

PARISH BULLETIN***

FEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS – September 14, 2025

The parish schedule published herein continues to the weekend of October 5, 2025

As circumstances suggest, updates will be posted on the parish website.



Saint John XXIII Roman Catholic Church

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Office Hours: On designated afternoons until 4:00 pm
and at other times for pre-arranged appointments

SACRAMENT OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST

SUNDAY LITURGIES (MASSES)

Saturday 4:00 pm, Sunday 9:00 am and 11:45 am

WEEKDAY LITURGIES

As announced in the schedule in this bulletin.

ASSISTANCE TO THE SICK AND SHUT-IN

For emergencies, you may contact the parish office.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (CONFESSIONS)

*As circumstances permit, on Wednesday evenings,
on Friday afternoons or by appointment.*

PARISH PASTORAL TEAM

Pastor: Reverend Fr. Robert Polz

204-832-7335 rpolz.stjohnxxiii@gmail.com

Custodian: José Barrera

204-888-9340

Pastoral Assistant: Sharon Camier

204-832-7206 scamier.stjohnxxiii@gmail.com

Music Ministry: Donna Vendramelli

204-888-8200 d_vendramelli@mymts.net

Trustee: William Gould

204-832-7175 william.d.gould@gmail.com

Building and Maintenance Chair: Brad McKay

204-795-6788 br.mckay@outlook.com

Trustee: Derek Lobo

204-832-7175 dereklobo73@gmail.com

Parish Pastoral Council Facilitator: Laurette Burch

204-885-6988 burchd@mymts.net

FAITH FORMATION:

Contact our Pastoral Assistant (Sharon) for further information concerning catechism materials for lessons to take place in the home setting and/or at church on Sunday mornings as circumstances permit.

SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION (BAPTISM, CONFIRMATION, EUCHARIST): Contact our Pastoral Assistant for further information.

SACRAMENT OF THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK: Contact the Pastor (Fr. Robert).

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE: Arrangements for preparation and celebration should be made at least six months in advance.

CELEBRATION OF CHRISTIAN FUNERALS: Contact the parish office before finalizing arrangements with funeral directors.

PARISH FAITH FORMATION 2025 – 2026

Catechism Classes for children and youth

The beginning of the school year also marks the resumption of catechetical programs in most parishes. Once again we have ordered the *Pflaum Gospel Weeklies* liturgically-based faith formation program that provides weekly handouts with a short description of the Sunday Gospel plus suggested activities and discussion starters for each age level. As many will recall, this faith formation program has materials divided into the following age groups: SEEDS (Preschool), PROMISE (Kindergarten – Grade 1), GOOD NEWS (Grades 2-3), VENTURE (GRADES 4-6) and VISIONS (Grades 7-8 and up).

Those who would like their children to take part in our program are asked to submit a completed **REGISTRATION FORM** asap for each child so we can prepare adequate materials for regular catechetical lessons to be done in the parish hall on Sunday mornings at 10:15 a.m. and, as circumstances suggest, in the home setting. **THANK YOU** to parents who have already registered their children for parish catechism classes.

FURTHER REGISTRATIONS WILL BE TAKEN at the main counter in the parish office on Sunday, September 21st from 10:00 am to 11:15 am and on Sunday, September 28th from 10:00 am to 10:30 am. If materials arrive and all goes as planned, in-person catechetical sessions will begin on Sunday morning, October 5th at 10:15 am.

Designated registration fees help defray some of the costs of running our faith formation and sacramental preparation programs. Given increased costs for materials, we continue to request a registration fee for each child/youth/candidate participating in our faith formation programs. Nevertheless, requested fees should in no way be considered a reason to refrain from enrolling for those persons and families for whom such fees would impose an undue hardship.

Preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Eucharist

Children who will be receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Eucharist in the spring of 2026 as a **PREREQUISITE SHOULD BE ENROLLED NOW** in our regular catechism program held on Sunday mornings. Later this year further details will be made available to parents/guardians about proximate preparation sessions for these two sacraments which will begin shortly after Christmas and will involve a mixture of lessons to be completed at church and at home.

Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation

The celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation for youth in our parish usually has taken place on a bi-annual basis. At this juncture, we have made no formal plans to prepare for the celebration of Confirmation in the spring of 2026. Nevertheless, if there is enough interest we could consider setting up a preparation program. In previous years, preparation sessions were held on designated Sunday afternoons from October through to May or June depending on the actual date for Confirmation assigned to our parish by the Archbishop's office. If your son or daughter is interested in preparing for the celebration of Confirmation in the spring of 2026, please contact the parish office as soon as possible to see what may be possible.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

How do I become Catholic?: Many avenues lead individuals to the Catholic Church. The journey of faith can be a winding road. Whatever path has led you to this time of searching or interest in becoming a baptized Christian or, if already baptized, to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church, the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is a process that could be Good News for you in your journey of faith. **Our parish will soon be starting up the RCIA process in our parish. Initial inquiry sessions will be held on WEDNESDAY EVENINGS. Please contact Sharon at the parish office and/or speak with Father Robert if you are interested in participating.** Our first session is scheduled to be held on **Wednesday, October 8, 2025 downstairs in room 9 at about 7:40 pm**, i.e. immediately following the 7:00 pm Wednesday evening liturgy.

CONCLUSION OF THE SEASON OF CREATION

**The Blessing of Animals will be held on
Saturday, October 4th at 6:00 pm**

The Season of Creation is an annual celebration which highlights our responsibility to care for the Earth, our common home, and its creatures. It starts on September 1st and ends with the Feast of Saint Francis on October 4th. In our parish, to mark the feast of Saint Francis of Assisi and the conclusion of the Season of Creation, a short prayer service will be held at 6:00 pm on Saturday evening, October 4th at the south door of Saint John XXIII Church. You are encouraged to bring your pets and other small animals to the church for a blessing.



SCHEDULE FOR SEPTEMBER 14 – OCTOBER 5, 2025

As circumstances suggest, the schedule published here may be subject to change.

Sunday, September 14	FEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS
4:00 pm Saturday	MASS – <i>Mary Capri+</i> , requested by <i>Bonnie Pelczar</i>
9:00 am	MASS (livestreamed) – “ <i>Pro populo</i> ” / Intentions of parishioners
10:00 am – 11:15 am	CATECHISM REGISTRATION (in the parish office)
11:45 am	MASS – <i>Roberta Florida+</i> , requested by <i>Sique family</i>
Monday, September 15	MEMORIAL: OUR LADY OF SORROWS
	Mass (offered in private) – <i>That the example of St. Kateri Tekakwitha may teach us to care for the gifts of Creation, requested by Janet Jack</i>
Tuesday, September 16	MEMORIAL: SAINT CORNELIUS, Pope, and SAINT CYPRIAN, Bishop, Martyrs
12:00 pm	Praying of the Angelus
12:10 pm	MASS – <i>Yoyyong Bessie Rodrigues+</i> , requested by <i>Tualla family</i>
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Office Hours – call or ring door buzzer for assistance
Wednesday, September 17	FERIAL
10:00 am – 4:00 pm	INTER-DIOCESAN ENGLISH RCIA CLERGY DIALOGUE – a gathering of clergy with Archbishop Albert LeGatt and Archbishop Murray Chatlain (This meeting will be held downstairs in St. John XXIII Parish Hall)
6:45 pm	OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP DEVOTIONS
7:00 pm	MASS – <i>Albert Issac+</i> , requested by <i>Linta Albert</i>
Thursday, September 18	FERIAL
11:00 am	FUNERAL MASS for <i>Gerardo Rendina+</i>
1:30 pm	Archdiocesan Church Governance Commission Meeting (downstairs in room 9)
Friday, September 19	FERIAL
12:00 pm	Praying of the Angelus
12:10 pm	MASS – <i>Paul Morris+ and Sylvia Johnson+</i> , requested by <i>Elsie Hardman</i>
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Office Hours – call or ring door buzzer for assistance
3:00 pm	Recitation of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy
Saturday, September 20	MEMORIAL: SAINT ANDREW KIM TAE-GON, Priest, PAUL CHONG HA-SANG, and COMPANIONS, Martyrs
10:30 am	PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL Meeting (downstairs in room 9)
2:30 pm – 3:30 pm	LEGION OF MARY Praesidium Meeting (downstairs in room 6)
4:00 pm	MASS for Sunday – <i>Mary Capri+</i> , requested by <i>Tannena Korolyk</i>
Sunday, September 21	TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
9:00 am	MASS (livestreamed) – “ <i>Pro populo</i> ” / Intentions of parishioners
10:00 am – 11:15 am	CATECHISM REGISTRATION (in the parish office)
11:45 am	MASS – <i>Albin Joseph Polz+</i> , requested by <i>family</i>

Let us remember in our prayers Archbishop Murray Chatlain and all the bishops of Canada who are gathering this week in Montréal, Québec, for the annual Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCC) Plenary Assembly.

Monday, September 22	FERIAL
	Mass (offered in private) – <i>Carl Starodub+</i> , requested by <i>Mary Starodub</i>
Tuesday, September 23	MEMORIAL: SAINT PIUS OF PIETRELCINA (PADRE PIO), Priest
1:00 pm	FUNERAL MASS for <i>Barry Eric Burke+</i> (Reception to follow downstairs in the parish hall)

Wednesday, September 24	FERIAL
6:45 pm	OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP DEVOTIONS
7:00 pm	MASS – Lailani Luna+, requested by Legion of Mary
Thursday, September 25	FERIAL
1:30 pm	Mass (offered in private) – Remedios Remolacio+, requested by Ronald Remolacio Fr. Robert will attend a Western Diocesan and Eparchial Coordinators of Ecumenism meeting
Friday, September 26	FEAST: SAINT JEAN DE BRÉBEUF and SAINT ISAAC JOGUES, Priests, and COMPANIONS, Martyrs, Secondary Patrons of Canada <i>The 2025 Jubilee of Catechists, September 26th to 28th, is a celebration to honour, inspire, and strengthen catechists in their ministry of faith formation throughout the Catholic Church</i>
12:00 noon	Fr. Robert is on-call for emergency sacramental ministry at Grace Hospital until 11:59 pm Monday
12:00 pm	Praying of the Angelus
12:10 pm	MASS – Pierre Daoust+, requested by his three daughters
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Office Hours – call or ring door buzzer for assistance
3:00 pm	Recitation of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy
Saturday, September 27	MEMORIAL: SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL, Priest
2:30 pm – 3:30 pm	LEGION OF MARY Praesidium Meeting (downstairs in room 6)
4:00 pm	MASS for Sunday – Intentions of Rose Marie Penner (birthday), req. by John & Loretta Penner
Sunday, September 28	TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME <i>Collection for the Needs of the Church in Canada</i> <i>(use special yellow offering envelope)</i>
9:00 am	MASS (livestreamed) – “Pro populo” / Intentions of parishioners
10:00 am – 10:30 am	CATECHISM REGISTRATION (in the parish office)
10:30 am – 11:15 am	Meeting of Catechists and Assisting Volunteers (downstairs in room 9)
11:45 am	MASS – Corazon Sique+, requested by Sigue family
<i>The Canadian Federation of Presbyteral Councils (CFPC) is holding its 2025 National Assembly this week here at St. John XXIII Parish. Priests from across Canada will be attending the Assembly. Members of our parish are welcome to join in the Eucharistic Celebrations as noted in the schedule below.</i>	
Monday, September 29	FEAST: SAINT MICHAEL, SAINT GABRIEL, SAINT RAPHAEL, Archangels
12:00 noon – 9:00 pm	Downstairs parish hall and room 9 reserved for the CFPC National Assembly
5:00 pm	MASS (Canadian Federation of Presbyteral Councils)
Tuesday, September 30	MEMORIAL: SAINT JEROME, Priest, Doctor <i>National Day for Truth and Reconciliation</i> <i>(N.B.: Office officially closed due to statutory holiday)</i>
7:30 am – 8:00 pm	Downstairs parish hall and room 9 reserved for the CFPC National Assembly
7:30 am	CFPC Morning Prayer
8:00 am	MASS (Canadian Federation of Presbyteral Councils)
Wednesday, October 1	MEMORIAL: SAINT THÉRÈSE OF THE CHILD JESUS, Virgin, Doctor
8:30 am – 12:00 noon	Downstairs parish hall and room 9 reserved for the CFPC National Assembly
8:30 am	CFPC Morning Prayer
<u>9:00 am</u>	MASS (Canadian Federation of Presbyteral Councils)
10:30 am	Fr. Robert will attend a Tribunal Judging Session at the Catholic Centre
6:45 pm	OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP DEVOTIONS
7:00 pm	MASS – Olesia Kowalsky+, requested by Elsie Hardman
Thursday, October 2	MEMORIAL: THE HOLY GUARDIAN ANGELS DAY 1 – NOVENA TO SAINT JOHN XXIII
8:30 am – 8:00 pm	Downstairs parish hall and room 9 reserved for the CFPC National Assembly
8:30 am	CFPC Morning Prayer
<u>9:00 am</u>	MASS (Canadian Federation of Presbyteral Councils)

Friday, October 3	FERIAL – FIRST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH DAY 2 – NOVENA TO SAINT JOHN XXIII
8:30 am – 12:00 noon	Downstairs parish hall and rooms 8 & 9 reserved for the CFPC National Assembly
8:30 am	CFPC Morning Prayer
<u>9:00 am</u>	MASS (Canadian Federation of Presbyteral Councils)
12:00 pm	Praying of the Angelus
12:10 pm	MASS – Monica Bird+, requested by Cecile Talas
12:45 pm – 3:45 pm	Adoration Time (<i>monstrance on altar in main worship space</i>)
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Office Hours – call or ring door buzzer for assistance
3:00 pm	Recitation of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy
3:45 pm	Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament
Saturday, October 4	MEMORIAL: SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI DAY 3 – NOVENA TO SAINT JOHN XXIII
11:00 am	Sharon Camier will attend an Archdiocesan Pastoral Council meeting
2:30 pm – 3:30 pm	LEGION OF MARY Praesidium Meeting (<i>downstairs in room 6</i>)
3:30 pm	RECITATION OF THE ROSARY in the church – all welcome to participate
4:00 pm	MASS for Sunday – Jordan Braun+, requested by Laurette and Doug Burch
6:00 pm	BLESSING OF ANIMALS (<i>at the south entrance of the church</i>)
Sunday, October 5	TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME 111th WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES DAY 4 – NOVENA TO SAINT JOHN XXIII
9:00 am	MASS (livestreamed) – Reynaldo Santos+, requested by Blaquera family
10:15 am – 11:15 am	CATECHISM CLASSES (<i>downstairs in the parish hall and classrooms</i>)
11:45 am	MASS – “Pro populo” / Intentions of parishioners

TABERNACLE LAMP OFFERING

September 14 – September 20	Joe and Virginia Guerrero+, requested by Alberto and Padua family
September 21 – September 27	Special intention for Archbishop Chatlain and all the Bishops of Canada
September 29 – October 4	Intentions of Fr. Robert Polz’s priestly ministry, requested by the parish vocation ministry team



If you wish to have the Tabernacle Lamp in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel of Saint John XXIII Church burn in memory of a loved one, to honour a special occasion, or for a particular intention, you may make arrangements through the Parish Office.

PLEASE PRAY for the loved ones of our community in need of healing and comfort:

Cathy Blaquera, Jean-Louis Charles, Betty Connor, René and Sue Gobeil, Bev and Steve Hewitt, Larry Kuyzk, Brett Lawrence, Kristy O’Toole, Lauran Peters, John Powell, Fr. Barry Schoonbaert, Jerome Strachan, Joe and Maria Wallack.

Please note that we continue the process of cleaning up our prayer list. If you wish your name or any of your loved ones to be included in our revised list, please notify the parish office. Be sure to obtain the consent of persons concerned before submitting their names.



PUBLIC RECITATION OF THE ROSARY

*During the month of October, the month of the Holy Rosary, join us for the communal recitation of the Rosary **every Saturday afternoon in Saint John XXIII Church beginning at 3:30 pm**, i.e. immediately before the 4:00 pm Mass.*

POPE’S PRAYER INTENTIONS 2025

FOR SEPTEMBER: *For our relationship with all of creation* – Let us pray that, inspired by Saint Francis, we might experience our interdependence with all creatures who are loved by God and worthy of love and respect.

FOR OCTOBER: *For collaboration between different religious traditions* – Let us pray that believers in different religious traditions might work together to defend and promote peace, justice and human fraternity.

Storytelling Gala in Support of Villa Rosa

Join the community of Villa Rosa for an unforgettable night on **September 18, 2025**. A delightful mix-and-mingle hour, an amazing auction, exquisite food stations, and carefully selected table spirits. Prepare to be moved as Villa Rosa Alumni share their powerful stories of triumph and transformation! [Click here to purchase tickets!](#)

Engaging a Catechist Heart: Pilgrims of Hope

Join us for the ONLINE Fall Formation 2025 as part of the ongoing Year of Jubilee, bringing together catechists, RCIA teams, and parish coordinators from the Archdioceses of Winnipeg and Saint-Boniface. This evening session will be held on **Wednesday, September 24, from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm**, with sign-in starting at 6:00 pm. To make it accessible to all, especially those in remote areas, the formation will be hosted online. We'll continue exploring the Jubilee theme while deepening our understanding of the RCIA process as a model for catechesis. Inspired by Pope Francis' words on hope, this session aims to nourish your heart and strengthen your journey as a pilgrim of faith. You'll receive a preparatory email on Monday with helpful details and a short reading. There is no cost to attend—this sponsored evening is our gift to you. [Register now to reserve your spot and join us in this enriching evening of formation and connection!](#) For more information, you may email khreizai@archsaintboniface.ca or call 204-594-0273.

Ado with Saint Carlo

You're invited to a special evening for youth and young adults filled with praise and worship, a powerful talk, and an inspiring multimedia presentation on the life of St. Carlo Acutis—the "Saint in Sneakers." Discover how this millennial, who loved soccer, video games, and computers, lived a life deeply rooted in his love for the Eucharist. The evening will also feature a Eucharistic Miracles exhibit with a guided reflection, the opportunity to venerate a relic of St. Carlo, and a time of Eucharistic Adoration to encounter Jesus Himself. Come and be inspired by the witness of a modern saint and grow deeper in your love for the Lord in the Eucharist! This event will take place on **September 28, 2025 at Mary, Mother of the Church**, 85 Kirkbridge Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5S7 from 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm. [Click here to learn more.](#)

Save the date: PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL WORKSHOPS

Hosted by the Archdiocese of Winnipeg Church Governance Commission, these workshops will serve as an opportunity for pastors and parish pastoral council members to review the updated norms, understand the Role of PPC members and how the PPC can best serve their parishes. Two dates available: **October 25, 2025 at Saint John XXIII Church**, 3390 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg and **November 8, 2025 at St. Augustine of Canterbury Church**, 327 4th Street, Brandon. Details and registration information to follow.

Marriage Milestone Anniversary Celebration

The Archdiocese of Winnipeg warmly invites all married couples celebrating a milestone wedding anniversary in 2025 to a special Mass of thanksgiving and renewal of vows in honour of their Sacrament of Matrimony during the **11:45 am Mass at Saint John XXIII Church on November 16, 2025**. His Grace, Archbishop Murray Chatlain, will preside at the celebration and offer a heartfelt blessing to couples marking anniversaries of 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, and on. This annual tradition, first introduced in our Archdiocese last year, is initiated by the Marriage and Family Life Synod Implementation Commission. Following the Mass, all are welcome to join a simple reception in the parish hall. Couples wishing to take part are kindly asked to register by Sunday, November 2, 2025. Registration can be completed by scanning the QR code on the poster or by visiting the [Archdiocese website at this link](#).

For other news and events in and around the Archdiocese of Winnipeg, go to: www.archwinnipeg.ca

Reflection for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross – September 14, 2025

The sign at the center of our faith

Teachers should know more than their students. I think most of us hope that the people who are training us in any capacity have more expertise than those whom they are mentoring. But we've probably all taken courses in which we found out that our teachers were posers, or we've held jobs in which our supervisors had less expertise than we did.

Nicodemus has such a credibility gap. He's a teacher of the people, a member of the Sanhedrin. Yet after hearing Jesus, Nicodemus realizes he's discovered a teacher who knows more than he does. And when Jesus tells him that the way to all truth includes being "born again," Nicodemus misunderstands him, imagining an impossible second physical birth. Nicodemus should not have been so uncomprehending: Judaism itself expected a second birth from those attracted to its teachings. The fact that Nicodemus questions this image implies that he's not been doing his homework.

Yet there's something redeemable about Nicodemus. He keeps coming back to Jesus even though under cover of darkness, afraid to be known as a disciple. He may be ignorant, but at least he knows that he does not know—which puts him far ahead of the unthinking mobs in the streets. Jesus tells him that second birth means that he has to start over, from scratch, a new beginning, and Nicodemus is prepared to try. This puts him head and shoulders above the multitudes who listen to Jesus politely for an afternoon, chalk up the experience as amusing or interesting, and return to their routines.

Those who stay, like Nicodemus, will have their ignorance challenged, their understanding broadened. They'll learn that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. They'll come to know that Jesus doesn't come to judge and condemn the world, but to rescue it. Those who hang around for the long haul will come to experience the sign at the center of great mystery: the cross of Christ. They will come to appreciate that a second birth is also a form of death to the old way of seeing and believing and behaving. The cross changes everything. It makes the strange specter of death into an ally toward fuller, more abundant life.

Saint Paul, the best posthumous pupil Jesus ever had, seemed to be born again in a single encounter with the Risen Lord. He perceived how humility leads naturally to glory, how death is the doorway to life. Paul, who, unlike his fellow Pharisee Nicodemus, probably never met the human Jesus nor saw the cross of Jesus, unpacked its tremendous significance and confessed his allegiance to its great saving mystery. If Nicodemus had been born again, he might have crept out of the shadows and become a memorable teacher of the faith. We might be reading his letters to the church today. — *Alice Camille*

“There is no evil to be faced that Christ does not face with us.

There is no enemy that Christ has not already conquered.

There is no cross to bear that Christ has not already borne for us, and does not now bear with us.”

—Saint John Paul II, pope

Reflection for the Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time – September 21, 2025

Learning the new math

Pedagogy is an ugly word to use at the start of a homily. Better to talk about the way we learn and how it shapes what we learn. It's Catechetical Sunday, not exactly a church feast but a significant feature on the landscape of religious understanding. It's a time to remind ourselves that when it comes to religious education, none of us ever graduate. Religious education gets pegged as something that happens to parochial school children or in Confirmation classes. It's something new parents are forced into to get their kids baptized. Certainly religion teachers and DREs offer a tremendous service to our community in their careful presentation of the faith.

But have you considered how the presider is also a catechist, as is the preacher? Liturgy is the most important catechism of the church because it's the one everyone learns just by showing up. We learn by saying our part and attending to the responses. But we also learn from songs, gestures, the movement of the action from the Sign of the Cross to the Act of Contrition, from word to sacrament, from responsorial psalm of praise to silent prayer of thanksgiving after Communion. While the homilist's primary motive is not catechetical, a little "stealth catechesis" once a while doesn't hurt.

Liturgy and sacrament are great teachers. So is the moral life as a whole. Practice makes perfect, and even those of us who aim much lower than perfection still learn a lot from every attempt we make to love better, forgive more, fear and judge less, be more generous. Environment shapes our learning, too. Remember all the posters in your early classrooms? The alphabet and numbers running colorfully around the room? Catholic environment is composed of words of grace and images of holiness. If you doubt it, try putting a crucifix in every room of your home. Erect a small prayer shrine in a corner. Post your favorite scripture verse on the fridge.

Of course it's good to make conscious choices for adult learning, too. Read a Catholic book; for suggestions, check out the catholicsread.org website or visit the nearest Catholic bookstore. Attend a retreat or parish workshop. Join a faith-sharing group. Subscribe to a Catholic magazine, paper, or news site. Find out what the bishops really said; don't settle only for media reports.

Is a commercial for religious education necessary? Yes, and biblical. We know that when it comes to how grace operates in the world, God doesn't add things up as we do. A duplicitous steward may show more spunk than a disciple of Jesus. If we want to learn the new math, we had better do our homework. — *Alice Camille*

“A life is either all spiritual or not spiritual at all. No man can serve two masters.

Your life is shaped by the end you live for. You are made in the image of what you desire.”

—Father Thomas Merton, O.C.S.O.

Reflection for the Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time – September 28, 2025

To hell in a very nice basket?

People in [North America] are among the most generous on Earth. We're also among the guiltiest: That is, we feel guilty about our many advantages. But are we actually guilty of anything besides success—and is it a sin, in the end, to be comfortable? That's the lurking suspicion that makes many of us uncomfortable. Somehow we've absorbed the idea that God doesn't like rich people.

Does the Bible make the case against the rich? On the contrary, it's easy to make a defense *for* the rich. "Blessing theology" fearlessly maintains that prosperity is evidence of virtue. Wealth, health, lots of children, and a long life are biblical signs of God's favor. It's a *quid pro quo* spirituality that's always been popular and remains intact despite the prevailing economic conditions. Its primary attraction is that it puts all the control for our quality of life in our hands. We know what to do to make God and ourselves happy in one fell swoop. Blessing theology is the best insurance policy you can buy.

But is it vaporware? In the poem by Edwin Arlington Robinson, Richard Cory glitters when he walks and still puts a bullet in his head. Otherwise physically healthy folks experience depression. People with umpteen children may not enjoy happy families. Not all who reach the age of 90 are glad they did. Material success and satisfaction are not birthed as twins. On the other hand, the mythical relationship between poverty and virtue is likewise fiction. In the parable of Lazarus we see no mention that the man covered with sores is morally superior to the rich man who barely notes him.

What bothers the prophet Amos (who's easily bothered) and what condemns Dives (Latin for "rich guy") is the same fault: not that people are prosperous but that prosperity has led to indifference. Amos never says that folks on beds of ivory chowing down on farm animals sin by doing so; that is not an indictment against Sealy Posturepedic or a manifesto of vegetarianism (Amos is both a shepherd and a tree farmer!). Nor does Jesus imply that Dives does badly in eternity for doing so well on Earth. The crime that enrages the prophets and consigns Dives to the netherworld is, simply, not caring. The poor suffered, and the comfortable changed the channel.

"I've got mine" can seem like a good life plan. We can extend that to "my family has theirs" or "our nation has ours," but it all comes down to the same dangerous scenario. You know that chasm between where Lazarus is and Dives wants to be in the end? Dives dug that with his own two hands. Too bad it never occurred to him to build a bridge instead. — Alice Camille

Alice Camille is a religious educator, scripture commentator, and author of many books including **This Transforming Word** and other titles found at alicecamille.com
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"Nothing is more fallacious than wealth. Today it is for thee; tomorrow it is against thee."

—Saint John Chrysostom

Saint John XXIII Parish Stewardship of Treasure

New parishioners are encouraged to contact the parish office to register with the parish and to arrange for pre-authorized debit or a box of regular offering envelopes.

If you prefer to donate via e-Transfer, go online and login to your online banking account. For name of recipient you may use **ST. JOHN XXIII PARISH** and be sure to use this **new email address: finance.stjohnxxiii@gmail.com** Transfers sent to finance.stjohnxxiii@gmail.com will be automatically deposited to the account of TRUSTEES OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH OF SAINT JOHN XXIII at RBC Royal Bank. When making your contribution via Interac e-Transfer through your financial institution, please be sure to INDICATE IN THE MESSAGE/MEMO line what your payment is for.

As well, we urge parishioners to continue their regular contributions to our capital campaign to help pay off the debt of the loans our parish has received from the Trustees of the RCAW Inc.

For further information, you may contact staff in the parish office and/or check out information published in previous parish bulletins. Copies are available for viewing on the parish website.

A sincere THANK YOU for your continued generosity and support of our parish and its ministries!

***"If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth,
who will entrust to you the true riches?" – Luke 16.11***