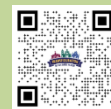
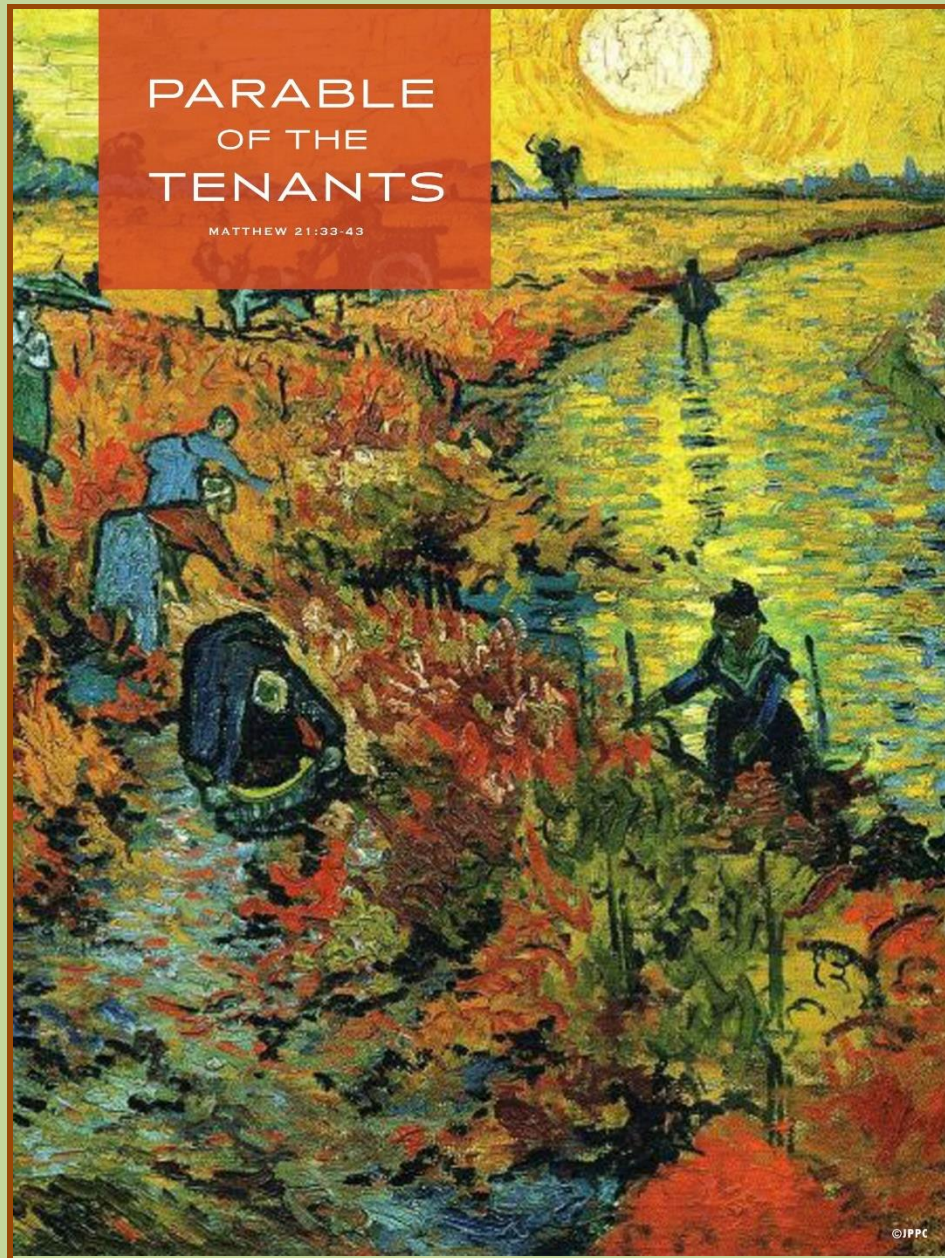


Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

October 8, 2023



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

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

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

Parish Office

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

MASS Intentions

October 7/8 – 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saturday 4:00 pm	October 7 – Vigil (St. Mary) Mark Vandette
Sunday 8:00 am	October 8 (St. Mark) Living Intention to Celebrate Edouard LaPlante on his 80 th Birthday
Sunday 9:30 am	October 8 (St. Mary) David & Beverly Laliberte Joseph Raymond "Ray" Lacasse
Sunday 11:00 am	October 8 (Sacred Heart) Barbara Burns

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Monday 9:00 am	October 9 (St. Mark) Kathleen Johnson
Tuesday 8:00 am	October 10 (St. Mark) Marcelino Lontok
Wednesday 4:30 pm	October 11 (St. Mark) Robert Achin
Thursday 8:00 am	October 12 (St. Mark) Aurore & Gerrard Sirois

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October 14/15 – 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saturday 4:00 pm	October 14 – Vigil (St. Mary) David Parenteau Nelson Chaffee
Sunday 8:00 am	October 15 (St. Mark) Lillian Seymour
Sunday 9:30 am	October 15 (St. Mary) Deceased Members of the Burtchell & Kavanagh Families
Sunday 11:00 am	October 15 (Sacred Heart) Russell J. Kenney Cheryl Kenney Milone

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Parish Contributions

Collection for September 30/October 1: \$15,451.74

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Federal Holiday: October 9th

The Parish Office will be closed on Monday, October 9th on account of the federal holiday. Please note that daily Mass **WILL** be celebrated in Saint Mark church on Monday, October 9th at 9:00 am, and the Rosary for Life will be prayed at 8:30 am prior to the start of Mass. As such, there is no 4:30 pm daily Mass on October 9th. Thank you for your understanding, and have a great long weekend!

Grand Annual Appeal Continues

As we move further into the month of October, our Grand Annual Appeal continues with great momentum. Many, many thanks to all who have given most generously to this appeal. The funds collected will allow us to maintain and grow parish ministries, continue upkeep of our parish properties, plan for future projects and allow us a financial cushion for unforeseen emergencies.

An added, nonfinancial benefit to this project is that our parish census can be updated, as a number of former parishioners have moved from the area and their information may be removed from our data base when envelopes are returned as undeliverable.

There is still time for you to participate in this united parish project. Flyers and donation cards are found near the doors of all three of our church buildings. You may also visit our parish website and donate online. A pledge allows you to spread out your donation over a period of time. Please know that 100% of your donation remains here in the parish and all funds collected are not subject to a diocesan tax. The Grand Annual Appeal will continue through the month of October.

thank you, thank you, thank you!

From Fr. Costa:

Daily Mass Time Change

Daily Mass is currently celebrated in our parish in Saint Mark Church on Monday and Wednesday afternoons at 4:30 p.m. and Tuesday morning at 8:00 a.m. Deacon Joe leads a Communion Service on Thursday mornings at 8:00 a.m.

Honestly, this current time schedule is proving to be challenging for my increasingly busy calendar. In addition to parish responsibilities and school duties, I also have diocesan tasks which are usually held in the afternoons.

For those reasons, beginning on **Monday, October 16**, the daily Mass schedule will change. Daily Mass, devotions, and the weekly Communion Service will remain at Saint Mark Church following these times:

Monday: Daily Mass at 8:00 a.m.

Tuesday: Daily Mass at 4:30 p.m.

the Respect Life rosary and Prayer & Pizza will be before or after daily Mass on Tuesday's

Wednesday: Daily Mass at 8:00 a.m.

Thursday: Communion Service at 8:00 a.m.

Thank you for your patient understanding and cooperation.

Respect Life Reflection

October is Respect Life Month; a time to join together as one Catholic Church to defend the dignity of all human life, from the time we are knit together in our mothers' wombs until we take our final breaths, each moment of our lives is a gift from God.

Today the gift of life is threatened in countless ways. Those who are most vulnerable, rather than receiving the protection they deserve, are all too often seen as a burden and as expendable. As new attacks on human life continue to emerge, we can be tempted to despair, but Christ instead offers us unfailing **HOPE**.

Hope is not false optimism or empty positivity. Christian hope is something much more profound and goes to the very depths of our identity as followers of Christ.

Hope is the virtue "by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit" (CCC, 1817).

Like us, Christ entered the world through the womb of a woman. He willingly experienced the fullness of human suffering. He took his last breath on the Cross at Calvary in order to save us. Therefore, "God is the foundation of hope: not any god, but the GOD who has a human face and who has loved us to the end" (Spe salvi 31).

The Church teaches us that "the one who has hope lives differently" (SS 2). Christ's promise of salvation does not mean that we will be spared from suffering. Rather, the promise of salvation ensures that even in the darkest moments of our lives, we will be given the strength to persevere. By virtue of this Christian hope, we can face any challenge or trial. When the seas of life swell and we are battered by the waves, hope allows us to remain anchored in the heart of God. May we hold fast to Christ our hope, from the beginning of life to its very end.

Transfiguration of the Lord Parish Women's Guild

The Transfiguration of the Lord Parish Women's Guild will hold the October Meeting on Tuesday, October 10th at Mount St. Mary's Abbey in Wrentham for a service of evening prayers. All in the parish are welcome to attend. Members and guests may go directly to the Abbey on their own or may meet in St. Mary's parking lot promptly at 6:00 p.m. where you can carpool to the Abbey for Rosary at 6:30 p.m., followed by the Hour of Compline. Please be on time, the rosary will start at 6:30 p.m. sharp and remember to bring your rosaries. Please contact Karen Bengtson (508-695-7496) if you have any questions.

2024 Mass Intention Book



The 2024 Mass Intention Book is officially 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.

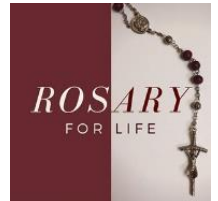
Marriage Preparation Team

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).



Rosary for Life

Please note: the Rosary for Life will be prayed at 8:30 am in Saint Mark church on Monday, October 9th on account of the federal holiday. The Respect Life Committee of Transfiguration of the Lord Parish is pleased to announce that the communal Rosary will also be livestreamed for any participants who wish to join us remotely.



Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)



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

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:

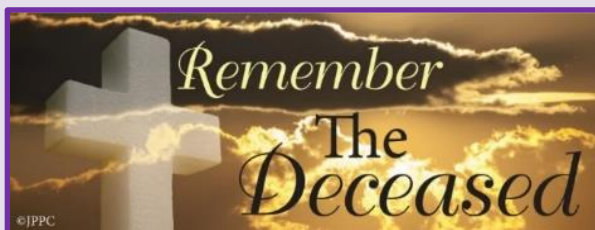
If you need assistance, please call the help line for our parish Saint Vincent de Paul Society. They can offer information about the types of assistance available. Please call 508-212-4755 for help or more information.

Brown Bag Project:



In order to stock our food pantry as the busy holiday season approaches, the St. Vincent de Paul Society is asking for your help. "Brown Bags" will be available at all Masses the weekend of October 14-15. Each bag will have 6 non-perishable items listed on them as **suggested** items. Additional items to help restock the pantry will be included such as shampoo, deodorant, and soap, which cannot be bought with food stamps. This is our primary way of keeping our pantry well stocked. Gift cards to Stop & Shop, Shaw's & CVS are always welcome to purchase pantry items. Bags can be returned beginning the weekend of October 21-22. 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 Stop & Shop for their continued generosity to our food pantry! We thank our parishioners in advance for your continued support of this project and the works of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society.



Please Pray for our Deceased:

Carl Battista, Jr.

Brittany L. Pilling

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

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:

NOTE: Due to the Columbus Day holiday, Faith Formation classes will not be held on Sunday, October 8th and Monday, October 9th.

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

October 15th: **Grade 9**, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

October 16th: **Grade 5**, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

October 22nd: **Grades 3 & 4**, 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.
(following the 8:00 a.m. Mass)

October 23rd: **Grade 6**, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

October 29th: **Grades 1 & 2**, 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.
(following the 8:00 a.m. Mass)

October 29th: **Grade 9**, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

October 30th: **Grade 7**, 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 NOW!

Flourish with FAITH, Family and Fundamentals!
Celebrating 100 Years of Catholic Education in the town
of North Attleboro



Members of Mrs. Susan Massoud's 8th grade class at Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School were attentive and engaged as Mr. Peter Metz expounded on the scientific facts and moral implications around nuclear weapons last week. His message echoed the message Bishop Edgar da Cunha delivered to the whole school, plus many parishioners, during his homily at the Opening of School Mass the day before: to be "socially responsible" and "care for our common home, the Earth." Mr. Metz was a guest speaker provided by the Pax Christi group that meets at LaSalette Shrine.

We invite you to learn more about our school by visiting our website: www.smshschool.com.

Parish Calendar & Ministry Groups

As parish ministry groups return to regular meetings and activities, leaders are reminded to please forward any schedule requests and plans for use of parish properties to Martha at the parish office. We need to keep the parish calendar up to date and avoid any scheduling conflicts. Your assistance is very much appreciated!



Bishop Feehan High School Open House

At Bishop Feehan High School we believe that great things are always within reach. Are you ready to be bold with us, to believe in yourself and to reach higher than you ever thought possible? If so, we can't wait to help you get to know us and get started on an amazing high school journey. Join us at our Open House on Sunday, October 15th at 1pm. This is a great opportunity to meet the Feehan community, tour campus and learn about academic programs, athletics and club activities.

BishopFeehan.com/getinfo

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



Join us as we plan for Transfiguration Parish's Annual Christmas Fair at St. Mary Church. The Festival of Trees opens Friday, November 24th from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. and Saturday, 9 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. upstairs for exhibit, raffles and silent auction. On Saturday, November 25th the Fair continues from 9 a.m.-4:00 p.m. in the Parish Center (downstairs). If you have never been involved with the Fair, please consider joining us. For new members of parish, this is a great way to meet parishioners and share your gifts and talents.

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 with any questions.

Transfiguration of the Lord Respect Life Group

Monthly Meeting:

The next meeting of the Respect Life Group will take place on Thursday, **November 2, 2023 at 6:30 pm in Sacred Heart Church's Library.**

Hospice Talk:

Believing that all life is sacred from conception to natural death, the Respect Life Committee is offering an evening conversation on the topic of hospice. What is hospice? Does hospice accelerate the pace of death? What is the difference between hospice and palliative care? Can Catholics be on hospice? What happens when somebody is on hospice? What are advanced directives and why is it important? These questions and many more will be answered at our gathering. Please join us at Sacred Heart Meeting Room, **October 24, 2023 at 7:00 pm.** ALL ARE WELCOME.

October is Respect Life Month:



"An old Irish proverb says, 'It is in the shelter of each other that the people live.' Indeed, we are created to depend upon one another and walk together in suffering. But when family members or friends approach life's end, we may not know how best to 'shelter' them. Here are some concrete ways we can compassionately care for them: usccb.org/end-of-life-care."

*USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities
Caring for Loved Ones at Life's End*



Pope Benedict XVI once said:

"In a world where there is so much noise, so much bewilderment, there is a need for silent adoration of Jesus concealed in the Host. Be assiduous in the prayer of adoration and teach it to the faithful. It is a source of comfort and light, particularly to those who are suffering."

Please join us at **Saint Mark church**, Friday, **November 3rd**, 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.

Saint of the Week: Saint John XXIII
October 11th

Although few people had as great an impact on the 20th century as Pope John XXIII, he avoided the limelight as much as possible. Indeed, one writer has noted that his “ordinariness” seems one of his most remarkable qualities.

The firstborn son of a farming family in Sotto il Monte, near Bergamo in northern Italy, Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli was always proud of his down-to-earth roots. In Bergamo’s diocesan seminary, he joined the Secular Franciscan Order. After his ordination in 1904, Fr. Roncalli returned to Rome for canon law studies. He soon worked as his bishop’s secretary, Church history teacher in the seminary, and as publisher of the diocesan paper.

His service as a stretcher-bearer for the Italian army during World War I gave him a firsthand knowledge of war. In 1921, Fr. Roncalli was made national director in Italy of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. He also found time to teach patristics at a seminary in the Eternal City. In 1925, he became a papal diplomat, serving first in Bulgaria, then in Turkey, and finally in France. During World War II, he became well acquainted with Orthodox Church leaders. With the help of Germany’s ambassador to Turkey, Archbishop Roncalli helped save an estimated 24,000 Jewish people.

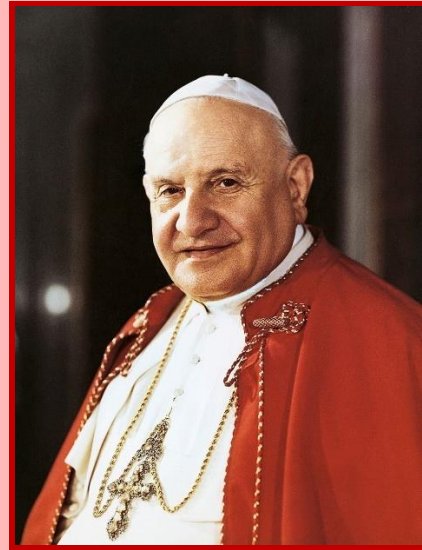
Named a cardinal and appointed patriarch of Venice in 1953, he was finally a residential bishop. A month short of entering his 78th year, Cardinal Roncalli was elected pope, taking the name John after his father and the two patrons of Rome’s cathedral, St. John Lateran. Pope John took his work very seriously but not himself. His wit soon became proverbial, and he began meeting with political and religious leaders from around the world. In 1962, he was deeply involved in efforts to resolve the Cuban missile crisis.

His most famous encyclicals were *Mother and Teacher* (1961) and *Peace on Earth* (1963). Pope John XXIII enlarged the membership in the College of Cardinals and made it more international. At his address at the opening of the Second Vatican Council, he criticized the “prophets of doom” who “in these modern times see nothing but prevarication and ruin.” Pope John XXIII set a tone for the Council when he said, “The Church has always opposed... errors. Nowadays, however, the Spouse of Christ prefers to make use of the medicine of mercy rather than that of severity.”

On his deathbed, Pope John said: “It is not that the gospel has changed; it is that we have begun to understand it better. Those who have lived as long as I have...were enabled to compare different cultures and traditions, and know that the moment has come to discern the signs of the times, to seize the opportunity and to look far ahead.”

“Good Pope John” died on June 3, 1963. St. John Paul II beatified him in 2000, and Pope Francis canonized him in 2014.

St. John XXIII



“Man has the right to live. He has the right to bodily integrity and to the means necessary for the proper development of life, particularly food, clothing, shelter, medical care, rest, and, finally, the necessary social services. In consequence, he has the right to be looked after in the event of illhealth; disability stemming from his work; widowhood; old age; enforced unemployment; or whenever through no fault of his own he is deprived of the means of livelihood.”

-St. John XXIII (October 11th)

Adopt-A-Family Bowl-A-Thon

Get your bowling shoes ready! Our Annual Adopt-A-Family Fundraiser bowl-a-thon will be held at North Bowl on **Friday, October 20, 2023.**

For so many of you who have experienced this fun-filled event in the past can attest to what a wonderful time they had coming together with our catholic community. It is a great evening of fellowship, laughter, friendship, and many chances to win some awesome raffle items! Also you **DO NOT HAVE TO BOWL** to attend this event. Many just come and take chances and have something to eat and socialize with friends to support this wonderful cause.



SO . . . MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR OUR NEXT FUN-FILLED BOWL-A-THON SCHEDULED FOR FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20th! If you are interested in pulling together a team or if you don’t have a team, we can put you on a team. Call Deb Fitzgibbons at 978-884-1945 with any questions or to secure a lane! If you are interested in sponsoring a lane, we will develop a “personalized” banner for you! Don’t miss out . . . this event has grown every year and there is **SO MUCH FUN** to be had! Cost for bowling is \$20.00 adults/\$11.00 children (under 10).

God Bless,

Debbie Fitzgibbons and Betty Poirier,
Adopt-A-Family Committee Members

27th Sunday in Ordinary Time - October 8, 2023



First Reading

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

Let me now sing of my friend,
my friend's song concerning his vineyard.
My friend had a vineyard
on a fertile hillside;
he spaded it, cleared it of stones,
and planted the choicest vines;
within it he built a watchtower,
and hewed out a wine press.
Then he looked for the crop of grapes,
but what it yielded was wild grapes.

Now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah,
judge between me and my vineyard:
What more was there to do for my vineyard
that I had not done?
Why, when I looked for the crop of grapes,
did it bring forth wild grapes?
Now, I will let you know
what I mean to do with my vineyard:
take away its hedge, give it to grazing,
break through its wall, let it be trampled!
Yes, I will make it a ruin:
it shall not be pruned or hoed,
but overgrown with thorns and briers;
I will command the clouds
not to send rain upon it.
The vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of
Israel, and the people of Judah are his cherished plant;
he looked for judgment, but see, bloodshed!
for justice, but hark, the outcry!

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

R. The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

A vine from Egypt you transplanted; you drove
away the nations and planted it. It put forth its
foliage to the Sea, its shoots as far as the River.

R. The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

Why have you broken down its walls, so that every
passer-by plucks its fruit, The boar from the forest
lays it waste, and the beasts of the field feed upon
it?

R. The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

Once again, O LORD of hosts, look down
from heaven, and see; take care of this vine,
and protect what your right hand has planted,
the son of man whom you yourself made strong.

R. The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

Then we will no more withdraw from you;
give us new life, and we will call upon your
name. O LORD, God of hosts, restore us; if
your face shine upon us, then we shall be saved.

R. The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

Second Reading

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians

Brothers and sisters:

Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and
petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known
to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all
understanding will guard your hearts and minds in
Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever
is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure,
whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any
excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise,
think about these things. Keep on doing what you have
learned and received and heard and seen in me. Then
the God of peace will be with you.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

R. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

*I have chosen you from the world, says the Lord,
to go and bear fruit that will remain.*

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 said to the chief priests and the elders of the people:

"Hear another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a hedge around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went on a journey. When vintage time drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to obtain his produce. But the tenants seized the servants and one they beat, another they killed, and a third they stoned. Again he sent other servants, more numerous than the first ones, but they treated them in the same way. Finally, he sent his son to them, thinking, 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and acquire his inheritance.' They seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What will the owner of the vineyard do to those tenants when he comes?"

They answered him,

"He will put those wretched men to a wretched death and lease his vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the proper times."

Jesus said to them,

"Did you never read in the Scriptures: The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; by the Lord has this been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes? Therefore, I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that will produce its fruit."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Love and Labor:

We recently spent a weekend at a bed and breakfast remodeled from an old barn. The barn was built more than one hundred fifty years ago when the land became a grape vineyard. We ran each morning through the rows of vines filled with grapes at harvest time. The sweet smell filled my senses, leaving me with feelings of warmth. Everything was right with the world. I couldn't help but wonder, however, what those vines had seen over the past hundred and fifty years. For sure they'd seen hard work. Certainly not many days had passed without hard work and strife, but surely there had been love and healing, too. It's true that few things can last very long without love and labor.

Comment:

Isaiah has composed a song about his friend, the vineyard keeper. We are not told this right away, but the vineyard keeper is actually God. The keeper first decided on which land to plant, then the land was cleared of stones. After this, he planted the vines and constructed a vat and watchtower. By the best agrarian measure, the crop had every chance to become perfect, but it didn't. Wild grapes grew instead, and the keeper became irritated. His only recourse was to let the vineyard go and become what it would.

Matthew's Gospel continues the vineyard theme, but in this case, it is the human element that is addressed. The landowner (God) previously sent servants (prophets) to gather the proceeds from the harvest. The vineyard workers (the chief priests and elders) killed the slaves. Finally the landowner sent his son thinking the workers surely would not kill him, too. But they did (Jesus' crucifixion). We know that it is God's way that something good should be born from something bad. Even though the workers killed the son, new life for the world began with his death and resurrection.

Reflection:

We are clearly the vines planted by Isaiah's vineyard keeper. We have been given every opportunity to love and serve God, but are the grapes of our vines wild or will we yield a good crop?

The vineyard of Matthew's Gospel has been left to us. The owner's son was killed, but new life began with his resurrection. The field has been entrusted to our care—that is the field of the Church and God's world. We are called to continue the care of the vineyard and be faithful to its mission. The fruit we yield must be good. Therefore, we need to work actively in our Church and world to be sure that it is God's will that prevails.

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Reflections for the Week beginning Sunday, October 8, 2023

Sunday, Oct 08, 2023

To the greater good!

Our country's second poet laureate, Richard Wilbur (1921-2017), fought in the Second World War. It convinced him that writing verse was serious business: "One does not use poetry ... to organize oneself and the world, until one's world somehow gets out of hand." Wilbur explained: "I feel that the universe is full of glorious energy ... and that the ultimate character of things is comely and good. I am perfectly aware that I say this in the teeth of all sorts of contrary evidence, and that I must be basing it partly on temperament and partly on faith." Believe in the ultimate goodness, regardless of any evidence to the contrary!

TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 5:1-7; Philippians 4:6-9; Matthew 21:33-43 (139). *"Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious ... think about these things."*

Monday, Oct 09, 2023

Going the distance for faith

In the third century, Saint Denis evangelized the country that would come to be France (then called Gaul), and he is thought to have been the first bishop of Paris (then called Lutetia). He was so successful at making converts that the Roman governor beheaded him on the highest hill in the city, now known as Montmartre. It was said he picked up his head and kept preaching while walking many miles before reaching his burial site in a town later named after him. He is the patron saint of France and one of the Fourteen Holy Helpers. Call on him for a missionary zeal that just won't quit.

MEMORIAL OF DENIS, BISHOP, AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

TODAY'S READINGS: Jonah 1:1—2:1-2, 11; Luke 10:25-37 (461). *"You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind."*

Tuesday, Oct 10, 2023

Don't shortchange charity

In 2021, Pope Francis used today, World Mental Health Day, to pray for those "affected by mental disorders and also the victims, often young, of suicide." This June, Francis mentioned teen suicide again, decrying a "culture that leads young people to think that they are 'losers.'" Francis also emphasized the basic human right to medical care and social services—so critical for mental health—but he also pointed to us individual Christians, who in our "haste" don't often stop long enough to care for each other. "It is easy to delegate charity to others, yet the calling of every Christian"—according to Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan—"is to become personally involved." His advice? Learn from Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, who said, "charity must not remain locked in the depths of one's heart."

TODAY'S READINGS: Jonah 3:1-10; Luke 10:38-42 (462). *"The Lord said to her in reply, 'Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things.'"*

Wednesday, Oct 11, 2023

A shrine for the ages

In America's "first city," St. Augustine, Florida, many Catholics today will celebrate the feast of Our Lady of La Leche, dedicated to a Marian apparition first recognized during the time of the Spanish colonial empire. The devotion, depicting Mary nursing the infant child Jesus, traveled with settlers to Florida in the 16th century, and a shrine to her was built at Mission Nombre de Dios in the

new colony of St. Augustine. The shrine is the oldest in the United States, having received canonical coronation in 2021, and is a popular pilgrimage site for those seeking intercession related to a pregnancy. Maybe today is the day for you to offer a special prayer for someone in your own life.

TODAY'S READINGS: Jonah 4:1-11; Luke 11:1-4 (463). *"All the nations you have made shall come and worship you, O Lord, and glorify your name."*

Thursday, Oct 12, 2023

Come as you are

Christians whose personalities would never be called pious or meek might take heart in Caryll Houselander (1901-54), whose death we commemorate today. She smoked, drank, and was said to have a sharp tongue. But people were drawn to her for good counsel, and Houselander's spiritual writing persists. A sample: "Love is most likely to spring from another's need for us, and the fact of spending ourselves for another always generates new life in us." With your own God-given personality, warts and all, take a step today toward building the Kingdom.

TODAY'S READINGS: Malachi 3:13-20b; Luke 11:5-13 (464). *"And I tell you, ask and you will receive; seek and you will find."*

Friday, Oct 13, 2023

The devil doesn't have a prayer

In an interview in *Exorcists against Satan* by Italian journalist Fabio Marchese Ragona, Pope Francis was asked about the devil. "It is possible that I get on the Devil's nerves," he said, "because I try to follow the Lord and do what the Gospel says. And that annoys him. At the same time, he is certainly happy when I commit some sin. He seeks man's failure, but he has no chance if there is prayer." It is a great mystery that God should permit diabolical activity, says the Catechism of the Catholic Church, "but we know that in everything God works for good with those who love him" (CCC 395). Take the simple steps of daily prayer and good works to keep the devil at bay.

TODAY'S READINGS: Joel 1:13-15; 2:1-2; Luke 11:15-26 (465). *"If Satan is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand?"*

Saturday, Oct 14, 2023

Redeeming qualities

There was a profound division in the church during the third-century pontificate of Callistus I. The pope believed and taught that even the most serious sins like murder and adultery could be absolved in a sincere confession. His position scandalized many church leaders in Rome who didn't agree. They believed that some sins were too serious to be forgiven, and they accused Callistus of laxity and sympathizing with heretics. Eventually Callistus prevailed and Confession became the healing sacrament for all sin, even the most serious. Thank our merciful God for guiding the church toward an ethic of redemption.

MEMORIAL OF CALLISTUS I, POPE, MARTYR

TODAY'S READINGS: Joel 4:12-21; Luke 11:27-28 (466). *"Blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it."*

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



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