

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 10-16, 2020

- Monday - 1 KGS 8:1-7, 9-13; MK 6:53-56  
**St. Scholastica**
- Tuesday - 1 KGS 8:22-23, 27-30; MK 7:1-13  
**Sts. Sotera, Gregory, Paschal I, Virgin Mary of Lourdes**
- Wednesday - 1 KGS 10:1-10; MK 7:14-23  
**Sts. Saturninus and Companions**
- Thursday - 1 KGS 11:4-13; MK 7:24-30  
**B. Jordan of Saxony**
- Friday - 1 KGS 11:29-32; 12:19; MK 7:31-37  
**Sts. Valentin, Cyril, Monk, Methodius, and Zenon**
- Saturday - 1 KGS 12:26-32; 13:33-34; MK 8:1-10  
**Sts. Faustinus, Jovita, and Onesimus**
- Sunday - SIR 15:15-20; MT 5:17-37 OR 5:20-22A, 27-28, 33-34A, 37  
**St. Juliana**  
Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time



**AFTERTHOUGHTS**

The First Century Palestinians who heard Jesus speak these words understood emphatically how essential Salt & Light were to them, to their lives. Hearing those same words 20 centuries later, are WE indeed Salt & Light to the people who need us?

**PRAY FOR:** Mona Escobar, Ray Duthu, Linda Lee, J.A. Foret, Jason Chaisson, Christina Sparks, Edrith Boudreaux, Ursula M. Breaux, Barbara Touns Miller, Susan Laperouse, Melinda Fabre, Sheryl Leaber, Evelyn Ruckstuhl, Deacon Lee Crochet, Selma Ferjani, Dee Belanger, Holden Sawyer, Lynn Paul Lirette, Sherman Brown, Mary Lee Boudreaux, Airman Wesley Speyrer, Nancy Rivere, Chelsea Ford, Denna Sanders, Gary Benoit, Sonny Lovell, Judy Porche, Faye Platt, Vincent Trabona, Alicia Headrick, Scott Stoufflet, Curtis Briggs, Sadie Talbot, Patty LeJune, Margaret Gaudet, Tracy LeBlanc, Kristen Watkins, Alex Schexnayder, Robert Cazayoux, Ken Watkins, Linda Musson, Donald Prosperie and Rosabelle Prosperie, Kayla Dudek Breaux Percy Lee, Linda LeClair, Sadie Talbot, (Open heart surgery), Susie Degeneres, Barbara Gaidry and for all prayer shawl recipients. *Please pray for the repose of the souls of all who have died, especially, Pearl Pitre LeBoeuf and Christine LeBoeuf Sullivan.*

**Daily Prayers for Priests:**

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the gift of the priesthood. We particularly thank you for the priests here in the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux. We ask that you draw them ever closer to the Sacred Heart of Your Son Jesus. May they experience the depth of communion with you that you long for. Grant them stillness Lord, that they might perceive your presence. Heighten their spiritual senses that they might see and hear you ever more clearly and feel you ever more deeply. Remind them of their call. Remind them of all that you have promised them and they promised you on the sacred day of their ordination. We ask for miracles of renewal in their priestly vocation, Lord. Renew them in your love and strengthen their resolve to love and serve you. Strengthen their priestly fraternity, Lord, and strengthen the bond between the priests and the Laity. That together Lord, we all might be ONE as you are One. In Jesus Name we pray, Amen.

**SANCTUARY LIGHTS**  
Church

In Loving Memory of Ernest Robichaux donated by Ida Robichaux

**GOSPEL COMMENTARY**



*"You are the salt of the earth."*

**But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned?"**

Too little salt in our diet can lead to serious dehydration. But too much salt in our diet can cause unhealthy fluid retention and high blood pressure. Like most things in life, we should try to achieve balance and moderation. Jesus says salt that loses its flavor is useless, except to be trampled under foot. Jesus' use of the image of salt was not about concern for flavoring food or even the effect of salt on the health of his disciples. He was challenging them identify, develop and use all of the unique array of talents abilities and gifts God had given them for their own benefit and enjoyment and for the benefit and enjoyment of others. He also challenges us. If we fail or refuse to use our gifts, imagine how we will feel when the day comes that we see Jesus face to face and he says, "You were created to be the salt of the earth. Did you season and improve your life and the lives of others? Or were you like salt that has lost its flavor and is not good for anything?"

**STEWARDSHIP REPORT**  
Sunday – February 2, 2020

Envelopes (254).....	\$12,069.00
Loose .....	\$ 2,165.13
Total .....	\$14,234.13

Sunday – January 26, 2020

Envelopes (234).....	\$10,127.00
Loose .....	\$ 2,224.40
Total .....	\$12,351.40

**SECOND COLLECTION THIS WEEKEND**  
CHURCH IN AFRICA

We have a second collection this weekend. This collection provides grants to finance pastoral projects that support the maintenance and growth of the Church in Africa. Funded projects include outreach programs, schools, evangelization and education of clergy and lay ministers.

**PARISH NEWS**

**SAVE THE CONVENT – SHARE THE VISION**

It is not too late to help Save the Convent! Please share the vision and help us get rid of Fr. Mayhem and Save the Convent! Envelopes are at each exit or you can mark your check or envelope with "Convent Renovation". Thank you!

**THE TIE-IN – ST. VINCENT DE PAUL**

In the Gospel today, Jesus says, "You are the light of the world," he is calling us to live our Christian vocation in words and deeds. Be a "light" to those living in poverty and in a world of darkness by giving a donation to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. If you or someone you know needs assistance, please call 985-872-2520. After the beep, clearly state your name, phone number, address, and nature of the request. One of our volunteers will call you back to arrange an appointment interview (caller id will not display the number).

Did you know that you can give online?

**St. Francis de sales - ParishSOFT On-Line Giving**

Look for this button on our church website.  
<http://www.stfrancisdesaleshouma.org/on-line-giving.html>

**EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION**

**PRAY FOR PEACE IN OUR COUNTRY**

"When My people humble themselves and seek My Presence, I will revive their land." (2 Ch 7:14)

St. Francis' Adoration Chapel current hours are 7am-6pm daily (Key fobs allow 24 hours access). All are welcome to come by and spend a few minutes with our Lord.

- Sunday – Donna Lapeyre – Home: 225-937-1861 - [donnalapeyre@yahoo.com](mailto:donnalapeyre@yahoo.com)
- Monday – Candy Archila – Home: 985-868-1792 – [jarchila@bellsouth.net](mailto:jarchila@bellsouth.net)
- Tuesday – Therese Oubre – Home: 985-226-2252 - Mobile: 225-329-6757 - [tsoubre@att.net](mailto:tsoubre@att.net)
- Wednesday – Melanie – Mobile: 985-709-3754 - [mbabin1@comcast.net](mailto:mbabin1@comcast.net)
- Thursday – Melva Fournier – Home: 985-873-7593 – Mobile: 985-226-7800 - [melfour816@gmail.com](mailto:melfour816@gmail.com)
- Friday – Ana Vice – Mobile: 985-852-8110 – [abvice1@gmail.com](mailto:abvice1@gmail.com)
- Saturday – Sue LeBlanc – Home: 985-879-2866 – Mobile: 985-688-9044 - [leblancsss@yahoo.com](mailto:leblancsss@yahoo.com)

**General Information:**

Paul Maclean – Mobile: 985-856-5345 - [macleanland@bellsouth.net](mailto:macleanland@bellsouth.net)



**SAINTS**

- 10-Feb **St Scholastica**  
(storms, convulsive children, nuns)
- 14-Feb **St Valentine of Rome**  
(couples, epilepsy, fainting, bee keepers, engaged couples, happy marriages, love, lovers, travellers, young people)



**MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS**

**THE SOCIETY OF ST. JOSEPH, HUSBAND OF MARY**

The members of this organization erect an altar in thanksgiving for our Bishop, Priests, Deacons, Religious, and Seminarians, past and present, on March 19th, the Feast of St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Youth Center. See the article in today's bulletin for this year's St. Joseph's Altar information. If you would like to be involved in The Society or help – please contact Richard Guidry at 985-872-3932 for more information.

**CATHOLIC KORNER**

Last week we learned Fortitude is the moral virtue that strengthens the resolve to resist temptations and overcome obstacles in the moral life (CCC 1808) and helps us master our fears – even fear of death, trials, and persecution. This week we talk about Temperance. Temperance is the moral virtue that helps us from overindulging in food, drink, spending money, sex, wasting time on the Internet, etc. It's not that these things are necessarily bad but too much of a good thing can turn into a bad thing. *Everything in moderation!*

How we practice Temperance: 1. Reflect. (Do you seek out entertainment that is destructive? Do you look at pornography? Has watching sports become an addiction? Do you drink or eat too much? Do you play too many video games?) 2. Act. Like all the virtues, temperance must be learned through practice and patience. While it may not sound like much fun, the only real way to become temperate is through prayer and self-denial. In other words, you have to tell yourself no now and then. Take less than you want. Be ok with being uncomfortable – for example, instead of staying in bed as long as possible – get up. 3. Pray. Pray at the beginning of each day and throughout asking God to help you see where you should spend your time and help you set your priorities straight. <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/resources/virtue/cardinal-virtues/fortitude>

Find out more next week when we talk about The Capital Sins.

Do you have a particular question you want answered? Send in your questions to [rvowell@hdiocese.org](mailto:rvowell@hdiocese.org) to have answered here!

**HELP NEEDED**

**OFFICE HELP**

We need a pool of volunteers who may be able to help on short notice for little projects, such as copying, stapling, stuffing and mailing letters, and various other small projects, in addition, answer the phones if staff is out of the office or unable. If you are interested in helping in the office – please call the church office at 985-876-6904 or email Rebecca at [rvowell@hdiocese.org](mailto:rvowell@hdiocese.org) to add your name to the list. Thank you!!

**FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY**

We are collecting food for the hungry to benefit the Bunkhouse. There is a box in the vestibule to place your donated items. At this time, we are requesting the following items: pouches of tuna or chicken, jerky, etc. (please make sure none requires a can opener to open); sealed containers of fruit; granola bars, bottles of water or gatorade, etc. Please make sure the expiration date is months away.

**MINISTERS SCHEDULE**  
WEEKEND OF FEBRUARY 15-16, 2020

- Commentators**
- 4:00 PM Becky Boudloche
  - 7:00 AM Evelyn Ruckstuhl
  - 9:00 AM James Watkins
  - 11:00 AM Earl Eues
  - 5:30 PM Ginny Hamilton

**Lectors**

- 4:00 PM Carlise Jukes
- 7:00 AM Mindy Scott
- 9:00 AM Mona Prejean
- 11:00 AM Jenni McNabb
- 5:30 PM Bubba Watkins

**Ministers of the Eucharist**

- 4:00 PM Jude Fanguy, Yvonne Fanguy, Mary Ann Rodrigue, Judith Archila, Melva Fournier, Carlise Jukes
- 7:00 AM Carla Exnicious, Paul Labat, Mark Spence, Dolly Duplantis
- 9:00 AM Colleen Lewis, Holly Champagne, Dale Norred, Nellie Chemin, Michael Boudreaux
- 11:00 AM Rene Rhodes, Julie Rhodes, Micheal D'Angelo, Carol Domangue, Gail Guilliot, Jane Lirette
- 5:30 PM Patrica Whipple, Margaret Monterio, Mike Amico, Randy Bethancourt, Adrienne Bethancouert, Gia Holekamp

**Altar Servers**

- 4:00 PM Caroline Louviere, Joshua Louviere, Will Seibert
- 7:00 AM Logan Arnold, Chloe Arnold, Heidi Hayes
- 9:00 AM Chloe Pitre, Presley Theriot, Luryn Trosclair
- 11:00 AM Avene Ryals, Gabrielle Hebert, Gracelyn Ramiez
- 5:30 PM Alexander Amico, Isabella Amico, Olivia Amico



## NEW SHIPMENT - KIOSK

We have received and put out a new shipment of awesome resources in the kiosk in the vestibule – check it out!

## ANNA'S ALLIES - FEBRUARY 19, 2020

**"She never left the temple, but worshipped night and day with fasting and prayer." Luke 2:37**

Anna's Allies meets at 11:00 AM on the third Wednesday of each month; our next rosary will be held on Wednesday, February 19, in the Cathedral. We will be offering the rosary for the sick and dying of the parish and those on the prayer list in our bulletin. This ministry is open to all, men and women! If you are interested in praying with us - simply come and join us in the Cathedral!

## BAPTISM SEMINAR – MARCH 3, 2020

The next Baptism Seminar will be held March 3 at 6:30pm in the convent. These seminars are held on a monthly basis – the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month. First time parents and godparents are required to attend this seminar, which emphasizes the symbols of Baptism, the rite of Baptism, and the importance of faith in the life of both parents and godparents. Contact the rectory office at 876-6904 to sign up for the seminar or schedule a baptism.

## ST. FRANCIS DE SALES CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

### REGISTRATION – MARCH 2, 3, 4, 2020

St. Francis de Sales Cathedral School 2020-2021

#### Registration for New Students

**March 2** -Registered parishioners of St. Francis de Sales Cathedral Parish

**March 3** -Registered parishioners of other church parishes

**March 4** -Non-Catholic students

Registration begins at 8:00 a.m. in the main area of the Youth Center.



## FOOD FOR THE SPIRIT – MARCH 14, 2020

This ministry delivers meals to homebound of our parish the second Saturday of each month. The next delivery date is March 14, 2020.

A meal plan is emailed to all volunteers prior to the upcoming weekend and participants volunteer to cook one of various dishes, or bring bread, dessert, etc. The group meets and prepares the go-plates, adding various prayer cards or small gifts to deliver along with the meals in a nicely decorated bag!

Each volunteer then takes 2 or 3 meals to deliver to the various homes of those who are homebound or in need of food. Can you spare a couple of hours each month? Please consider helping – we are in need of volunteers, especially to help deliver the food. Contact Roxane Haydel at 985-381-3573 or roxane.haydel@gmail.com.

## WHEN FAITH CAUSES FAMILY FRICTION

by Dr. Ray Guarendi

Do you ever feel like raising kids in the faith is a losing battle? Or maybe your spouse wishes you weren't quite so religious. Concerns surrounding Christianity and faith can become touchy topics for today's families.

With equal doses of sound spiritual wisdom and good psychological perspective, Dr. Ray addresses the most common issues, such as:

- Kids asking, "Why do we have to go to church when Dad doesn't?"
- A spouse saying, "You're no fun anymore since you found God."
- Frustrated parents wondering, "How can we get our toddler to behave during Mass?"

Let Dr. Ray show you the guilt-free way to live your faith and share it peacefully with those you love.

**FORMED** Find this and more on FORMED. To sign up go to: go to our church website, <http://www.stfrancisdesaleshouma.org/>, click on FORMED, click on Register Now, enter the requested information including email and password (that you will create).

FORMED also has an app for Apple or Android mobile devices! Go to the App Store or the Google Play store to download the FORMED App.



## ST. JOSEPH ALTAR – MARCH 19 & 22, 2020

• Public viewing March 19, 2020 from 8:00am until 6:30pm

• March 19, 2020 - St. Joseph Mass 8:30am.

Celebrated by Bishop Fabre

o Blessing of the altar after 8:30am Mass followed by the Tupa-Tupa.

• The Altar will be closed March 20, & 21 and reopen on Sunday March 22 8:00am-6:00 pm

Our most sought after FIG COOKIES will be in abundance this year as well as our traditional Italian cookies, and other delicacies. Goodie bags filled with cookies and religious items will be in abundance along with fava beans and St. Joseph prayer cards. Our proceeds support Seminarians of our diocese and other charitable work.

## YOUTH NEWS

### ALL YOUTH ARE INVITED (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grades)

#### NEXT LIFE NIGHT – FEBRUARY 9, 2020

Life Nights are held in the Youth Center from 3:45pm-5:15pm and conclude with 5:30pm mass. If you are interested in assisting with Youth Formation & Confirmation, please contact Jane Lirette (985-856-5488; [LiretteBunch@yahoo.com](mailto:LiretteBunch@yahoo.com)) or Gina Danos (985-688-9696; [StFrancisHoumaYouthMinistry@gmail.com](mailto:StFrancisHoumaYouthMinistry@gmail.com))

#### SPRING 2020 LIFE NIGHTS

✠ February 9, 2020

✠ March 15, 2020

✠ March 29, 2020

✠ April 5, 2020

✠ April 26, 2020

✠ May 3, 2020

## COMMUNITY NEWS

### 20/20 Love Vision

#### A GATHERING OF SOCIAL MINISTERS - COME & LISTEN, LEARN, LOVE & LIVE - SATURDAY MARCH 7TH 2020

At the Pastoral Center - Starts with light breakfast at 8:30 am and ends at 3:30 pm. A hot grilled on-site hamburger lunch will be provided.

All volunteers who are involved in social ministry at the Church parish level and those who are discerning a ministry are welcome.

Speakers include Fr P.J Madden, Fr Joe Krafft, Deacon Kevin Carges, Matt Rousso and many more. To register please send an email to [psm@htdiocese.org](mailto:psm@htdiocese.org) or call 985-876-0490.

### RACIAL SOBRIETY:

#### BECOMING THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2020

Bishop Shelton J. Fabre, Christine Streams and Robert Gorman are hosting *Racial Sobriety: Becoming the Change You Want to See* Saturday, February 29 from 9–12:00 PM at the diocesan Pastoral Center in Schriever. Doors will open at 8:30 AM for breakfast, snacks and coffee.

This workshop is a follow-up to the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux's Listening Session on Racism that was held in March 2019 at the Pastoral Center. It is free and open to everyone, but attendance is limited. Pre-registration is required by visiting <https://htdiocese.org/day-of-racial-sobriety> or calling Very Rev. Alex Gaudet at (985) 850-3124, or by e-mailing [bishopsec@htdiocese.org](mailto:bishopsec@htdiocese.org).

See the link to the current (February 2020) Bayou Catholic story detailing more about the event. The story can be found on p.28 of the magazine. Bayou Catholic link: [https://issuu.com/htdiocese/docs/bayou\\_catholic\\_magazine\\_february\\_2020](https://issuu.com/htdiocese/docs/bayou_catholic_magazine_february_2020)

## PERMANENT DEACONS: CALLED TO SERVE JESUS

Men who believe they may have a vocational call to the permanent diaconate are invited to attend one of four information sessions to learn more about the formation process and what it means to serve as an ordained deacon of the Catholic Church. If you or someone you know would like more information please contact the Office of the Permanent Diaconate at (985) 850-3145.

## PILGRIMAGE TO LEBANON – JUNE 1-10, 2020

Come to what God calls His Sanctuary – Lebanon - with Father Paul Bergeron and Charbel Achkar. Visit the Cedars of Lebanon and Tyre, Sidon, and Cana, as well as many other places. To register or get more information, call Fr. Paul Bergeron at 985-856-7709 or Yvonne Lottinger at 985-873-8355.

## JOIN A PILGRIMAGE WITH FR. SIDNEY SPEAKS TO THE HOLY LAND - MAY 26 - JUNE 6, 2020

You are invited to join a 12 day Pilgrimage to the Holy Land where we will visit the humble home of Joachim and Anna where the Angel Gabriel visited Mary; the birth place of Jesus in Bethlehem; the Sea of Galilee; the house of Caiaphas where Jesus was held for trial; and the Antonia Fortress where Jesus was tried by Pilot; the site of the Crucifixion and the tomb where Jesus rose from the dead.

A brochure with Reservation Application is available in the vestibule or at the rectory, or contact Deacon Jerry Martinez at [pilgrimswayusa@aol.com](mailto:pilgrimswayusa@aol.com) or at 504-559-4495.

## JOIN A PILGRIMAGE TO TURKEY AND GREECE WITH FR. BEAU CHARBONNET - JUNE 21-25, 2020

Follow the Path of St. Paul through The Seven Cities of the Book of Revelation and Other Sites in Turkey and Greece with Fr. Beau Charbonnet. Starting from Istanbul (Constantinople), we travel south to visit the Seven Cities of the Book of Revelations, then take a cruise across the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas, stopping at Patmos, Rhodes, Crete, and Santorini, then tour Athens, Corinth, and Delphi. Contact Jerry Martinez (504) 559-4495 or [PilgrimsWayUSA@aol.com](mailto:PilgrimsWayUSA@aol.com) if interested.

## JOIN A PILGRIMAGE TO IRELAND WITH MSGR HARRY BUGLER - JULY 6 - 17, 2020

In response to previous Pilgrimages to Ireland with Fr. Harry, many people have expressed interest in joining him for a visit to his native Emerald Isle. Those who have traveled with Fr. Harry to Ireland know how special it is to have him on the journey. Jack our guide and Johnny our driver chat with Fr. Harry in their native Gaelic Irish language, and their Irish wit adds great joy to the pilgrimage that cannot be adequately described, it must be experienced.

Fr. Harry is hosting a meeting for anyone interested in the pilgrimage at St. Philip Neri Parish Center, 6500 Kawanee St., Metairie, LA at 7:00 PM on February 9, 2020. For more information contact Jerry Martinez, Pilgrim's Way by phone or text at 504-559-4495, or Email: [pilgrimswayusa@aol.com](mailto:pilgrimswayusa@aol.com).



The Archdiocese of New Orleans Retreat Center (5500 St. Mary St, Metairie, LA) has the following upcoming offerings:

**February 11** – Day of Prayer: Hearts Ablaze with the Fire of God's Love – Noel Delery

**February 28-March 1** – Living a Life of Faith: A Practical Guide to Christian Living – Rev. Dan Dorsey

**March 4-6** – Walking with Jesus: Lent 2020 – Rev. Lee Poche  
**To Sign up – 504-267-9604 or neworleansretreats.org**

## CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING: GLOBAL SOLIDARITY

We are one human family whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. Our love for all our sisters and brothers demands that we promote peace in a world surrounded by violence and conflict.

The parish is where the Church lives. Parishes are communities of faith, of action, and of hope. One of the most encouraging signs of the gospel at work in our midst is the vitality and quality of social justice ministries in our parishes. More and more, the social justice dimensions of our faith are moving from the fringes of parishes to become an integral part of local Catholic life.

— US Catholic Bishops, *Communities of Salt and Light*.

The gospel is a wonderful and positive statement about the Christian life. The followers of Jesus are both salt and light. Jesus reminds us that this wonderful gift, this marvelous vision, this great reality is not just a feeling or a gift for one's interior life. It is a gift for the whole world. It is something to be shared and lived out in our service of one another and our promotion of peace and justice in the world.

The first reading from Isaiah reminds us that this light involves not simply personal piety or religious enthusiasm. It involves service and solidarity with those in need. It is then that the light is most clear and bright. Share your bread with the hungry, shelter the oppressed and the homeless; clothe the naked when you see them, and do not turn your back on your own. Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your wound shall quickly be healed; and your vindication shall go before you.

Furthermore, Isaiah points out that it involves more than service to the poor and needy. It involves removing oppression. I suppose today, we would say that it involves working for social change and liberation for the entire world. It involves awareness of the important issues in our world, social analysis, and learning from those who live the experience of injustice. It involves courageous work for justice and for the transformation of society.

## FLOWERS HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE AT MASS

By Philip Kosloski

The use of flowers contains multiple levels of spiritual symbolism that should not be forgotten.

In many Catholic churches, flowers are the most commonly used decorations in the sanctuary. They can be found surrounding the altar at Mass, or in front of statues and other prominent works of art.

While they might seem like an "afterthought," the Church actually has distinct rules and regulations regarding flowers and makes use of them for specific spiritual symbolism.

For example, the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* explains, "Floral decoration should always show moderation and be arranged around the altar rather than on the altar table." Additionally, "During Advent the floral decoration of the altar should be marked by a moderation suited to the character of this time of year, without expressing in anticipation the full joy of the Nativity of the Lord. During Lent it is forbidden for the altar to be decorated with flowers. Exceptions, however, are Laetare Sunday (Fourth Sunday of Lent), Solemnities, and Feasts."

In this aspect, flowers are meant to express joy, and is why they are restricted during the somber seasons of Advent and Lent. Additionally, flowers serve the purpose of reminding us of God's creation and the beauty of his handiwork. Nikolaus Gihl in his book, *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*, elaborates on this spiritual meaning.

A holy religious, the Capuchin Francis Borgia, used to say: "God has left us from Paradise three things: the stars, the flowers and the eyes of a child." In fact, flowers have in God's creation a place entirely their own; they are on the globe of the earth what the stars are in the canopy of heaven — uneffaced traces of a former world, the earthly Paradise, the least affected by the curse of sin. In the splendor of their colors, in their fragrance, they are revelations of the beauty and goodness of God, emblems of His benevolence, images of His first, true designs (Isa. 25, 1)

Flowers also remind us of the spiritual life and the virtues we should acquire within our hearts.

Flowers also symbolize those supernatural prerogatives, graces and virtues with which the soul should be adorned; for the saints bloom as the lily and they are in the presence of God as the odor of balsam. Flowers, by reason of their freshness and beauty which they receive from the sun and which they turn towards it, are emblems of that innocence and holiness we derive from Christ, the Sun of Justice, and with which we again glorify Him as the Sun of our spiritual life. — The flowers on the altar signify, moreover, that the blossoms of grace, prayer and virtue unfold in the supernatural light and in the heavenly warmth, which radiates from the sun of the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

The next time you attend Mass and see flowers adorn the sanctuary, recall the multiple levels of symbolism and raise your heart to God as you enter into the celebration of the Eucharist.