single day into eight. Historically, Christianity inherited the practice from Judaism, which, for instance, celebrates eight days of Hanukkah and circumcision eight days after a boy's birth—the latter being why many baptismal fonts are octagonal. If a week is seven days, then the eighth day begins a new week—the eighth day signaling the start of something new or renewal, just as Baptism makes a person new or "born again." Honor Mary anew by praying the Salve Regina today.

MEMORIAL OF THE QUEENSHIP OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

TODAY'S READINGS: Judges 6:11-24a; Matthew 19:23-30 (420). *"For men this is impossible, but for God all things are possible."*

Wednesday, Aug 23, 2023

Go deep

Today is the feast of Rose of Lima, patron of Latin America. You can visit her tomb in the historic center of Lima, Peru, a place teeming with activity. Enter the Dominican monastery where she is buried and leave behind the noise and heat of the street. Descend

a narrow passage; bow your head to clear the low ceiling. You'll emerge into a cool, hushed room with her tomb at the far end. It is a holy place—a place you'd never know if you didn't go deep. How do you get to the deep sacred space within your daily life?

MEMORIAL OF ROSE OF LIMA, TERTIARY

TODAY'S READINGS: Judges 9:6-15; Matthew 20:1-16 (421). *"Thus, the last will be first, and the first will be last."*

Thursday, Aug 24, 2023

Pure faith

Tradition has it that Bartholomew was tortured to death for the faith. Scholars believe that he is mentioned in scripture by both his name and by the name Nathaniel. Nathaniel was famously complimented by Jesus for being a true Israelite, with no duplicity. Purity of heart, in fact, is how most holy disciples attain holiness. Through profound connection to God, they avoid guile, duplicity, and other sins that are so easy to fall into when God slides into the background. Saint Bartholomew, help us maintain a clean heart.

FEAST OF BARTHOLOMEW, APOSTLE

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 21:9b-14; John 1:45-51 (629). *"Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, 'Here is a true child of Israel. There is no duplicity in him.'"*

Friday, Aug 25, 2023

Women will not remain silent!

Do you know all 333 women of the Bible? There are at least that many, writes Catholic commentator Alice Camille, and each is worth getting to know. Visible presence of women in leadership roles has long suffered from hierarchical structures rooted in patriarchal values. The establishment of the biblical canon reflects this as well with women's voices and stories rarely included except in support roles. Stories such as that of Ruth and Naomi that survived the canonical cutting-room floor are a beacon of light and remind us that despite overwhelming suppression of women's voices, they could not be silenced. How are you called to give voice or to amplify suppressed voices today?

TODAY'S READINGS: Ruth 1:1, 3-6, 14b-16, 22; Matthew 22:34-40 (423). *"Ruth said, 'Do not ask me to abandon or forsake you!'"*

Saturday, Aug 26, 2023

A ruling from the bench

Jesus speaks of the scribes and Pharisees sitting on the "chair of Moses." Archeologists have uncovered stone chairs in prominent places in ancient synagogues where such leaders presumably sat as they pronounced on all things related to Jewish Law and Tradition. When it came to fulfilling the spirit of the Law rather than just the letter, Jesus called out the hypocrisy of those who did not practice what they preach. In any field—politics, business, religion—leaders need to be judged not by the eloquence of their words but by the integrity of their actions. That goes for all of us, wherever we take our seat!

TODAY'S READINGS: Ruth 2:1-3, 8-11; 4:13-17; Matthew 23:1-12 (424). *"The scribes and the Pharisees have taken their seat on the chair of Moses.... but do not follow their example. For they preach but they do not practice."*

Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time



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20th Sunday in Ordinary Time - August 20, 2023

READINGS FOR THE WEEK



First Reading

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

Thus says the LORD:
Observe what is right, do what is just;
for my salvation is about to come,
my justice, about to be revealed.

The foreigners who join themselves to the LORD,
ministering to him,
loving the name of the LORD,
and becoming his servants—
all who keep the sabbath free from profanation
and hold to my covenant,
them I will bring to my holy mountain
and make joyful in my house of prayer;
their burnt offerings and sacrifices
will be acceptable on my altar,
for my house shall be called
a house of prayer for all peoples.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



*O woman,
great is
your faith!*

MATTHEW 15:28

Responsorial Psalm

R. O God, let all the nations praise you!

May God have pity on us and bless us;
may he let his face shine upon us.
So may your way be known upon earth;
among all nations, your salvation.

R. O God, let all the nations praise you!

May the nations be glad and exult
because you rule the peoples in equity;
the nations on the earth you guide.

R. O God, let all the nations praise you!

May the peoples praise you, O God;
may all the peoples praise you!
May God bless us,
and may all the ends of the earth fear him!

R. O God, let all the nations praise you!

Second Reading

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters:

I am speaking to you Gentiles.
Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles,
I glory in my ministry in order to make my race jealous
and thus save some of them. For if their rejection is the
reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance
be but life from the dead?

For the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable.
Just as you once disobeyed God but have now received
mercy because of their disobedience,
so they have now disobeyed in order that,
by virtue of the mercy shown to you,
they too may now receive mercy.
For God delivered all to disobedience,
that he might have mercy upon all.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

*Jesus proclaimed the Gospel of the kingdom
and cured every disease among the people.*

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

† A reading from the holy Gospel according to
Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord.

At that time, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman of that district came and called out,

*"Have pity on me, Lord, Son of David!
My daughter is tormented by a demon."*

But Jesus did not say a word in answer to her.
Jesus' disciples came and asked him,

"Send her away, for she keeps calling out after us."

He said in reply,

*"I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house
of Israel."*

But the woman came and did Jesus homage, saying,
"Lord, help me."

He said in reply,

*"It is not right to take the food of the children
and throw it to the dogs."*

She said,

*"Please, Lord, for even the dogs eat the scraps
that fall from the table of their masters."*

Then Jesus said to her in reply,

*"O woman, great is your faith!
Let it be done for you as you wish."*

And the woman's daughter was healed from that hour.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



**Society of St. Vincent de Paul
District Council of Attleboro**
Serving Attleboro, North Attleboro, Seekonk,
Rehoboth, Norton & Mansfield



**Join Us
Saturday, Sept. 23, 2023**

*A trail walk to help
individuals and families in need*

Friends
OF THE POOR®
WALK

Rain or Shine

All fundraising walkers
will receive a
free event t-shirt.

BASKET RAFFLES
Raffle Drawing @ 11:30

**Attleboro Springs Wildlife
Sanctuary at LaSalette**

Route 118 • Attleboro, MA 02703

8:30 AM • Registration & Kickoff

12 Noon • Walk Ends

Register online: www.fopwalk.org/event/2482

**Be a Business Sponsor
Walk & Solicit Pledges
Donate to a Walker**

100% of donations will be used for families needing
rent, utilities or emergency assistance.



REGISTER ONLINE



CONTACT US

Pax Christi at LaSalette Shrine

Save the Date! Pax Christi at LaSalette Shrine, Attleboro, will host an evening program entitled "Building a World Without Nuclear Weapons," on **Thursday, September 28, at 7:00pm at the Shrine.** The guest speaker will be Peter Metz, a retired MIT-educated engineer who, motivated by his Catholic faith, works on social action initiatives, chief among them the creation of a world without nuclear weapons. The program is free and open to the public. Mark your calendars now!



TWENTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Openness:

Today's readings remind us that all of us are "strangers" who owe our "chosenness" to God's openness and all-inclusive love. By definition, then, we have no business dabbling in any form of exclusiveness. As Isaiah puts it, God's "house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples."

Comment:

The reading from Isaiah speaks to "insiders" and "outsiders." It reminds us that salvation is not contingent on membership in a chosen people. Rather, it depends on a person's attitude of faith. All who embrace the faith of Israel will enjoy the salvation God has promised Israel. God is not exclusionary. God is openness and welcome. That is why God's house "shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples."

In the second reading, we find Paul speaking of a remnant, a recurring theme throughout the ancient Scriptures. Paul emphasizes that the prophets have continued to announce that no matter what befalls God's people, God will save a remnant. Paul sees this as a divine gift, a gift of life out of death.

Paul is reminding us not to grow smug, not to write off the Jews. God is working in ways we cannot understand—perhaps cannot even imagine. The house of God will be a home for all, for God has so promised. God will stay true to that word. God will have no "them" and "us," no insiders and outsiders.

In today's Gospel passage, the Canaanite woman is the ultimate "outsider." She is a triple threat, you might say: she is a non-Jew; she is a Canaanite enemy; she is a woman. Maybe she's a quadruple threat: she's also bold. Her daughter is suffering, troubled and beset by a demon. The woman recognizes that Jesus is Lord, Son of David, so she boldly calls upon him to cure her child. Jesus doesn't offer her any response. However, the woman does get a rise out of Jesus' disciples. They don't feel pity for her, only embarrassment because of her. Their response is to entreat Jesus to get rid of her. Jesus proceeds to do just that. He tells the woman that his mission is to the lost sheep of Israel alone. The woman, however, is persistent. Jesus becomes more blunt, even insulting. She brushes off the insult and says that she'll take what she can get. Jesus can't refuse such faith. He gives her everything. He heals her daughter.

Since Jesus repeatedly denies the Canaanite woman and even goes so far as to call her the "D" word (dog), it's tempting to read sarcasm, even venom, in Jesus' words. To do so, however, would be to fail to recognize an ancient mode of Semitic dialogue and wit that matches wise aphorism with wise aphorism or riddle with riddle. Jesus tosses off a maxim to the woman and she turns it around on him to her own advantage. Jesus is impressed. He acknowledges her wisdom and praises her faith.

Matthew uses this event to explain how Jesus' mission of salvation is not a parochial one. Rather, the evangelist wants to make it abundantly clear that Jesus' mission is one that extends beyond the house of Israel to the ends of the earth and to all its people. Matthew wants us to understand that membership in the chosen people is neither enough nor essential. What is enough, what is essential is active faith.

Reflection:

The Canaanite woman is one gutsy gal. Unnamed, outcast, a foreigner, a woman, she stands for us as a model for faith and faith-filled prayer. Her prayer comes from a deep recognition of who she is and upon whom it is she is calling. Her prayer is "grounded" in humility (from humus, "of the earth/dust"). Her intercession is made not on her own behalf, but on behalf of her sick and tortured child. Her prayer is simple, to the point, and brooks no misinterpretation: "Lord, help me!" No matter that she is one of Israel's outcasts, she calls upon Jesus to "observe what is right, do what is just" (Isaiah 56:1). The woman's faith is strong. That makes her prayer persistent. Neither she nor it will be rebuffed. She calls to mind the words of Saint Paul, "There does not exist among you Jew or Greek, slave or freeman, male or female. All are one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). Here, in the middle of Matthew's Gospel, the Canaanite woman serves as our representative, one of the many ordinary, unnamed, and outcast people, on behalf of whom, at the end of the Gospel, Jesus commands, "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28:19).

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