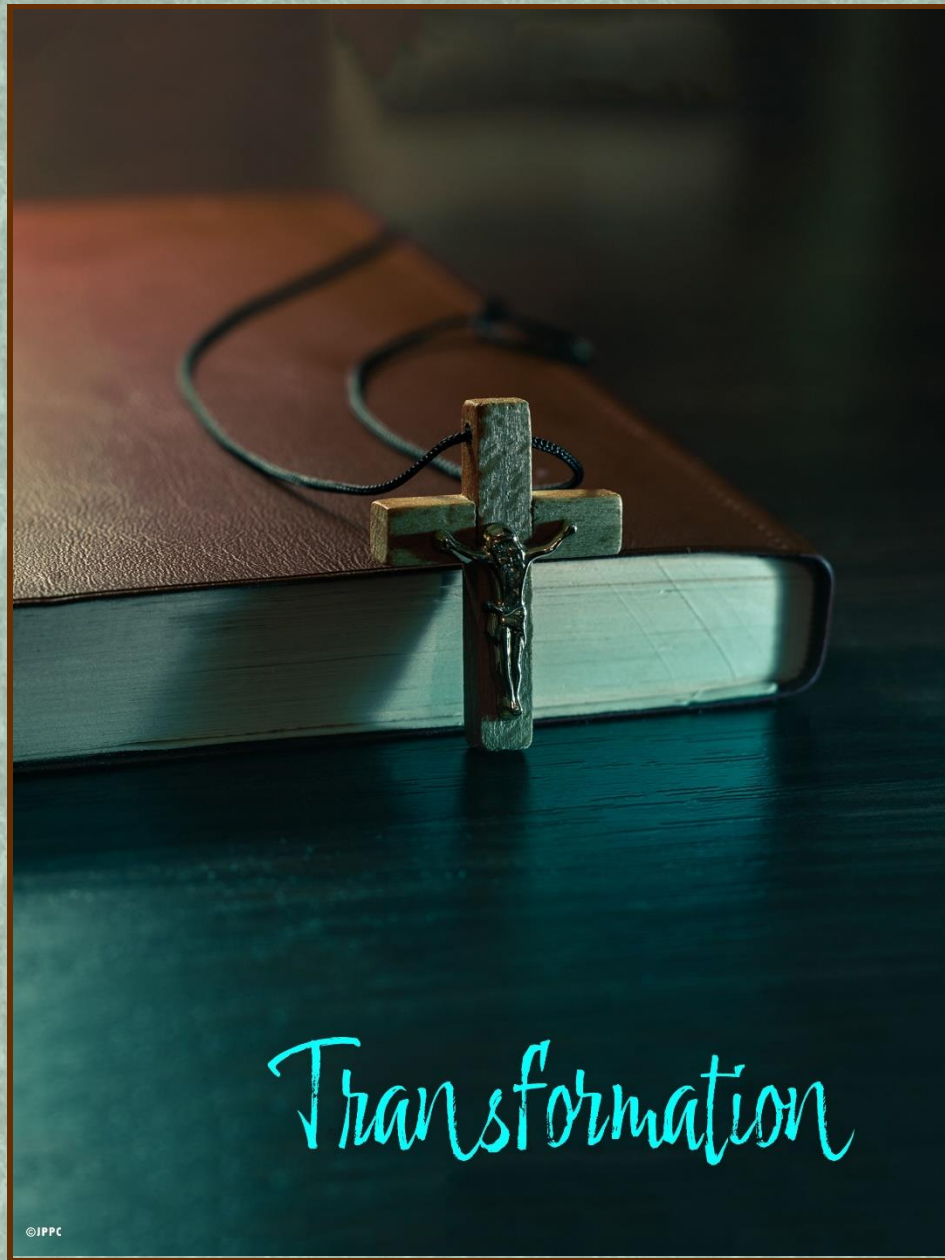


Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 28, 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 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

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 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
Parish website • www.saintmaryna.com
Phone 508-695-6161 Fax 508-695-5248
Faith Formation • TransfigurationRelEd@gmail.com
Faith Formation • 508-695-3823
Music Ministry • transfiguration.na.music@gmail.com

MASS Intentions

January 27/28 – 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Saturday | January 27 – Vigil (St. Mary) |
| 4:00 pm | People of the Parish |
| Sunday | January 28 (St. Mark) |
| 8:00 am | Daniel Barry |
| Sunday | January 28 (St. Mary) |
| 9:30 am | Judy Leco |
| Sunday | January 28 (Sacred Heart) |
| 11:00 am | Mariano Araujo Pamela S. Lunter |

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| | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|
| Monday | January 29 (St. Mark) |
| 8:00 am | Yvonne Poirier |
| Tuesday | January 30 (St. Mark) |
| 4:30 pm | Fred & Marion Findlen |
| Wednesday | January 31 (Sacred Heart) |
| 9:30 am | Catholic Schools Week Mass |
| Thursday | February 1 (St. Mark) |
| 8:00 am | Genevieve Vespia |

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February 3/4 – 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Saturday | February 3 – Vigil (St. Mary) |
| 4:00 pm | Gregory Fyfe |
| Sunday | February 4 (St. Mark) |
| 8:00 am | People of the Parish |
| Sunday | February 4 (St. Mary) |
| 9:30 am | People of the Parish |
| Sunday | February 4 (Sacred Heart) |
| 11:00 am | Virginia B. Miller Esther Pinsonnault |

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Parish Contributions

Collection for January 20/21: \$16,674.95

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Tuesday Communal Rosary Schedule



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)
 Tuesday, March 19, 2024: Prayer & Pizza (5PM)

National Catholic Schools Week

National Catholic Schools Week is an annual celebration of Catholic education in the United States. Now entering its 50th anniversary year, Catholic Schools Week has traditionally been held the last week in January. Our parish school, celebrating 100 years of lively faith, academic excellence, generous service, and loving community, will mark Catholic Schools Week, January 28 through February 3.

The theme for this year's celebration is: "United in Faith and Community." Catholic schools have an irreplaceable role in the Church's evangelizing mission. Building on the central goal of Catholic schools to form saints, Catholic schools teach and embrace the whole person, body, mind and spirit. The fact that all members of a Catholic school community share the Christian vision of faith that Christ is the foundation of Catholic education is what unites the school as a faith-filled community.

While faith is the binding element in Catholic schools, the Church reiterates that parents are the first teachers of their children. Holding this tenet, Catholic school communities expand beyond the walls of school buildings to envelop the family as an integral part of the school community. Together, teachers, administrators, staff, students and parents fuel the light of faith by integrating culture with faith and faith with living.



The Catholic Schools Week logo symbolizes the united community of Catholic schools – not a building or an institution, but people of faith serving God and others. No Catholic school can fulfill its educational role alone. As a community, Catholic schools are nourished and stimulated by the centrality of the word of Christ expressed through knowledge, service, Scripture and sacramental tradition.

January 31: Catholic Schools Week Mass

This **Wednesday, January 31**, the Saint Mary-Sacred Heart school children and faculty will gather to celebrate our annual **Catholic Schools Week Mass**. The Mass will be celebrated at **9:30 am** in **Sacred Heart Church**. You are cordially invited to participate in this celebration during which we will thank God for the many blessings bestowed upon our school. Please note that there will be **NO** 8 am daily Mass at St. Mark church on Wednesday, January 31st. Thank you.

Eucharistic ADORATION

Saint Alphonsus Ligori once said:

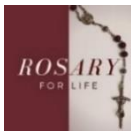
"Of all devotions, that of adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the greatest after the sacraments, the one dearest to God and the one most helpful to us."

Please join us at **Saint Mark church** on Friday, **February 2nd**, 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.

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 Returns:

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!

Sisters of Life Talk:

Abundant Hope Pregnancy Resource Center invites you to attend a free inspirational and educational talk by the nationally known Sisters of Life, a Catholic religious community whose members take a fourth vow to protect the sacredness of life. Join us on **Thursday, Feb 15th** from 3-5 PM for a presentation, refreshments and "Meet & Greet" at the LaSalette Shrine Welcome Center. For questions, please contact Abundant Hope at 508-455-0425.

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!

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.



Please Remember our Deceased Parishioners:

Colleen M. Domingos

Pamela S. Lunter

Paul F. Dugan

Denise A. Gaudette

Diane M. Kade

Gertrud K. Birle

Jeanne M. Duphiney

H. William "Bill" Donnelly

Eternal rest grant unto our beloved dead, O Lord.

Let perpetual light shine upon them.

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 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.

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.



SAINTS

SAINT MARY-SACRED HEART

Flourish with FAITH, Family and Fundamentals!



For over 100 years, generations of families have been trained at Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School. And as we look forward to the future, we invite your family to be part of the next generation of Saints to walk through these doors and “make SMSH part of your story.” To learn more about our Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 8 Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School students and programs, please visit our school’s website at: www.smshschool.com.

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SMSH Auction - Friday, March 8, 2024, Luciano's Lake Pearl in Wrentham, MA:

This year's auction is particularly special as we celebrate the centennial of our school. We are expecting 200 in-person guests and will reach even more through our online auction. We greatly appreciate any donations you can make to support our cause. Whether it's a family vacation getaway or gift baskets filled with items from local businesses, every contribution is valuable. We also offer advertising and sponsorship opportunities for those who prefer to contribute in that way. Please reach out to our Auction Co-Chairs, Lisa Augusto O'Neill or Jillian Figueiredo at the following email address: SMSHauctioncommittee@gmail.com. Thank you for considering our request. We truly appreciate your support!

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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 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!

Faith Formation Program 2023-2024

Director of Religious Education ~ Mrs. Elaine Corvese
508-695-3823; transfigurationreled@gmail.com

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

Class Schedule:

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

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

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

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

February 5th: **Grade 6**, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

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

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

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

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

February 26th: **Grade 8**, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Dates of First Penance:



RECONCILIATION

February 6, 2024: 6:30 p.m. Saint Mark Church
February 7, 2024: 6:30 p.m. Saint Mark Church
February 10, 2024: 1:00 p.m. Saint Mark Church
February 13, 2024: 6:30 p.m. Saint Mark Church

Date of Confirmation:



CONFIRMATION

April 7, 2024: 1:00 p.m. Saint Mary Church

Dates of First Communion:



HOLY EUCHARIST

May 4, 2024: 10:00 a.m. Saint Mary Church
May 4, 2024: 1:00 p.m. Saint Mary Church
May 11, 2024: 10:00 a.m. Saint Mary Church

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.

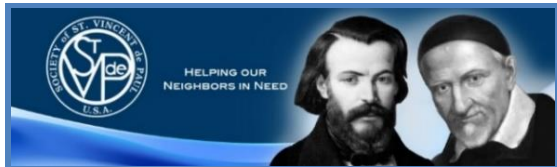


Prayer Shawl Ministry

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.

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.

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.

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



The Finest Wine

Couples' Valentine Date Night

With Vigil Mass, Marriage Vow Renewal, Dinner, & Presentation

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.

Saint of the Week: **Saint John Bosco**

John Bosco's theory of education could well be used in today's schools. It was a preventive system, rejecting corporal punishment and placing students in surroundings removed from the likelihood of committing sin. He advocated frequent reception of the sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion. He combined catechetical training and fatherly guidance, seeking to unite the spiritual life with one's work, study and play.

Encouraged during his youth in Turin to become a priest so he could work with young boys, John was ordained in 1841. His service to young people started when he met a poor orphan in Turin, and instructed him in preparation for receiving Holy Communion. He then gathered young apprentices and taught them catechism.

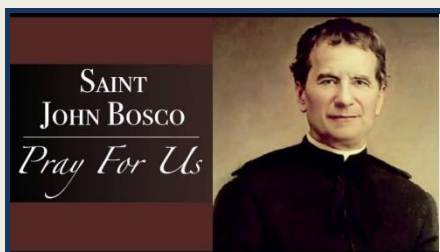
After serving as chaplain in a hospice for working girls, Don Bosco opened the Oratory of St. Francis de Sales for boys. Several wealthy and powerful patrons contributed money, enabling him to provide two workshops for the boys, shoemaking and tailoring.

By 1856, the institution had grown to 150 boys and had added a printing press for publication of religious and catechetical pamphlets. John's interest in vocational education and publishing justify him as patron of young apprentices and Catholic publishers.

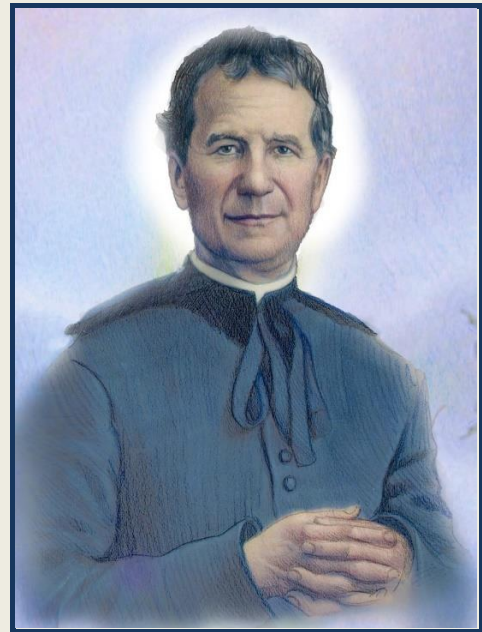
John's preaching fame spread and by 1850 he had trained his own helpers because of difficulties in retaining young priests. In 1854, he and his followers informally banded together, inspired by Saint Francis de Sales.

With Pope Pius IX's encouragement, John gathered 17 men and founded the Salesians in 1859. Their activity concentrated on education and mission work. Later, he organized a group of Salesian Sisters to assist girls.

John Bosco educated the whole person—body and soul united. He believed that Christ's love and our faith in that love should pervade everything we do—work, study, play. For John Bosco, being a Christian was a full-time effort, not a once-a-week, Mass-on-Sunday experience. It is searching and finding God and Jesus in everything we do, letting their love lead us. Yet, because John realized the importance of job-training and the self-worth and pride that come with talent and ability, he trained his students in the trade crafts, too. Saint John Bosco is the patron saint of youth and educators.



Saint John Bosco **Feast Day: January 31st**



"The school was not the end; it was rather the instrumental means for improving the way of life."

-St. John Bosco

a dozen reasons **to choose Catholic Schools**



CATHOLIC
school education
Success - Learn - Serve - Lead

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time - January 28, 2024



First Reading

A reading from the Book of Deuteronomy

Moses spoke to all the people, saying:

"A prophet like me will the LORD, your God, raise up for you from among your own kin; to him you shall listen. This is exactly what you requested of the LORD, your God, at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, 'Let us not again hear the voice of the LORD, our God, nor see this great fire any more, lest we die.' And the LORD said to me, 'This was well said. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their kin, and will put my words into his mouth; he shall tell them all that I command him. Whoever will not listen to my words which he speaks in my name, I myself will make him answer for it. But if a prophet presumes to speak in my name an oracle that I have not commanded him to speak, or speaks in the name of other gods, he shall die.'"

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



Responsorial Psalm

R. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Come, let us sing joyfully to the LORD;
let us acclaim the rock of our salvation.
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;
let us joyfully sing psalms to him.

R. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Come, let us bow down in worship;
let us kneel before the LORD who made us.
For he is our God,
and we are the people he shepherds, the flock he
guides.

R. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Oh, that today you would hear his voice:
"Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,
as in the day of Massah in the desert,
Where your fathers tempted me;
they tested me though they had seen my works."

R. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Second Reading

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

Brothers and sisters:

I should like you to be free of anxieties. An unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord. But a married man is anxious about the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and he is divided. An unmarried woman or a virgin is anxious about the things of the Lord, so that she may be holy in both body and spirit. A married woman, on the other hand, is anxious about the things of the world, how she may please her husband. I am telling you this for your own benefit, not to impose a restraint upon you, but for the sake of propriety and adherence to the Lord without distraction.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

R. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

*The people who sit in darkness have seen a great light;
on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death,
light has arisen.*

R. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

The Lord be with you.

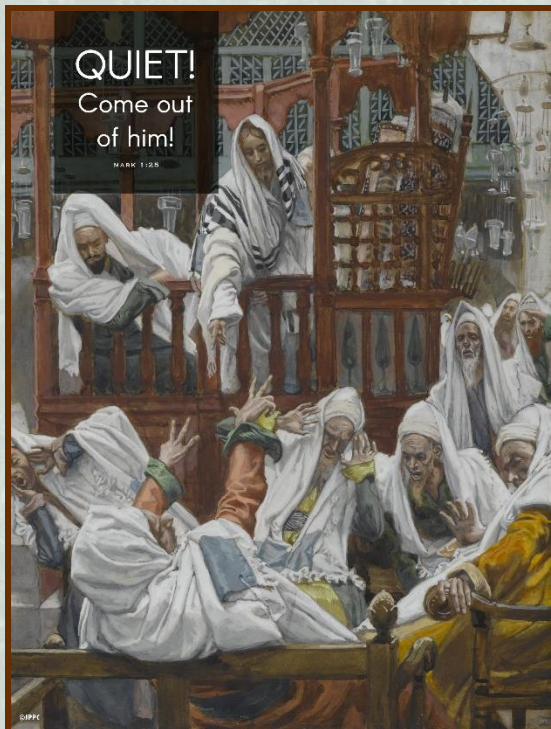
And with your spirit.

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

Then they came to Capernaum, and on the sabbath Jesus entered the synagogue and taught. The people were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes. In their synagogue was a man with an unclean spirit; he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!" Jesus rebuked him and said, "Quiet! Come out of him!" The unclean spirit convulsed him and with a loud cry came out of him. All were amazed and asked one another, "What is this? A new teaching with authority. He commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him." His fame spread everywhere throughout the whole region of Galilee.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Authority:

The word "authority" comes from the Latin word *auctor*, which means "author." The word doesn't mean that a person with authority must be a writer. But it does mean that the person with authority must be an artist—someone who "authors" something. But what does that person author? Jesus knew the answer: life. The bringer of life has authority to change the world.

Comment:

In today's Gospel, we see that the authority of Jesus was clearly grasped by the opposition. The cry from the demon, the spirit of evil, is unmistakable and chilling: "I know who you are!" This is to say, "You are the ultimate threat to us." Evil will no longer have its way. Jesus has served notice, and the spirit of evil knows it. The lines are drawn.

It is characteristic of Mark to draw the battle lines early in his Gospel. He shows us that the embodiment of God's goodness is diametrically opposed to the power of evil that is tolerated in the world. The collusion of systems and institutions that drives the people to distraction and keeps them poor and ignorant goes on and on and on. The words coming from the mouth of the single tormented man in the synagogue are startling, to say the least. But the great wonder is the durable hope of the people at large. Finally, at long last, could this be the author of life? The creator of something new under the sun? The crowd was held spellbound by Jesus. He spoke of newness. He did not sound like the tired, soulless teachers the plentiful poor had grown so weary of. Jesus was not the "same old, same old."

The first reading would have prepared the people at Capernaum. They knew by heart the grace and beauty of the book of Deuteronomy, literally, the "second law." This book gave them the great Shema: "Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone!" (6:4) The revered Moses has primacy of place in this book.

It may come as a surprise to us that Moses is described as a prophet. Not only that, he is the standard by which all other prophets are measured. There is often widespread confusion about the vocation of the prophet. An authentic prophet is not one who sees into the future, but rather one who speaks for God. Moses, the great one who speaks for God, reminds the people that God will raise up a prophet like Moses himself. This prophet will speak in God's name and only in God's name.

We can easily make the transition to Jesus himself. We see him stand up to read the Scriptures in the synagogue of Capernaum. Those who heard him were astonished. The spirit of evil was enraged. The time was ripe. The Author of life was ready for battle.

A mere fifty-six years after Jesus' resurrection the world was changing. Paul writes a letter to the Church at Corinth, the second reading today. He understands that with baptism comes a new day that would yield to the supposedly imminent second coming. In the face of this grace-filled time of great expectation, we sense Paul's urgency. He counsels the Corinthians to be free of anxiety and to realize that they are called to devote themselves entirely to the Lord. For all his sense of urgency, Paul nonetheless bears within himself an assurance and serenity born not of self-confidence but of grace. He wishes this for the Corinthians and for us.

Reflection:

God has raised up one like Moses and greater than Moses. Jesus is understood as good news for those who are willing to receive him. He is a threat or a matter of indifference for those who will not. In Mark's Gospel, the first miracle is a casting out, an exorcism. The simplest and the most sophisticated listeners understood that they were witnessing a new time. Sin had overstayed its time and lost its power. There was someone new under the sun, and he would change the world.

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Reflections for the Week beginning Sunday, January 28, 2024



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

28 January 2024

WORD OF THE WEEK

Benedictus \be-nə-'dik-təs\

From Latin meaning "blessed," the hymn sung by Zechariah, John the Baptist's father, an elder priest, who became mute on learning that he and Elizabeth would become parents late in life. After John's birth, Zechariah's tongue is loosed and he praises God with this canticle beginning: "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, for he has come to his people and set them free" (Luke 1:68).

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

CONTEXT

Since the early centuries, the **Benedictus** has been sung in the morning prayer of the church's liturgy because of its praise for the coming of the Redeemer and its allusion to Christ coming as the dawn to give light to those in darkness.
—Stephen J. Binz

May I have the courage today/ To live the life that I would
love,/ To postpone my dream no longer,/ But do at last what I
came here for/ And waste my heart on fear no more.
—John O'Donohue, **Benedictus**: A Book of Blessings

WHY IT MATTERS

The **Benedictus** is one of four canticles sung at the start of Luke's gospel, including Mary's Magnificat, (*My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord*), the song of the angels to the shepherds (*Glory to God in the highest!*), and Simeon's prayer at the presentation of Jesus in the temple (*Lord, now you let your servant go in peace*). Together these songs remind us that, in the face of good news, the most reasonable response is to sing. Joyful people know this. It is the most natural response to the graciousness of God who truly has "come to the people and set them free!"

From The General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours: The Gospel canticles, the *Benedictus*, the *Magnificat* and the *Nunc dimittis*, should be accorded the same solemnity and dignity as is usual for the hearing of the Gospel (138).

RELATED WORDS

Magnificat | Nunc dimittis | Beatitudes

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Why do we sing at Mass?

Saint Augustine, who said many things well, insisted: "Singing is for one who loves." This is the same Bishop Augustine who considered banning music from his church altogether. In the end he adhered to an older proverb: "Whoever sings well prays twice over." So pass out the song sheets.

Saint Paul was an earlier proponent of church music, back when church still gathered in somebody's house. He advocated that believers sing "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God" (Col. 3:16). While Augustine got it right that singing is for lovers, happy people in general whistle while they work, and grateful people know they have something to sing about. This may explain why some folks in church are reluctant to sing. Without a significant increase in the spirit of joy and gratitude, don't expect an increase in responsive singers. Yet to those who love, feel joy, and are grateful, a little frivolity in public is in order.

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

REFLECTION OF THE WEEK

FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD (FEBRUARY 2)

Listen to your elders

Mary and Joseph were faithful Jews and desired their son to be raised in the faith that had sustained them. They took Jesus to the Temple to be consecrated and presented to God, where they met Simeon and Anna, elders of the community. The elders immediately recognized Jesus as the Messiah, the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel.

READINGS: Malachi 3:1-4; Hebrews 2:14-18; Luke 2:22-40 (524 <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/020224.cfm>). "My eyes have seen your salvation."

FAITH IN ACTION

Follow the wisdom of our biblical elders and call forth the gifts of a child to give light to the world.



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