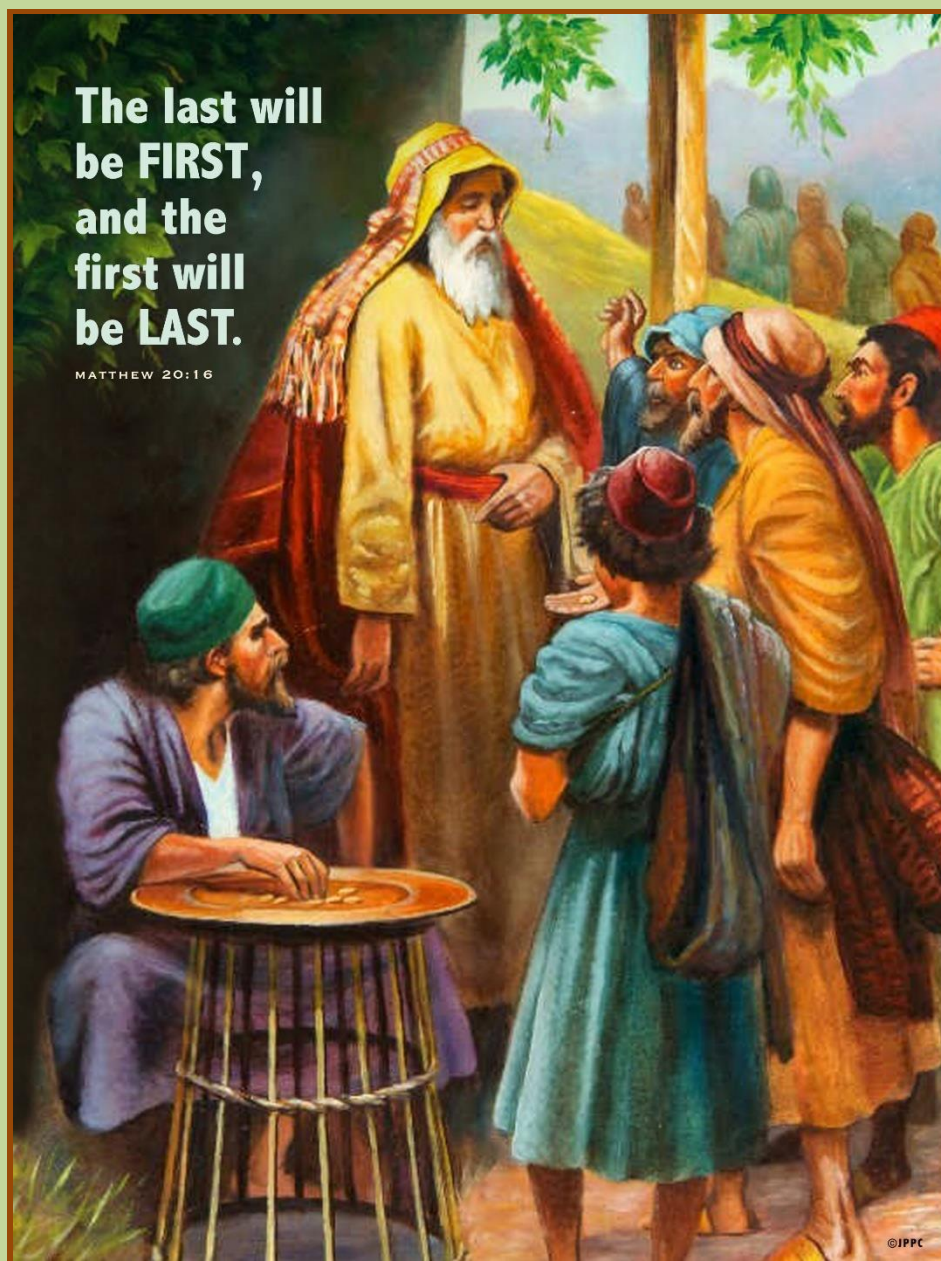


Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

September 24, 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

September 24 – 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saturday 4:00 pm	September 23 – Vigil (St. Mary) Lee Killingsworth Alphonse & Victoria Antonitis
Sunday 8:00 am	September 24 (St. Mark) Gabriel Petroni
Sunday 9:30 am	September 24 (St. Mary) Carole Flynn
Sunday 11:00 am	September 24 (Sacred Heart) Ronald Oakley

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Monday 4:30 pm	September 25 (St. Mark) Tricia Diamond
Tuesday 8:00 am	September 26 (St. Mark) Albert Desilets
Wednesday 9:30 am	September 27 (Sacred Heart) SMH 100 th Anniversary Mass
Wednesday 4:30 pm	September 27 (St. Mark) People of the Parish
Thursday 8:00 am	September 28 (St. Mark) Judith & Manuel Moreira Virginia & Augusto Almeida

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October 1 – 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saturday 4:00 pm	September 30 – Vigil (St. Mary) Dan T. Hickey
Sunday 8:00 am	October 1 (St. Mark) People of the Parish
Sunday 9:30 am	October 1 (St. Mary) Elizabeth Sabal
Sunday 11:00 am	October 1 (Sacred Heart) Arsen Shamshoian

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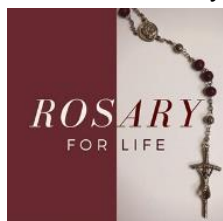
Parish Contributions

Collection for September 16/17: \$13,597.38

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Rosary for Life

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



Transfiguration Annual Appeal

By this time, all registered families of our parish should have received a letter and packet from Fr. Costa detailing the 2023 Grand Annual Appeal. As the letter states, the Grand Annual supplements the weekly financial contributions of our parishioners. Funds generated from this Appeal will augment the operating budget, help with larger projects in all three of our churches/properties, and allow us to set some funds aside for emergency expenses as well as anticipated winter costs.

Your response has been very positive in this first week. Many thanks to all who gave most generously. You may drop your donation in the collection basket, send it to the parish office through the mail, or use the online giving platform found on our parish website. Every gift counts! Thank you for responding generously to the needs of your parish!



Please remember Deacon Joe Regali and Joanne Regali in your prayer as they celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary!

Deacon Joe and Joanne, may you know good health, generous blessings, and much joy!



*You are cordially invited
to join Bishop Edgar da Cunha
and the Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School community
as we begin our 100th anniversary celebrations with a:*

Mass of Thanksgiving

**Wednesday, September 27, 2023
at 9:30 a.m.**

**Sacred Heart Church
58 Church Street
North Attleborough, Massachusetts**

From Fr. Costa:

This Sunday, September 24, marks the 100th anniversary of the opening of Sacred Heart School and the beginning of Catholic elementary education in the town of North Attleborough. (note: Saint Mary School opened a year later in 1924).

The parish archives tell us that the founding pastor of Sacred Heart, Fr. D.D. Villandre, had dreamed of building a school, but his sudden and tragic death prevented his following through with this plan. Fr. Louis Dequoy, his successor as pastor, shared his vision.

Fr. Dequoy promised the parishioners from the pulpit, (spoken in French, of course) "If you build me a school, I will build you a church." He was referring to the completion and decoration of the upper portion of the present Sacred Heart Church. The entire structure had been built in 1909, but the upper level was an empty shell while the parish had been worshipping in the lower level. He was true to his word, paying off school construction costs and completing the upper structure in time for Christmas, 1929.

The plans for the new Catholic school in North Attleborough were approved by Bishop Feehan on January 21, 1923. Construction began on April 12, 1923. The major work on the building, consisting of eight classrooms and a convent wing, was completed in August of that year. Finish work in both the school and the convent was not completed when the first Holy Union Sisters arrived on Saturday, September 15, 1923.

On Sunday, September 16, with "moving emotions" and in "endearing terms," Fr. Dequoy introduced the new faculty at all the parish Masses. Since desks and chairs had not been delivered, the children of the school gathered in the present church hall for a three-day retreat, on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of that first week. During that same week, the five nuns were welcomed at the rectory for meals and free time, while work continued inside the convent and school during the day.

At all Masses the next weekend, Fr. Dequoy and his assistant, Fr. Jalbert, invited the men of the parish to take up hammers and screwdrivers to install the newly arrived desks and chairs. Many generous parishioners responded to this appeal and quickly finished the necessary work.

On Monday, September 24, after having attended Mass and receiving Holy Communion, the Sisters renewed their religious vows in their new chapel (the current principal's office at SSMH). They then officially welcomed 211 students of Grades 1 through 5 into the new Sacred Heart School building. Thus began a ministry of love, generosity and service that has continued for 100 years!

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:

September 24th: **Grades 1 & 2**, 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.
(following the 8:00 a.m. Mass)

September 25th: **Grade 7**, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

October 1st: **Grades 3 & 4**, 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.
(following the 8:00 a.m. Mass)

October 1st: **Grade 9**, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

October 2nd: **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.

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.

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



A Catholic education is one of the best gifts you could ever give your children. From preschool through Grade 8, our SSMH students grow in faith, knowledge, character, and grace, thriving in an atmosphere where they feel respected and loved by their teachers and fellow Saints. We invite you to learn more about our school by visiting our website: www.ssmhschool.com.

Transfiguration of the Lord Parish Women's Guild: Gift Certificate Calendar

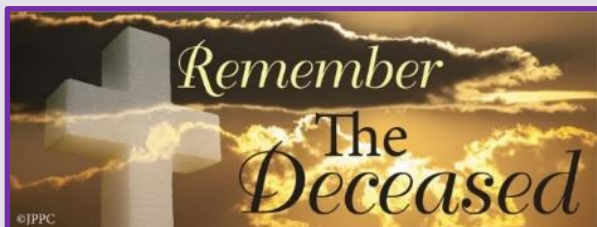


Want 31 chances to win some great gift certificates? The Women's Guild will be selling their Gift Certificate Calendar at Masses the last few weeks in September and drawings will start on October 1st and go to October 31st. The cost is \$20 per calendar. **Here is how it works:** Once you buy a calendar for \$20, this puts your name into a drawing, and a name is drawn each day during the month. If your name is drawn you win the gift certificate for that day, which could be worth up to \$50! Your name is then put back into the drawing so you have another chance to win again on another day and so on. All proceeds from this fundraiser calendar are used to help supplement our monthly meeting expenses for the Transfiguration of the Lord Parish Women's Guild Program.

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.



Please Pray for our Deceased:

Carl Battista, Jr.

Marilyn R. Beard

Nelson R. Chaffee

Jeanne T. (Ringette) Kelley

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



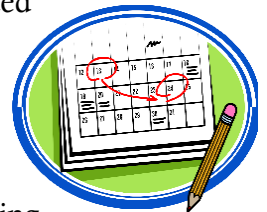
Saint Peter Julian Eymard once said:
"Eucharistic Adoration is the greatest of actions. To adore is to share the life of Mary on earth when she adored the Word Incarnate in her virginal womb, when she adored Him in the Crib, on Calvary, in the divine Eucharist."

Please join us at **Saint Mark church**, Friday, **October 6th**, 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.

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!



Catholic Financial Life

Catholic Financial Life:

Members to meet on 9/26 at 7:00pm at Panera Bread for officer election meeting.

Pax Christi at LaSalette Shrine

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



Saint of the Week: St. Padre Pio
September 23rd

In one of the largest such ceremonies in history, Pope John Paul II canonized Padre Pio of Pietrelcina on June 16, 2002. It was the 45th canonization ceremony in Pope John Paul's pontificate. More than 300,000 people braved blistering heat as they filled St. Peter's Square and nearby streets.

Many people have turned to the Italian Capuchin Franciscan to intercede with God on their behalf; among them was the future Pope John Paul II. In 1962, when he was still an archbishop in Poland, he wrote to Padre Pio and asked him to pray for a Polish woman with throat cancer. Within two weeks, she had been cured of her life-threatening disease.

Born Francesco Forgione, Padre Pio grew up in a family of farmers in southern Italy. Twice his father worked in Jamaica, New York, to provide the family income. At the age of 15, Francesco joined the Capuchins and took the name of Pio. He was ordained in 1910 and was drafted during World War I. After he was discovered to have tuberculosis, he was discharged. In 1917, he was assigned to the friary in San Giovanni Rotondo, 75 miles from the city of Bari on the Adriatic. On September 20, 1918, as he was making his thanksgiving after Mass, Padre Pio had a vision of Jesus. When the vision ended, he had the stigmata in his hands, feet, and side.

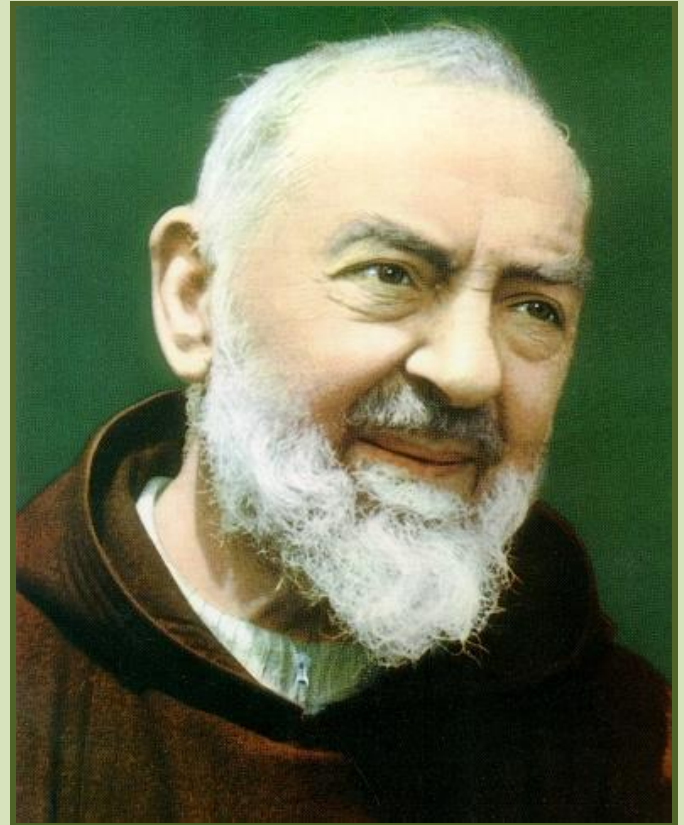
Life became more complicated after that. Medical doctors, Church authorities, and curiosity seekers came to see Padre Pio. In 1924, and again in 1931, the authenticity of the stigmata was questioned; Padre Pio was not permitted to celebrate Mass publicly or to hear confessions. He did not complain of these decisions, which were soon reversed. However, he wrote no letters after 1924. His only other writing, a pamphlet on the agony of Jesus, was done before 1924.

Padre Pio rarely left the friary after he received the stigmata, but busloads of people soon began coming to see him. Each morning after a 5 a.m. Mass in a crowded church, he heard confessions until noon. He took a mid-morning break to bless the sick and all who came to see him. Every afternoon he also heard confessions. In time his confessional ministry would take 10 hours a day; penitents had to take a number so that the situation could be handled. Many of them have said that Padre Pio knew details of their lives that they had never mentioned.

A number of people have reported cures they believe were received through the intercession of Padre Pio. Those who assisted at his Masses came away edified; several curiosity seekers were deeply moved. Like Saint Francis, Padre Pio sometimes had his habit torn or cut by souvenir hunters.

One of Padre Pio's sufferings was that unscrupulous people several times circulated prophecies that they claimed originated from him. He never made prophecies about world events and never gave an opinion on matters that he felt belonged to Church authorities to decide. He died on September 23, 1968, and was beatified in 1999.

St. Padre Pio



*"Joy, with peace, is the sister of charity.
Serve the Lord with laughter."*

-St. Padre Pio (September 23rd)

Transfiguration of the Lord Respect Life Group

The next meeting of the Respect Life Group will take place on Thursday, **October 5, 2023 at 6:30 pm in Sacred Heart Church's Library**. In addition, please mark your calendars: the Secretariat of the New Evangelization's Family and Respect Life Office of the Diocese of Fall River will be hosting two Respect Life events on Sunday October 22, 2023 to mark Respect Life Month. The Annual Respect Life Mass with Bishop da Cunha will be held at Cathedral of St Mary of the Assumption in Fall River at 10:30 AM. Following this Mass, there will be a Respect Life Conference at White's of Westport for \$35 (lunch and speakers). It is sponsored by the Knights of Columbus. Tickets can be purchased by contacting Joanna Wissler: 508-243-5307 or wissler5@verizon.net.

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 24th at 7:00 p.m. **ALL ARE WELCOME.**

Reflections for the Week beginning Sunday, September 24, 2023

Sunday, Sep 24, 2023

At home in the world

Free to leave, free to stay. Liberty of movement is a right most of us take for granted. Have you resided in more than one place? On this 109th World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Pope Francis asks us to imagine a world in which everyone has the option to stay or go as they please. It necessitates a world in which staying is safe: free from discrimination, violence, and dire poverty. All would have the protection of equal rights and respect, and could reach their potential in their present circumstances. Until that day, welcoming the stranger is our sacred obligation.

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 55:6-9; Philippians 1:20c-24, 27a; Matthew 20:1-16a (133). *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord."*

Monday, Sep 25, 2023

Be creative for the sake of creation

The Season of Creation, an annual ecumenical celebration of prayer and action for our common home, began on September 1 (World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation) and ends on October 4 (the feast of Saint Francis of Assisi). There is still more than a week left for you, your family, your cohort of friends, your school, and your parish to renew your relationship with the Creator and with creation, through celebration, conversion, and commitment together. How? Pray. Read Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato si'*. Coordinate a cleanup project or other sustainability effort. Use your voice and advocate for climate justice. Best idea yet? Come up with one no one has thought of!

TODAY'S READINGS: Ezra 1:1-6; Luke 8:16-18 (449). *"No one who lights a lamp conceals it ... rather, he places it on a lampstand so that those who enter may see the light."*

Tuesday, Sep 26, 2023

Freely share the gifts you've been given

Cosmas and Damian were legendary. Many churches have been built in their honor, and their names make the short list of saints enshrined in Eucharistic Prayer I, used during the Mass. During the final years of Rome's brutal persecution of Christians, the twin physicians lived in Syria—then an eastern province of the Roman Empire. Not only were they gifted healers, but they refused to charge for their services. As they explained, "We treat the infirm by the power of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and take no payment for rendering aid to the sick, because our Lord commanded His disciples, 'Freely have you received, freely give.'" How have you been blessed by God, and how can you share that with others?

MEMORIAL OF COSMAS AND DAMIAN, MARTYRS

TODAY'S READINGS: Ezra 6:7-8, 12b, 14-20; Luke 8:19-21 (450). *"My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and act on it."*

Wednesday, Sep 27, 2023

Now on tour

Today is World Tourism Day. According to the United Nations, the tourism sector employs one in every 10 people on Earth, and millions more benefit economically from tourism, though the wealth generated isn't always shared equitably. For tourists, exploring new places and enjoying favorite ones can be exhilarating—but bad behavior can ruin a trip. Keeping an attitude of openness and gratitude, as well as respect for local people and customs while on

vacation or a tour can transform the experience. Archbishop Rino Fisichella of the Vatican's Dicastery for Evangelization wrote in anticipation of today's observance, "A tourism that respects the person and the environment opens the way to perceiving the goodness of the Father who reaches out to everyone with his love." It's hard to imagine a better souvenir than that.

MEMORIAL OF VINCENT DE PAUL, PRIEST

TODAY'S READINGS: Ezra 9:5-9; Luke 9:1-6 (451). *"Then they set out and went from village to village proclaiming the good news and curing diseases everywhere."*

Thursday, Sep 28, 2023

Lighten the load

You may have heard the old English Christmas song about a Bohemian king who became Saint Wenceslaus, in part because of his great charity. The most famous tale from the charitable king's life was recorded in the carol "Good King Wenceslaus." The king helps a poor man keep from freezing by trodding a path in the snow for him, easing the man's journey to shelter. It ends with an admonishment to do likewise for anyone who suffers and "[you] shall yourselves find blessing." Do a favor for someone in need today, and like Wenceslaus, you will find blessing.

MEMORIAL OF WENCESLAUS, MARTYR

TODAY'S READINGS: Haggai 1:1-8; Luke 9:7-9 (452). *"Who then is this about whom I hear such things?"*

Friday, Sep 29, 2023

Entertaining angels

Care for strangers has always been a strong imperative in Christianity. Yet in today's highly politicized environment, it is challenging to reach out to strangers who some have deemed to be threats—people like refugees and other marginalized communities. Scripture is clear: "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it." Angels? It's far easier to see angels from the safety of a holy card or a statue. But think for a moment and see if you have at some point encountered an angel through the presence of a stranger.

FEAST OF MICHAEL, GABRIEL, AND RAPHAEL, ARCHANGELS

TODAY'S READINGS: Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14 or Revelation 12:7-12ab; John 1:47-51 (647). *"How do you know me?"*

Saturday, Sep 30, 2023

Christianity, by the book

As early Christianity distanced itself from Judaism, Christians began to lose touch with their faith's deep Jewish roots. Saint Jerome (born around 340) helped to reestablish the link. He learned Hebrew from a Christian monk who had converted from Judaism. More unusual for the time, he studied with Jewish rabbis to gain a better understanding of Hebrew scripture. He then spent 15 years producing the foundational Latin translation of the Hebrew Bible, which we know as the Old Testament. He later said, "For if, as Paul says, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God, and if the man who does not know Scripture does not know the power and wisdom of God, then ignorance of Scriptures is ignorance of Christ." Crack open the Good Book today, in honor of a key figure who helped shape it.

MEMORIAL OF JEROME, PRIEST, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

TODAY'S READINGS: Zechariah 2:5-9, 14-15a; Luke 9:43b-45 (454). *"Jesus said to his disciples, 'Pay attention to what I am telling you.'"*

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



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25th Sunday in Ordinary Time - September 24, 2023

READINGS FOR THE WEEK



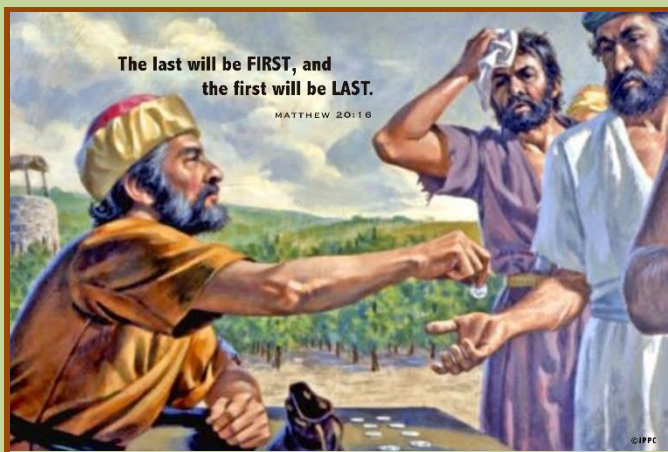
First Reading

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

Seek the LORD while he may be found,
call him while he is near.
Let the scoundrel forsake his way,
and the wicked his thoughts;
let him turn to the LORD for mercy;
to our God, who is generous in forgiving.
For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.
As high as the heavens are above the earth,
so high are my ways above your ways
and my thoughts above your thoughts.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



Responsorial Psalm

R. The Lord is near to all who call upon him.

Every day will I bless you,
and I will praise your name forever and ever.
Great is the LORD and highly to be praised;
his greatness is unsearchable.

R. The Lord is near to all who call upon him.

The LORD is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and of great kindness.
The LORD is good to all
and compassionate toward all his works.

R. The Lord is near to all who call upon him.

The LORD is just in all his ways
and holy in all his works.
The LORD is near to all who call upon him,
to all who call upon him in truth.

R. The Lord is near to all who call upon him.

Second Reading

**A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the
Philippians**

Brothers and sisters:
Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or
by death.
For to me life is Christ, and death is gain.
If I go on living in the flesh,
that means fruitful labor for me.
And I do not know which I shall choose.
I am caught between the two.
I long to depart this life and be with Christ,
for that is far better.
Yet that I remain in the flesh
is more necessary for your benefit.

Only, conduct yourselves in a way worthy of the gospel
of Christ.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

R. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

*Open our hearts, O Lord,
to listen to the words of your Son.*

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 is like a landowner who went out at dawn to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with them for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. Going out about nine o'clock, the landowner saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and he said to them, 'You too go into my vineyard, and I will give you what is just.' So they went off. And he went out again around noon, and around three o'clock, and did likewise. Going out about five o'clock, the landowner found others standing around, and said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?' They answered, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You too go into my vineyard.' When it was evening the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Summon the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and ending with the first.' When those who had started about five o'clock came, each received the usual daily wage. So when the first came, they thought that they would receive more, but each of them also got the usual wage. And on receiving it they grumbled against the landowner, saying, 'These last ones worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us, who bore the day's burden and the heat.' He said to one of them in reply, 'My friend, I am not cheating you. Did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what is yours and go. What if I wish to give this last one the same as you? Or am I not free to do as I wish with my own money? Are you envious because I am generous?' Thus, the last will be first, and the first will be last."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

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:

Cecelia Ann Birch



Daughter of Scott & Kara (Fitzgerald) Birch
Godchild of Clinton Birch III & Kelci (Keene) Camara

Matthew James Castonguay



Son of Michael & Katelyn (Giacoppo) Castonguay
Godchild of J.C. MacDonald & Aimee Byrne

Layla Maria Finocchi



Daughter of Michael & Allison (Alling) Finocchi
Godchild of Andrew Kiewlicz & Melissa Finocchi

Weston James Gartman



Son of Jakob Gartman & Hailee Lobisser
Godchild of John Gartman & Morgan Gartman

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Equality:

My sister keeps careful track of what she does for each of my children. If she takes one out to the movies, she has to work it in her schedule to take the others on an outing, too. If she spends ten dollars on one gift, she will not spend nine or eleven dollars on anyone else. They all have a price limit of ten dollars. I admire her sense of fairness, but mostly I admire her ability to keep track of what she's done over the course of the year!

I have learned a phrase that my children will complain I use all too often. When things just don't seem to be working out evenly, I tell them, "The world is not divided into five equal pieces." I must admit, none of my kids would have been very happy working in the vineyard all day and watching someone who worked half the time get the same amount of pay.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 55:6–9
RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 145:2–3, 8–9, 17–18
SECOND READING: Philippians 1:20c–24, 27a
GOSPEL: Matthew 20:1–16a

Comment:

The readings from Isaiah, the psalm and Philippians focus on a merciful and just God—a God who is near, who is loving, who pardons. The people of Isaiah had lost their faith and hope in God. They were in exile and did not live the way God wanted them to. Their ways were not God's ways, and their thoughts were not the thoughts of God. But rather than abandon these people or punish them, God called them to return. Paul knew God to be kind and loving. He told the Philippians not to despair but to live good lives according to the gospel message. God's loving generosity became clear in the parable when Jesus suggested that it is all right, even admirable, for a vineyard owner to pay some of his workers generously. The parable causes us to look inward and discover what it is that makes the other apostles and us jealous of the workers who did little, and got paid the same amount we did.

Reflection:

We expect God to be near, loving, and to pardon us. We find no contention in this description and have probably used these words to describe God ourselves.

So why then do we find ourselves in league with the grumbling workers of the Gospel? Those guys didn't show up till almost quitting time. "It's not fair that they receive the same amount of money as the workers who came early," many people would complain. Haven't we complained in the same way ourselves?

The parable, on closer examination, is not so much about people getting more than they deserve as it is about God's generosity. And God continues to be generous to us. Ours is a loving, forgiving God who is quietly involved in our lives.

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