

*JMJ*

Dear Parishioners,

In this Sunday's Gospel we find Jesus who, after withdrawing to the mountain, prays throughout the night. The Lord, having distanced himself from the people and the disciples, manifests his communion with the Father and the need to pray in solitude, far from the commotion of the world. This distancing, however, must not be seen as a lack of interest in individuals or trust in the Apostles. On the contrary, Matthew recounts, Jesus made the disciples get into the boat, "and go before him to the other side", where he would see them again. In the meantime the boat "was many furlongs distant from the land, beaten by the waves; for the wind was against them". And so in the fourth watch of the night [Jesus] came to them, walking on the sea"; the disciples were terrified, mistaking him for a ghost and "cried out for fear". They did not recognize him, they did not realize that it was the Lord.

Nonetheless Jesus reassured them: "Take heart, it is I; have no fear". This is an episode from which the Fathers of the Church drew a great wealth of meaning. The sea symbolizes this life and the instability of the visible world; the storm points to every kind of trial or difficulty that oppresses human beings. The boat, instead, represents the Church, built by Christ and steered by the Apostles. Jesus wanted to teach the disciples to bear life's adversities courageously, trusting in God, in the One who revealed himself to the Prophet Elijah on Mount Horeb "in a still small voice". The passage then continues with the action of the Apostle Peter, who, moved by an impulse of love for the Teacher, asks him to bid him to come to him, walking on the water. "But when he saw the wind [was strong], [Peter] was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, 'Lord, save me!'".

Saint Augustine, imagining that he was addressing the Apostle, commented: the Lord "leaned down and took you by the hand. With your strength alone you cannot rise. Hold tight to the hand of the One who reaches down to you", and he did not say this to Peter alone but also to us. Peter walks on the water, not by his own effort but rather through divine grace in which he believes. And when he was smitten by doubt, when he no longer fixed his gaze on Jesus but was frightened by the gale, when he failed to put full trust in the Teacher's words, it means that he was interiorly distancing himself from the Teacher and so risked sinking in the sea of life. So it is also for us: if we look only at ourselves we become dependent on the winds and can no longer pass through storms on the waters of life. The great thinker Romano Guardini wrote that the Lord "is always close, being at the root of our being. Yet we must experience our relationship with God between the poles of distance and closeness. By closeness we are strengthened, by distance we are put to the test".

Dear friends, the experience of the Prophet Elijah who heard God passing and the troubled faith of the Apostle Peter enable us to understand that even before we seek the Lord or invoke him, it is he himself who comes to meet us, who lowers Heaven to stretch out his hand to us and raise us to his heights; all he expects of us is that we trust totally in him, that we really take hold of his hand. Let us call on the Virgin Mary, model of total entrustment to God, so that amidst the plethora of anxieties, problems and difficulties which churn up the sea of our life, may our hearts resonate with the reassuring words of Jesus who also says to us "Take heart, it is I; have no fear!"; and may our faith in him grow.

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
*Father Newcomb*

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**The second collection this weekend, August 8th/9th  
is for the Church in Africa.  
Please give it your prayerful consideration.**

The Feast of the Assumption is Saturday, August 15th. It is not a holy day of obligation this year but we will have mass at 9am in the Church.

Manny, from Manny's Barber Shop in Port Jervis, is donating his time and talent to those who may need a haircut and not able to afford one.

If you or someone you know needs a FREE haircut please call Gina at St. Mary's Church (845) 856-8212 to reserve a time slot. No "Walk-ins". Date: Sunday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> Time: 10am-3pm. Be sure to arrive at your assigned time and practice proper social distancing.

St. Joseph's Table will resume on Friday, September 11th from 5pm until 7pm. Proper protocol and precautions including temperature scanning, and no more than four (4) people per table unless it is a family sitting together, will be in effect. If you would like to continue to volunteer please contact Deacon Rich at the parish office (845) 856-8212 or via email: [deacon@stmarysportjervis.com](mailto:deacon@stmarysportjervis.com).

Save the Date! We will have an Avon fundraiser beginning October 14! to raise funds for the bus to Washington, DC in January for the March for Life. More information forthcoming!

St. Mary's Little Lambs is now accepting applications for their 3 and 4 year old programs for the Fall registration. **Limited** full-time and half day programs are available. Contact Mary Carver, director (845) 858-4208 or email: [littlelambs@stmarysportjervis.com](mailto:littlelambs@stmarysportjervis.com) to set up an appointment to tour the school.

We have various Mass Intentions available. If you would like a Mass Intention for a loved one, living or deceased, please contact the parish office.

You may drop off Religious Education registration forms at the parish office Monday-Friday from 9:30 until 3 or during Religious Education office hours Tuesday and Thursday from 4pm-6pm.

Nexamp, a leading community solar provider, is committed to helping residents save money while being good stewards to the earth. Community solar is an extremely easy way to support local clean energy & save up to 10% on your electricity costs, without installing rooftop solar panels. No catch. No hidden fees. Just a smart way to reduce your electric bills & do right by your home and your community. Contact Miriam Stiefel via phone (201)638-3032 or email: [MiriamS@reflectediveES.com](mailto:MiriamS@reflectediveES.com) if you would like to sign up or have any questions about all the available energy saving products.

## Announced Masses

- Monday, August 10 (Lawrence, deacon and martyr)**  
9:00am Peggy Klotz, by Patricia Long
- Tuesday, August 11 (Clare)**  
9:00am Vicky Vicchiariello, by Helen and Ed Eckes
- Wednesday, August 12 (Jane Frances de Chantal, religious)**  
9:00am Frank Caracciolo, by Agnes and Mary
- Thursday, August 13 (Pontian, pope & Hippolytus, priest, martyrs)**  
9:00am Peggy Klotz, by Pal and Sophie Rosso
- Saturday, August 15 (Assumption of the BVM)**  
9:00am Dr. Jane Brooks, by Bob Cole  
10:30am Jessica Judah, by Regina and Robert Vonbevern
- 4:00pm Luann McCarthy, by Mom
- Sunday, August 16**  
8:30am The parishioners of St. Mary's  
11:30am Eileen Darcy, by her family

**PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK:** Donald Wolff, Carol Gomillion, David Lisker, Nancy Parsons, Debi Cotugno, Michael Bello, Michael Barnes, William Lincoln, Jeannine Lincoln, James Lincoln, Charles Hildebrandt, Maureen Hildebrandt, Walter Szpakowicz, Carmella Balsamello, Aedan Roach, Robin Radzikowski, James Roach, Catherine Simons, Brendan Carmody, Nico Nicolette, Jaryd Viserta, Steven Gaesser, Kacey Warner, Sandra Ramsey, Lorraine Mannarino, Elizabeth Startup Jones, Mary Lynn Beam, Jose Ramos, Carmen Ramos, Mercedes Rodriguez, Jose Brito, Michael Medaglia, Barbara Straub, Tress Loughrey, Sal Careri, Cody Bain, Robert Witherow, Theresa Fuller, Allen Lynch, Enid Decker, Jackie Mundy, Chris Marion, III, Barbara Lindsay, Robert Ackerman, Wayne DeMarco, Ryan O'Connor, Elizabeth Brennan, Jerri Kavanaugh, Allan Garcia, Christine Haberzettl, Eric Hildebrandt, Rose Gotthardt, Georgia Gotthardt, John Olenick, John Hendrix, Stephen A. Odrechowski and fam., Scott Robertson, Eva Scopino, Jan Kaminski, Ana Anaya, Glenn Lagatol, Ellen Pentland, Shirley Simeone, Belinda Vazquez, Leticia Nuestro, Christina Nuestro, Vini Tankasali, Alice Drew, Catherine Scopino, and Amelia Quinn.

***The Cardinal's Appeal*** is still ongoing. Our goal is \$34,500. We have received pledges totaling \$18,855 from 94 donors. You can visit [Cardinalsappeal.org](http://Cardinalsappeal.org). All Donations can be mailed directly to : The Cardinal's Appeal PO Box 4020 NY, NY 10261. Our Parish number is **518**.

The collection for August 1st/2nd was \$5,877.  
Thank you for your continued generosity.