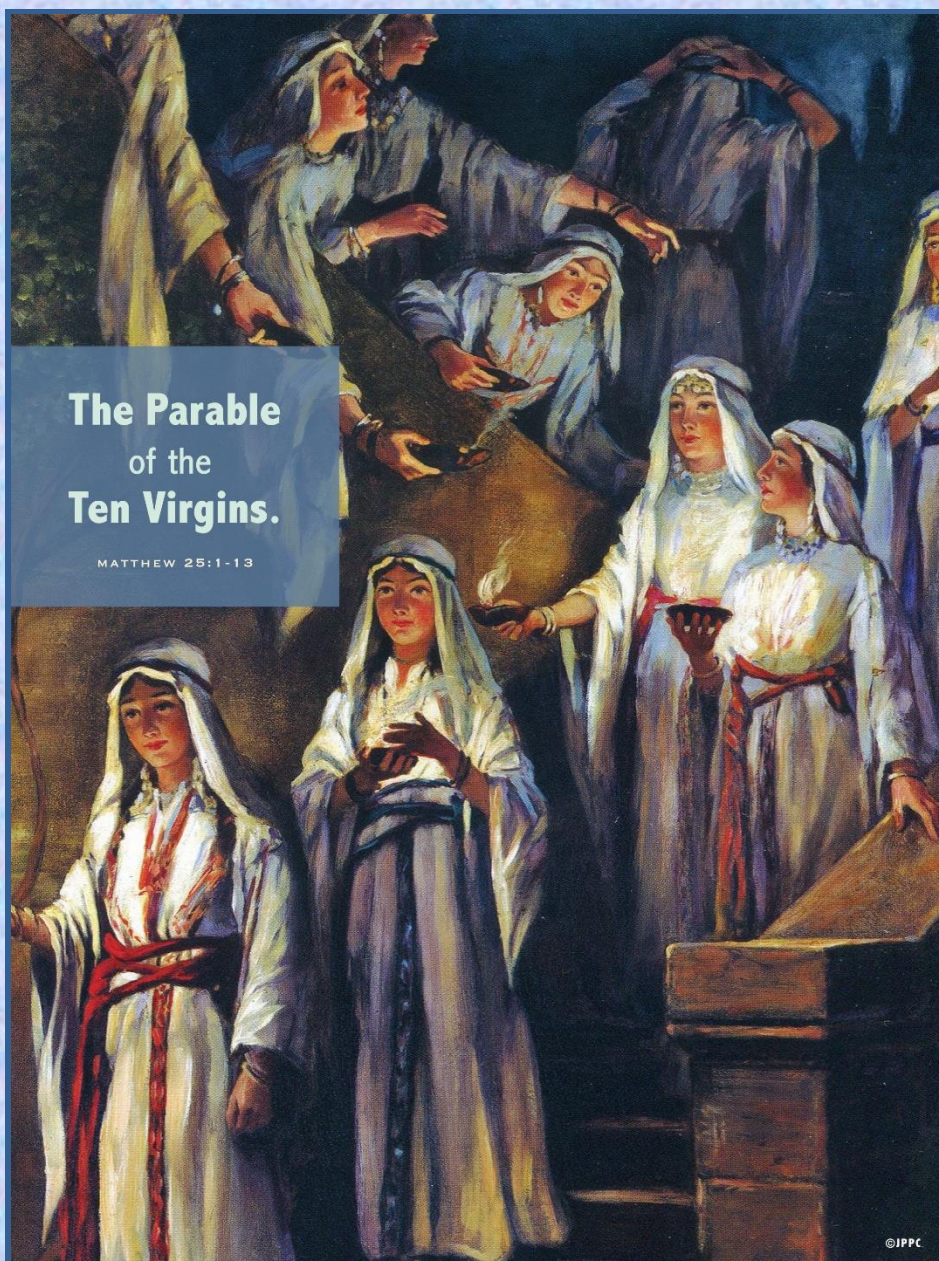


Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time

November 12, 2023



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.smhschool.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://app.gabrielsoft.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

November 11/12 – 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saturday **November 11 – Vigil (St. Mary)**
4:00 pm Joseph Clayton, Sr.
Desire “Buster” Larocque

Sunday **November 12 (St. Mark)**
8:00 am Thomas Huber
John “Jack” D. Coyle, Jr.

Sunday **November 12 (St. Mary)**
9:30 am Beatrice O. Leary &
Francis J. Leary, Sr.

Sunday **November 12 (Sacred Heart)**
11:00 am Eva Blake &
Christopher Blake

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Monday **November 13 (St. Mark)**
8:00 am Claire Poirier

Tuesday **November 14 (St. Mark)**
4:30 pm David Parenteau

Wednesday **November 15 (St. Mark)**
8:00 am Raymond Morrissey

Thursday **November 16 (St. Mark)**
8:00 am Catherine Lontok

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November 18/19 – 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saturday **November 18 – Vigil (St. Mary)**
4:00 pm Mary E. & Joseph M. Ruby
Connie Gonsalves

Sunday **November 19 (St. Mark)**
8:00 am People of the Parish

Sunday **November 19 (St. Mary)**
9:30 am Michael Sharkey
Jeannette Battista

Sunday **November 19 (Sacred Heart)**
11:00 am Guilherme Micheletto
Irene Larocque

+++++

Parish Contributions

Collection for November 4/5: \$14,323.33
All Saints Day Collection: \$3,796.00

+++++

Tuesday Communal Rosary Schedule

Tuesday, November 14, 2023: Rosary for Life (4PM)
Tuesday, November 21, 2023: Prayer & Pizza (5PM)
Tuesday, November 28, 2023: Rosary for Life (4PM)
Tuesday, December 5, 2023: Rosary for Life (4PM)
Tuesday, December 12, 2023: Rosary for Life (4PM)
Tuesday, December 19, 2023: Prayer & Pizza (5PM)
Tuesday, December 26, 2023: No Mass or devotions today

From Fr. Costa:

Last weekend, you may have heard Adam, our music director, refer to the Christmas Mass schedule in his post-Communion “plug” for new choir members. Yes, that schedule has been determined. To assist with your planning, I offer the schedule and some of the rationale behind this time schedule.



As Christmas falls on a Monday this year, we celebrate a very, very brief fourth week of preparation. The **Fourth Sunday of Advent** is Saturday, December 23, and Sunday, December 24. There will be **two** Masses scheduled for this last Sunday of Advent:

Saturday, December 23, Vigil Mass @ 4:00 p.m.
St. Mary Church

Sunday, December 24, Morning Mass @ 9:30 a.m.
St. Mary Church



There will be six (6) Masses celebrated for the **Christmas** holy day in our parish. Each of our churches will have two Masses. As the 4:00 p.m. Vigil Mass is the most popular with our parishioners, there will be three 4:00 p.m. celebrations. The solemn Mass for Christmas will be celebrated at 9:00 p.m. in Sacred Heart Church. The Roman Missal (the official prayerbook for Mass) no longer refers to this as Midnight Mass. Now it is called “Mass in the Night.” This Mass will feature our choir and instrumentalists. There will be a concert of Christmas music before the Mass. The full schedule for Christmas Masses is as follows:

Saint Mary Church

Christmas Eve, December 24, Mass @ 4:00 p.m.
Christmas Day, December 25 @ 9:30 a.m.

Sacred Heart Church

Christmas Eve, December 24, Mass @ 4:00 p.m.
Christmas Eve, December 24, Mass @ 9:00 p.m.

Saint Mark Church

Christmas Eve, December 24, Mass @ 4:00 p.m.
Christmas Day, December 25 @ 8:00 a.m.

I hope the early sharing of this information will be helpful for planning your Christmas activities. Because people always ask, I also want you to know that the collection taken on Christmas remains 100% in the parish. Many thanks for your generosity and commitment to Transfiguration Parish.

Parish Grand Annual Appeal

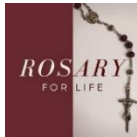
We are approaching the final stretch of our 2023 Grand Annual Appeal. You, our faithful parishioners, have responded most generously to this extra "ask" which will assist our parish in maintaining and growing ministries and services, complete larger renovation and upkeep projects on our properties, allow us to plan for future development and growth, and provide a financial "cushion" for any unexpected needs that may arise. (I'm not saying the "s" word!)

As of this writing (November 7), the total for the 2023 Grand Annual Appeal stands at approximately **\$190,000.00!** This amazing amount has been donated by approximately **575** households. Many, many thanks for your concern, dedication, trust and generosity!

If you have not made your donation to this appeal, you still have time to join your fellow parishioners. Flyers and donation cards may be found at the doors of all three of our church buildings. Any and every donation counts. Please contact the parish office if you have any questions. May God bless your generosity and support!

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.



Please Pray for our Deceased:

*David L. Stanley
Charles A. Entwistle, Sr.
Donald G. Fiola*



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

November Memorial Book

During the month of November, the Church traditionally honors our beloved dead. We invite you to write their names on the **purple insert** included in the October 22nd bulletin, and return it to the parish office via the collection basket or by mail. In addition, you may write the names of your deceased family members and friends on the pages provided in our Memorial Books before or after Mass. *Please note that all of the names which were included on the All Souls' Day envelopes are included in the Memorial Books as well.* During November, the books will be placed in prominent positions in each of our churches to remind us of our loved ones and our prayer for them.



November Women's Guild Meeting

The Transfiguration of the Lord Parish Women's Guild will be meeting *this* Tuesday, **November 14, 2023**. All women of the parish are invited to join us at 6:00 p.m. at St. Mary's in the Upper Church for a short business meeting and refreshments followed by our guest speaker Jim Hale of the North Attleborough Historical Society. Come for a little entertainment and a little education about the history of the Town of North Attleborough. We hope to see you there!



If you are interested in joining our choir or becoming a cantor, please scan the appropriate QR code(s) and fill out the form.

To join the **choir**:



To become a **cantor**:



If you are unable to complete the form online, please see Adam Turcotte after any Mass to pick up a paper copy.

Transfiguration of the Lord Respect Life Group

Monthly Meeting:

The next meeting of the Respect Life Group will take place on Thursday, **November 30, 2023 at 6:30 pm in Sacred Heart Church's Library**. We hope to see you there!

Rosary for the Family:

The Respect Life Committee extends a heartfelt invitation to our Parish Family to attend a "**Rosary for the Family**". It will be held on Saturday November 18, 2023 at 9AM (*weather permitting*) at Saint Mary Church at the statue of the Blessed Virgin.

'The Family that prays together stays together'

-Father Patrick Peyton

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.

Brown Bag Project:



We want to thank our parishioners for your continued support of this year's Brown Bag Project, and the works of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society. This is our primary way of keeping our pantry well stocked, and we appreciate all of your help. Gift cards to Stop & Shop, Shaw's & CVS are always welcome to purchase pantry items. Bags can still be returned at all Masses **this weekend, November 11-12.** You may also return filled bags at the parish office during normal business hours. Our pantry is being utilized more than ever by our friends in need and **any** help you can provide is very much appreciated. *A special thank you to E. A. Dion for printing our labels for the Brown Bag Project, and to Stop & Shop for their continued generosity to our food pantry!*

Madonna Manor Christmas Bazaar



Madonna Manor is very excited to announce the return of their annual Christmas Bazaar, a special holiday tradition, which has been suspended for the past few years due to COVID. The Bazaar will be held on:

Friday, December 1, 2023 (9:00 am – 4:00 pm)

Saturday, December 2, 2023 (9:00 am – 2:00 pm)

Madonna Manor, 85 N. Washington St., N. Attleboro

The Bazaar will feature:

Bakery Items

White Elephant

Raffle Items

Lottery Raffles

50/50 Raffle

Face Painting

Handmade Items

Hot Dogs & Chowder

Photos with Santa

...and more...

All proceeds are to benefit the residents of Madonna Manor.

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.

November Class Schedule:

Please note change in schedule for November 12th:
Grades 1, 2, & 9 are canceled (Veteran's Day Holiday)

November 13th: **Grade 5**, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

November 19th: **Grades 3 & 4**, 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.
(following the 8:00 a.m. Mass)

Please note change in schedule below for grade 6 & 7:

November 20th: **Grade 7**, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

November 27th: **Grade 6**, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Early December Class Schedule:

December 3rd: **Grades 1 & 2**, 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.
(following the 8:00 a.m. Mass)

December 3rd: **Grade 9**, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

December 4th: **Grade 8**, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

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

Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School - JOIN OUR FAMILY!

Saints in Action: Laundry Drive



Service is at the heart of every Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School Saint. At SMSH, our students learn the importance of living out a life serving others as part of their experience each and every day. In addition to learning about social justice and Catholic social teachings, an emphasis is placed on ensuring that our Saints recognize the responsibility that each of us has to the greater world around us. We would love for you to join our Saints Family. To learn more about our Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 8 Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School students and programs, please visit our website: www.smschool.com.

Transfiguration of the Lord Parish Annual Christmas Fair at Saint Mary Church



Join us as we plan for Transfiguration Parish's Christmas Fair at St. Mary Church. The Festival of Trees opens Friday, November 24th from 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm and Saturday, 9 am - 2:00 pm upstairs for exhibit, raffles and silent auction. On Saturday, November 25th the Fair continues from 9 am-4:00 pm in the Parish Center (downstairs). If you have never been involved with the Fair, please consider joining us! This is a great way to meet parishioners and share your gifts and talents.

Sponsors Needed

We are looking for **Christmas Fair sponsors**. If you or any area businesses would like to sponsor the fair, please contact Karen Smith at 508-212-7377 for more information. All sponsors will be recognized at the fair and in our parish bulletin.

Silent Auction

Our fair is just **two** weeks away and our **Silent Auction** table needs your help! Do you have tickets to a sporting event or theater/concert performance you can't use? Would you like to host a dinner party or donate a restaurant gift certificate? Are you an artist or crafts person who has an item you have created that you would consider donating? In the past we have had donations of sports equipment, computers, and jewelry. If you would like to make a donation, please contact Gerry Brunell at 508-695-1914 or Andrea Pariseau at 774-278-7222.

Theme Raffle Baskets

Your help is needed to fill our raffle baskets for the fair! Poster boards with suggested themes can be found near the entrances of each of our churches: (1) Choose a "**Theme**" and peel it off the board. (2) Take a basket. (3) Fill the basket & bring it back to any of the 3 churches (*with your theme*). Please return baskets by **Sunday, November 12th**. We will arrange the basket and wrap it for you! Thank you for your assistance and support!

*Please clip and drop in collection basket or mail to the office:
14 Park Street, North Attleborough, MA 02760*

Transfiguration Parish Christmas Fair November 25, 2023

We need everyone's help in making our Christmas Fair a big success! Listed below are ways **you** can make a difference. Please circle your choices below!

Yes, I can help with the Christmas Fair this year!

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Please circle what you would like to do:

Help with set-up ~ Help to decorate ~ Bake

Make candy ~ Donate a gift card ~ Donate a bottle of wine

Sponsor a table ~ Help with the Festival of Trees

Work the day of the Fair

Hours available to work: _____

Please contact Karen Smith (508-212-7377) or

Miles Miller (508-369-1349) with any questions.

To volunteer, please contact Colleen Buckley at 508-455-8446.

Festival of Trees

The ever-popular "Festival of Trees" will return to our parish Christmas Fair on Friday evening, November 24, and Saturday, November 25. The center of aisle of Saint Mary Church will become a winter wonderland of lights and themed Christmas trees showcasing the talents of our parishioners. We need your help to make this aspect of our annual Christmas Fair a success. You are invited to sign-up to decorate a tree after any of our Masses. Trees of various sizes are now available for the taking, or you can purchase your own. You choose the theme and use your imagination and creativity to fashion a masterpiece! Many of the stores in our area have their Christmas decorations available now. **Trees need to be returned to St. Mary Church by Wednesday, November 22.** We look forward to displaying your creativity and raffling off your masterpiece!

What-Not Shoppe

Dana Frederick is collecting gently-used household items and new gift items you may have received but cannot use. *Please remember that we cannot accept used electronic items such as TVs, computers, printers, etc.* **You may drop off your donations after any Mass at St. Mary Church, or at the parish office during normal business hours (8am-4pm).** If you need to schedule a different time, or if you have any questions, please contact Dana Frederick at 508-695-3859.

50/50 Raffle

We will be selling tickets for the 50/50 raffle at all Masses starting November 4th through November 19th and at the Fair. Tickets are sold as books of **6 for \$5**. Good luck!

Wine Wheel

Donations are needed for our Wine Wheel. If you have an extra bottle of wine (*or more*) that you would like to donate, we would be most grateful. Donations can be returned after any of the Masses, or by setting up an appointment with a committee member at a convenient time for you. Please contact Kathy Scholtes at 508-930-0119 for more information.

Sewing, Knitting & Crafts

We are looking for any hand-made/sewn items, and any crafts for the fair. Donations can be returned after any of the Masses. Please contact Connie Schnack at 508-695-9774 or Noreen Kiff at 508-310-3570 for more information.

Bakery & Candy Shoppe

Please consider baking some tasty treats for our fair. Our famous meat pies will also be available for sale. Baked goods, candy, and fudge can be dropped off on **Friday, November 24th from 9AM to noon**. Thank you!

Baptism Congratulations

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

Penelope Layne Demers



Daughter of Stephen & Stephanie (Ryan) Demers
Godchild of Brent Robin & Krystina Torrey

Felicity Dean Krafka



Daughter of Peter & Amanda (Dean) Krafka
Godchild of Thomas Lucia & Megan Lucia

Jackson Daly Persechini



Son of Zachary & Samantha (Roselli) Persechini
Godchild of Gregory Roselli & Kelsey Persechini

Vivian Dahlia Zeng



Daughter of Michael & Yvonne (Comoletti) Zeng
Godchild of Brian Kovalski & Margaret Morad

Saint of the Week: St. Frances Xavier Cabrini November 13th



St. Frances Cabrini, the first American citizen saint of the Church, is widely known for her energy, her generosity, and her vibrant love for those most in need. It's easy to admire her but (powerhouse that she was) sometimes a bit hard to imitate her! One way to grow to be like Mother Cabrini is to focus less on her accomplishments and more on three key aspects of faith she can teach us.

1. Mother Cabrini can teach us how to pray better. *"I trust in you, my Jesus. I place my poor soul in your hands – mold me according to your divine will,"* she wrote in 1877.
2. Mother Cabrini can teach us how to accept difficulty. When we struggle with difficulties we wish would go away, Mother Cabrini's example can help. Acceptance makes every cross lighter for, as she said, *"If you carry the Cross willingly, the Cross will carry you."*
3. Mother Cabrini can show us how to grow in humility. *"A single act of humility is worth more than the proud exhibition of any virtue"* she advised.

Marriage Preparation Team

Volunteers are needed to assist with the Marriage Preparation Team. We are looking for recently married couples and seasoned couples, as well as any other parish members who would like to join. Sessions are twice a year. This is a wonderful opportunity to strengthen your relationship and to give back to the community. If you would like to learn more about the program, please contact Lori Darragh (508-838-8580).



32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time - November 12, 2023



First Reading

A reading from the Book of Wisdom

Resplendent and unfading is wisdom,
and she is readily perceived by those who
love her, and found by those who seek her.
She hastens to make herself known in
anticipation of their desire;
Whoever watches for her at dawn
shall not be disappointed, for he shall find her
sitting by his gate. For taking thought of wisdom
is the perfection of prudence,
and whoever for her sake keeps vigil
shall quickly be free from care;
because she makes her own rounds,
seeking those worthy of her,
and graciously appears to them in the ways,
and meets them with all solicitude.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



Responsorial Psalm

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

O God, you are my God whom I seek; for you
my flesh pines and my soul thirsts like the
earth, parched, lifeless and without water.

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

Thus have I gazed toward you in the sanctuary
to see your power and your glory, For your
kindness is a greater good than life; my lips
shall glorify you.

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

Thus will I bless you while I live; lifting up my
hands, I will call upon your name. As with the
riches of a banquet shall my soul be satisfied,
and with exultant lips my mouth shall praise
you.

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

I will remember you upon my couch, and
through the night-watches I will meditate on
you: You are my help, and in the shadow of
your wings I shout for joy.

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

Second Reading

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

We do not want you to be unaware, brothers and
sisters, about those who have fallen asleep, so that you
may not grieve like the rest, who have no hope. For if
we believe that Jesus died and rose, so too will God,
through Jesus, bring with him those who have fallen
asleep. Indeed, we tell you this, on the word of the
Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the
coming of the Lord, will surely not precede those who
have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself, with a word
of command, with the voice of an archangel and with
the trumpet of God, will come down from heaven, and
the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are
alive, who are left, will be caught up together with
them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Thus
we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore, console
one another with these words.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

R. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

*Stay awake and be ready!
For you do not know on what day your Lord will come.*

R. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

† A reading from the holy Gospel according to
Matthew

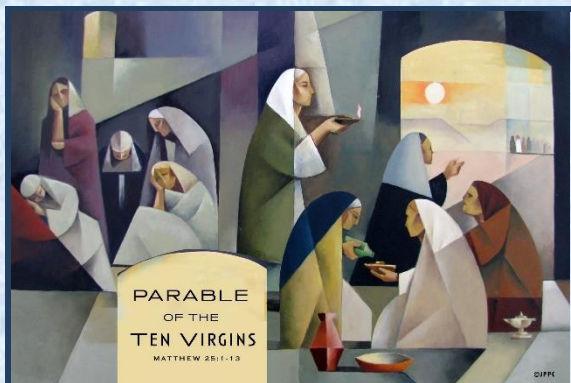
Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus told his disciples this parable:

"The kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones, when taking their lamps, brought no oil with them, but the wise brought flasks of oil with their lamps. Since the bridegroom was long delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. At midnight, there was a cry, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!' Then all those virgins got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise ones replied, 'No, for there may not be enough for us and you. Go instead to the merchants and buy some for yourselves.' While they went off to buy it, the bridegroom came and those who were ready went into the wedding feast with him. Then the door was locked. Afterwards the other virgins came and said, 'Lord, Lord, open the door for us!' But he said in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, I do not know you.' Therefore, stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



THIRTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Time:

Our use of time is revealing. We make instant coffee. We buy packages of one-minute food and add water or broth or milk. We are familiar with the adjective "quick." It describes shops and services. But, on the other hand, we take all the time we need when we are pursuing certain occupations or hobbies. We have all the time in the world to pursue the object of our affections.

Comment:

Our first reading is from Wisdom, the newest Old Testament book. It was written in Alexandria, Egypt somewhere between 50 and 30 B.C. Here he is, a Jewish scholar and philosopher speaking from the standpoint of his minority faith to a majority Greek culture. The author frames Wisdom as a personified attribute of God. The Wisdom that is the focus of concern for the seeker is readily available. The one who loves, seeks, watches for Wisdom, will find her ready to hand. Wisdom/God is not elusive, tricky, wily. Wisdom wants to be found; Wisdom is available. Wisdom opens to the seeker. She graciously appears; she all but goes out to meet the one who seeks.

This seeking, vigil keeping, attentiveness is also present in the Gospel for today. Matthew's Gospel was written between 80 and 90 (a relatively long time after Jesus' resurrection and ascension). The question of the end-times or the day of the Lord's coming loomed fairly large on the horizon for the early Church. The first followers of Jesus fully expected his imminent return.

This story of the wise and foolish virgins, found only in Matthew, responds to this concern. It seems to drive home the point that we must exercise foresight, because the time of the coming of the Lord is uncertain. There's just no telling.

The parable includes some details that are a little stretched to prove a point. The bridegroom is late in coming for his bride. This surely addresses the impatience of the members of the early Church. The virgins seem ungenerous, but no one can do the waiting for another. That is, no one can live another person's life for them. Each is responsible for his or her own attentive vigilance. This same lesson is retaught in the second of three parables that make up the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew's Gospel. The lesson of these parables apparently needs reinforcement!

Paul's letter to the Thessalonians also takes up the point of the Second Coming and responds to the question of the beloved faithful who died before the Second Coming. What of those who will not be around for this great and awesome day? In the end, Paul's words are sufficient for us also. They are based on trust in the power of the Resurrection. We can be sure—as they were—that the deceased and the living are always with the Lord. No faithful one is or ever will be forgotten.

Reflection:

All three readings for today nudge us toward an earthly practicality. Initially, this doesn't seem to be the case. The focus seems to be on the end of life, rather than the object of our present life. Seeking God is to be the focus, or object, of our life. The end of life will take care of itself. We can pretty much leave that alone, or leave it in God's hands. Daily life is the stuff we are called to manage and mold and handle. We seek Wisdom/God in all our doings and Wisdom will most certainly come to us. We live in the sure knowledge, won in the Resurrection, that we will not be left alone or left out like those who dallied or let all the oil drain away from their lamps.

We are called to tend our circle of light. This message is not nearly as spectacular as the recurring ominous predictions of end-times one runs across on television and radio programs. There seems no end of seers. Jesus insists that we just don't know the day or the hour, but there is no such humility among those prognosticators and fear-mongers who want to grab our time and attention.

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Reflections for the Week beginning Sunday, November 12, 2023

Sunday, Nov 12, 2023

Last things

November's a good time to consider our responsibilities to those who depend on us and may be nearing the end of life. (Or perhaps we're getting long in years ourselves.) We know our social obligations: Write a will, make our medical preferences known to doctors and family members. But Catholics have other duties too. Offering forgiveness and being forgiven are vital issues at the end of life—and every year of life. We have to ensure the sacraments are available to the elderly and the sick. How vigils, funerals, and burials are conducted matters to us. Reflect on these things now.

THIRTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

TODAY'S READINGS: Wisdom 6:12-16; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13 (154). *"Afterwards the other virgins came and said, 'Lord, Lord, open the door for us!' But he said in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, I do not know you.'"*

Monday, Nov 13, 2023

The underestimated shall be esteemed

Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini was born Maria Francesca in Italy in 1850, the youngest of 13 children. She was small and had poor health. Because of her frailty, she was rejected by the religious community she wanted to join. She founded her own order and dreamed of becoming a missionary to the Far East like the saint whose name she took. But the pope sent her west instead, to the United States—and she founded 67 missionary institutions to serve the sick and poor from New York to Chicago to Los Angeles. Nine years after her death, her religious institute, the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, became missionaries in China. Don't underestimate the power of God or yourself!

MEMORIAL OF FRANCES XAVIER CABRINI, RELIGIOUS FOUNDER

TODAY'S READINGS: Wisdom 1:1-7; Luke 17:1-6 (491). *"If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you."*

Tuesday, Nov 14, 2023

Put your hope in order

As we inch toward Advent, it's good to revisit the theme of hope. Consider this, from Pope Francis two years ago today, for the World Day of the Poor: "The hope born of the Gospel has nothing to do with a passive expectation that things may be better tomorrow, but with making God's promise of salvation concrete today.... Christian hope is not the naïve, even adolescent, optimism of those who hope that things may change [and] in the meantime go on with life; it has to do with building daily, by concrete gestures, the kingdom of love, justice, and fraternity that Jesus inaugurated." Or as Italian Bishop Don Tonio Bello would say, "We cannot be content to hope. We have to organize hope." How will you organize hope today?

TODAY'S READINGS: Wisdom 2:23-39; Luke 17:7-10 (492). *"Those who trust in him shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love."*

Wednesday, Nov 15, 2023

Live a life of great service

The great Dominican friar Albertus Magnus died on this day in 1280, after a long life of dedication to the church as a scholar, scientist, and briefly the bishop of Regensburg. He shunned excess and was known as a mediator—which, in his day, was a complicated matter, given the ongoing Crusades. We, too, live in

an age of war, economic inequality, and general spiritual laxity. We owe it to ourselves to look to the German Dominican for inspiration to live a more rigorous life of spiritual seeking, so as to find lasting solutions to the problems of our day.

MEMORIAL OF ALBERT THE GREAT, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

TODAY'S READINGS: Wisdom 6:1-11; Luke 17:11-19 (493). *"For those who keep the holy precepts hallowed shall be found holy, and those learned in them will have ready a response."*

Thursday, Nov 16, 2023

Extraordinary sacrifice in ordinary clothing

It's easy to think that martyrs were people completely different from us, but Christian courage doesn't always have a cinematic face. Father Ignacio Ellacuría, S.J., five other Jesuits, and their housekeeper and her daughter were murdered in El Salvador. Ellacuría and his fellow Jesuits had publicly defended human rights and ministered to poor people in spite of intense government repression. May their dedication to justice inspire us to do our part in creating a more just world order that protects those who speak truth to power.

TODAY'S READINGS: Wisdom 7:22b-8:1; Luke 17:20-25 (494). *"For behold, the Kingdom of God is among you."*

Friday, Nov 17, 2023

A delicate matter

The Catholic Church identifies well over a dozen saints as patrons of lacemaking, lace workers, and related textile workers. Saint Elizabeth of Hungary is among these patrons who possibly became associated with lacemaking as it is a craft often seen as "immaculate" and virtuous, much like the saints themselves. But lacemakers and other artisan workers also often sat on the edge of poverty. These were the people who benefitted from the kind deeds of the likes of Saint Elizabeth, who roamed the streets near her castle passing out alms for the poor and tending to the sick. Take a moment to consider the artisans and craftspeople of our own time who could benefit from your patronage.

MEMORIAL OF ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY, RELIGIOUS

TODAY'S READINGS: Wisdom 13:1-9; Luke 17:26-37 (495). *"For from the greatness and the beauty of created things their original author, by analogy, is seen."*

Saturday, Nov 18, 2023

Let freedom ring

In 1818, when Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne came from France to the United States, she was dismayed that slavery still operated "in the land of the free." Yet, when she opened foundations in Louisiana, the sisters were given slaves along with their households. In 1830 she accepted a slave in lieu of a tuition payment. She insisted that slaves in the household be treated well, arguing, "They have the same soul as we; they have been redeemed by the same blood and received into the same Church," but, like all of us, she was clearly enmeshed in social structures in need of redemption. Work for a society that truly is free at last.

MEMORIAL OF ROSE PHILIPPINE DUCHESNE, RELIGIOUS

TODAY'S READINGS: Wisdom 18:14-16; 19:6-9; Luke 18:1-8 (496). *"Will not God then secure the rights of his chosen ones who call out to him day and night?"*

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



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