



August 20, 2023

*Twentieth Sunday
In Ordinary Time*

ST. PETER'S CHURCH

262 N. Main Street

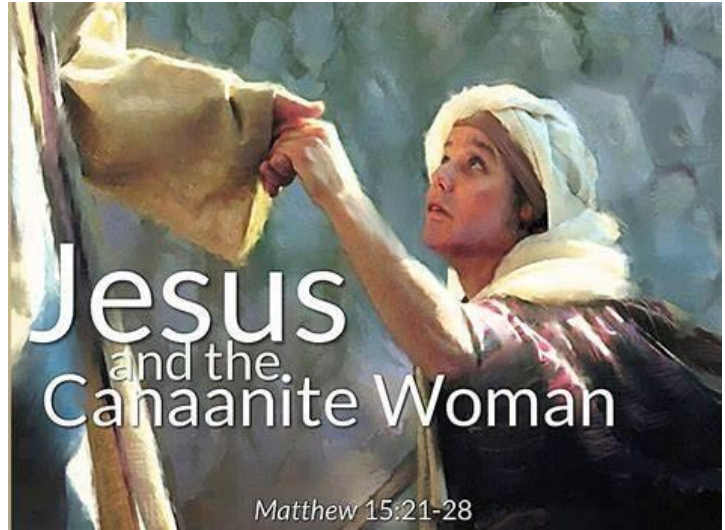
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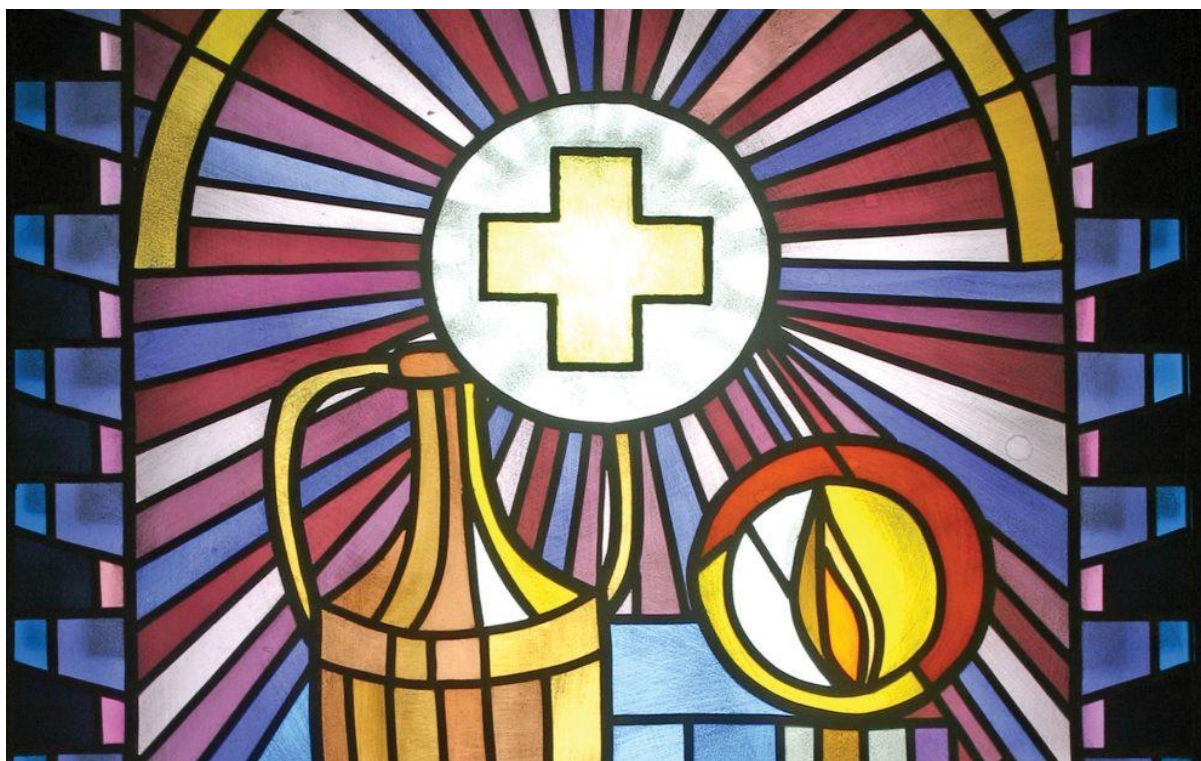
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LIVING OUR FAITH

Who is welcome to our faith community, to our town, or to our country and who is not? What we hear today from the prophet Isaiah, from St. Paul and Jesus himself, can help us understand God's perspective. Each of the readings we will hear today challenge us to break down walls that stand in the way of those who are excluded. In today's Gospel it is a foreign woman who persuades Jesus to knock down the accepted barriers of his day.

Questions: *What do you make of Jesus in this scene, who seems to change his mind about his own mission? Whom is the message of inclusion in today's readings challenging me to look at differently? How can I be more accepting of others?*



Why do Catholics anoint the sick?

Anointing of the sick affirms the presence of God's healing love in the lives of the vulnerable and suffering.

ANNE MCGOWAN

My father was seriously ill several times in his last years of life. He could have received the sacrament of the anointing of the sick when facing surgery for a brain tumor discovered when it started compromising his breathing, when the cancer diagnosis turned terminal after several years of relatively stable health, and in the final days before he died. However, due to various circumstances, he was anointed only once as he began hospice care. By that point, he lacked the capacity to communicate much about his experience of the sacrament.

Now, as a teacher of sacramental rites and theology, I ponder how the sacrament of anointing, like all the sacraments, mediates God's grace and mercy to particular people in specific situations of human life. Anointing proclaims Christ's presence and the Spirit's power for and among the sick within a relational and ecclesial context. The theology supporting the current form of the sacrament reflects a broader understanding than in the past about what it means to be sick. It also unambiguously affirms human sickness and suffering undergone by Christians as participation in Christ's dying and rising—within a perspective encompassing not only eternity but also the present experiences of broken people in this vulnerable world.

Anointing is for people suffering from serious illness

Pastoral Care of the Sick, a liturgical book from the joint commission of bishops' conferences, notes that anointing baptized people "seriously impaired by sickness or old age" sacramentally manifests Christ's healing presence and the church's pastoral care. Regardless of the course an illness takes after anointing, sick people receive spiritual strength from the church's prayer of faith and oil hallowed by God's blessing to meet their illness as people who share now in Christ's suffering and hope to share eventually in the joy of his resurrection. Anointing is certainly appropriate for Charlotte who has cancer, Hector who had a heart attack, Sawyer who suffered a stroke, George wounded by gunshots, and Huy hospitalized after a serious car accident.

However, anointing is also advisable for people suffering from degenerative or chronic diseases that cause serious suffering even if they are not immediately life-threatening—

such as Alma, who has Alzheimer’s disease, or Arnold, who struggles daily with crippling arthritis. Anointing is also accessible to people with serious illnesses that remain more hidden because they affect the mind before they ravage the body—people such as Darnell, distressed by major depression; Peter, pained by post-traumatic stress disorder; and Addison, afflicted with addiction. Maria can be anointed before surgery if serious illness prompted the operation. Ernie and Eva, who are elderly, may be anointed “if they have become notably weakened” even in the absence of any particular serious illness.

Anointing a person as death approaches remains recommended, if possible, but there is no need to delay reception of this sacrament until a person who is sick unmistakably becomes a person who is dying. Anointing is a repeatable sacrament! People previously anointed may be anointed again if they recover and then succumb to the same serious illness or a different one, whenever a serious illness enters a significantly more serious phase, or when they are dying. Pastoral and medical discernment about the severity of an illness is advisable, but reasonable judgment suffices.

Anointing is for people called to full, conscious, and active participation in the liturgy—and their lives

The Second Vatican Council continued the process of reframing a sacrament designated during the Middle Ages as “extreme unction” (anointing done near death—*in extremis*) as a sacrament of healing fittingly celebrated already when a person *begins* to be endangered by sickness or old age. Sacramental anointing seals the sick person’s status as a dignified member of the human community and the ecclesial community precisely at a time when sickness compromises one’s ability to sustain established community connections, let alone create new ones.

If Susanna is anointed soon after the diagnosis of a serious illness, she herself will participate more actively in the rite (engaging the liturgy’s scripture readings, songs, gestures, actions, responses, etc.). Perhaps she can even provide input to help prepare the rite, shaping its celebration in ways that would make it more meaningful for her. Furthermore, she can invite and enable her relatives, friends, and members of the parish community to participate more actively in this sacramental manifestation of the church’s prayer and care for the sick.

A communal celebration of anointing within Mass or a more abbreviated anointing outside Mass sends the sick forth to continue glorifying God by their lives, despite their illness and weakened position and even through the witness of grappling with their condition. Anointing strengthens baptized Christians to share more fully in Christ’s paschal mystery as they accept the dying and rising of Christ borne now in them, however anxiously or patiently, painfully or precariously, grudgingly or gracefully.

Anointing is for people who long for God’s saving power

Anointing’s “salve” slipped onto the skin of head and hands promises salvation, administering a variant dose of the “medicine of immortality” (a term more commonly designating the Eucharist). When meeting God soon becomes a prominent possibility, people often welcome the sacrament’s calming comfort. “Through this holy anointing,” a priest prays as he anoints a head traced earlier with the sign of the cross in preparation for baptism and perhaps also sealed similarly with this sign in confirmation, “may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit.” Next the priest applies blessed oil to hands that have held and healed, sent and soothed in Christ’s service, saying, “May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up.”

The sign of the crucified savior who gave his life to lead us to newness of life now marks anew the body of another suffering servant. Any short-term remission of suffering resulting from the sacrament anticipates the ultimate human healing of sharing fully in

the life of the risen Christ, the healing that is the hope of Christians. Anointing represents a foretaste of the resurrection in this life for people awaiting its fullness to come.

Anointing is for people who are well

While attesting to the centrality of the paschal mystery in Christian life, anointing compels all baptized Christians to care for the sick according to their capacities to sustain and restore the health of the sick, demonstrate love for the sick, and celebrate the sacraments alongside them. In accepting the sacrament of anointing, even while participating profoundly unconsciously, a dying great-grandfather becomes an embodied witness to the dying and rising of Christ continuing now in Christ's body, the church—for his family members, the priest, the nursing assistant, and his next-door neighbor.

In this way, the church's ministry *to* the sick becomes ministry *of* the sick. Whether articulated explicitly or expressed implicitly, the sick person's faith converges with the church's faith in Christ who suffered and died for us and for our salvation and who now invites us to share more fully in radically redeemed life in light of his resurrection. Despite being very sick or very old, sick people continue contributing to the ongoing mission of the church for the life of the world.

Readings for this Weekend – August 20

Isaiah 56:1,6-7

Romans 11: 13-15,29-32

Matthew 15: 21-28

Readings for next Weekend – August 27

Isaiah 22: 19-23

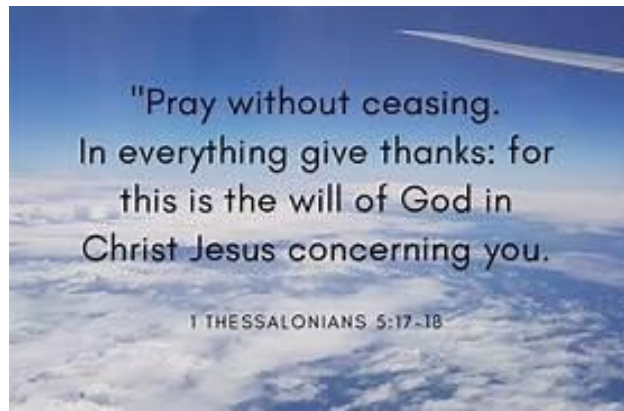
Romans 11: 33-36

Matthew 16: 13-20

Donations for last Weekend – August 13

Regular Collection: \$2141





WE PRAY...

We continue to pray for peace in the troubled areas of our world, for the people of the Ukraine and all those affected by the recent violence in our communities. We join our Holy Father in his prayer intentions for

August 2023- For World Youth Day

We pray the World Youth Day in Lisbon will help young people to live and witness the Gospel in their own lives.

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED

If you would like to add a name to our prayer list, contact the Parish office.

We kindly ask that you do not request a name to be included without the express consent of the person for whom you are requesting prayer. *We ask for prayer for Charles Thomas and ministry, Betty & Robert Friedland, Brian & Maria Cosgrove, Richard Rakin, Andrew Mikulski, Todd Conklin, Jean Van Lowe, John Fitzsimmons, Roseanna Walsh, Stefan Wiklinski, Sharon Mungeer, John Joseph, Bob Washington, Alice Landante, Gerry McMurrer, Pastor Bridgette LeConey, Michael Costin*

PRAYERS FOR THE DEARLY DEPARTED

We remember all our deceased family members, friends, and parishioners and in particular: *Gary Tempel, James Jensen, Bridget Hinkle, Det. Sgt. Frank Gualdino, Pope Benedict XVI, Arianna Toscano, Maureen Stiene, Louis Halvas, Kathryn Jones, Sister Kevin John Shields, OP, Anne Ferro, Stanley Brian Stewart, Mary Woods, John Ryan, Russell Constant, Jovan Islam, Ann Clark, Dylan Eidel, Mary Magenta, Wanda Kupiec, Todd Conklin, James Uciechowski, Charles Conti, Gideon Olfaro*

FRIDAY MORNING ADORATION

Friday Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the Church from 9:00-10:00am. All are warmly welcome to join us in this beautiful tradition of our faith.

SUNDAY MORNING ROSARY

Just a reminder - the Rosary is prayed every Sunday morning at 9:30am in the Church. All are welcome to join us for this beautiful Catholic devotion!

CENTERING PRAYER WITH CHANT

Our Centering Prayer group will meet on Monday mornings at 9am in the Church. All are welcome to join us in this profound experience of prayer.



Dear Families!

I hope you and yours are enjoying the lazy, hazy days of August! While there are still many days left for swimming, basking in the sun, chasing fireflies and eating ice cream, we are quickly approaching the start of another year of Religious Education. Each and every child, made in the image and likeness of God, is valued in our Program, and so we hope your child will join us this year! We have been busy this summer planning what we hope will be a fun, fulfilling and fruitful year of faith formation. I will be sending out more information and the calendar over the next few weeks to all families who are registered.

If you have not yet registered your child, you can find registration packets at the back of the Church or at the Parish office. Forms can be returned to me either at Mass, by email at st.peterrep@gmail.com, postal mail, or by dropping them off at the Parish office. Payment of registration fees can either be mailed in or dropped off. Please note: We never want finances to preclude a child from participating in our Program. Should there be difficulty paying the registration fee, please know we would be more than happy to work with you in setting up a nominal monthly payment plan. All requests for financial assistance will be held strictly confidential.

Walk-in registrations are most welcome at the Rectory on the following days between the hours of 11:00am and 4:00pm:

Tuesday, August 22nd
Thursday, August 24th
Tuesday, August 29th
Thursday, August 31st

We ask that all registration packets be returned by August 31st. In years past, we have had a flurry of requests to register for REP on the morning of our first class – which creates quite a chaotic morning for our students and volunteers!

As always, I am here and available to answer any questions or address any concerns you may have... and as the song goes, “See you in September...”!

In the love of our Lord and Savior!

Christy

SUMMER FOOD DRIVE

Throughout the month of August, in striving to keep Jesus' command to "feed the hungry", we will accept donations of food and toiletry items to help us keep the shelves of our Parish Food Pantry stocked.

Our Parish Food Pantry has seen a tremendous increase in recent weeks in the number of individuals and families who come to us for help. As you know from your own experience at the grocery store, prices for essentials have increased at an exponential rate. We are asking for your help so that we may continue to serve all those in our community facing food insecurity.

If you are able to help, we are in most need of the items listed below. Boxes will be set up at the back of the Church to collect your donations.

On behalf of those we serve, THANK YOU!

Food items most needed:

Cereal
Pasta
Pasta sauce
Soup
Peanut butter
Tuna

Toiletry items most needed:

Toothbrushes
Toothpaste
Deodorant
Bath soap

For more information about our Food Pantry, please contact Debbie at 845-798-6056 or the Parish office.

WELCOME TO OUR COMMUNITY, SUMMER VISITORS!

We extend a great big, warm welcome to all those visiting us this summer weekend. We are happy you have joined our Parish Family in worship today!

We pray that when you leave our beautiful Catskill Mountains, you relieve renewed and refreshed.

FIND A MASS, ANYWHERE!

Planning a vacation this summer and want to be able to find a local Catholic Mass? Simply visit <https://masstimes.org/> and plug in your location for a list of nearby Catholic churches.

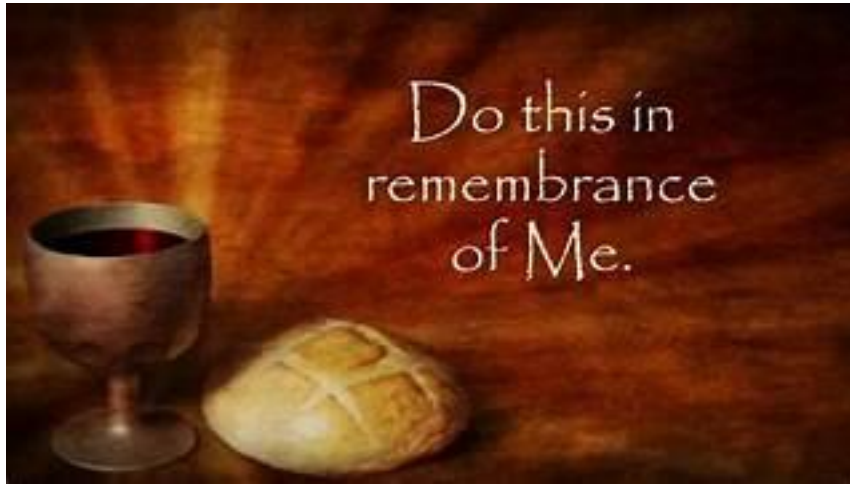
HOME HEALTH AIDE POSITION AVAILABLE

A senior woman in Liberty is seeking a FT or PT home health aide to assist her with cooking, shopping, etc. No heavy lifting is required.

For more information, please call May at 717-273-1231.

PARKING REQUEST

The new management at Lemonade Supermarket has graciously agreed to allow us to continue using the store parking lot during our services. They have asked that we use the parking spots closest to the library. Please, we ask that our Parishioners be respectful and comply with their request. Thank you.



OUR REGULAR WEEKEND MASS SCHEDULE:

Saturday evenings at 7 PM: *Mass in Spanish*

Sunday mornings at 10 AM: *Mass in English* **

Sunday evenings at 4:00 PM: *Mass in English*

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 8:30 AM: (*Mass in English*)

**We will continue to livestream our Sunday morning Mass on Facebook.

**The Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) is available before all Masses or anytime by appointment.

