



# St. Mary St. Michael

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616.677.3934 • [www.saintmarysmarne.org](http://www.saintmarysmarne.org)

17150 88th Ave., Coopersville, MI 49404  
616.384.4026 • [www.saintmichaels.us](http://www.saintmichaels.us)



*Pastor: Rev. Michael Hodges*

[frmhodes@grpriests.org](mailto:frmhodes@grpriests.org) • For emergencies please call: 616.745.1409

### Saint Mary Parish Staff

**St. Mary Parish Office Hours**  
Monday .....9:00AM - 4:30PM  
Tuesday .....9:00AM - 4:30PM  
Wednesday 9:00AM - 11:30AM  
Thursday .... 9:00AM to 4:30PM  
Friday ..... Closed

**Deacon**  
Tom Roberts  
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**Director of Faith Formation**  
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**Maintenance**  
Jim Looks

**Custodian**  
Marian Looks

**Liturgical Minister**  
Gary Karr  
[gkarr@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:gkarr@saintmarysmarne.org)

**Music Director**  
Dr. Bernie Stanko  
616.490.3836  
[berniestanko@hotmail.com](mailto:berniestanko@hotmail.com)

**St Mary Prayer Line**  
616.677.3934 or  
Linda at 677.3269  
For evening requests call  
Darlene 616.453.0157 or  
email [bfa1414@yahoo.com](mailto:bfa1414@yahoo.com)

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Wednesday... 9:00AM - 4:00PM  
Thursday ..... Closed  
Friday ..... 9:00AM to 4:00PM

**Deacon**  
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Brenda Kilpatrick  
616.837.6363

**St Michael Prayer Line**  
Chris Albrecht  
616-403-7110  
Judy Driedger  
616-899-2470

**Director of O.C.I.A**  
Cliff Kozminski  
616.437.5318

**Weekend Mass Schedule**  
Saturday ..... 4:00PM • St Michael  
Sunday ..... 8:30AM • St Michael  
Sunday ..... 10:30AM • St Mary

**Weekday Mass Schedule**  
Tuesday ..... 12:00PM • St Mary  
*Adoration begins after Mass until 3:30PM*  
Wednesday ..... 12:00PM • St Michael  
*Adoration begins after Mass until 3:30PM*  
Thursday ..... 12:00PM • St Mary  
Friday ..... 12:00PM • St Michael

**Sacrament of Reconciliation**  
Tuesday and  
Thursday ..... 12:30PM to 1:30PM • St. Mary  
Wednesday and  
Friday ..... 12:30PM to 1:30PM • St. Michael  
Saturday ..... 3:00PM to 3:45PM • St. Michael

# Mass Schedule & Intentions

## Saturday October 4

4:00PM † Sherman & S.J. Hecksel by Ruth Hecksel .....MI  
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 3:00 PM—3:45 PM - St Michael

## Sunday October 5

8:30AM † Troy Spencer by Arlyn & Louann Doornbos .....MI  
 10:30AM † Ken Zarbeck by M/M Gary Karr .....MA

## Monday October 6 No Mass

## Tuesday October 7

12:00PM † Kathleen Sobie by M/M Jerry Willcome .....MA  
 Adoration begins after Mass until 3:30pm  
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 12:30-1:30PM - St. Mary

## Wednesday October 8

12:00PM † Cathy Bonter by the Kutchin Family .....MI  
 Adoration begins after Mass until 3:30pm  
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 12:30-1:30PM - St. Michael

## Thursday October 9

12:00PM † Chuck Klein by Knights of Columbus #4404 .....MA  
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 12:30-1:30PM - St. Mary

## Friday October 10

12:00PM † Elise Anderson by John & Denise Anderson .....MI  
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 12:30-1:30PM - St. Michael

## Saturday October 11

4:00PM † David Balkon by K of C #9909 .....MI  
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 3:00 PM—3:45 PM - St Michael

## Sunday October 12

8:30AM † Fred Boswell by the O'Bradovich Family .....MI  
 10:30AM † Jim Potts by M/M Paul Kirkwood .....MA

MA=St. Mary MI=St. Michael's



## Scripture Readings for the Week of October 5, 2025

**Sunday** Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Hb 1:2-3; 2:2-4; Ps 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9; 2 Tm 1:6-8, 13-14; Lk 17:5-10

**Monday** Jon 1:1-2:1-2, 11; Jon 2:3, 4, 5, 8; Lk 10:25-37

**Tuesday** Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary  
 Jon 3:1-10; Ps 130:1b-2, 3-4ab, 7-8; Lk 10:38-42

**Wednesday** Jon 4:1-11; Ps 86:3-4, 5-6, 9-10; Lk 11:1-4

**Thursday** Mal 3:13-20b; Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6; Lk 11:5-13

**Friday** Jl 1:13-15; 2: 1-2; Ps 9:2-3, 6 and 16, 8-9; Lk 11:15-26

**Saturday** Jl 4:12-21; Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12, Lk 11:27-28

**Sunday** Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 2 Kgs 5:14-17; Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4; 2 Tm 2:8-13; Lk 17:11-19

## St. Michael's Liturgical Ministers

|                       | Oct 11—4:00PM                  | Oct 12 —8:30AM   |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Altar Servers         | Dylan Ranney<br>NEED ONE       | Bryson Lindberg<br>Reid Lindberg   |
| Eucharistic Ministers | Veronica Schumaker<br>NEED TWO | Deacon Tom<br>Kenny Harker<br>Zack Nelson<br>Sharon Carlson<br>Jennifer DeMull<br>Jennie Taylor<br>Peter Nielsen |
| Lector                | Kevin Schumaker                | Mary Guilbault   |
| Sacristan             | Cindy Bleckley                 | Judy Driedger  |
| Ushers                | Ray Maka<br>NEED ONE           | Mary Bueche<br>Dan Schneider<br>Calvin Lindberg<br>Curt DeVos  |
| Music                 | Craig Bleckley                 | Craig Bleckley   |

## St. Mary's Liturgical Ministers

|                | October 12—10:30AM  |
|----------------|---|
| Sacristan      | Gary Karr   |
| Altar Servers  | Noah Davis<br>Calvin Davis<br>Ty Ricord                         |
| Precious Body  | Deacon Tom<br>June Stevens<br>Bruce Kamp                        |
| Precious Blood | Mary Kirkwood<br>Christina Withers<br>Margie Jirous<br>Need One |
| Hospitality    | Leonard Horter  |
| Lector         | Geary Farrell   |
| Music          | Bernie Stanko   |

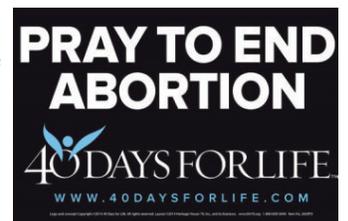
## 40 Days for Life!

### Would you be willing to pray for one hour?

40 Days for Life is a unique pro-life effort that consists of 40 days of prayer, fasting and peaceful vigil in front of abortion clinics. This will be the 32nd campaign in Grand Rapids, and it will take place in front of **Planned Parenthood- Grand Rapids,**

This facility provides the abortion pill and refers for abortions. Dozens of area churches have adopted a day of prayer. **Our parish family has chosen Friday, October 17, 2025** ~ Would you be willing to pray for one hour to fill in the time slots to pray to end abortion?

We will need 2 prayer volunteers from 7 am till 7 pm throughout the day. This is a powerful and proven effective way to close abortion centers and show the Mother's that we are praying and thinking about them and their babies. Please consider a hour of your time~ If you are unable to attend that day you may go to the clinic and pray any time! Thank you for your commitment to LIFE!  
 God bless!



## Cluster News and Community News and Events

### Catholic Service Appeal - 2025

Thank you for your gifts to 2025 Catholic Services Appeal! Your generous support funds essential diocesan ministries that strengthen us in Christ. Every gift, regardless of the amount, is important in this effort. Our parish goal for 2025 is:  
Thank you for your stewardship!

#### St Mary

CSA 2025 Pledge Goal: \$50,516.00

Total Pledges Made: \$55,055.00 (109%)

**Balance: \$4,539.00 OVER- THANK YOU!**

Participation: 107 of 260 Active - Households (42%)

#### St Michael

CSA 2025 Pledge Goal: \$52,297.00

Total Pledges Made: \$42,380.00 (81%)

Balance: \$9,917.00

Participation: 100 of 255 - Active Households (39%)

Totals as of September 30, 2025

Please keep in mind that any amount raised over our goal is returned 100% to the parish. Please continue to pray for the success of this important effort.



**STRENGTHENED IN CHRIST,  
RESPONDING WITH JOY.**

Diocese of Grand Rapids  
Catholic Services Appeal

### Mass for God's Children

**Nov. 3 | 7 p.m. Cathedral of Saint Andrew**

The Diocese of Grand Rapids invites anyone who has experienced the loss of a child before baptism to this special Mass, including parents, grandparents, siblings, relatives and friends. A memorial rose with a naming card will be provided for families who have lost a child(ren). If you would like to reserve a memorial rose, contactto Lauren Vandervort at 616.288.0588 or [lvandervort@grdiocese.org](mailto:lvandervort@grdiocese.org).

### Exploring priesthood?

**Annual Seminary Visit is Nov. 13-15**

The Diocese of Grand Rapids and St. John Vianney College Seminary are offering men who are juniors or seniors in high school and want to discern their vocation an opportunity to take a closer look at the priesthood. Travel with Father Rob Mulderink, director of the Office of Priestly Vocations, to experience a few days at St. John Vianney College Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. Transportation, accommodations, and meals are provided at no cost. Space is limited. Register by Oct. 17 by contacting Pattie Reynolds, [preynolds@GRdiocese.org](mailto:preynolds@GRdiocese.org).

### Bulletin Sponsor of the Week



**Rodenhouse  
Body Shop**

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR BULLETIN!

### Fr Mike's Musings



"Respect Life Month" is in October. This year's theme is **Life, Our Sign of Hope**. The Respect Life program begins anew each year on "Respect Life Sunday" on the first Sunday in October. The day and month provide opportunities to reflect more deeply on the value of each human life and on efforts to protect life from conception to natural death. During October, we are asked to consider why every human life is valuable and to reflect on how to build a culture that values and protects life.

From beginning to end, or "womb to tomb," the catechism states:

*"Human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains forever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end."* (CCC 2258)

Practices such as abortion, assisted suicide and capital punishment violate the dignity of the human person and must be rejected. In today's world, this truth can be subverted in favor of how useful someone is or will be, casting aside those most vulnerable: the unborn, women and children, those living in poverty, the mentally and physically ill, the imprisoned, those living with disabilities and the elderly, or whomever is designated as being inconvenient or undesirable.

In the very beginning of the Bible, we are told that we were created to share in God's life through knowledge and love, established in a unique relationship with our Creator that elevates us above all else in Creation (Genesis 1:27; CCC 355-356). Each of us reflects God, called to share in love and creation. As we hear in the Book of Jeremiah:

*"Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you."* (1:5)

Therefore, God's love for His children is not based on usefulness or status in society. Christ's life and teachings continually guide us toward that message:

*"Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me."* (Matthew 25:40)

And

*"Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these."* (Matthew 19:14)

"Respect Life Month" reminds us of the other part of that equation as we work toward ending the culture of death: respect. Not only are the people considering or supporting life-denying options often in dire positions, but they are also God's children. So, when we come across this type of situation, let us be Christ to one another in our words and actions and speak the words of life with love and compassion. There are several opportunities in the Diocese of Grand Rapids which are open for our life-affirming services as servants and children of God.

"Walking with Moms and Families in Need". This program offers support during and after pregnancy, supplies for baby and toddler pantries, healing counseling/emotional support after abortion, infertility information and access to professional counseling services.

Volunteer for vigil hours during "40 Days for Life" campaign, September 25<sup>th</sup> - November 3<sup>rd</sup>. Our parish cluster has selected Friday, October 17<sup>th</sup> to prayerfully gather at the 'Planned Parenthood' clinic on Cherry Street in Grand Rapids. Sign-up sheets can be found in the St. Mary narthex or the glass hallway at St. Michael.

The annual "March for Life" in Washington, D.C. is currently scheduled for January 24, 2026. Those wishing to attend the march should get in touch with Sue Smith See *Bulletin Insert for Event Information*. Or call your parish office.



**October 5, 2025 ~ The 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

View this bulletin online at [www.DiscoverMass.com](http://www.DiscoverMass.com)

# St. Mary's Parish News

## St Mary Faith Formation

**Children's Liturgy of the Word (CLW):**  
**Pre-School thru 2nd Grade During 10:30 AM Mass.**  
**CLW will start on Sunday, October 5th.**  
**This is the Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time. Luke 17:5-10.**

When the apostles ask Jesus to increase their faith, he offers a very famous response. He tells them that if they have faith the size of a mustard seed, they have more than enough faith. The mustard seed is not the smallest seed that exists. But it is the smallest seed that the disciples knew about.

**1st-7th Grade Faith Formation Classes -**  
**Wednesdays at Hall / 6:00- 7:30pm**  
**8th Grade - Confirmation Classes -**  
**Wednesdays at Hall / 6:00- 7:30pm**

**Welcome back! Faith Formation students!**  
**Classes have started, but it is not too late to join us.**

Forms are available online or in the Narthex.  
 Register ONLINE HERE:

<https://www.saintmarysmarne.org/religious-education-elementary>

**For more information** or any questions on any of these programs Please contact Debbie Veneklas at [dre@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:dre@saintmarysmarne.org) or 616.677.3934

## Together is where we belong

If you have been away, Whatever your reasons are , there's one thing you should know ... you've been missed. Come back to the place where you can be fed. If you have friends or loved ones who have been away , invite them back. Our Cluster parishes are places of welcome where the love of Christ is shared in community, service, and sacrament. Gather with us ! Come back to Mass. The Doors are Open! Together is where we belong!



## Our Lady of Fatima Guild - Meeting

OUR LADY OF FATIMA GUILD: is a service-oriented group dedicated to praying the Rosary and helping people in need. Those who benefit from the Guild are St. Mary's Parish and area organizations. Help is given in many forms: food, clothing, money, friendship, Christmas Cards, and gifts. Funds are raised from member donations and Ladies Advent by Candlelight as well as drives conducted to collect items for the different organizations in need. Meetings are held in the Community Room monthly from September through December at 7PM on the second Tuesday of the month. Meetings consist of praying the Rosary, Guild matters, and fellowship. **All ladies of the parish are invited to join.** For mor information call Lori Rander 616-215-6524 or the Parish Office. **Please plan on joining us: Oct 14, Nov 11 & Dec 9 at 7PM.**  
**Save the date: Advent by Candlelight-Nov 30, 2025**

## Knights of Columbus #11581 News

How to become a Knight: You can enroll in the Knights of Columbus immediately as an "Online Member" by scanning the QR Code. Once you complete and submit the form on that page a local council will contact you. For additional information or to learn more about what the Knights do, Contact Grand Knight: Bruce Kamp [b.kamp@charter.net](mailto:b.kamp@charter.net) / Phone 616-780-4941



## Upcoming Blood Drive & Community Breakfast - Oct 12

**Blood Drive is 8:30AM to 1:00PM**

**Breakfast will be served 9AM till 12PM**  
 Breakfast Cost-  
 \$10.00 Adults,  
 \$8.00 Seniors,  
 \$5.00 Kids  
 Come for Breakfast even if you do not donate blood. All are welcome!  
 Support Our Knights!

**Saint Mary's Catholic Church**  
**Community Blood Drive**

Parish Hall  
 15164 Juniper Dr.  
 Marne, MI 49435

**APPOINTMENTS PREFERRED**  
 -Call 866-642-5663  
 -Visit [versiti.org/mi](http://versiti.org/mi)  
 -Or scan the QR code below

\*Walk-ins welcome as schedule allows!

Helpful tip:  
 Make sure to eat a healthy meal and drink plenty of water before donating.

For eligibility questions please call 866-642-5663

## Save the Dates

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| Oct 5  | Cookies After Mass-Thank You: The Todd & Sharon Davis family for serving |
| Oct 11 | COR- 7AM Community Room  |
| Oct 12 | Knights of Columbus Breakfast & Blood Drive 8:30AM-12:30PM               |
| Oct 14 | Our Lady of Fatima Guild Meeting 7PM Community Room                      |
| Oct 25 | COR- 7AM Community Room  |
| Oct 27 | Fr Mike Ordination of Priesthood Anniversary- 13years                    |
| Nov 2  | Cookies After Mass - Volunteers needed                                   |
| Nov 11 | Our Lady of Fatima Guild Meeting 7PM Community Room                      |

## Giving Back to God

|                                    |                  |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Mass: Attendance</b> 9/28       | <b>204</b>       |
| Adult Contributions                | \$3950.00        |
| Children Contributions             | \$20.00          |
| Loose Contributions                | \$197.50         |
| Capital Improvement                | \$100.00         |
| Online Giving                      | \$685.00         |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>\$4952.50</b> |
| Weekly Offertory Needed for Budget | \$5519.008       |
| Offertory-YTD Budget vs YTD-Actual | +3629.21         |

**Thank you** for your continued support and generosity! To donate now, open your phone camera, scan the QR code and follow instructions.



## Welcome to the Cluster Parishes of St. Mary and St. Michael

## St. Michael's Parish News

**Scrip News**— Thank you to our 7 families that purchased Scrip this week. Totals will be updated next week.



### St. Michael's Parish Family

**Remembers in Their Prayers:** Kevin Johnson, Anne Pols, Alexandria Gordon, George Langlois, Brooke Campbell, Linda Abel-Carroll, Jackie May, Dennis Goosen, Jean Mayse, Ken Heflin, Marvin Hecksel, Payton Patterson, Pat Harlett, the victims of abortion, & the men and women in the military.

## St. Michael's Faith Formation

**Faith Formation Registration** for the 2025-2026 school year is now enrolling. Attention families with children ages 3 through grades 8. You can find registration forms on the parish website and forms are also located in the church narthex. **Classes have started. It is not too late to join us.**



### Attention parents of 1st or 7th graders:

**First graders' Parents!** Do you know of a child that is attending first grade at a public school this fall? Please have their families contact the Parish Office now so that we can be sure to sign them up for Wednesday night classes. If a child is anticipating receiving their First Holy Communion and First Reconciliation, they will have to complete one year of Catechism class prior to preparing for these sacraments in second grade.

Do you have a seventh grader or know one? Confirmation preparation begins in the seventh grade. If you know a student in seventh grade this fall, please spread the word to their parents now. They can still attend Faith Formation class.

**Children's Liturgy of the Word:** CLW program is offered on Sunday during 8:30 Masses. Children 3-9 years old are welcome to join us each week as we pray, read and explore the Sunday Gospel from a child's viewpoint. We include the Gospel Acclamation so children understand the importance of preparing our mind and heart for the Gospel reading. Today's Gospel reflection – Jesus tells us that we don't need a lot of faith. We just need a tiny bit- like a mustard seed. Even though a mustard seed is tiny, it grows and turns into a huge plant. So, even the tiniest bit of faith in God can grow into something powerful.

**Elementary Faith Formation:** The elementary program is for students in grades 1-5. We meet on Wednesday from 6:00- 7:30 pm in the parish school. Registration forms are in the back of church and on the parish website. **Classes have started, but It is not too late to join us.**

**Middle School Faith Formation:** Grades 6, 7 and 8 meet on Sundays from 9:45-11:15am in the Youth Room. The 8th Grade students will also receive Confirmation Preparation. Classes have started, but it is not too late to join us.



**St. Michael's Sanctuary Lamp**  
for +Pete & Marge Ferwerda  
by Pam Raczkwicz

## Thank You!



**Thank You!!** Thank you to EVERYONE who worked so tirelessly to make this year's festival a big success. We will have final numbers to report in the coming weeks, but we could not have pulled it off without the efforts of our co-chairpeople Cindy Bleckley and Cindy Lindberg, and the countless volunteers who gave of their time, talent and treasures. Thank You!

There will be a festival wrap-up meeting on today, after the 8:30 AM Mass. Anyone is invited to attend.

### PANCAKE BREAKFAST



Today, October 5,  
from 9:30—11:30 a.m.  
Adults, \$12.00; Children  
6-12, \$7; Under 6, free;  
Immediate Family Max: \$33  
*Come support the Knights and their efforts!*

## Giving Back to God

September 27/28

|   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| <b>Mass Attendance:</b> 9/27– 4:00PM:     | 86                |
| <b>Mass Attendance:</b> 9/28: 8:30 PM     | 166               |
| Adult Envelopes                           | \$2,184.00        |
| Loose Cash                                | \$359.00          |
| Children's Envelopes                      | \$35.61           |
| <b>Total</b>                              | <b>\$2,578.61</b> |
| Building Fund                             | \$70.00           |
| <i>Weekly Offertory Needed for Budget</i> | \$5,406.00        |
| <i>Offertory-YTD Budget vs YTD Actual</i> | +\$5,108.63       |

**Thank you for your continued support!**

**Online Giving** — Now there's an even more convenient way to contribute to St. Michael's! To donate now, open your phone camera, scan the QR code and follow instructions. Or text the word GIVE to: 616-384-5011.



**October 5, 2025 ~ The 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

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# Servants or Lovers? Obligation or Passionate Gift?

**W**hat disappoints Jesus Christ the most? Judging from the Gospel, it is not “sin” as we think of sin.

Jesus understands sin; he showed in his life that he knew how to talk to sinners, understood what they were going through, and believed in the greatness to which they could be led through conversion. Jesus seems to have had more trouble with mediocrity than with sin.

Jesus was compassionate toward the adulteress and the serial wife (John 8:3; 4:18), and patient with the wild kid (Luke 15:11). He could respect the cleverness of the embezzler (Luke 16:1) and even reach out to oppressive military and defrauders of the poor (Matthew 8:5; Luke 3:14, Matthew 9:9, Luke 19:1). The straight-out sinners he was comfortable with. But self-righteous mediocrity seems to have been something he just could not deal with.

Ultimately, Jesus can deal with anybody, heal anything, save us from any kind of sin. But it seems that in order to deal with self-righteousness or with complacent mediocrity he first has to convert us either to a sense of sin or to an understanding of what love is all about. And if it seems odd that “sin” and “love” should be linked together in the same sentence, the answer may be that, in dealing with Jesus Christ, the greatest sin of all is simply not to love.

People who are committing obvious sins, sins they recognize as such, know that they are failing in some way. It may even be that the perceived absence of love is already a preliminary understanding of what love is. The dimensions of emptiness can reveal the shape of fulfillment. But the people least able to respond to love are those who spoil their appetite for loving through constant, compulsive nibbling at righteousness. They are so used to being petty they don't know what it is to respond to another in love with a reckless, passionate heart. Like the Pharisees Jesus condemned, they are so preoccupied

OCTOBER 5, 2025

27TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Habakkuk 1:2-3 and 2:2-4;  
2 Timothy 1:6-8, 13-14; Luke 17:5-10

straining at gnats that they swallow the camel whole—their attention is so focused on not breaking little rules that they break the greatest rule of all, which is to love with one's whole heart, whole strength, whole mind.

Rabbi Heschel said it all in one phrase: “To respond moderately to God is a desecration.”

This Gospel does not say we should disregard the rules or the law of God, whether in big things or in little things. What it says is that when we have kept all the rules and done everything that is required of us—everything that is of “obligation”—we should say that we are only on the threshold of being Christians. We are “useless servants” in the sense that we have not yet begun to give Jesus Christ the service he asks of us; we are only on the brink of love.

For example, to come to Sunday Mass out of obligation is good—but it is not an authentic participation in the Mass. The youth who went to Mass dutifully all the time they lived in their parents' house, and then just stopped because, as they say, “It never meant anything to me; I never got anything out of it,” were not authentically participating in the Mass. They were there, but they were not participating. They were fulfilling their obligation, but they were not expressing together with the rest of the community what the Mass expresses. They were not there to give themselves passionately, whole-



heartedly, to the Father and to the human race in love, in union with Jesus Christ given on the cross. The Mass was meaningless to them because they were speaking the language of mediocrity in a service that speaks the language of passionate, total love.

If we as a community are going to give valid expression to our faith, and be authentic, effective witnesses to others, we have to go beyond what is of “obligation” and start responding passionately, generously, to him in everything we do. Only then can we experience authentically the religion of Jesus Christ. And only then can we share his religion, his life, with others.

## REFLECTING ON THIS WEEK'S GOSPELS

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### Twenty-Seventh Week of the Year

*Pray daily: Lord, if you did for us as God only what you are obliged in fairness to do, you would not be the God we know. And if I do for you only what I am commanded to do, I will never know what it is to be a Christian. Teach me the way of personal, passionate love. Teach me your heart. Amen.*

**Monday:** Luke 10:25-37: “You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself... Do this and you will live” Jesus said. Are you constantly looking for ways to love God more? What is the primary focus of your religion? Of your life?

**Tuesday:** Luke 10:38-42: Jesus said, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her.” What concerns and worries keep you from taking time to spend just in communion with God every day?

**Wednesday:** Luke 11:1-4: Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples.” Have you ever asked Jesus to teach you how to pray? Have you ever asked anyone else? How many methods of praying do you know?

**Thursday:** Luke 11:5-13: Jesus said, “I tell you, ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.” What do you ask Jesus for? Is it to know him better, give him more? In how much of your prayer are you seeking? What have you found in prayer? When is your prayer a knocking, asking entry? Entry to what?

**Friday:** Luke 11:15-26: Jesus said, “Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.” To be “with” Jesus, is it enough just to “keep in bounds” by not sinning? What does it mean to “gather” with him?

**Saturday:** Luke 11:27-28: A woman from the crowd called out, “Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that nursed you.” Jesus replied, “Blessed rather, are those who hear the word of God and obey it.” Is Jesus talking here just about people who keep the ten commandments? Do you believe that a greater blessing is offered to you than that of being the mother of the Messiah? Does this motivate you to live a life characterized by reflection on the words of Jesus?

## LIVING THIS WEEK'S GOSPELS

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**As Christian:** See if it is possible to participate in the daily celebration of Christ’s redemption of the world. If daily Mass is impossible, what is possible?

**As Disciple:** Read the Bible daily, as faithfully as if it were as much an obligation as Sunday Mass.

**As Prophet:** Each day this week consciously do more than you are commanded to do. Be a little more friendly, give a little more service.

**As Priest:** Go the “extra mile” with someone who takes up your time. Look beyond what you have to do for people; look instead at what you can do—and do it willingly.

**As King:** Help someone with a job that is not your specific responsibility. Think about everything that is done on earth as being the service of God to which you are committed.

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