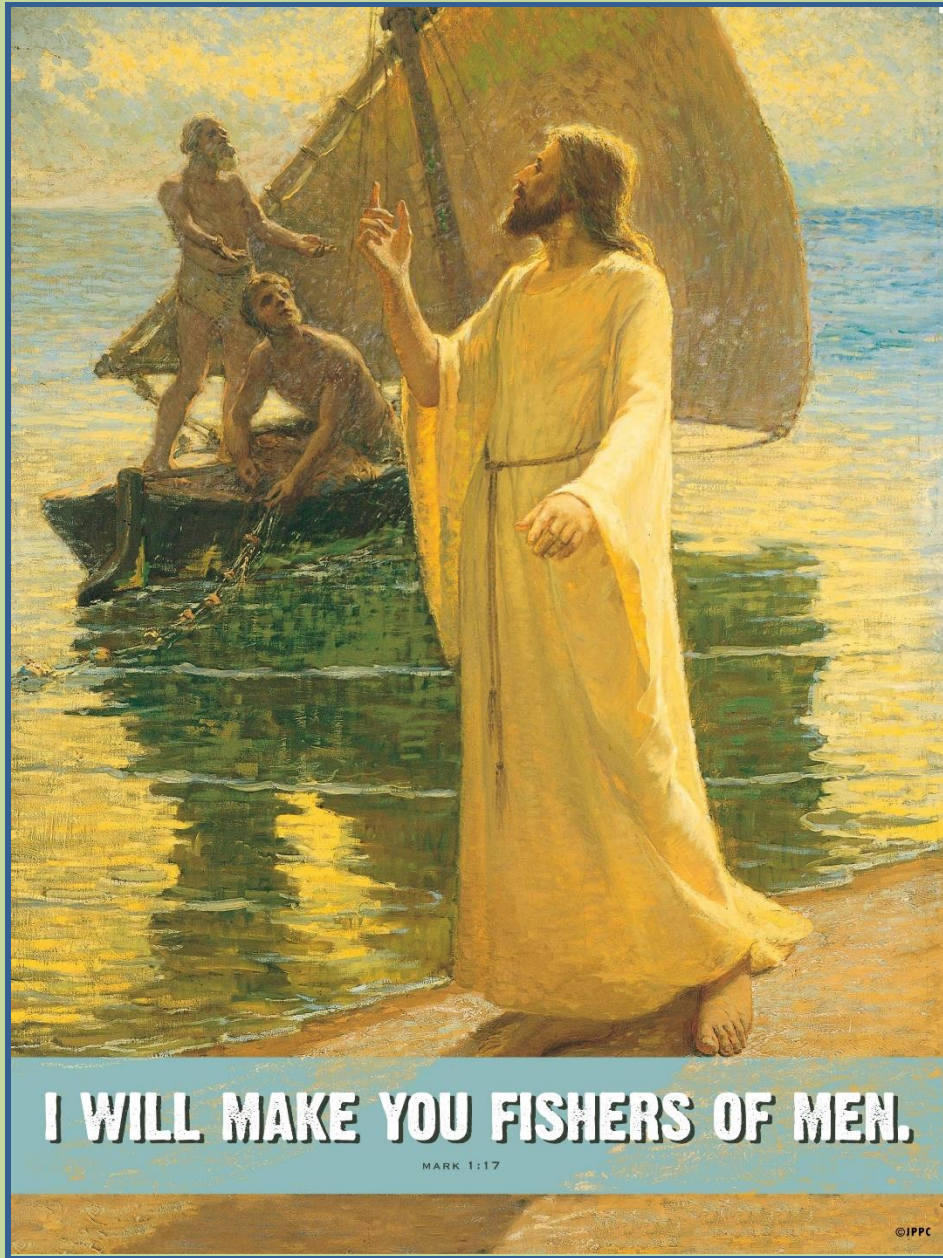


# Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

## January 21, 2024



## Transfiguration of the Lord Parish

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. Martha O'Neill, Administrative Assistant  
Mrs. Jean Howard, Business Manager  
Mrs. Elaine Corvese, Director of Religious Education  
Mrs. Lisa Serak, Principal, Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School  
Mr. Adam Turcotte, Director of Music  
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](mailto:smsh@smsh.dfrcs.org) [www.smshschool.com](http://www.smshschool.com)

### Saint Mary Cemetery

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

### Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saint Mary 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](mailto: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://chms.ecatholic.com/guest/mafrdiocese/31>  
Thank you for your ongoing support!

### Weekend Masses

Saturday 4:00 pm **Saint Mary Church**  
Sunday 8:00 am **Saint Mark Church**  
Sunday 9:30 am **Saint Mary Church**  
Sunday 11:00 am **Sacred Heart Church**

### Weekday Masses

Monday 8:00 am **Saint Mark Church**  
Tuesday 4:30 pm **Saint Mark Church**  
Wednesday 8:00 am **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](mailto:stmaryna@noozi.com)  
Parish website • [www.saintmaryna.com](http://www.saintmaryna.com)  
Phone 508-695-6161 Fax 508-695-5248  
Faith Formation • [TransfigurationRelEd@gmail.com](mailto:TransfigurationRelEd@gmail.com)  
Faith Formation • 508-695-3823  
Music Ministry • [transfiguration.na.music@gmail.com](mailto:transfiguration.na.music@gmail.com)



# MASS Intentions

## January 20/21 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

<b>Saturday</b> 4:00 pm	<b>January 20 – Vigil (St. Mary)</b> Lillian Shea Frank Golden
<b>Sunday</b> 8:00 am	<b>January 21 (St. Mark)</b> Robert & Angela MacCormack
<b>Sunday</b> 9:30 am	<b>January 21 (St. Mary)</b> People of the Parish
<b>Sunday</b> 11:00 am	<b>January 21 (Sacred Heart)</b> People of the Parish

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<b>Monday</b> 8:00 am	<b>January 22 (St. Mark)</b> Michelle (Graveline) Resendes
<b>Tuesday</b> 4:30 pm	<b>January 23 (St. Mark)</b> People of the Parish
<b>Wednesday</b> 8:00 am	<b>January 24 (St. Mark)</b> People of the Parish
<b>Thursday</b> 8:00 am	<b>January 25 (St. Mark)</b> People of the Parish

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## January 27/28 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

<b>Saturday</b> 4:00 pm	<b>January 27 – Vigil (St. Mary)</b> People of the Parish
<b>Sunday</b> 8:00 am	<b>January 28 (St. Mark)</b> People of the Parish
<b>Sunday</b> 9:30 am	<b>January 28 (St. Mary)</b> People of the Parish
<b>Sunday</b> 11:00 am	<b>January 28 (Sacred Heart)</b> Mariano Araujo Pamela S. Lunter

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### Parish Contributions

Collection for January 13/14: \$11,522.49

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### Tuesday Communal Rosary Schedule



**Tuesday, January 23, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)**  
**Tuesday, January 30, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)**  
**Tuesday, February 6, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)**  
**Tuesday, February 13, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)**  
**Tuesday, February 20, 2024: Prayer & Pizza (5PM)**  
**Tuesday, February 27, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)**  
**Tuesday, March 5, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)**  
**Tuesday, March 12, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)**



# Open HOUSE

Come and see our school!

GRADES Pre-K - 8  
JANUARY 21, 2024  
12:30 - 2:30 PM

**OUR SAINTS**  
LEARN. SERVE. LEAD. SUCCEED

**CONTACT US**  
Saint Mary - Sacred Heart School  
57 Richards Avenue  
North Attleboro, MA 02760  
508.695.3072 WWW.SMSHSCHOOL.COM @SMSHSaints

### Music Ministry News: Youth Choir



If your child (*grades 3-8*) is interested in joining our youth choir, they will sing the **first Sunday** of every month at the **11:00 am Mass at Sacred Heart**. Please scan the QR code to sign up, or see Adam Turcotte after Mass.



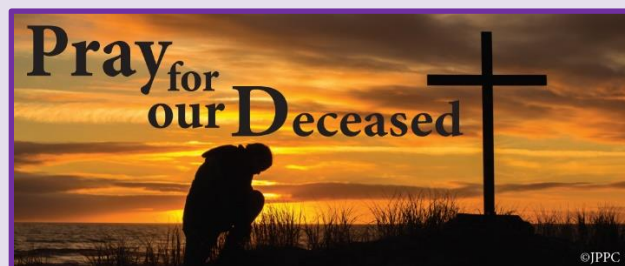
Join the  
Youth  
Choir!



### Please Remember our Deceased Parishioners:

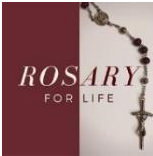
*Colleen M. Domingos*  
*Pamela S. Lunter*  
*Paul F. Dugan*  
*Denise A. Gaudette*  
*Diane Kade*  
*H. William "Bill" Donnelly*

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



## Rosary for Life

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



## Transfiguration of the Lord Respect Life Group Abundant Hope Baby Bottle Drive Updates:



### Baby Bottle Return:

Thank you for returning your Abundant Hope baby bottles **this** weekend to help support women and families in our community! Bottles will continue to be accepted and can be left in the front of the church. Your support is very much appreciated! In 2023, Abundant Hope helped over 1000 women with free services thanks to your generous donations!

### Monthly Meeting:

The next meeting of the Respect Life Group will take place on Thursday, **March 7, 2024 at 6:30 pm in Sacred Heart Church's Library**. We hope to see you there!

## January 27: Pax Christi Zoom Forum

"Building a World Without Nuclear Weapons: An Urgent Imperative" is the topic of an online forum to be held on Saturday, January 27, 2-4 pm ET. Its focus will be the grave concern of the increasing threat of nuclear war and what ordinary citizens can do to prevent it. The speakers are **John C. Wester, Archbishop of Santa Fe, NM**, who in 2022 led the way in the U.S. Catholic Church with his groundbreaking [pastoral letter on nuclear disarmament](#); **Dr. Ira Helfand**, co-founder and immediate past president of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War; and **Marie Dennis**, Catholic Nonviolence Initiative/Pax Christi International. Pax Christi Massachusetts is sponsoring this event in association with Pax Christi USA, with many co-sponsors from across North America.



[Register here](#) or type <http://tinyurl.com/ForumJan27> into your computer's browser to register. For more information and a complete list of co-sponsors, click [here](#).

## Baptism Congratulations

Our prayerful best wishes are extended to two of our children and their families who recently celebrated the Sacrament of Baptism. Please welcome and remember:

### *Charlotte Cynthia Byrne*



Child of Kevin Byrne & Nicole (Steele) Byrne  
Godchild of Richard Steele, III & Richelle Shanahan

### *Michael Andrew Cahill*



Child of Donald Cahill, Jr. & Michelle (Rizzo) Cahill  
Godchild of Thomas Rizzo & Bridget Lashway

## Baptismal Preparation Classes Have Resumed

Parents requesting the baptism of their child should be registered members of the parish who attend weekend Mass here at Transfiguration of the Lord Parish on a weekly basis. Please pick up and complete one of the Parish Census forms if you have not already registered with the parish. If this is your first Baptism here at Transfiguration Parish, parents are asked to attend a brief baptismal preparation session. The next session will be held on Sunday, **February 11 at 12:30 pm** in the Sacred Heart Meeting Room. Advanced registration is required. Please call Martha at the parish office or email at [stmaryna@noozi.com](mailto:stmaryna@noozi.com) for more information.

## Knights of Columbus Monthly Meeting

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](mailto:jim.schromm@verizon.net).



# SAINTS

## SAINT MARY-SACRED HEART

Introducing our newest class of Word Detectives!



Our first grade SAINTS have earned their Word Detective Badges! They have worked diligently during our training missions to learn strategies for decoding difficult words over the past month. We are extremely proud of them. However, it is now time for them to apply their hard work in real-life situations! As Word Detectives, they now have the necessary tools to tackle any challenging words they encounter. Go Saints!

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### Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School Open House:

We cordially invite you to explore more about our school during our **Open House this Sunday, January 21, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.** This event welcomes current SMSH families, as well as new and prospective families. We look forward to seeing you there!

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### Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School Alumni:

Did you, your child, grandchild or other relative graduate from St. Mary's School, Sacred Heart School or Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School? If so, please go to the Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School website [www.smshschool.com](http://www.smshschool.com) and under the Alumni tab fill in the form on reconnect with SMSH. We appreciate your support in this important part of our school's history!

**CATHOLIC**  
school education  
Success - Learn - Serve - Lead

### Faith Formation Program 2023-2024

Director of Religious Education ~ Mrs. Elaine Corvese  
508-695-3823; [transfigurationreled@gmail.com](mailto:transfigurationreled@gmail.com)

**Faith Formation Office hours:**  
**Monday – Thursday: 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

#### Class Schedule:

January 21<sup>st</sup>: **Grades 1 & 2**, 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.  
(following the 8:00 a.m. Mass)

January 21<sup>st</sup>: **Grade 9**, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

January 22<sup>nd</sup>: **Grade 8**, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

January 28<sup>th</sup>: **Grades 3 & 4**, 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.  
(following the 8:00 a.m. Mass)

January 29<sup>th</sup>: **Grade 5**, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

February 4<sup>th</sup>: **Grades 1 & 2**, 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.  
(following the 8:00 a.m. Mass)

February 4<sup>th</sup>: **Grade 9**, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

February 5<sup>th</sup>: **Grade 6**, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

February 11<sup>th</sup>: **Grades 3 & 4**, 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.  
(following the 8:00 a.m. Mass)

February 12<sup>th</sup>: **Grade 7**, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

February 25<sup>th</sup>: **Grades 1 & 2**, 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.  
(following the 8:00 a.m. Mass)

February 25<sup>th</sup>: **Grade 9**, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

February 26<sup>th</sup>: **Grade 8**, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

**Second Grade Parent meeting** will be held this Sunday, January 21, 2024 at 9:15 a.m. at Saint Mark Church. Important information regarding the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion will be discussed.



**Ninth grade parent and candidate meeting** to be held this Sunday, January 21, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. at Saint Mark Church. Important information regarding the sacrament of Confirmation will be discussed.



Please see website: [saintmaryna.com](http://saintmaryna.com) for the 2023-2024 calendar for all grades. Faith Formation classes are held at Saint Mark Church hall in Attleboro Falls.

**Cancellation of classes:** In the event of cancellation of classes due to inclement weather, the Faith Formation Office will notify parents/guardians by email and the cancellation notice will also be on the answering machine of the Faith Formation office at 508-695-3823. Please note: if the North Attleboro School Department cancels school, Faith Formation classes are automatically canceled.



## Prayer Shawl Ministry

The Prayer Shawl Ministry is looking for knitters/crocheters to help with making small Baptismal blankets to be given to the children being baptized in our parish. We have been doing this for quite a few years now and some members of our group can no longer participate. Any help would be much appreciated.

Patterns are available for both knit and crochet if needed. For more information, please contact Nancy Chapman at [nchapman88@comcast.net](mailto:nchapman88@comcast.net).

## 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.



Saint Alphonsus Ligori once said:

*"Of all devotions, that of adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the greatest after the sacraments, the one dearest to God and the one most helpful to us."*

Please join us at **Saint Mark church** on Friday, **February 2<sup>nd</sup>**, 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.

## Winter Storm Mass Policy



As we face the unpredictable New England winter season, I share our Winter Storm Mass Policy.

### Sunday Mass

Should there be significant snowfall or extreme ice conditions on a weekend, especially if we have been warned or "encouraged" to stay off the roads, weekend Masses will be celebrated **ONLY** at Saint Mark Church. We will follow the usual Mass times, but all Masses will be moved to Stanley Street because (1) I live on that property and the Dominicans would not be driving from Providence to be with us, and (2) only one property will need to be plowed and shoveled in time for Mass. Please note: when we are told to stay off the roads because it is too dangerous to travel due to weather conditions, any Mass obligation does not hold. **STAY HOME** for your safety and the safety of others. The Lord certainly understands!

### Daily Mass

When school is canceled or delayed due to winter weather, the daily Mass is also canceled. If the delay is on a Tuesday, we will have Mass on Tuesday afternoon. If there is an early dismissal of school due to winter weather on a Tuesday, the daily Mass on Tuesday afternoon is canceled.

I hope these directives are clear. Thank you for your assistance and cooperation. If you have any questions, please call the parish office.

## The Museum of Family Prayer: Upcoming Event



You and your spouse are cordially invited to a faith-filled Valentine's night out on Saturday, February 10. Come celebrate the blessings of married life in the Lord! Set aside time together as a couple to experience a joyful and memorable evening. Meet other local married couples at this special, complimentary evening that will include: a Vigil Mass and Renewal of Vows at St. Joseph Chapel at **5pm** and Dinner and Date Night at the Museum of Family Prayer from **6pm to 8pm**, both at the Father Peyton Center, 518 Washington St., N. Easton, MA 02356. Please **RSVP by February 2**, using the following link: <https://qrco.de/bef6u9>. If you have any questions, please contact us at: [mission@hcfm.org](mailto:mission@hcfm.org).



### **Saint of the Week: Mother Marianne Cope**

Mother Marianne's generosity and courage were celebrated at her May 14, 2005, beatification in Rome. She was a woman who spoke "the language of truth and love" to the world, said Cardinal José Saraiva Martins, prefect of the Congregation for Saints' Causes. Cardinal Martins, who presided at the beatification Mass in St. Peter's Basilica, called her life "a wonderful work of divine grace." Speaking of her special love for persons suffering from leprosy, he said, "She saw in them the suffering face of Jesus. Like the Good Samaritan, she became their mother."

On January 23, 1838, a daughter was born to Peter and Barbara Cope of Hessen-Darmstadt, Germany. The girl was named after her mother. Two years later the Cope family emigrated to the United States and settled in Utica, New York. Young Barbara worked in a factory until August 1862, when she entered the Sisters of the Third Order of Saint Francis in Syracuse, New York. After profession in November of the next year, she began teaching at Assumption parish school. Marianne held the post of superior in several places and was twice the novice mistress of her congregation. A natural leader, three different times she was superior of St. Joseph's Hospital in Syracuse, where she learned much that would be useful during her years in Hawaii.

Elected provincial in 1877, Mother Marianne was unanimously re-elected in 1881. Two years later the Hawaiian government was searching for someone to run the Kakaako Receiving Station for people suspected of having leprosy. More than 50 religious communities in the United States and Canada were asked. When the request was put to the Syracuse sisters, 35 of them volunteered immediately. On October 22, 1883, Mother Marianne and six other sisters left for Hawaii where they took charge of the Kakaako Receiving Station outside Honolulu; on the island of Maui they also opened a hospital and a school for girls.

In 1888, Mother Marianne and two sisters went to Molokai to open a home for "unprotected women and girls" there. The Hawaiian government was quite hesitant to send women for this difficult assignment; they need not have worried about Mother Marianne! On Molokai she took charge of the home that Saint Damien de Veuster had established for men and boys. Mother Marianne changed life on Molokai by introducing cleanliness, pride, and fun to the colony. Bright scarves and pretty dresses for the women were part of her approach.

Awarded the Royal Order of Kapiolani by the Hawaiian government and celebrated in a poem by Robert Louis Stevenson, Mother Marianne continued her work faithfully. Her sisters have attracted vocations among the Hawaiian people and still work on Molokai. Mother Marianne died on August 9, 1918, was beatified in 2005, and canonized in 2012.

### **St. Marianne Cope** **Feast Day: January 23<sup>rd</sup>**



*"Let us make the very best use of the precious moments and do all in our power for His dear sake and for His greater honor and glory. I do not think of reward; I am working for God and do so cheerfully."*

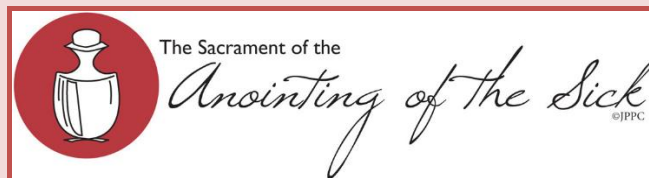
-St. Marianne Cope

### **2024 Mass Intention Book**

The 2024 Mass Intention Book is open. The current Mass schedule provides for fewer opportunities for parishioners to remember their beloved dead at weekend Masses. For this reason, we will schedule, when necessary, multiple intentions for weekend Masses. There is no limit on the number of daily Mass intentions. Please contact the office via email, phone, or in writing with your requests.



### **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.

# *3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time - January 21, 2024*

## READINGS FOR THE WEEK



### *First Reading*

#### **A reading from the Book of the Prophet Jonah**

The word of the LORD came to Jonah, saying: "Set out for the great city of Nineveh, and announce to it the message that I will tell you." So Jonah made ready and went to Nineveh, according to the LORD'S bidding. Now Nineveh was an enormously large city; it took three days to go through it. Jonah began his journey through the city, and had gone but a single day's walk announcing, "Forty days more and Nineveh shall be destroyed," when the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast and all of them, great and small, put on sackcloth.

When God saw by their actions how they turned from their evil way, he repented of the evil that he had threatened to do to them; he did not carry it out.

The word of the Lord.

*Thanks be to God.*



### *Responsorial Psalm*

#### **R. Teach me your ways, O Lord.**

Your ways, O LORD, make known to me;  
teach me your paths,  
Guide me in your truth and teach me,  
for you are God my savior.

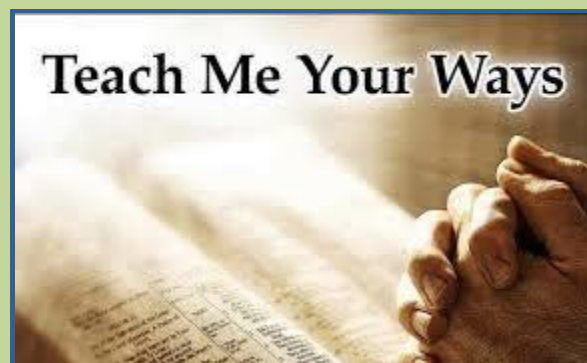
#### **R. Teach me your ways, O Lord.**

Remember that your compassion, O LORD,  
and your love are from of old.  
In your kindness remember me,  
because of your goodness, O LORD.

#### **R. Teach me your ways, O Lord.**

Good and upright is the LORD;  
thus he shows sinners the way.  
He guides the humble to justice  
and teaches the humble his way.

#### **R. Teach me your ways, O Lord.**



### *Second Reading*

#### **A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians**

I tell you, brothers and sisters, the time is running out. From now on, let those having wives act as not having them, those weeping as not weeping, those rejoicing as not rejoicing, those buying as not owning, those using the world as not using it fully. For the world in its present form is passing away.

The word of the Lord.

*Thanks be to God.*



## Gospel Acclamation

**R. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

*The kingdom of God is at hand.  
Repent and believe in the Gospel.*

**R. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

## Gospel

The Lord be with you.

**And with your spirit.**

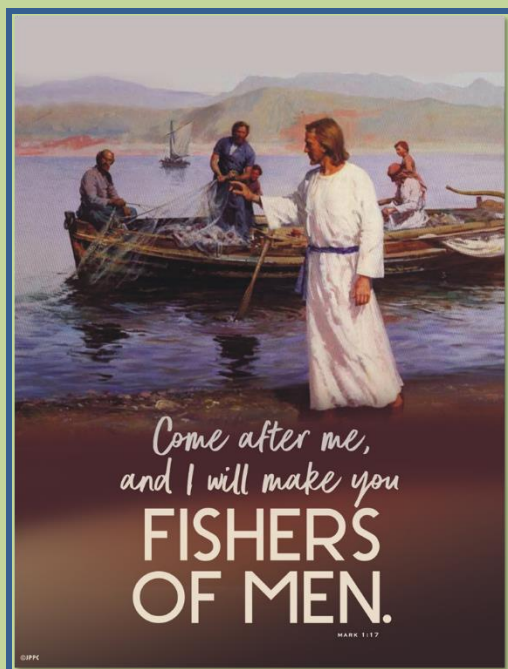
† A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God: "This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

As he passed by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting their nets into the sea; they were fishermen. Jesus said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." Then they abandoned their nets and followed him. He walked along a little farther and saw James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They too were in a boat mending their nets. Then he called them. So they left their father Zebedee in the boat along with the hired men and followed him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*



## THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### Creativity:

Prize-winning novelist Toni Morrison once told an interviewer that raising children nourished her creativity. The interviewer was startled. Surely, he thought, spending time with helpless infants, needy children, unsure adolescents would squelch creativity and occupy the time Morrison could spend instead at her desk creating yet another novel. But no, her children knew her as mother, as the creator and sustainer of their lives. They brought out the best in her. They freed her so that she could create even more.

### Comment:

The readings from Jonah and the Gospel describe instantaneous and positive responses. Jonah is given the task of preaching conversion to hitherto unrepentant Nineveh. The demand for repentance barely leaves Jonah's lips, and the city rises up to obey. The people repent in sackcloth and ashes.

In the Gospel for this day, Jesus is walking the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Not once, but twice, he encounters a set of brothers, who abandon their nets at Jesus' call. Such spontaneous and obedient responses appear rarely. And today we get two such incidents in a row. We must not miss the point. God expects such a response from us. This is our chance, our big chance. God knows this, and if we are not too dull of spirit, we know it, too. God's call is Good News that we can seize. This may imply surrendering the bad news of our easy and trivializing habits, not someday or tomorrow, but right now.

Making such a response to God's offer of Good News calls for faith, yes, but more than that, it calls for freedom. God's call invites our free response. That is why Paul summons us in the second reading to travel light, to lead lives unburdened of those things that threaten to drag us down and keep us there. It would be drawing the wrong conclusion to infer that Paul is denigrating marriage or any other human good. Rather, he is simply calling attention to the fact that responding to Christ's summons means achieving a perspective that focuses the stuff of human life toward God.

### Reflection:

We know, of course, that the people of Nineveh responded immediately, but alas! Jonah didn't. He dragged his anchor, for sure. He had to be tossed overboard and coughed up on shore before he finally got himself turned around in the direction that led to the fulfillment of his prophetic mission—the conversion of the willing and pliable people of Nineveh.

Mark's account of the call of the disciples shows them accepting their mission instantly. The disciples abandon their old way without a second thought. Imagine yourself leaving your workplace at the drop of the hat without announcement or future plan or further thought. People who knew you well would search for a reason, a deep motivation. Jesus' call to the disciples touched their deeper sense, stirred something in the very soul of Israel and of its faithful people. The disciples recognized the one truth that was meant for them. This was the promised one of God and they were on their way. They discovered in him the freedom of the sons and daughters of God. In this new undertaking they were finally free. Not merely free from fish and fishing, but free to serve the Lord in a new and undreamed of, but wished for, way. Paul describes this sort of freedom in acceptance of the Lord's mission. He tells us that people who take up the mission of Jesus Christ must be free from the day-to-day worries that can drain the life out of a person. As we have noted, the person of mission—the Christian—is not called to detach himself or herself from the world, from family, from relationships. Rather, the Christian must involve himself or herself in these very worries and concerns so that they can be shaped and managed to serve the work of Christ on this great old joyful and painful earth. Christians are called to use all the tools at hand. Only then will the Christian be free, and only then can he or she help in the work of freeing others and helping them see and experience the presence of God, not by transcending this world, but by creatively taking it on.

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# Reflections for the Week beginning Sunday, January 21, 2024



Invest time each week to  
expand your vocabulary and  
deepen your faith.

21 January 2024

## WORD OF THE WEEK

### Metanoia \me-tə-'noi-ə \

Greek word in the New Testament translated as "change of mind" or "change of heart." It corresponds with the Old Testament word for repentance and the Latin *conversio*, turning or returning, from which derives the idea of *conversion*. *Turning* is key, assuming we have lost our way or gone off course.

Pronunciation: <http://tinyurl.com/Take5-metanoia>

### CONTEXT

Community takes transformation. Being people of communion requires **metanoia** that results from encounter and dialogue.

—Sister Nicole Trahan, F.M.I.

Far from being a demand to feel lousy about our screw-ups, **metanoia** invites us to radically transform the way we perceive others, ourselves, and the world.

—David Anderson

**Metanoia** invites us to meet all situations, however unfair, with understanding and an empathetic heart.

—Father Ronald Rolheiser, O.M.I.

### WHY IT MATTERS

The willingness to change is a crucial ingredient in a life of integrity. On the journey through the years, we will all be confused or misdirected and swerve off the path of truth. **Metanoia** is the much-needed spiritual course correction. Consider **metanoia** the vital summons to recalculate where we're headed and what needs to change for us to get there.

From the Catechism of the Catholic Church: Jesus' call to conversion and repentance, does not aim first at outward works, but at the *conversion of the heart, interior conversion*. [H]owever, interior conversion urges expression in visible signs, gestures, and works of penance (1430).

### RELATED WORDS

Conversion | Penance | Contrition | Transformation

## QUESTION OF THE WEEK

### What does it mean to repent?

Repentance doesn't necessarily require falling on our knees and beating our breasts, though sometimes that may be the appropriate response—as it was for skeptical Thomas, when the resurrected Lord whom he'd doubted stood before him. Basically, to repent means to change course. That can mean movement if we've been standing still, or stopping if we've been in frantic motion. It can mean changing our minds or our hearts, our direction or our behavior.

The word has several important root meanings. The earliest is the Hebrew word *t'shuvah*: return. It's a crucial concept to prophets like Amos, Hosea, and Jeremiah. Their fellow citizens have wandered far from God's ways, and it's time for them to return home. *Metanoia* is the New Testament Greek term that carries a similar meaning. John the Baptist first issues the call to change direction, signaled by Baptism. Jesus uses this term when he invites his listeners to change their dispositions—to turn their hearts and lives around—in response to his teaching. Repentance carries the additional meaning of expressing regret for past actions and attitudes—along with the expectation that real change is forthcoming. In addition, the word *conversion* means turning around, implying a reorientation of intentions and actions. In the sacrament of Reconciliation, we include the stipulation of "making reparation" for what we've done or failed to do that has caused harm.

—Alice Camille, from *Questions Catholics Ask* <https://tinyurl.com/QCA-repent>

## REFLECTION OF THE WEEK

FEAST OF THE CONVERSION OF SAINT PAUL THE APOSTLE  
(JANUARY 25)

### Take the next turn toward truth

The amazing thing about Saint Paul's conversion was that he went from persecutor of Christians to a devout Christian himself. The change in him was so incredible not everyone believed it at first. His turnaround was a complete about-face toward Jesus.

READINGS: Acts 22:3-16 or 9:1-22; Mark 16:15-18 (519 <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/012518.cfm>). "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"

### FAITH IN ACTION

With God's help, you can bring about conversion in your own life. Start with a simple act of forgiveness.