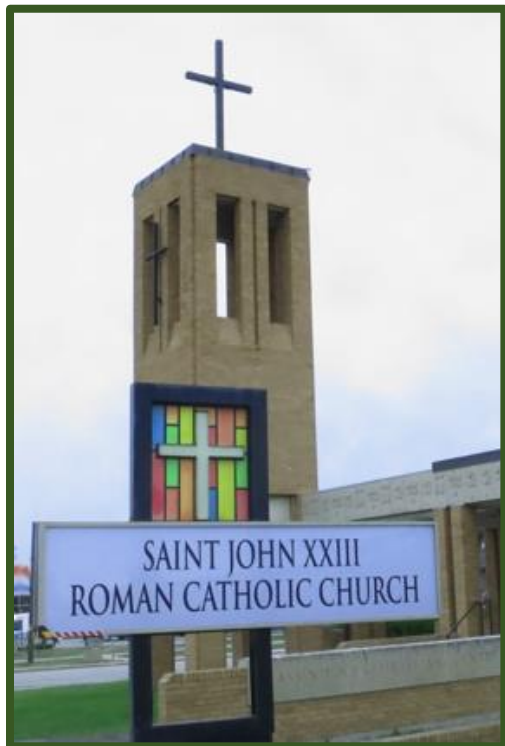


## PARISH BULLETIN

### FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – February 1, 2026

*The parish schedule herein continues to February 22, 2026*

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



### Saint John XXIII Roman Catholic Church

3390 Portage Avenue

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3K 0Z3

Telephone: 204-832-7175 • Fax: 204-885-2447

Email: [office.stjohnxxiii@gmail.com](mailto:office.stjohnxxiii@gmail.com)

Website: [www.johnxxiii.ca](http://www.johnxxiii.ca)

**Office Hours:** On designated afternoons 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm  
and at other times for pre-arranged appointments

#### SACRAMENT OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST

#### SUNDAY LITURGIES (MASSES)

Saturday 4:00 p.m., Sunday 9:00 a.m. and 11:45 a.m.

#### 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,  
Friday afternoons or by appointment.*

### PARISH PASTORAL TEAM

**Pastor: Reverend Fr. Robert Polz**

204-832-7335      [rpolz.stjohnxxiii@gmail.com](mailto:rpolz.stjohnxxiii@gmail.com)

**Custodian: José Barrera**

204-888-9340

**Pastoral Assistant: Sharon Camier**

204-832-7206      [scamier.stjohnxxiii@gmail.com](mailto:scamier.stjohnxxiii@gmail.com)

**Music Ministry: Donna Vendramelli**

204-888-8200      [d\\_vendramelli@mymts.net](mailto:d_vendramelli@mymts.net)

**Trustee: William Gould**

204-832-7175      [william.d.gould@gmail.com](mailto:william.d.gould@gmail.com)

**Parish Pastoral Council Facilitator: Laurette Burch**

204-885-6988      [burchd@mymts.net](mailto:burchd@mymts.net)

**Trustee: Derek Lobo**

204-832-7175      [dereklobo73@gmail.com](mailto:dereklobo73@gmail.com)

#### 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.



## COUNTDOWN TO LENT!

**Ash Wednesday this year is on February 18, 2026**

*Please bring last year's palms to church by February 15<sup>th</sup> so they may be burned in preparation for Ash Wednesday.*



**Ash Wednesday Mass with the distribution of ashes will be celebrated at 7:00 p.m. in Saint John XXIII Church.**

*As circumstances permit, we hope to livestream Ash Wednesday Mass via our parish YouTube channel.*

### **Preparation for First Reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist**



An introductory meeting with parents, guardians and children was held already on Sunday, January 25<sup>th</sup>. **If there are any other children who eligible to prepare for these sacraments, please contact our pastoral assistant, Sharon Camier, to register and to join us ASAP in these important preparation sessions which are being held between Masses on Sunday mornings.** So long as the children are properly prepared and circumstances permit, we plan to hold the Celebration of First Reconciliation on Friday, March 13, 2026, and our First Communion Celebration on Sunday, June 7, 2026, the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ.

From the Church's Code of Canon Law: **"It is primarily the duty of parents and of those who take their place, as it is the duty of the parish priest, to ensure that children who have reached the use of reason are properly prepared and, having made their sacramental confession, are nourished by this divine food as soon as possible. It is also the duty of the parish priest to see that children who have not reached the use of reason, or whom he has judged to be insufficiently disposed, do not come to holy communion."** (Canon 914)

Children who have "reached the use of reason" is generally understood to be about 7 years old and older. So these parish sacramental preparation sessions are meant for children who are already baptized and who are currently in Grade 2 or a higher grade in school. If you require further information and/or clarification, do not hesitate to contact Sharon Camier.

## LEGION OF MARY COLUMBAN DRIVE

**The Legion of Mary will be conducting a Columban Drive before and after Masses during the weekend of February 7 – 8, 2026.**

The "Columban Drive" for the Legion of Mary started as a recruitment strategy named after the Columban Fathers who first used it in England, involving a priest speaking at Masses about lay apostolate, parishioners signing up on cards, and legionaries following up to form new groups, becoming a key method for the Legion's global expansion to involve more laity in evangelization.

### **The Legion of Mary at Saint John XXIII Parish** *Virgin Most Faithful Praesidium*

The Legion of Mary is an international lay association of Catholics, whose members give service to the Church on a voluntary basis in almost every country around the globe. Inspired by the Holy Spirit and commissioned by the Blessed Mother, the Legionaries embark on a Catholic life of prayer and faithful service. Active members meet once a week to recite a set of prayers starting with the Rosary, to study the Bible, the Catechism, writings of the Saints and other Catholic literature. Planning and reporting of apostolate works are also discussed in the meetings.

**If you are a member of Saint John XXIII Parish and/or live in the area and are interested in becoming a member of the Legion of Mary, for more information you may contact: Gemma Minerva (President) – Telephone: 204-291-5320, Email: [gemma\\_minerva@yahoo.com](mailto:gemma_minerva@yahoo.com)**



*O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you!*

**Come and pray the WAY OF THE CROSS in Saint John XXIII Church at 7:00 pm on most Friday evenings of Lent. N.B.: We plan to hold a Lenten Retreat Evening on Friday, February 27<sup>th</sup>. Schedule and details forthcoming.**

# SCHEDULE FOR FEBRUARY 1 – 22, 2026

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

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Sunday, February 1</b><br>4:00 pm Saturday<br>9:00 am<br>10:15 am – 11:15 am<br>10:15 am – 11:15 am<br>11:45 am | <b>FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – “CALLED BY NAME SUNDAY”</b><br><b>MASS</b> – Jeffrey Penner+, Motuz family<br><b>MASS (livestream)</b> – Lilia Reyes+, requested by Federico Reyes<br><b>CATECHISM CLASSES</b> (downstairs in the parish hall and classrooms)<br><b>Sacramental Preparation Session for First Reconciliation</b> (room 9)<br><b>MASS</b> – “Pro populo” / Intentions of parishioners  |
| <b>Monday, February 2</b><br><br>7:00 pm   | <b>FEAST: THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD – “CANDLEMAS”</b><br><b>“WORLD DAY FOR CONSECRATED LIFE”</b><br><b>MASS</b> – Intention for vocations to the priesthood, diaconate, and consecrated life<br><b>Candles may be blessed at the beginning of Mass today</b>   |
| <b>Tuesday, February 3</b><br><br>1:00 pm – 4:00 pm  | <b>FERIAL</b><br>Mass (offered in private) – <i>Special intention</i><br><b>Office Hours</b> – call or ring door buzzer for assistance  |
| <b>Wednesday, February 4</b><br>6:45 pm<br>7:00 pm<br>7:40 pm  | <b>FERIAL</b><br><b>OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP DEVOTIONS</b><br><b>MASS</b> – Jordan Braun+ and Roland Gaudry+, requested by Madeleine Gaudry<br><b>Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults Session</b> (downstairs in room 9)   |
| <b>Thursday, February 5</b>  | <b>MEMORIAL: SAINT AGATHA, Virgin, Martyr</b><br>Mass (offered in private) – <i>Intention TBA</i>   |
| <b>Friday, February 6</b><br>12:00 pm<br>12:10 pm<br>12:45 pm – 3:45 pm<br>1:00 pm – 4:00 pm<br>3:00 pm<br>3:45 pm | <b>MEMORIAL: SAINT PAUL MIKI AND COMPANIONS, Martyrs – FIRST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH</b><br>Praying of the Angelus<br><b>MASS</b> – Valerie Stark+, requested by St. James Assiniboia CWL<br><b>Adoration Time</b> (monstrance on altar in main worship space)<br>Office Hours – call or ring door buzzer for assistance<br><b>Recitation of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy</b><br><b>Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament</b>   |
| <b>Saturday, February 7</b><br>2:30 pm – 3:30 pm<br>4:00 pm  | <b>FERIAL</b><br><b>LEGION OF MARY Praesidium Meeting</b> (downstairs in room 6)<br><b>MASS for Sunday</b> – George Bonnefoy+, requested by Janet and Wayne Hemingway   |
| <b>Sunday, February 8</b><br><br>9:00 am<br>10:15 am – 11:15 am<br>10:15 am – 11:15 am<br>11:45 am                 | <b>FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</b><br><b>LEGION OF MARY COLUMBAN DRIVE (MEMBERSHIP DRIVE)</b><br><b>MASS (livestream)</b> – Enya Diaz+ and Candice Aquilar+, requested by Medina family<br><b>CATECHISM CLASSES</b> (downstairs in the parish hall and classrooms)<br><b>Sacramental Preparation Session for First Reconciliation</b> (room 9)<br><b>MASS</b> – “Pro populo” / Intentions of parishioners   |
| <b>Monday, February 9</b>  | <b>FERIAL</b><br>Mass (offered in private) – <i>Special intention</i>   |
| <b>Tuesday, February 10</b><br><br>12:00 midnight<br>10:30 am<br>1:00 pm – 4:00 pm<br>1:00 pm – 3:00 pm<br>6:00 pm | <b>MEMORIAL: SAINT SCHOLASTICA, Virgin</b><br>Mass (offered in private) – <i>Souls in purgatory, requested by Tualla family</i><br><i>Fr. Robert is on-call for emergency sacramental ministry at Grace Hospital until 12:00 noon Friday</i><br><i>Fr. Robert is scheduled to attend a Council of Priests Meeting at St. Theresa’s Church, West St Paul</i><br><b>Office Hours</b> – call or ring door buzzer for assistance<br><b>Knitting Group</b> (downstairs in room 8)<br><i>Fr. Robert is scheduled to attend a Manitoba Multifaith Council Board of Directors Meeting</i> |

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>Wednesday, February 11</b> | <b>OPTIONAL MEMORIAL: OUR LADY OF LOURDES</b><br><b>WORLD DAY OF THE SICK</b><br><b>OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP DEVOTIONS</b><br>Liturgy of the Word with the distribution of Holy Communion<br>Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults Session ( <i>downstairs in room 9</i> )   |
| 6:45 pm                       |   |
| 7:00 pm                       |   |
| 7:30 pm                       |   |
| <b>Thursday, February 12</b>  | <b>FERIAL</b><br>Mass (offered in private) – <i>Special intention</i><br><i>Central Winnipeg Deanery meeting at St. Charles Church (tentative)</i>  |
| 10:30 am                      |   |
| <b>Friday, February 13</b>    | <b>FERIAL</b><br>Mass (offered in private) – <i>Special intention</i><br>Office Hours – call or ring door buzzer for assistance<br><b>Recitation of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy</b>   |
| 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm             |   |
| 3:00 pm                       |   |
| <b>Saturday, February 14</b>  | <b>MEMORIAL: SAINT CYRIL, Monk, and ST. METHODIUS, Bishop</b><br><b>LEGION OF MARY Praesidium Meeting</b> ( <i>downstairs in room 6</i> )<br><b>MASS for Sunday</b> – <i>Intentions St. John XXIII staff and volunteers, req. by Tannena Korolyk</i>  |
| 2:30 pm – 3:30 pm             |   |
| 4:00 pm                       |   |
| <b>Sunday, February 15</b>    | <b>SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</b><br><b>MASS (livestream)</b> – <i>“Pro populo” / Intentions of parishioners</i><br><i>N.B.: No catechism or sacramental preparation classes today</i><br><b>MASS</b> – <i>Verla Smith+, requested by John and Sharon Camier</i>   |
| 9:00 am                       |   |
| 11:45 am                      |   |
| <b>Monday, February 16</b>    | <b>FERIAL – LOUIS RIEL DAY HOLIDAY</b><br>Mass (offered in private) – <i>Albin Joseph Polz+, requested by Fr. Robert Polz and family</i>  |
| <b>Tuesday, February 17</b>   | <b>FERIAL</b><br>Office Hours – call or ring door buzzer for assistance<br><b>MASS</b> – <i>Raquel Albalos+, requested by Blaquera family</i>   |
| 1:00 pm – <u>3:30 pm</u>      |   |
| 3:30 pm                       |   |
| <b>Wednesday, February 18</b> | <b>ASH WEDNESDAY – THE HOLY SEASON OF LENT BEGINS</b><br><b>*** UNIVERSAL DAY OF FASTING AND ABSTINENCE FROM MEAT ***</b><br><i>N.B.: Our Mother of Perpetual Help Devotions to be prayed in private today</i><br><b>MASS (livestream)</b> – <i>“Pro populo” / Intentions of parishioners</i><br><b>Mass this evening will include the blessing and distribution of ashes</b><br>RCIA Session ( <i>room 8</i> ) |
| 7:00 pm                       |   |
| 8:00 pm                       |   |
| <b>Thursday, February 19</b>  | <b>THURSDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY</b><br>Mass (offered in private) – <i>Intention TBA</i>   |
| <b>Friday, February 20</b>    | <b>FRIDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY</b><br>Praying of the Angelus<br><b>MASS</b> – <i>Joseph Gfroerer+, requested by Overton family</i><br>Office Hours – call or ring door buzzer for assistance<br><b>Recitation of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy</b><br><b>WAY OF THE CROSS</b> at St. John XXIII Church – All welcome   |
| 12:00 pm                      |   |
| 12:10 pm                      |   |
| 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm             |   |
| 3:00 pm                       |   |
| 7:00 pm                       |   |
| <b>Saturday, February 21</b>  | <b>SATURDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY</b><br><b>LEGION OF MARY Praesidium Meeting</b> ( <i>downstairs in room 6</i> )<br><b>MASS for Sunday</b> – <i>Dianne Geith+, requested by Tannena Korolyk</i><br><b>MASS including the RITE OF ELECTION</b> at St. Mary’s Cathedral, 353 St. Mary Avenue   |
| 2:30 pm – 3:30 pm             |   |
| 4:00 pm                       |   |
| 5:00 pm                       |   |
| <b>Sunday, February 22</b>    | <b>FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT</b><br><b>MASS (livestream)</b> – <i>Lourdes Caluag Tumale, requested by Pacatang family</i><br><b>CATECHISM CLASSES</b> ( <i>downstairs in the parish hall and classrooms</i> )<br><b>Sacramental Preparation for First Reconciliation</b> ( <i>room 9</i> )<br><b>MASS</b> – <i>“Pro populo” / Intentions of parishioners</i>   |
| 9:00 am                       |   |
| 10:15 am                      |   |
| 10:15 am                      |   |
| 11:45 am                      |   |

***“O God, grant that whatever good things I have, I may share generously with those who have not, and whatever good things I do not have, I may request humbly from those who do.”***

—Saint Thomas Aquinas

### TABERNACLE LAMP OFFERING

February 1 – February 7      Jordan Braun+ and Roland Gaudry+, requested by Gaudry-Braun family  
February 8 – February 14      Intentions of Hermalyn Agcaoili (70<sup>th</sup> birthday)  
February 15 – February 21      For the catechumens and candidates of our parish on their journey of faith

*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, Gwen and Malcolm Broughton, Jean-Louis Charles, Betty Connor, René and Sue Gobeil, Bev and Steve Hewitt, Magdeline Johnston, Brett Lawrence, Kristy O’Toole, Lauran Peters, John Powell, Fr. Barry Schoonbaert, Jerome Strachan, Joe and Maria Wallack, Helen Yankoski.***

*If you wish your name or any of your loved ones to be included in our prayer list, please notify the parish office. Be sure to obtain the consent of persons concerned before submitting their names.*



**Living with Christ SUNDAY MISSAL 2025 – 2026:** Copies available at the parish office - Price \$7.25 each. This compact missal contains the Current English translation of the Roman Missal, Scripture readings for Sunday Masses, reflections for all Sundays, monthly calendar of Saints, inspiration from the Saints, Papal prayer intentions for each month of the year, etc.

**NRSV CATHOLIC BIBLES** from the Canadian Bible Society are available at the parish office. Attractive Presentation Bible with imitation leather cover, presentation page, gilt edges, ribbon marker: \$35 per bible. NRSV Bible with forest green hardcover and gold stamping: \$25 per bible.

**DONATIONS REQUESTED OF PEANUT BUTTER AND JAM:** Our St. James Assiniboia CWL Council has learned from the managers of the Main Street Project that they would greatly appreciate donations of peanut butter and jam to assist in making sandwiches for the many folks who visit their clinic. Therefore, we are requesting the generous assistance of parishioners who are willing to help. **A bin to collect donations of peanut butter and jam has been placed in the south vestibule of the church** (i.e. in the corner near the bulletin board and elevator). CWL members will arrange delivery to the Main Street Project of the items collected. A sincere thank you to all who are helping us out in this effort. May Our Lady watch over you and keep us all in her prayers.



**Prevent MAiD for Mental Illness - Support Bill C-218:** In March 2021, Canada expanded its euthanasia law (Bill C-7) to allow MAiD for mental illness alone, with implementation delayed until March 17, 2027. To stop this change, MP Tamara Jansen introduced Bill C-218 on June 20, 2025. If passed, Bill C-218 will exclude mental illness from being considered a “grievous and irremediable medical condition,” preventing MAiD for mental illness alone. The bill’s first debate occurred on December 5, and a second debate and vote are scheduled for February 2026. Support Bill C-218 by signing the petition [here](#) or go online to [www.nomaidformentalillness.ca](http://www.nomaidformentalillness.ca)

**HEALTH CARE WORKERS’ MASS AND FELLOWSHIP RECEPTION:** A Tridieocesan initiative, in partnership with the Catholic Health Association of Manitoba (CHAM), will host a Health Care Workers’ Mass on the 34<sup>th</sup> World Day of the Sick. The Mass will be celebrated by Archbishop Murray Chatlain on **Wednesday, February 11, 2026 at 7:00 pm at St. Gianna Beretta Molla Parish**, 15 Columbia Drive, Winnipeg and will be followed by a Fellowship Reception. This gathering is a special opportunity to honour all who serve in the healing ministry, including health care workers, students, retirees, volunteers, caregivers, and anyone who supports the ministry of care in any capacity. Admission is free, but registration is requested to help plan hospitality. Reserve your place online at the Fellowship Reception [here](#).

**THE JESUS PRAYER SESSIONS:** An introduction to one of the oldest and most beautiful methods of Byzantine worship: praying with the heart by the invocation of the name of Jesus. Session will be held from **7:00 to 8:00 pm on Thursdays, February 12 to March 5, 2026 at Holy Eucharist Parish**, 505 Watt Street. See [holyeucharistwinnipeg.ca](http://holyeucharistwinnipeg.ca)

**ANNUAL 40-DAY BREAD AND WATER FAST:** CCRS of Manitoba invites you to join their annual 40-day Bread and Water personal fasting program for Lent 2026. The fast **begins on Ash Wednesday, February 18, 2026, and concludes on Holy Saturday, April 4, 2026.** For more details, visit the CCRS of Manitoba [website www.catholicrenewalservices.com](http://www.catholicrenewalservices.com) or to register complete the form online [here](#).

**MINISTRY OF CARE CONNECTIONS FOR VOLUNTEERS** builds on the past two-part training series offered by the Archdiocese of Saint Boniface and the Catholic Health Association of Manitoba. The session offers a continued opportunity for learning, discussion, reflection, and fellowship with fellow volunteers from the dioceses. The session will be held on **Saturday, February 21, 2026 from 10:30 am - 12:00 pm at St. Anne Ukrainian Catholic Church, 35 Marcie Street, Winnipeg.** Previous attendance is *not* required. Please register by February 15, 2026 [here](#) or for more information contact Nadine Fetherston by email, [mfl2@archsaintboniface.ca](mailto:mfl2@archsaintboniface.ca). Access the event poster [here](#).

**THE RITE OF ELECTION** on **February 21, 2026 at 5:00 pm at St. Mary's Cathedral, Winnipeg.** At the Rite of Election, the Archbishop summons the Catechumens (those seeking Baptism) to the Easter Sacraments in the name of the whole Church. Also, candidates for Full Communion (those who were already baptized in another Christian tradition and are seeking to enter full communion with the Catholic Church through the sacraments of Confirmation and the Eucharist), along with their sponsors, are invited to attend the Rite of Election. His Grace will acknowledge their presence as a group. All are welcome!

**For further news and upcoming events in and around the Archdiocese of Winnipeg  
go to the website: [www.archwinnipeg.ca](http://www.archwinnipeg.ca)**

## REFLECTION FOR FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – FEBRUARY 1, 2026

### *How do you get there from here?*

How do you get to holy from where you're sitting? Is it a matter of saying enough prayers, going to church for years, not breaking the Commandments, being generous to the annual bishop's appeal? Those things might help; I'm not one to knock any of them. Especially the bishop's appeal, which is a way of being faithful to the common good of our sisters and brothers. But sanctity is not the pot of gold at the end of any of these rainbows automatically.

And maybe, honestly, *holiness* is not even on your bucket list. The faces on the holy cards rarely look like they're having a good time. I've got a heavenly host of saints' images all around my desk, with expressions ranging from pensive (the Madonnas) to brooding (Saint Paul) to grim (Jerome!). I'd love to have a view of the laughing, dancing communion of saints, but apart from some grinning Mother Teresas and mischievous Pope John Paul IIs, those are hard to find.

Yet when Jesus fashioned his most famous teaching, the Beatitudes, he capitalized on what would make us "happy" — which is a more accurate translation than "blessed." Which leads you to wonder: Shouldn't being among the blessed be a source of joy for us? Of course one must admit the list of qualifying folks doesn't sound as if they've got a lot to smile about: the poor (in spirit or otherwise), the mourners, the downtrodden, the oppressed, the persecuted and insulted. I suppose being a compassionate, pure-hearted peacenik isn't so bad. But ask me again when I'm actually practicing those virtues.

So what makes this lot so happy, according to Jesus? Their reward in heaven will be great. In a culture that views delayed gratification as no gratification at all, that sounds like the not-so-good news of Jesus Christ. Is Jesus saying, "Suffer now to be happy later"? When life is presented in those terms—the cross today or the flames tomorrow—that's not exactly comforting. Happily, that's *not* what Jesus is saying. The common denominator in the Beatitude Club is humility, not suffering. If we want to belong to this Happy Club, we have to exercise that most essential of all virtues.

What does it mean to be humble? To know when to bow down or bend the knee. We bow before the will of God, which is to love and be loved. We bend the knee before God alone. Those who are humbled by their present circumstances or who humble themselves by conforming their lives to God's will are mutually blessed. As Mother Teresa once said, we must empty ourselves to receive a blessing because even God cannot fill what is full. Want happiness? Seeking holiness? Start with humility.

— 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](http://alicecamille.com).

## REFLECTION FOR FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – FEBRUARY 8, 2026

### *Worth your salt*

Civilization owes so much to salt. Humans literally can't live without it: We need it to maintain bodily fluids, regulate blood pressure, and support both nerve and muscle function.

Cultures have used salt to fertilize their land, preserve foods, disinfect wounds. More recently, basic attributes—affordability, how it lasts a long time without spoiling, its common use as table salt—meant iodine could successfully be added to prevent developmental disabilities.

So significant has salt been, up and down the ages, that Roman soldiers were paid in it—it’s where we get the word “salary” and saying someone is “worth their salt.” Disruptions in supply have fomented civil unrest—the unpopular salt tax, for instance, that helped provoke the French Revolution and Gandhi’s “Salt March.”

But like water—the other chemical compound our bodies can’t live without—too much salt hurts instead of helps. In ancient times armies over-salted their enemy’s fields, rendering them infertile. Today, a diet too high in sodium wrecks our health. Salt, while disinfecting, stings in high concentrations (“rubbing salt into a wound”) while saline solution, sufficiently diluted, is indispensable for eyes and nose, IVs, flushing wounds, and more.

But moderation isn’t the main thing to learn from salt. For Christians, there’s more. Pope Francis said salt doesn’t exist for itself but to make other things better, echoing Saint Hildegard of Bingen, who said “every dish should be salted so you can taste the food before the salt.” Jesus says it best, of course, calling disciples “salt of the earth”—that is to say, rock salt mined from the ground instead of harvested from the sea. Rock salt has one main vulnerability, a susceptibility to having potency leached away, especially by water. It’s as if Jesus is saying: Don’t water down the teachings I’ve left you—make bold use of them.

– Mary Lynn Hendrickson

Mary Lynn Hendrickson, a freelance writer, spent nearly 20 years directing parish catechetical ministry within the Diocese of Madison, Wisconsin. Previously she was the executive director of the Associated Church Press and worked for 20 years in Catholic publishing as an editor and writer.

## REFLECTION FOR SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – FEBRUARY 15, 2026

### *There ought to be a law*

My 85-year-old mother is addicted to cop shows and courtroom dramas. She’s not an active lawbreaker herself, mind you, but she loves to invest her evenings in following criminals down their morally darkened paths outsmarting clever law-enforcers and heavily-degreed legal counsels by slipping through loopholes in jurisprudence and all but disappearing behind the wall of their crimes in triumph—until the end of the hour, that is, when some infinitesimal fact comes to light, condemning the guilty and vindicating the innocent. The disturbing thing is, I’m not sure which my elderly mother enjoys more: that justice is finally served, or that the perp almost got away with it!

Many of us have a morally ambiguous relationship to law. We love having plenty of laws nailed into place to protect us and our property from other people. At the same time we play fast and loose with the laws that inconvenience us. Tax laws, traffic laws, and municipal laws are only three kinds of rules some of us are comfortable breaking if we think we can get away with it. Most of us are pleased to defend the rule of law until a particular facet of it gets in our way, and let’s presume that we churchgoers are the law-*abiding* segment of the population! Some folks have far less respect for the rules than we do.

So we become glued to serials like *The Sopranos*, *Damages*, *Breaking Bad*, or any story where the moral lines are vague between the good guys and the bad ones. Like my mom, we’re attracted to stories that confess a disconcerting truth: We’re all ready to break the law given the right set of circumstances. Perhaps we’ve convinced ourselves that most laws are neither good nor bad but arbitrary. If a given law crosses our sovereign free will or basic self-interest, we might be willing to look the other way and “break bad”—just this once.

Biblical law was established to be a different kind of law altogether from what folks were used to. The Hebrew word for *law* is more like “guidance” or “instruction” than a line drawn in the sand. Divine law wasn’t viewed as negatively prohibitive or punitive but positive and helpful. The point wasn’t to constrict human freedom but to keep people safe, happy, and at peace.

A red light isn’t meant to make you late for an appointment, after all—even if it does just that; it’s intended to keep you and your neighbor from plowing into each other at an intersection. Law was deemed such a cheerful thing in Israel that psalms were written to praise the joy of living lawfully. God’s gift of law is evidence that God is serious about wanting to preserve the happiness of the community so favored. When Jesus extends the laws as deep and high as you can conceive, is this his way of making life harder—or simpler than ever?

– 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](http://alicecamille.com).

*The above reflections are reprinted with permission from PrepareTheWord.com*

***“The secret of happiness is to live moment by moment and to thank God for what He is sending us every day in His goodness.”***

—Saint Gianna Beretta Molla

## 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.**

You may place your offering envelopes in the COLLECTION BASKET passed by the ushers to those sitting in the pews during regular Sunday liturgies. Please make cheques payable to "St. John XXIII Parish".

**In this New Year 2026, please use offering envelopes dated 2026. Having updated our parish list, new numbers have been assigned to some parish envelope holders.**

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](mailto:finance.stjohnxxiii@gmail.com)**

Transfers sent to [finance.stjohnxxiii@gmail.com](mailto: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 in previous parish bulletins published last year. 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!**

## Called by Name Sunday: Weekend of January 31 – February 1, 2026

*Called by Name Sunday* is not only an opportunity for us as individuals to be open to God's call in our lives. It is also a chance for us to allow God to call others through our invitation. Is there a man you know who may be called to the priesthood? Help us to encourage him by sharing his name and contact information. There are two ways to do so: by filling out the card or online.

To share their information by card, fill out the card we have provided and drop the card into the collection basket at Mass, or hand your completed card to a volunteer in the narthex before or after Mass during the weekend of January 31<sup>st</sup> – February 1<sup>st</sup> or the weekend of February 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>. To share their information online, go to the website: [archwinnipeg.ca/vocations/](http://archwinnipeg.ca/vocations/) You can find that URL on the cards we have provided as well as a QR code that you can scan with your phone's camera. The online submission deadline is February 9, 2026.

Please keep in the mind that we are looking for young men in high school or older (i.e. 16 – 49 years old and single), including those who may currently be in college or working outside of the archdiocese. Those whose names are provided will receive a communication from Archbishop Chatlain and the Office of Vocations with encouragement and resources to hear and respond to God's call for their life - no matter what it is.

Thank you for your generous participation in *Called by Name Sunday*. With your help, this initiative will bear fruit for our archdiocese for generations to come.

ARCHDIOCESE OF WINNIPEG

# VOCATIONS

# CALLED

BY NAME *Sunday*

Thank you for nominating a man whom you believe Jesus may be calling to the priesthood or religious life. The man you nominate will receive a letter from our Archbishop, congratulating him on living the Christian life in an exemplary way. He will also be gently invited to begin formally discerning his calling and will receive information and resources that may be helpful on his journey. There are no requirements or commitments on his part -- only a loving invitation from the Lord.

We are looking for young men in high school or older, including those who may currently be in college or working outside of the diocese.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name (if under 18) \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_



Home Parish \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to this person \_\_\_\_\_

Tell us about this person \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

[archwinnipeg.ca/vocations](http://archwinnipeg.ca/vocations)

*Scan here to complete online!*

