The Son of Man is Coming at an Hour You do not expect Luke 12:40

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
August 11, 2019
Sabbath Switch-Off -- I began to notice that Sunday was becoming just another day of work, not a day of rest, and certainly not a day of rest to be kept holy. So I decided it was time to digitally disconnect. In hindsight, perhaps, it was really not a day of rest to be kept holy.

—from "Pray for our infirmed and homebound"

Pancake Breakfast -- A FREE Pancake Breakfast will be held next Sunday after the 9 a.m. Mass in O’Connell Hall sponsored by the Knights of Columbus. All are welcome!

Financial Stewardship
For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Report for August 4, 2019
464 donors; 1,403 envelopes mailed (33%)

Weekly Offertory $11,456
Weekly Off. Online (164 donors) $2,057
Food Bank $1,268
Parish Share 2019 $332
Total Collection $15,113
Over/(Under) Weekly Off. Budget $ to be determined
Over/(Under) Annual Off. Budget to Date $ to be determined
First Sunday of August 2018 $14,985
Parish Share 2019 Year-to-date $63,775

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Pentecost 1998, Pope St. John Paul II published the apostolic letter Dies Domini, on keeping the Lord’s Day holy. Twenty years on, it is more pertinent than ever — and never has its message been more urgent. Dies Domini views Sunday rest as the means to see life in proper perspective. And this means taking the time to “see the true face of the people with whom we live” — not “face time” on a screen but the human faces of those around us. Pope John Paul II reminds us that it is essential that free time, especially on Sundays, should “offer spiritual enrichment, greater freedom, opportunities for contemplation and fraternal communion.” Interestingly, the means he suggests to achieve this is shared forms of culture and entertainment. It is imperative, the apostolic letter claims, that these cultural entertainments “must be in keeping with a life lived in obedience to the precepts of the Gospel. Sunday rest then becomes prophetic, affirming not only the absolute primacy of God, but also the primacy and dignity of the person.” It is in and through this recreation that Christians anticipate “the new heavens” and the “new earth,” in which liberation from slavery will be final and complete.” By so living, Sunday becomes not just the Christian “day of the Lord” but, in the truest sense, “the day of man as well.” Sunday is more than just a Sabbath day of rest, though. For Christians it is “the weekly Easter” (Dies Domini). Pope John Paul maintains that Sunday “reveals the meaning of time” and, with it, the hope to which we look forward at the end of time itself. In keeping Sunday holy, therefore, the Christian witnesses to this reality “so that every stage of human history will be upheld by hope.” When I first “digitally disconnected” on Sunday, initially at least, such a rupture left me feeling lost, but I persisted. And, week after week, I began to notice that Saturday nights started to take on an unexpected excitement, while finding myself looking forward to this digital-free day. On the natural level, Sundays were transformed, becoming by far the most relaxing and enjoyable day of the week. On a supernatural level, this quiet stillness brought me back to pondering the Sabbath. Seemingly effortlessly, my rest was becoming prayer — a day resting in the Risen Lord. (K.V. Turley, National Catholic Register)
Catholic Men’s Fellowship Meeting -- The next meeting of the SFC Catholic Men’s Fellowship will be Saturday, August 17, 2019 in Sacred Heart Hall at 9 a.m. All men are welcome! Please contact Deacon Joe or Kevin Garrett for more information.

Merchandise Bingo -- Monday, August 19, at 7 p.m. in O’Connell Hall, sponsored by the Christian Mothers of St. Frances Cabrini Parish in Center Twp. Silent auction, door prizes and lunch are part of an evening of fun!

Attention New And Existing Volunteers in Church Ministries -- St. Frances Cabrini will be hosting two workshops required for Diocesan clearances. Protecting God's Children Workshop is a 3-hr training for all volunteers in parish ministries which include the choir, lectors, Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, ushers, greeters, preschool, faith formation for children, high school youth ministry, adult altar servers and the kitchen. This workshop is scheduled for Saturday, September 7, in O'Connell Hall from 9 a.m. until noon. Call to register at 724-774-4888 if you have not attended this workshop.

A 3-hr workshop for training of Mandated Reporters is scheduled at St. Frances Cabrini on Saturday, October 5, in O'Connell Hall from 9 a.m. until noon. This workshop is required for all volunteers who work directly with children which include all volunteers in the faith formation for children (CCD), preschool and high school youth ministry. Call to register at 724-774-4888.

New Parishioners
Welcome! We are excited to have you join our parish family!

We Warmly Welcome Our Newest Parishioners -- Mr. & Mrs. Phillip & Patti (Sumy) Calvin and grandson, Aiden. When you get the chance to meet them, please extend a hearty, personal greeting of welcome. Saint Frances Cabrini Parish now includes 1,898 families and 4,821 “souls” in our faith community.

Religious Education
Contact: Deanna Stacho 724-774-4888, stfrancesschl@comcast.net

Registration for the 2019-2020 Catechetical Year is available on the Parish website, in the office and outside the office door. Please submit your registration as soon as possible. Preparation is in progress for the September 15 start of the school year.

Office Hours -- Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m.

Youth Ministry
Contact: Cory Bates, 724-987-0201, corybates80@yahoo.com

Youth Group -- Save the date! Special Youth Mass on Sunday, August 18, at 6 p.m. at St. Frances Cabrini.

Parish News
Contact: Parish Office 724-775-6363, info@sfcabrini.us

Newly Baptized in Christ: Lucca Domenic, son of Rossi & Erika (McCullough) Guadio. Let us pray for him and support and encourage Lucca in word and example as he grows in knowledge and love of God, and of our common Catholic faith.

Assumption Of The Blessed Virgin Mary -- Thursday, August 15, is the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, celebrating the entry of Mary into heaven, body and soul. The belief that Mary was “assumed” into heaven was defined as a dogma by Pope Pius II in 1950, in the Apostolic Constitution Munificentissimus Deus, (Most Bountiful God) but belief in the Assumption of Mary dates back to the earliest centuries of the Church.

Also, belief in the Assumption is also justified on theological grounds. The early Church fathers asserted that it was fitting that God should not allow Mary to suffer the corruption of death; Mary is therefore the “first fruits” of Jesus’ saving action. Masses for this holyday of obligation are:

4 p.m. (Wednesday) at St. Titus
5:30 p.m. (Wednesday at St. John the Baptist
6:30 p.m. (Wednesday) at St. Frances Cabrini
7 a.m. (Thursday) at St. Titus
8 a.m. (Thursday) at St. John the Baptist
8:30 a.m. (Thursday) at Our Lady of Fatima
12:10 p.m. (Thursday) at St. Frances Cabrini
7 p.m. (Thursday) at Our Lady of Fatima

Christian Mothers are invited to a joint meeting of our grouping Christian Mothers organizations with Fr. Joseph Tuscan, OFM, Cap. National Director of the Archconfraternity of Christian Mothers on Monday, September 9, at 6 PM Our Lady of Fatima’s Kohler Hall. The evening will include prayer, a picnic dinner, Fr. Joseph's address, and social time. Please RSVP to Margie-Jo Miller at 412-935-5121 or olofchristianmothers@comcast.net
Gift Card Thanks to the MB family for aiding Catholic education! The family needed new glasses, and they used J.C. Penney Optical. Last week the family purchased $700 of Giant Eagle gift cards from us, and used them to purchase $700 of J.C. Penney gift cards (earning $1.40 in fuel perks; with a 30 gallon fuel up, they saved $42 at the pump). The whole family is seeing better, including big dollar signs, and Catholic elementary education in our grouping got a boost. Thanks again for going the extra mile for us.

OLOF School Clean Up Day --Thanks so much to the roughly dozen people who responded to the call for assistance with OLOF School clean up day last Saturday. Three teachers demonstrated that they can also clean and paint; four parents and their family cut, planted, weeded and trimmed; clergy and clergy-to-be (David) had hands for "callouses not just chalices, toils not just oils." An OLOF parishioner showed herself a jack of all trades; and three from another parish in our grouping could easily get a job with Stanley Steamer. One of them commented "everyone was so welcoming when I walked in the building, and I felt a sense of contribution when I left. What a treasure we have in OLOF School. Good service to God and his children!" Thanks also to Jodi Patterson who did an outstanding job on the artwork on the classroom doors! She used her great talent to depict colorful scenes from the Bible, a different one on each door. (She must be a hockey fan as penguins are quite visible in Noah's Ark!) This is also a good time to publicly thank the Knights and the Christian Mothers for their ongoing assistance at the School throughout the year. They act as "grandparents" to all of our students, lending a hand whenever and wherever needed. Thanks again. Most of the "to do" list was completed. If "cleanliness is next to godliness," Jesus is surely even more intensely present at OLOF School after Saturday's collaborative effort.

All women are invited to the Magnificat Pittsburgh prayer breakfast on August 24, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Double Tree by Hilton, Cranberry Twp. Nicole Abisinio, producer, actor, and film marketing executive, will speak about her conversion to Catholicism. Nicole had a life journey of success in Hollywood, working with movie and television stars even appearing in a movie with Bill Murray. But her life felt empty and worthless until she understood her identity in Christ and how much God loves her. She will share how God changed her, the struggles she faced in the film industry after her conversion, and how God taught her to use the media for His glory. Tickets cost $23. To register, call Deb, 412-736-7523 or Pam, 412-461-8906 or go to www.magnificatpittsburgh.org. The registration deadline is August 16.

Quigley Catholic High School is accepting applications for the positions of Head Cheer Coach and Head Girls Volleyball Coach for the 2019 – 2020 school year. Interested candidates should send a letter of interest, resume, and references to Matt Kuntz, Quigley Catholic Athletic Director, at ad@qchs.org.
Readings for the Week
August 11, 2019

Monday: Dt 10:12-22; Mt 17:22-27
Tuesday: Dt 31:1-8; Mt 18:1-5, 10, 12-14
Wednesday: Dt 34:1-2; Mt 18:15-20
Thursday: Vigil: 1 Chr 15:3-4, 15-16; 16:1-2; 1 Cor 15:4b-57; Lk 11:27-28 Day: Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab; 1 Cor 15:20-27; Lk 1:39-56
Friday: Jos 24:1-13; Mt 19:3-12
Saturday: Jos 24:14-29; Mt 19:13-15
Sunday: Jer 38:4-6,8-10; Heb 12:1-4; Lk 12:49-53

Today’s Readings
First Reading -- Your ancestors waited in faith and courage for God’s promised summons (Wisdom 18: 6-9).
Psalm -- Blessed the people the Lord has chosen to be his own (Psalm 33).
Second Reading -- By faith Abraham sojourned in the promised land (Heb. 11:1-2, 8-19 [1-2, 8-12]).
Gospel -- You know not the day nor hour when the Son of Man will appear (Luke 12:32-48).

The English translation of the Psalm Responses from Lectionary for Mass (c) 1969, 1981, 1997, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.

Deepest Sympathy
to the family and friends of †Dawn DeLucca (SJB), †Nellie Ebel (ST), †Helen Stefanick (ST), †George Maksin (SJB), †Mike Giuffre (SJB), †Rachel Bush (ST) and †Kathleen Miller (ST).

May the angels lead them into paradise. May the martyrs come to welcome them and take them to the holy city, the new and eternal Jerusalem. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Sanctuary & Holy Family Candles
Contact: Parish Office

The Sanctuary Candle acknowledging the Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament resident in the tabernacle is burning this week in loving memory of †Caterina & †Domico DeFelice from Family. May the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar be praised, adored and loved in all the tabernacles of the world even until the end of time.

The Holy Family Candle is burning this week in loving memory of †Carol Ann Rabovsky from the Chaptes Family. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, in you we contemplate the splendor of true love, to you we turn with trust. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, bless us now and at the hour of our death.

Mass Intentions (MB: Fr. Martin; TS: Fr. Thomas; JM: Fr. Joachim; RA: Fr. Regis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>August 11 - Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>MB</td>
<td>9 a.m. †Jenny &amp; †Shaben Michael (Rita Unis)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MB</td>
<td>11:30 a.m. †Cynthia Elias (Husband and Children)</td>
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<td>Monday</td>
<td>August 12 - Weekday</td>
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<tr>
<td>JM</td>
<td>8:30 a.m. †Rose Ann Cindrich (Family)</td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>August 13 - Weekday</td>
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<td>RA</td>
<td>6:30 p.m. †Moser Family (Rose Martin)</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>August 14 - St. Maximilian Kolbe</td>
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<tr>
<td>MB</td>
<td>8:30 a.m. †Joseph Shahen (Shahen Family)</td>
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<td>MB</td>
<td>6:30 p.m. †Anita Gidwani (Family)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>August 16 - Weekday</td>
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<tr>
<td>MB</td>
<td>8:30 a.m. †Jason Bendekovic (Amy Abrams)</td>
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<td>Saturday</td>
<td>August 17 - Vigil: 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>JM</td>
<td>4:30 p.m. †Vincent Amendolia, B’day (Daughters)</td>
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<td>Sunday</td>
<td>August 18 - Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>TS</td>
<td>9 a.m. †Mary, †Victor &amp; †Charles Horvath (Family)</td>
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<tr>
<td>JM</td>
<td>11:30 a.m. †Emily Michael (Anne &amp; John Michael)</td>
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Our Lady of Fatima School
At fivë BELÖW. Whatever You Got Will Buy A Lot!
Visit us at www.fivebelow.com

Pre Tax Purchase Amount $________
Register #: 1 2 3 4 5 Associate Initials:________

Please don’t forget to bring this flyer to the event so that we get credit for your purchase!

Our Back to School Event Will Be Held On:
Date: August 16-18 (every Fri. - Sun.)
August 23-25 (every Fri. - Sun.)
Time: Sun: 10 am-7p
Mon thru Sat: 9 am- 9pm
Where:
115 Wagner Rd.
Monaca PA 15061

And 10% of the total dollars spent by our organization will be donated BACK to
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST, ST. TITUS, ST. FRANCES CABRINI AND OUR LADY OF FATIMA COMING TOGETHER AS ONE IN CHRIST FOR OUR...

MACH¹ YOUTH MASS

Be a part of the experience!
All are welcome to join us for our first monthly Youth Mass.
with contemporary Christian music by Debi and Nick Genovesi

SUNDAY, AUGUST 18 | 6 PM
ST. FRANCES CABRINI CHURCH

Afterwards, Fr. Joachim will be dishing out sweets during our "Sundaes on Sunday" social. A parent meeting will be held with Holly McIlwain, our Youth Ministry Program consultant, as we build the next level of youth ministry for our church.
Two friends meet in the street. The one man looked rather forlorn and down in the mouth. The other man asked, "Hey, how come you look like the whole world caved in?"

The sad fellow said, "Let me tell you. Three weeks ago, an uncle died and left me $10,000."

"I'm sorry to hear that, but a bit of good luck for you, eh?"

"Hold on, I'm just getting started. Two weeks ago, a cousin I never knew kicked the bucket and left me $20,000, free and clear."

"Well, you can't be disappointed with that!"

"Yep. But, last week my grandfather passed away. I inherited almost $100,000."

"Incredible... so how come you look so glum?"

"Well, this week...nothing!"

Two elderly ladies had been friends for many decades. Over the years they had shared all kinds of activities and adventures. Lately, their activities had been limited to meeting a few times a week to play cards.

One day they were playing cards when one looked at the other and said, "Now don't get mad at me....I know we've been friends for a long time....but I just can't think of your name! I've thought and thought, but I can't remember it. Please tell me what your name is." Her friend glared at her. For at least three minutes she just stared and glared at her. Finally she said, "How soon do you need to know?"

How many roads must a man walk down before he admits he’s lost?
**Sunday, Aug 11, 2019**  
**NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

**Ready, set, jump!**

In a secular age, some believers feel the need to “prove” the credibility of religion. If only we could dig up Noah’s Ark, produce Jesus’ swaddling clothes, or locate Martha’s dishes! Even better, if only consecrated hosts would bleed before the eyes of skeptics. Archeological evidence and miraculous interventions aside, a life of faith requires neither and isn’t bolstered by either. Faith is grounded in the future, not the past, and is more about where we place our hope rather than where we misplaced the Holy Grail. Faith is a flying lesson. Let go!

**TODAY’S READINGS:** Deuteronomy 31:1-8; Matthew 18:1-5, 10, 12-14 (413).  
“Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

**Monday, Aug 12, 2019**  
**MEMORIAL OF JANE FRANCES DE CHANTAL, RELIGIOUS**

**Make peace with the world**

Jesus said, “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s.” But at other times, he’s not so clear. What’s more, it’s not always clear what’s a worldly concern and what’s a godly one. No doubt Jane Frances de Chantal wrestled with this ambiguity. Left a widow in 1601, with four children to care for and an estate that she’d rescued from ruin, she found solace under the spiritual direction of Saint Francis de Sales. But even after her worldly affairs were put in order, Francis dissuaded her from jumping too quickly into the life of a nun. There was much good she still needed to do in the world. What in the world are you called to do?

**TODAY’S READINGS:** Deuteronomy 10:12-22; Matthew 17:22-27 (413).  
“‘The highest heavens belong to the Lord, your God, as well as the earth and everything on it.’”

**Tuesday, Aug 13, 2019**  
**MEMORIAL OF PONTIAN, POPE, AND HIPPOLYTUS, PRIEST, MARTYRS**

**No finger-pointing, please**

There is a lesson for us today in looking at the persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire that led to the deaths of Pontian, Hippolytus, and many more. When Rome burned, Nero blamed the Christians. As the city fell on hard times, Christians were easy targets. A minority group, with unfamiliar religious customs—what more was needed to scapegoat them? Accused of being disloyal foreigners, things got so out of hand that Christians were suspected of incest for calling each other brothers and sisters and even of cannibalism because they consumed the “body and blood” of their Savior. Next time a demagogue points a finger to vilify a whole group, ask if one day that finger might be pointed at you.

**TODAY’S READINGS:** Deuteronomy 31:1-8; Matthew 18:1-5, 10, 12-14 (414).  
“Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

**Wednesday, Aug 14, 2019**  
**MEMORIAL OF MAXIMILIAN KOLBE, PRIEST, MARTYR**

**Make a difference**

Maximilian Kolbe (1894-1941) was a Polish priest whose devotion to Mary was a central part of his life. He was a writer whose monthly columns expressed that devotion to a sizeable readership. Human like the rest of us, Maximillian sometimes was a difficult colleague, and initially his publications reflected some of the anti-Semitic rhetoric of his time and place. However, he never abandoned the work of promoting faith, citing indifference as the poison of the time. Sentenced to Auschwitz in 1941, he ultimately gave his life to save another prisoner. His was a martyrdom of love. Be mindful today of the toxin of indifference within and around you.

**TODAY’S READINGS:** Deuteronomy 34:1-12; Matthew 18:15-20 (415).  
“For where two or three are gathered together in my name . . . there I am in the midst of them.”

**Thursday, Aug 15, 2019**  
**SOLEMNITY OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

**Don’t assume faith is easy**

The Assumption of Mary is often portrayed in art in a blissful scene of cherubs transporting Mary, eyes cast upward and robes flowing majestically, up into the heavens. Beneath this image, however, is a life of grit and grace in which Mary lived the fullness of Christian discipleship. Mary hears, ponders, challenges, and receives the Word of God, allowing it to permeate her whole being. Her Assumption then is a symbol and a promise to each of us that our journey of discipleship is one destined for ultimate wholeness in God.

“Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled.”

**Friday, Aug 16, 2019**  
**MEMORIAL OF STEPHEN OF HUNGARY**

**Hail, holy order**

To some, Stephen of Hungary was an iron-fisted monarch who punished any hint of paganism among his people. To others, he was a grieving father who—having outlived his immediate family—spent the rest of his days washing the feet of paupers. Either would be great fodder for the high drama of a Hollywood screenplay. The reality? Stephen’s legacy stems from being an administrator. He created local dioceses for the successful establishment of the church in his country. His rule provided such a lasting peace that a route through Hungary became the preferred way for pilgrims to visit the Holy Land. We tend to bristle at “rules and regulations,” but when the motive behind them is good, more appreciation is perhaps in order.

**TODAY’S READINGS:** Joshua 24:1-13; Matthew 19:3-12 (417).  
“Whoever can accept this ought to accept it.”

**Saturday, Aug 17, 2019**  
**A tribute to touch**

Today’s gospel has Jesus placing his hands on children and praying for them. The simple gesture of “touch and prayer” can be profound because all humans crave a kind touch. Examples of “touch and prayer” abound. The sacraments are built on this combination. Some Christians hold hands during grace. In many Latin countries children routinely ask for a blessing from elders, who trace a cross on the child’s forehead as they pray. Can you bless somebody in your life today through the power of “touch and prayer”?

**TODAY’S READINGS:** Joshua 24:14-29; Matthew 19:13-15 (418).  
“Children were brought to Jesus that he might lay his hands on them and pray.”

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

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Jesus Brings the Kingdom with Him

Written by Br. John-Marmion Villa, BSC

Wisdom 18:6-9
Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19

A few years ago, I went to see the movie “Star Wars” on its opening night. This was to be an event like no other. The organization I was working for bought all the tickets for that evening’s showing. I was there with about 200 others, and the moment that the iconic John Williams theme started with the characteristic story line scrolling upwards on the screen, the theater was electric! There were shouts and applauses from everyone. We watched with great delight seeing our favorite intergalactic heroes appear.

A few weeks ago, I had the chance to visit St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York City. To my great surprise, a wedding was about to begin. There were twice as many tourists as wedding guests. I found myself off to the side, with a great view of the main aisle. Other tourists were thinking the same thing I was: I gotta get my phone out and take a video of the bride! The wedding party had just arrived, and the organist began playing the wedding march. A few moments later, I was able to see the bride walking solemnly down the aisle, escorted by her father. They met the groom at the foot of the altar, and the father-of-the bride gave his daughter away to her soon-to-be husband. The two then walked up the steps into the sanctuary.

What do these two familiar occasions have in common? You might be thinking to yourself, “An
eager anticipation.” If you were thinking that, you’re not too far off. But there’s one more step to take. An eager anticipation of what? The arrival.

Yes! The arrival ... of the movie starting ... of the bride meeting her groom. We've all been in situations like this, so it's not too far of a stretch to say that today's Gospel talks about the eager anticipation of the arrival of the kingdom. Throughout his Gospel (4:43, 6:20, 8:10, 10:9, to name a few), Luke talks about the kingdom of God as being present anytime Jesus is around. Jesus brings the kingdom with him! And not only that, today's Gospel says that we have all been given that kingdom.

That sounds a little strange to the modern ear, no doubt. When I think “kingdom,” I think medieval castles and the gallantry of knights and noble ladies. But Jesus’ kingdom isn’t like that. His kingdom can only be seen by faith. Did you know that word is used 5 times in this week's second reading. “Faith is the realization of what is hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Heb 11:1). This kind of faith is what is needed to see the kingdom of God here and now ... today, right where we are. It is this kind of faith that evokes that eager anticipation of the bridal procession or the start of the long-awaited movie.

If anyone else is like me, I need to learn how to make space in my life so that I can be more attuned to spiritual realities. My life can be so bombarded with all sorts of noise from the outside as well as the inside. I'm learning to slow down my life ... even when I am at home, or more so, when I am alone with the Lord in the solitude of prayer. This takes energy, courage, and discipline.

PRAYER
Lord, I believe in you.
I believe you are good.
I believe that I am secure in you,
that I am hidden in you
and no real harm can come to me
with you as my rock and my salvation.
I believe that you see me and you love me,
that I am treasured in your sight.
Help my unbelief.
Help that head knowledge become heart knowledge,
so that my actions reflect those truths
and not the lies the enemy throws at me.

— Prayer When Struggling with Doubt

Our spiritual lives have taken a back seat to reason and emotion, neither of which are bad in themselves. But faith comes from a place other than the mind and heart, though definitely connected to them. When we allow ourselves to really live by faith as described in Hebrews, then we begin to see the kingdom living within me and all around me. Who doesn't want more of that ... especially in today's world?

Br. John-Marmion Villa, BSC
NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, CYCLE C

11 Aug 2019

SUNDAY SUMMARY

Wisdom 18:6-9  The children of God keep vigil for the hour of divine action.

Psalm 33:1, 12, 18-19, 20-22  Those who hope in the Lord will be delivered from death.

Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19 or 11:1-2, 8-12  Because of his faith Abraham, as good as dead, fathered a nation.


The inner word

What’s in your heart?

Abraham obeyed because he trusted the one who bade him to have faith. It was not blind faith, but rather an experience of God as reliable that offered Abraham another way of seeing and evaluating. The Israelites on the first Passover night were able to believe because they, too, had experienced God as trustworthy.

- Have I experienced God as trustworthy, or do I keep my guard up?
- How would your life be different if you didn’t have faith in God?
- How would your life be different if your faith in God was absolute?

Exploring the word

The trustworthy steward

As any teacher or public speaker knows, the best way to deliver a message is to tell a story that drives the point memorably home. Rest assured that people will lose the handouts, shelve their notes, and forget the PowerPoint display in short order. But an evocative story has staying power. The longer it is savored, the more its meaning penetrates our understanding.

So it is not surprising to note how frequently biblical writers resort to storytelling as a mode of exhortation. Sure, there are long lists of laws, rules, and moral instructions in the Bible, too, but how familiar is the average churchgoer with Leviticus and Sirach? The best known and most well-loved part of the scripture is the Book of Genesis. That’s where the stories are. That’s where the action is and where listening becomes learning.

In today’s readings, we see that the writer of Wisdom appeals to the great story of the Exodus to illustrate God’s special providence for the just, while the writer of Hebrews retells the exploits of Abraham to affirm the necessity for a vital faith. In the gospel, Jesus underscores a teaching on stewardship with contrasting parables about responsible and reprehensible servants. Though all three of these teachers were no doubt held in great esteem by their audiences, chances are their lessons might have slipped beyond their listeners—and any future disciples—if they had relied on a thesis statement alone.

The holy children of the good

Times were hard in Egypt as Jacob’s children languished in slavery. If you read the account of their trials in the Book of Exodus, you know that the people of God were not fervently awaiting their deliverance at
the hand of the Almighty. They definitely wanted to be released from their chains, but they lacked a
communal experience of the divine to rally around in sacred memory. On the night of Passover, however,
all of that changed. From that night on, they were a people with a story to tell, a ritual to repeat, and an
experience to count on. The nation that would emerge from Passover night would become the stewards
of holy memory, recalling the story for each new generation: “Why is this night different from every other
night?”

Christians, too, are stewards of the stories of salvation, not just the climactic good news of the gospel but
of all the experiences of God’s people leading up to it as well. This is why we recount both storylines—Old
and New Testaments, Hebrew and Christian scripture—in our liturgies. This practice dates from the first
century of the church, when Judaism and Christianity were by no means distinct identities. The Letter to
the Hebrews demonstrates what this dual religious consciousness was like. The writer intertwines the
personalities of the ancient story and the contemporary witness of Christians with a seamless sensibility.
Abraham and Sarah—not to mention Moses, David, the judges, and the prophets—all acted in faith and
were rewarded for their trust in God. Yet none received the fullness of the promises they believed in, the
writer notes. How favored the Christian community is in its faith, to be the immediate beneficiaries of what
they hold true! Christ assumes, perfects, and fulfills the meaning of salvation history as a whole. The
ancient stories, far from being rejected or replaced, are illuminated with a new light.

The parables of Jesus

Jesus is rarely depicted as retelling the ancient stories. He knew other teachers were handling that end of
the business. Instead, he created stories to open new windows on human understanding. His parables
were memorable because they were fresh and contemporary. The folks in the crowds were familiar with
servants like the ones Jesus described: the fellow who is vigilant for his master’s arrival and has the
household organized to receive him, as well as the abusive servant who raids the kitchen and the liquor
cabinet, beats the men beneath his station, and takes liberties with the women. These and other
characters that Jesus described—a farmer sowing seed or a woman baking bread—were imbued with
meaning because of the tag ending that Jesus applied to these common scenes.

So Jesus effectively communicates two messages at once through the vehicle of story: one, the stated
teaching (e.g., “You must also be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come”),
and two, the implicit message that the truths of the reign of God are “hidden out in the open” of ordinary
experience.

The ancient stories that other teachers tell and retell remind us that God has worked in human history in a
great cooperation for the purpose of our salvation. These are proof texts we can use as ballast against
the tossing and turning of contemporary times, where God’s intervention may seem noticeably absent.
But the stories Jesus tells are not reminders so much as revealers. They lift the veil on our present
experiences to show us that God’s grace is active in every hour and is available with those who have
eyes to see.

Applying the word

Telling a modern tale of grace

What is the trick to opening up the parables for today’s audience? Some feel the stories of agrarian
culture or ancient social codes are no longer accessible to civilized urbanites. I personally doubt we are
that civilized. But to overcome the perceived lost worldview, we often deliver meticulous homilies about
the precise nature of sheep or fun facts to remember about first-century Judean households. This
approach can be instructive, but it relies on the notion of analogy, which parables are not. It also begs the
deeper issue: Is the homily to instruct or inspire? It would be closer to the tactic of Jesus to tell steward
stories of our own, about responsible and neglectful parents, or—at our own expense—nurturing or lazy
pastors, and how the reign of God comes to light through them. The stories have not changed much. Only
the roles get moved around to protect the perpetrators.

Related scripture links

Other heroes in Hebrews: Heb. 11:20-39
Common scenes in Lucan parables: 8:4-18, 10:29-37, 12:16-21, 13:6-9, 18-21, 14:7-24, 15:1-16:8, 16:19-
31, 18:1-14, 19:11-27
In other words

The Sunday gospel in everyday English

“Don’t be afraid of missing out. You’re my dearest friends! The Father wants to give you the very Kingdom itself.

“Be generous. Give to the poor. Get yourselves a bank that can’t go bankrupt, a bank in heaven far from bankrobbers, safe from embezzlers, a bank you can bank on. It’s obvious, isn’t it? The place where your treasure is, is the place you will most want to be, and end up being.

“Keep your shirts on; keep the lights on! Be like house servants waiting for their master to come back from his honeymoon, awake and ready to open the door when he arrives and knocks. Lucky the servants whom the master finds on watch! He’ll put on an apron, sit them at the table, and serve them a meal, sharing his wedding feast with them. It doesn’t matter what time of the night he arrives; they’re awake—and so blessed!

“You know that if the house owner had known what night the burglar was coming, he wouldn’t have stayed out late and left the place unlocked. So don’t you be slovenly and careless. Just when you don’t expect him, the Son of Man will show up.”

Peter said, “Master, are you telling this story just for us? Or is it for everybody?”

The Master said, “Let me ask you: Who is the dependable manager, full of common sense, that the master puts in charge of his staff to feed them well and on time? He is a blessed man if when the master shows up he’s doing his job. But if he says to himself, ‘The master is certainly taking his time,’ begins maltreating the servants and maids, throws parties for his friends, and gets drunk, the master will walk in when he least expects it, give him the thrashing of his life, and put him back in the kitchen peeling potatoes.

“The servant who knows what his master wants and ignores it, or insolently does whatever he pleases, will be thoroughly thrashed. But if he does a poor job through ignorance, he’ll get off with a slap on the hand. Great gifts mean great responsibilities; greater gifts, greater responsibilities” (from Luke 12).


Homily stories

This little house

After many years of condo living, I bought my first house. I didn’t know the first thing about taking care of a house—any house, even a new house, much less the very old one I got. While it’s been lots of fun turning a 100-year-old fixer-upper into my dream home, it’s also been much more work than I originally thought.

With an old house that needs repairs, you never know what might happen, so I’ve adjusted to expecting the unexpected. Thankfully nothing too bad has happened—the worst have been animal invasions, like a rabid raccoon that tore open my bedroom window screen while I was sleeping. Talk about entering like a thief in the night!

I keep working away on my house, diligently preparing it for my future, because I hope this is my forever home. I also simply try to enjoy it in the present, and the process of making it better and more beautiful.
The latter has been challenging because I’m a very tidy, organized control freak. I’ve learned from this project about living with chaos I can’t control, that good things come to those who wait.

Jennifer Tomshack

Jennifer Tomshack is a veteran journalist who has written and edited for numerous publications, including U.S. Catholic magazine. She has a master’s degree in journalism from Northwestern University and a bachelor’s degree in English from DePaul University.

Homily stories

Learning to wait

The whole day, even before sun-up, his son was chattering away. They were on their first fishing trip together and his son was excited. It soon became clear that the boy hadn’t had much experience being quiet. Most of his activities—even at home alone in his room—involved noise. His computer games were all noisy, his radio was always on, at school the work was often done in groups, and his basketball team was one noisy bunch.

And so the boy found it hard to be quiet. All the way in the car he chattered and asked questions. When they got to the lake other fishermen gave him the evil eye and paddled their boats away from the father and son team as fast as they were able. The whole day was one comment or question after another.

And so the father was not surprised when they arrived home and the boy continued his nonstop narrative, but this time he was filling his mother in on all that he had seen and heard. “It’s so quiet up there, Mom, and you can hear the birds singing and the bees buzzing and deer came right up to the shore and drank from the lake and we saw a hawk overhead and a fallen tree is a good place to catch bass and some fishermen don’t catch and release but we did and it’s important to be real quiet so you can pay attention to where the fish might be . . .”

Well, the lesson was heard; now all he needed was a bit more practice.

Tom McGrath

Tom McGrath is the vice president for product development at Loyola Press. He was a co-founder of TrueQuest Communications and, prior to that, director of publishing at Claretian Publications. He is author of Raising Faith-Filled Kids <http://www.loyolapress.com/raising-faith-filled-kids.htm> and The Meal Box <http://www.loyolapress.com/the-meal-box.htm>.

Homily stories

Keep your eyes and ears open

During the height of the Cold War in the ’50s when I was a child, every Tuesday morning at 10:30 the civil defense sirens would go off throughout Chicago. They were supposed to remind us of what we should do if there ever were to be an attack from the Soviet Union. But mostly, people ignored the sirens and life went on without ever skipping a beat.

But back in 1959 when the Chicago White Sox won the American League baseball pennant, an overexcited fire commissioner set the sirens off in celebration. It is probably an urban legend, but some say that a number of families got into their cars and drove far up north into Wisconsin to get away from the potential bombs and destruction before finding out the real reason for the sirens. We laugh at this now, but those were the days of family fallout shelters and movies about the world ending in nuclear war.

Now, sadly, we find ourselves forced to prepare for the violence of terrorism. So we wait in long lines at the airport and encounter heightened security in other places. We may not be able to stop everything, but we want to be prepared. And scripture advises us that we cannot control when our God will come for us, but we need to be prepared to hear the heavenly trumpet. (It probably won't be a siren.)
Father Dominic Grassi

Father Dominic Grassi is pastor of St. Gertrude Catholic Parish in Chicago and the author of several books, including Living the Mass with Joe Paprocki (Loyola Press, 2005). He is the 2017 recipient of the St. John XXIII Award, which is given by the Association of Chicago Priests for excellence in priestly ministry and for significant contributions to the life of the Church of Chicago.

Prayers

Penitential Act & Prayer of the Faithful

Penitential Act

Invitation

As the people of God, we ask for God’s loving mercy.

Invocations

- We can become trapped by money and possessions. Grant us the freedom generosity gives us. Lord, have mercy.
- We are not always ready to receive the Lord. Grant us a greater awareness of his presence. Christ, have mercy.
- We sometimes fail to welcome the gift of the kingdom of God. Grant us an increase of faith and trust. Lord, have mercy.

Prayer of the Faithful

The universal prayer

God has chosen us to be a people of God. In prayer we prepare ourselves to make the journey of faith.

- That all we look in hope, expectation, and trust for the kingdom of God among us, both now and to come, we pray to the Lord.
- That those who lead both honor to the best of their abilities the trust placed in them, and receive the support of those they faithfully serve, we pray to the Lord.
- That those returning to schools at this time of year have the faith to guide their knowledge, and the knowledge to deepen their faith, we pray to the Lord.

O Divine Master, we always seek to be your servant and welcome you. Welcome our prayers, and welcome us into our true homeland, your kingdom, where you live and reign, now and forever. Amen.

Quotes

Every experience God gives us . . . is the perfect preparation for the future that only he can see.
—Corrie ten Boom

A God will gird himself, bring his servants to table, and wait on them! Behold an unexpected inversion of things, a terrible reprimand to masters, a surprising reversal of subordination.
—Peter Chrysologus (406-450)

Not knowing when the dawn will come, I open every door.
—Emily Dickinson
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Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

"Faith is the realization of what is hoped for and evidence of things not seen."
Hebrews 11:1

Saint of the Week
St. Jane de Chantal

JANUARY 28, 1572 – DECEMBER 13, 1641
FEAST DATE: AUGUST 12

At 20, Jeanne-Francoise Fremyot of Dijon, France, married Baron Christophe de Rabutin-Chantal. They were happy, but after eight years she was widowed and left with four children. In 1604 St. Francis de Sales became her spiritual director; they collaborated on the founding of the Order of the Visitation of Holy Mary, designed for women unsuited for the more rigorous life of other religious communities. At her death there were about 80 Visitation convents. St. Vincent de Paul, a contemporary, called her “one of the holiest people I have ever met on this earth.”

The Third Commandment

The Third Commandment calls us to keep holy the Sabbath day. For Christians, the observance of the Sabbath is transferred to Sunday, the day that Jesus rose from the dead. God, through the Church, obliges us to make Sunday holy by participation in the Eucharist and by our being prayerfully reflective as far as possible. Sunday observance fulfills the interior law inscribed in the human heart to render to God visible and public worship as a sign of radical dependence upon God and as gratitude for all the blessings we have received.

Every seven days, the Church celebrates the Easter mystery. This tradition goes back to the time of the Apostles. It takes its origin from the actual day of Christ’s Resurrection. Sunday extends the celebration of Easter throughout the year. It is meant to be illumined by the glory of the Risen Christ. It makes present the new creation brought about by Christ.

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"Faith is the realization of what is hoped for and evidence of things not seen."
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Sunday also recalls the creation of the world. The Genesis account of creation, expressed in poetic style, is a hymn of awe and adoration of God in the presence of the immensity of
creation.

The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council explained how we should celebrate the Eucharist on Sunday, or its vigil on Saturday evening:

The Church, therefore, earnestly desires that Christ’s faithful, when present at this mystery of faith, should not be there as strangers or silent spectators. On the contrary, through a good understanding of the rites and prayers they should take part in the sacred action, conscious of what they are doing, with devotion and full collaboration. They should be instructed by God’s word and be nourished at the table of the Lord’s Body. They should give thanks to God. Offering the immaculate victim, not only through the hands of the priest, but also together with him, they should learn to offer themselves. Through Christ, the Mediator, they should be drawn day by day into ever more perfect union with God and with each other, so that finally God may be all in all. (SC, no. 48)

Our presence at Eucharist must be more than a passive experience of the work of the priest and the music from the choir. We should join actively in the worship, where everyone present pours out adoration of and love for God. The more we meditate upon what we are doing, the more we will worship in spirit and truth and benefit from the grace that flows from the Eucharist. We will grow in our love and worship of God as well as in respect and love for one another.
A fter the Christian religion obtained its freedom under the Roman emperor Constantine in the fourth century, civil laws were passed to limit unnecessary work on Sunday. The greatest beneficiaries were the poor who otherwise worked long hours every day of the week. Centuries later, at the height of the Industrial Revolution, sweatshops were established in large cities where men, women, and children worked fifteen hours a day, often on Sundays.

Today in some places in our country, those seven-day sweatshops have returned. This is both an injustice to the poor and also an abuse of Sunday rest, and we need to find ways to correct this. “God's action is a model for human action. If God 'rested and was refreshed' on the seventh day, man too ought to ‘rest’ and should let others, especially the poor, ‘be refreshed’” (CCC, no. 2172).

Millions of people in our culture deny themselves a day of rest. Exceptions are made for those who must work for the public good, but this is not the problem. Too many people are just as busy and exhausted on Sundays as they are on weekdays. For many, Sunday is neither a day of rest nor a time for worship.

Sunday rest puts our whole life into perspective. It helps us stand back from material concerns and reflect on spiritual values. Sunday rest allows us to look again at the wonders of nature and experience the harmony and peace placed there by God. It is a precious time for rediscovering the fundamental goodness of creation as it comes from God’s providential hand.

Sunday also provides the opportunity for families to be together and to engage in common activities. Weekday schedules often require members of the family to spend much time away from each other. Participation in the Eucharist and other activities can renew the bonds of love and unity.

Athletic events for young people have sometimes interfered with the Sunday Mass observance of Catholic youth. Until recently, Sunday morning was a sacred time in most communities.
and neighborhoods, set aside for church attendance. Before this is abandoned on behalf of sports activities or other unexpected intrusions, it is hoped that Catholic pastors and other Christian religious leaders, with the support of their congregations, may prevail on sponsors of athletic events to adapt their programs to the religious needs of youth.

A proper observance of Sunday can thus be a prophetic stance in our culture, offering a witness that is both wholesome and healing for the great number of people who need to be less frantic and more willing to let go and settle down to what best corresponds to their spiritual nature and yearnings.
**Who Me, Pray?... With Her?**

DOWN TO EARTH QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT PRAYING AS A COUPLE

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**Q.** Why bother?

**A.** As you probably know, 46-48% of marriages end in divorce.

**But did you also know that:**
For couples who worship together each Sunday only about 20% divorce. For couples who also regularly pray together at home marital stability is even greater. Praying together can be divorce insurance, but it sounds kind of awkward. Sure it's fine for priests and nuns or really holy people, but what about normal married couples?

**Q.** But we go to church on Sunday and say grace before meals. Isn’t that enough?

**A.** That’s great! Of course these prayer times are important and valuable, but they are different from couple prayer. There is a certain intimacy and vulnerability that comes from opening your heart to God in the presence of your spouse.

**Q.** OK, we might give it a try, but where do we start?

**A.** There is no wrong way to pray and the desire to try is prayer in itself. First, some preliminary decisions:
Decide a time. Presumably both of you are very busy. Isn’t everyone these days? So finding an agreeable, semi-reliable time is essential. After experimenting with several times of day my husband and I agreed on first thing in the morning (about 15 minutes before the first child is expected to awake). Since Jim is a morning person and I’m not, his job is to wake me and say it’s time.

Decide a place. Anywhere will do, but it’s nice to have a bible or whatever reading you plan to use handy. If clutter is endemic to your home at least find a place where you can cover it or turn your back on it. Personally, I like to have a window that I can look out of and see the sky. If it’s dark, lighting a candle can be inspiring.

Decide how often. Ideally, daily is the way to go since there is a rhythm and regularity to it. In our own marriage, however, we have made peace with a less than ideal but workable goal. We commit to weekdays since that’s more predictable than the weekends. We figure Mass takes care of Sunday. We also make exceptions for illness, being out of town, pregnancy (when almost any time felt nauseous), or unexpected interruptions like crying babies. It’s not perfect, but we feel we’re doing OK if we meet our bottom line of doing it more often than not. God wants our attention not our guilt.

Q. So what do we do once we’re sitting together?

A. There are many ways to pray depending on your style and preferences

Here are a few:

- Memorized prayers
- Reflection on today or tomorrow
- Reading scripture
- Guided meditation (from a book)
- Writing in a journal
- Reading an inspirational book
- Rosary or devotions
- Meditation on a spiritual theme
- Liturgy of the Hours
- Your own creation

Rank the above styles from 1 to 10 and find the ways that appeal to both of you.

Q. Hey, we’re not theologians. What do we do with the information above?

A. Keep it simple. After trying to be creative and experimenting with a variety of styles my husband and I found that for regular couple prayer to work for us it had to be very simple. Eventually we settled on the following format:

One Model – 5 Easy Steps

One spouse finds the scripture reading of the day
One opens the prayer with a phrase like “Lord, we come before you at the start of our day.”

Read the scripture out loud.
Sit in silence for awhile. (We may think about the scripture, the upcoming day and how we will live it out, or perhaps put some thoughts in a journal). Inevitably for me, some time is spent daydreaming. I’m not proud of this, but I would do you no favor to suggest that you fail when not fully concentrating. Sometimes I just offer up the distraction and figure I’m honoring God by the effort I made just to show up.

At the appointed ending time, each spouse makes a petition flowing from the silent prayer.

Q. Can you simplify “simple”?

A. How about after the alarm goes off (before you get out of bed) hold hands and offer a prayer for a good day, help with a particular problem, or thanksgiving. Likewise, at night, after turning off the light, hold hands and offer a prayer of thanks for anything that day.

Q. What if my spouse just isn’t into couple prayer? (S)he is a good person and we pray individually but we just aren’t going to be able to do it together.

A. Don’t beat yourself up over this. Sure couple prayer is good and can bring you closer together, but God’s love is bigger than any prayer form. Pray for each other in your own way.

Q. How do we find the Scripture of the day or other books of the Bible?

A. To find the daily readings, go to www.usccb.org/bible/readings

Susan Vogt is an author and speaker on marriage, parenting, and spirituality. Her website is SusanVogt.net.
The first name of this solemnity—was the Feast of Mary, Mother of God. Later, its name in the East carried over, the Dormition (or Falling Asleep) of Mary. In the West, it became known as the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

This solemnity celebrates the fact that Mary’s Assumption is “a pledge of the future participation of the members of the mystical Body of Christ in the paschal glory of the Risen Christ.” It shows that the Lord “reserves a munificent reward for his humble Servant because of her faithful cooperation with the divine plan, which is a destiny of fullness, happiness, glorification of her immaculate soul, her virginal body, perfect configuration to her Risen Son” (Directory, no. 180). The Mass has a proper vigil, and the solemnity replaces the Mass of the day when it occurs on a Sunday in Ordinary Time.

What does this all mean? On November 1, 1950, Pope Pius XII declared the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which the Church celebrates every year on August 15. Simply put, the dogma of the Assumption states that at the end of her life, the Blessed Virgin Mary was taken, body and soul, into Heaven.
While this event isn’t reflected in Sacred Scripture, it is clearly part of the Church’s earliest observance. In the sixth century, St. John Damascene wrote in one of his sermons, “Your sacred and happy soul, as nature will have it, was separated in death from your most blessed and immaculate body, and although the body was duly interred, it did not remain in the state of death, neither was it dissolved by decay; your most pure and sinless body was not left on earth, but you were transferred to your heavenly throne.”

Theologically speaking, death is often understood to be a consequence of original sin. Since Mary was conceived without Original Sin, some theologians have wondered if Mary died or if perhaps she was taken into Heaven without experiencing death. The Catechism of the Catholic Church doesn’t answer this question but simply states, “The most blessed Virgin Mary, when the course of her earthly life was completed, was taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven” (no. 974)

The Solemnity of the Assumption reminds us of the unique role that Mary served in the process of our salvation. Although she was without sin, we have the possibility of receiving God’s forgiveness for our sins through Christ. Her entry into Heaven prefigures our own hope of experiencing the same eternal life.

Ordinarily, the celebration of the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary is a holy day of obligation for Catholics, but when it falls on a Saturday or a Monday, that obligation to attend Mass is lifted.
Prayer to Begin a School Year/Semester

Blessed are you, Lord God,
Creator of body and mind and heart;
you have sent the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge
to guide your people in all their ways.

At the beginning of this new school year (or semester/term)
we implore your mercy:
bless the students, teachers, and staff of N.,
that together we may grow in faith, hope, and love
as we learn from you and each other
how to follow your Son Jesus.

Expand the horizons of our minds,
that we may grow in wisdom,
understanding, and knowledge;
deepen our commitment to seek the truth of your ways;
and enliven our faith to reach out to those in need.

Glory and praise to you, Lord God,
in the Church and in Christ Jesus forever and ever.

R/. Amen
Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina for the Nineteenth Week in Ordinary Time

We begin our prayer:
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Almighty ever-living God, whom, taught by the Holy Spirit, we dare to call our Father, bring, we pray, to perfection in our hearts the spirit of adoption as your sons and daughters, that we may merit to enter into the inheritance which you have promised. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

(Collect, Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time)

Reading (Lectio)
Read the following Scripture two or three times.

Jesus said to his disciples: “Do not be afraid any longer, little flock, for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your belongings and give alms. Provide money bags for yourselves that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven that no thief can reach nor moth destroy. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.

“Gird your loins and light your lamps and be like servants who await their master’s return from a wedding, ready to open immediately when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds vigilant on his arrival. Amen, I say to you, he will gird himself, have them recline at table, and proceed to wait on them. And should he come in the second or third watch and find them prepared in this way, blessed are those servants. Be sure of this: if the master of the house had known the hour when the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come.”

Then Peter said, “Lord, is this parable meant for us or for everyone?” And the Lord replied, “Who, then, is the faithful and prudent steward whom the master will put in charge of his servants to distribute the food allowance at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master on arrival finds doing so. Truly, I say to you, the master will put the servant in charge of all his property. But if that servant says to himself, ‘My master is delayed in coming,’ and begins to beat the menservants and the maidservants, to eat and drink and get drunk, then that servant’s master will come on an unexpected day and at an unknown hour and will punish the servant severely and assign him a place with the unfaithful. That servant who knew his master’s will but did not make preparations nor act in accord with his will shall be beaten severely; and the servant who was ignorant of his master’s will but acted in a way deserving of a severe beating shall be beaten only lightly. Much will be required
of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more.”

Meditation (Meditatio)
After the reading, take some time to reflect in silence on one or more of the following questions:

- What word or words in this passage caught your attention?
- What in this passage comforted you?
- What in this passage challenged you?

If practicing lectio divina as a family or in a group, after the reflection time, invite the participants to share their responses.

Prayer (Oratio)
Read the Scripture passage one more time. Bring to the Lord the praise, petition, or thanksgiving that the Word inspires in you.

Contemplation (Contemplatio)
Read the Scripture again, followed by this reflection:

What conversion of mind, heart, and life is the Lord asking of me?

Do not be afraid any longer, little flock, for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom. How does my hope in God’s kingdom dispel my fear? How can I help to build God’s kingdom?

You also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come. How am I preparing for Jesus’ return? How is God part of my vision for my future?

Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more. With what gifts has God entrusted me? How can I use these gifts to build God’s kingdom?

After a period of silent reflection and/or discussion, all recite the Lord’s Prayer and the following:

Closing Prayer:

Exult, you just, in the LORD; praise from the upright is fitting. Blessed the nation whose God is the LORD, the people he has chosen for his own inheritance.

See, the eyes of the LORD are upon those who fear him, upon those who hope for his kindness, To deliver them from death and preserve them in spite of famine.

Our soul waits for the LORD, who is our help and our shield. May your kindness, O LORD, be upon us who have put our hope in you.

(From Psalm 33)

Living the Word This Week

How can I make my life a gift for others in charity?

Explore ways to place your gifts at the service of the Church and of those in need.


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