

# Saint Mary's Church

15164 Juniper Dr. Marne, MI 49435 / 616.677.3934 / [www.saintmarysmarne.org](http://www.saintmarysmarne.org)

August 20, 2023 ~ The 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time



## Weekend Mass Schedule:

Saturday 4:30PM St Mary

Sunday 8:30AM St Michael

Sunday 10:30AM St Mary

Sunday 4:30PM St Michael

## Weekday Mass Schedule:

Tuesday 9AM St Mary

*Adoration begins after Mass until 2:00 pm*

Wednesday 9AM - St Michael

*Adoration begins after Mass until 2:00 pm*

Thursday 9:00 AM St Mary

Friday 9:00 AM St Michael

## Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Saturday 3:30 PM—4:15PM-St Mary

Sunday 3:00PM -4:00PM St Michael

Tuesday 2:00 PM—3:00 PM St Mary

Wednesday 2:00 PM—3:00 PM St Michael

*(or anytime by appt. please call parish office)*

## St. Mary Parish Office

Monday - 8:00AM - 4:30PM

Tuesday - 8:00AM - 4:30PM

Wednesday - 8:00AM - 11:30AM

Thursday - 8:00AM to 4:30PM

**St Mary's Mission Statement:** *We, the Roman Catholic community of St. Mary's, by our baptism have become the People of God, dedicated to living and proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are a community built on faith and the sharing of individual talents, abilities and skills for the sake of the Kingdom of God. Empowered by the Holy Spirit and strengthened by prayer and the sacraments, we continue the mission of Jesus to reveal God's presence in all of human life.*

## Pastor:

Rev. Michael Hodges / [frmhodges@grpriests.org](mailto:frmhodges@grpriests.org)  
616.677.3934

*For emergency please call: 616.745.1409*

## Deacon:

Deacon Tom Roberts / [troberts@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:troberts@saintmarysmarne.org)  
616.677.3934

## Business Manager:

Todd Kline / [businessmanager@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:businessmanager@saintmarysmarne.org)

## Parish Secretary:

Cathie VanGessel / [secretary@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:secretary@saintmarysmarne.org)

## Director of Religious Education:

Rebecca Chicklon / [dre@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:dre@saintmarysmarne.org)  
616.677.5065

## Youth Minister

Rebecca Chicklon / [dre@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:dre@saintmarysmarne.org)  
616.677.5065

**Director of R.C.I.A:** Jill Brown-616.677.3934

**Maintenance/Custodian:** Jim & Marian Looks: 677.3934

## Liturgical Minister:

Gary Karr / 616.677.3934 / [gkarr@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:gkarr@saintmarysmarne.org)

## Music Director:

Dr. Bernie Stanko 616.490.3836 /  
[berniestanko@hotmail.com](mailto:berniestanko@hotmail.com)

## Pastoral Council:

Sharon Davis, Becky Warners,  
Vito Dolci, Geary Farrell, Doug Frantz

## Finance Council:

Lisa Bradley, Jose Gomez, Todd Kline,  
Scott Lampe, Mel Northup

**Martha League:** Parish Office: 616.677.3934  
(assistance with meals during illness or injury)

## Prayer Line:

Parish Office 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)

## Our Cluster Parish:

St Michael's - 17150 - 88th Avenue  
Coopersville, MI 49404  
616.384.4026  
[www.saintmichaels.us](http://www.saintmichaels.us)

# Mass Intentions

## Saturday August 19

4:30PM † Bob Bacon by Family..... **MA**  
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 3:30 PM—4:15 PM - St Mary

## Sunday August 20

8:30AM † Eli O'Bradovich by Family ..... **MI**  
 10:30AM † Pat O'Connor by Margie Jirous ..... **MA**  
 4:30PM † Caroline Idziak by Bob Idziak and Family..... **MI**  
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 3:30 PM—4:15 PM - St Michael

## Monday August 21 No Mass

## Tuesday August 22

9:00AM † Bette Lipski by Family..... **MA**  
 Adoration begins after Mass until 2pm  
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 2:00 PM—3:00 PM - St. Mary

## Wednesday August 23

9:00AM † Margaret Jonio by Ruth Estelle ..... **MI**  
 Adoration begins after Mass until 2pm  
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 2:00 PM—3:00 PM - St. Michael

## Thursday August 24

9:00AM † Jim Kline by M/M Duane Perrin ..... **MA**

## Friday August 25

9:00AM † Chuck Albrecht by Chris Albrecht ..... **MI**

## Saturday August 26

4:30PM † Robert Wetherbee by Janice Beuschel..... **MA**  
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 3:30 PM—4:15 PM - St Mary

## Sunday August 27

8:30AM † Jim Drake by Joan Drake ..... **MI**  
 10:30AM † Monica Zahm by M/M Jim May ..... **MA**  
 4:30PM No 4:30 Mass, due to Parish Festival ..... **MI**

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



## For the Week of August 20, 2023

Sunday Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Is 56:1, 6-7; Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8; Rom 11:13-15, 29-32; Mt 15:21-28

Monday Memorial of Saint Pius X, Pope  
 Jgs 2:11-19; Ps 106:34-35, 36-37, 39-40; 43ab & 44; Mt 19:16-22

Tuesday Memorial of the Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary  
 Jgs 6:11-24a; Ps 85:9, 11-12, 13-14; Mt 19:23-30

Wednesday Memorial of Saint Rose of Lima, Virgin  
 Jgs 9:6-15; Ps 21:2-3, 4-5, 6-7; Mt 20:1-16

Thursday Feast of Saint Bartholomew, Apostle  
 Rv 21:9b-14; Ps 145:10-11, 12-13, 17-18; Jn 1:45-51

Friday Memorial of Saint Louis of France and Saint Joseph Calasan, Priest  
 Ru 1:1, 3-6, 14b-16, 22; Ps 146:5-6ab, 6c-7, 8-9a, 9bc-10; Mt 22:34-40

Saturday Ru 2:1-3, 8-11; 4:13-17; Ps 128:1b-2, 3, 4, 5; Mt 23:1-12

Sunday Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Is 22:19-23; Ps 138:1-2, 2-3, 6, 8; Rom 11:33-36; Mt 16:13-20

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

## St. Michael's Liturgical Ministers

	Aug 27 / 8:30 AM	Aug 27 / 4:30 PM
Altar Servers	Bryson Lindberg Clare Taylor	NO MASS
Eucharistic Ministers	Denise Parish Jennifer DeMull Joe Hitchings Zach Nelson Cindy Lindberg Peter Nielsen Jeff Johnson	NO MASS
Lector	Carl Pohlman	NO MASS
Sacristan	Rosemary Weigel	NO MASS
Ushers	Jim Ponshair Wade Lindberg Dave Tronovich Deb Tronovich	NO MASS
Music	Anna Jonaitis	NO MASS

## St. Mary's Liturgical Ministers

	August 26 - 4:30PM	August 27 - 10:30AM
Sacristan	Jose Gomez	Gary Karr
Altar Servers	Kassidy Britt MaKaelyn Britt	Calvin Davis Hannah Davis
Precious Body	Angie Hanks Paul Madura Geary Farrell	Janette Ney Bruce Kamp Jim Fritz
Precious Blood	Deb Hapon Julie Lothschutz Kay Willcome Mary Kirkwood	Margie Jirous Becky Warners Need Two
Hospitality	Jeff Schneider Megan Greenland Katie Greenland Austin Lampe	Jim Looks Marian Looks Leonard Horter Need One
Lector	Rita Carmody	John Klein
Music	Bernie Stanko	Bernie Stanko



**20<sup>th</sup> Sunday**  
 in Ordinary Time

"O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish."  
 And her daughter was healed from that hour.

Matthew 15:28

Christ and the Canaanite Woman by Jean Germain Drouais, 1788  
 © Thomas

## Cluster News and Community News and Events

HOSTED BY  
THE CHURCHES OF COOPERSVILLE

INFLATABLES  
GAMES  
FOOD  
AND MORE

**BACK TO SCHOOL BASH**

**Tuesday August 22nd**  
5:00-7:00PM  
Vets Park  
250 W Randall St

**FREE FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY**

### Diocesan Assembly 2023:

#### Share your Encounter

Catholics of the diocese are invited to participate in Diocesan Assembly 2023: **Saturday, Sept. 30 - 8:45 a.m. to 3 p.m.** on at Cathedral Square Center. This year's keynote speaker will be Father René Constanza, CSP, president of the Paulist Fathers and former rector/pastor of the Cathedral of Saint Andrew and executive director of the Catholic Information Center. The conference will be offered in-person and online. The in-person and livestreamed sessions will be presented concurrently in English and Spanish. Cost of the in-person event is \$15 (includes lunch) Registration to attend via livestream is free. For registration info:

Contact Jen at [jbaxter@grdiocese.org](mailto:jbaxter@grdiocese.org)

### Please Pray for our Engaged Couples

#### Christian Hall & Kayleigh Kutchin

.....August 25, 2023 (St Michael)

#### Marissa McDonald & Christopher Barczak

.....October 7, 2023 (St Mary)

#### Julia Delaney & Logan Brouwer

.....April 13, 2024 (Cathedral of St Andrew)

#### Rachel Berg & Joseph Elenbaas

.....September 21, 2024 (St Mary)

*Lord God, the source of all love, the wise plan of your providence has brought these young people together. As they prepare themselves for the sacrament of marriage and pray for your grace, grant that, strengthened by your blessing, they may grow in their respect for one another and cherish each other with a sincere love. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen*



### Youth Ministry

#### Youth Ministry (6-12 Grade)

Youth Ministry will resume in the fall. Feel free to contact Rebecca for more details.

6th-12th grade youth are invited to help with the St. Michael Festival and St. Mary Parish Picnic. If interested, please contact our Director of Youth Ministry, Rebecca Chicklon at the contact information listed below.

Questions or comments

Please contact Rebecca Chicklon at 616-677-5065 or [dre@saintmarys.marne.org](mailto:dre@saintmarys.marne.org)



### Fr. Mike's Musings



In one of my favorite 'Three Stooges' skits Moe is going door-to-door as a Federal census taker and asks a gentleman the standard questions about his address and his age and then reveals to the hapless homeowner what his feelings are concerning the bonds of matrimony: "Are you married or happy?" While we may find this question humorous (I do) the sacrament of Marriage is a serious matter for the Church.

Throughout history civilizations have placed a sense of sacredness on the union of man and woman. There has always been a vague realization that the deep longing for oneness with "the other" is life-giving, and that this longing bespeaks it as being the source of all life for generations to come. This is why religious rituals and codes of behavior have always been tied to marriage. Jesus gave matrimony a new sacramental dimension as being a hallmark of Christian vocation that has its beginnings in the sacrament of Baptism. The family of God is mirrored in the family of man.

In matrimony a couple is called to live their sacramental bond for the good of not only themselves but also for others that they encounter. By their closeness, a couple affects the lives of others with the love of Christ in their midst. They reveal Christ's love and make it something to be desired to their immediate family members and to the community as a whole. A couple's love not only gives life through the birth of children but also imparts the life-giving presence of Christ to their brothers and sisters in the world.

Matrimony is more than a private arrangement between two people designed to give only satisfaction and joy to one another. It is a sacramental vocation in the Church through which Christ reveals and deepens the mystery of His oneness with us, His Body. In realization of this important aspect of the bond couples, new and years in being, should strive to avoid unrealistic aspects that place "conditions" on the relationship, conditions that often lead to stress and endanger the marriage when they have not been met.

Below is a short list of some myths that can hamper the true happiness inherent in marriage. They are red flags for potential problems in the relationship and they need to be addressed, not ignored or swept under the rug.

- \*Marriage should be totally happy all the time.
- \*There's never disagreement in a happy marriage.
- \*Total honesty leads to marital paradise.
- \*Successful marital partners should be like twins who have everything in common.
- \*Doing everything together will lead to total happiness.
- \*Stability should be the highest priority of a marriage.
- \*Always expect to do family rituals the way your family did.
- \*There is no place for joy and laughter in marriage; it's all serious work.
- \*Make sure to hide your fears and weaknesses from your spouse.
- \*Love conquers all and will keep you together.
- \*Men and women are from different planets.
- \*Conflict will take care of itself if you wait long enough.
- \*Remember that you are always right; remind your partner of this frequently.
- \*Take credit for everything that goes well.
- \*Always blame your partner for your problems.
- \*Exaggerate the negative and minimize the positive to help your spouse grow.
- \*Never ever forgive your spouse.
- \*The only way to express affection in marriage is to have sex.

Living in the reality of human relationships can only serve to enhance the reality of our relationship with Christ. And when this enhanced relationship of true love is exhibited to others their relationships can grow and improve as well. "Are you married or happy?" The answer should be a resounding "YES!" on both counts. It is the truest response couples can give in fulfilling their sacramental vocation.

### Meal Train for Fr Mike

Have you signed up yet? It really is as easy as making an extra serving of whatever you are preparing your family for dinner. Put it in a microwavable container and drop it off at the Parish Office on our way to (or home) from work.. Or call the office to make special drop off arrangements. (Sign up online: or call the parish office)

<https://www.mealtrain.com/trains/8vv97n>

**August 20, 2023 ~ The 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

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## St. Mary's Parish News

### Religious Education

**Religious Education** meets on Wednesdays, 6:15-7:30 p.m. and will resume in September.

Children's Liturgy of the Word meets during the 10:30 a.m. Mass and will resume in the fall.

#### Questions or comments:

Please contact Rebecca Chicklon at [dre@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:dre@saintmarysmarne.org) or 616-677-5065

#### High School Youth Ministry

See Cluster Page for more information.

## St. Mary's 2023 Photo Directory

This Will Be A Digital Website Directory Only  
Using Parishioner Supplied Images

### 3 Ways To Submit Your Photo:

**Email  
Your Image to:**  
[secretary@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:secretary@saintmarysmarne.org)

**Physical  
Photo:**  
Send us your printed photo  
or digital photo on a memory stick  
Envelope at Church  
or Mail to:  
15164 Juniper Drive  
Marne, MI 48435  
Office: 616.677.3934

**Attend  
an Evening  
Photo Session:**  
These will be informal  
Send us an email to sign up  
(Date to be determined)  
[secretary@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:secretary@saintmarysmarne.org)

**Important: Provide Full Names,  
listed from Left to Right, Back Row First**

## Save the Dates

<b>August 27</b>	St Michael Parish Festival
<b>Sep 10</b>	St Mary Parish Picnic
<b>Sept 30 &amp; Oct 1</b>	Knights of Columbus Scrap Metal Drive Parish Hall Parking Lot
<b>Oct 8</b>	Knights of Columbus Council #11581 Breakfast & Blood Drive
<b>Oct 24</b>	Flute Recital - St Mary 7:30PM
<b>Nov 3</b>	Mass of Hope, Health & Healing St Mary 7:00PM
<b>Nov 22</b>	Thanksgiving Eve Mass, Grocery Collection
<b>Nov 23</b>	Thanksgiving Day Mass

### Catholic Service Appeal 2023

Thank you for your gifts to 2023 Catholic Services Appeal! Your generous support funds essential diocesan ministries that strengthen us in Christ.

**CSA 2023 Pledge Goal: \$51,834.00**

Total Pledges Made: \$41,630.00 (81%)

Balance: \$10,204.00

Participation: 112 of 292 Active Households (39%)

Totals as of August 8, 2023

**Thank you for your stewardship**

**Please Note, if we do not reach the parish goal set by the diocese, the shortage will need to come out of our church operating account. Please help us reach our goal and send in your pledge card this week! If you have returned your CSA pledge card,**



### St Mary's Parish FAMILY REUNION Mass & Picnic - Sept 10.

Join your parish family (past & present) for an afternoon of FOOD, FELLOWSHIP & FUN! Grilled Hamburgers & Hotdogs, Baked Beans, Potato Salad, Coleslaw, Chips and Punch & Punch will be provided.. Please bring a DESSERT or SALAD to share.. All are Welcome! Come and Visit... Stop by and say HI to your old friends and make some new friends. 50/50 Raffles, Yard Games, LIVE Music, Cake Walk and More... 10:30AM Mass at the Cemetery Altar. (Please bring a lawn chair. In case of inclement weather, Mass will be celebrated inside) Picnic Reunion will be at the Parish Hall at 12PM. Please RSVP... Sign Up Sheets in the Narthex. Questions call the Parish Office



### Parish Picnic Planning Meeting ~ August 22-6PM

The Next Planning Meeting will be on **Tuesday, August 22 at 6PM**. The Meeting will be held in the church community room. Please plan on attending the meeting to see what you can do to help your parish picnic.

### Knights of Columbus #11581 News

To learn more about the Knights of Columbus' activities and what they do to support our parish community, the surrounding area and the world, please contact Grand Knight: Rob Rander at: [roblander82@gmail.com](mailto:roblander82@gmail.com) or come to a General Membership Meeting. Meetings are held the 1st Thursday of the month at 7:00pm in Parish Hall.

**Next Meeting - September 7 at 7PM at the Parish Hall.**

**Scrap Metal Drive - September 30 & October 1**

**St. Mary's - Marne Hall Parking Lot - SELF SERVE**

**Community Breakfast and Blood Drive - October 8**

Register here:

[https://donate.michigan.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive\\_schedule/149333](https://donate.michigan.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/149333)



### Knights of the Month

Knight Person of the Month for August - Joe Lothschutz

Knight Family of the Month for August - Jim & Marian Looks

The Knight Person / Family of the month is a way of recognizing someone who has gone above and beyond, or done something extra for the council or the church community. Congratulations and Thank You for your for service and commitment to our Parish Family



### Parish Office Closed

The St Mary Parish Office will be closed Monday, August 21. It will resume normal office hours on Tuesday, August 22.



### Thank You

The Lady of Fatima Guild would like to thank all of you for your generous gifts of Back to School Supplies.



## Giving Back to God

	August 12/13
Regular Contributions	\$3952.00
Capital Improvement	\$105.00
Online Contributions	\$1460.00
Children's Contributions	\$2.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5519.00</b>

**Thank you for your continued support and generosity!**

**St. Mary's Sponsor of the Week**  
**DONNA'S CATERING ~ INTERURBAN DEPOT CAFÉ'**

Jim & Bobbi Poley 231.856.6193 / 616.677.1280

**THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR BULLETIN!**

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

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

## St. Michael's Parish News



**Scrip News—** Thank you to our 10 families who purchased Scrip this week. Our total profit was \$86.20.



We are pleased to welcome a newly baptized child of God!

**Cecilia Rose Nelson**

daughter of Zachary & Amber Nelson  
**Baptized on August 13, 2023**

## St. Michael's Preschool

Have you considered St. Michael's Preschool for your child or grandchild? If not, you should! Come see what a great experience St. Michael's Preschool can provide. Come meet our Director/Teacher, Cindy Lindberg! Preschool meets on MWF from 8:45—11:45 am (Mon. 8:45am-2:30pm for 4-year-olds). For more info, call the Parish Office at 616-384-4026. Now enrolling for the 2023-24 school year!



## St. Michael's Faith Formation

**It is time to register for Faith Formation. Attention families with children ages 3 through grades 8. Please registered your child for Faith Formation. You can find registration forms on the parish website and forms are also located in the church narthex.** Contact Debbie if you have any questions (616)384-4026.

**Children's Liturgy of the Word:** program is offered on Sunday during 8 and 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. **CLW will start on 9/24.**

**Elementary Faith Formation:** The elementary program is for students in grades 1-5. We meet on Wednesday from 6:15- 7:30 pm. Registration forms are in the back of church and on the parish website. **Classes start on 9/20.**

**Middle School Faith Formation:** Grades 6, 7 and 8 will meet on Sundays after the 8:30am Mass from 9:45 to 11:15 in the Youth Room. The 8th Grade students will also receive Confirmation Preparation. **Classes will begin on 9/24.**

## St. Michael's Parish Family

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



## St. Michael's Sanctuary Lamp

for +Caroline Idziak  
by Bob Idziak and Family



## St. Michael's Chicken Dinner

Come one, come all. Our parish festival is next Sunday, August 27! We will have a big raffle, chicken dinner, mini-affle, kids' tent, grocery wheel . . . something for all ages! We still need many volunteers to help out. Sign-up sheets are in the glass hallway.

**Large Raffle:** Raffle tickets will be available after Masses. We are asking that each family try to sell at least 2 packets. All sold or unsold tickets **MUST** be returned by 10 AM Festival morning.

**Mini Raffle:** You may bring donated items into the office during regular hours. If you would like to donate money for the committee to purchase items, please do so by today!

**Kitchen:** In need of donations — 1 large decaf canisters of coffee; 1 large regular canisters of coffee; fresh cherry tomatoes; 1 jug of bleach; 1 large bottle of dish soap.

**Country Store:** The following is meant to be suggestions only: any and all baked goods, canned preserves, pickles, fruits, homemade jewelry, greeting cards, quilts, wood work, ceramics, home-made doll clothes, produce and herbs from your garden, honey, homemade soap. And books are always welcomed! If you aren't sure it is appropriate for the Country Store, please call Mary Turbessi 231-865-3468 or Cindy Lindberg

**Pie Collections:** We have taken two pie collections, but you may still contribute to the pie collection if you'd like.

Please contact our co-chairs, Cindy Lindberg (616-822-1213) or Jenny Lindberg (616-862-3588), with any questions.

## Giving Back to God

**August 13, 2023**

Adult Envelopes	\$3,272.00
Loose Cash	\$222.00
Children's Envelopes	\$8.25
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,502.25</b>
Pie Collection	\$596.00
Building Fund	\$2,085.00
Financial Assistance	\$10.00

**Thank you for your continued support!**

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## The Church *kata-holos*

Matthew's theme in his Gospel is that Jesus is the promised Son of David, the Messiah. But Jesus is called this only three times in direct address (9:27; 15:22; 20:30), twice by blind men and once by this Canaanite woman, who should not have known this Jewish title.

Jesus ignores her. When she falls at his feet and asks for help, he responds, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." This does not sound like Jesus. His mother would have been ashamed of him! But Jesus was not being rude. He knew this woman; she was not the wilting type. Undaunted, she answers, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Jesus says, "Woman, great is your faith!" and then cures her daughter.

What Jesus did here was to deliberately lead the woman into making an act of faith. Essentially, she acknowledged the truth of God's revelation to Israel by accepting that the Jews are the "children," the chosen family of God. This does not mean she felt inferior! She probably would have insisted to the whole world (Jesus included): "A Canaanite is better than a Jew any day!" But she acknowledged that for some reason God had chosen them. This was her act of faith.

She did not convert to Judaism. At that time religion and nationality were identified. To accept the Jewish faith meant to accept Jewish culture and life-style. There was no distinction between religious expression and cultural expression, between religious identity and ethnic identity. And there would not be until the Church became catholic.

The passage to catholicism is described in the Acts of the Apostles. When the Church decided to give the Greek Christians their own leaders (Acts 6:1-7) and

AUGUST 20, 2023

20TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Isaiah 56:1, 6-7; Romans 11:13-15, 29-32;  
Matthew 15:21-28

to accept converts from paganism without requiring them to become Jews first or to follow the Jewish cultural-religious laws (see Acts 10:1-11:18 and 15:1-29), the Church broke the identification of Christianity with a single culture or cultural pattern of expression. This is what opened the door for Christ's Church to spread "throughout the whole" (*kata-holos*), which is what *catholic* means. The Catholic Church is the Church whose teaching and belief are the same throughout the whole world, but whose expression of this belief is embodied differently in the diverse cul-

tural forms of every race, nationality and ethnic group.

There is no such thing, therefore, as a "Roman Catholic Church." There is the Roman (or Latin) rite of the Catholic Church—which is just one of eighteen rites recognized as

equal in every way. The Church we belong to is the Armenian-Bulgarian-Chaldean-Coptic-Ethiopian-Georgian-Greek Italo/Albanian-Latin-Malabar-Malankar-Maronite-Melkite-Romanian-Russian-Serbian-Syrian-Ukrainian Catholic Church. Each of these rites has its own rules, government, liturgy and culturally influenced ways of expressing the faith we

**There is no such  
thing as a "Roman  
Catholic Church."**





all hold in common. And all are equal.

The Catholic Church is not tied down to any one mentality. Catholics can express their devotion silently or by dancing in the aisles; choose bishops by appointment or by majority vote; require priests to be married or celibate; give women public roles in liturgy or reserve these to men. All these choices are cultural, not religious. To be catholic is to refuse to identify religion with a single culture.

At the same time, since religion has to be expressed and all human expression is determined by human culture, being Catholic also means accepting one's own rite and following its rules until they change. One can change rites, just as one can change countries, but everyone has to belong to some culture and accept its rules or just leave the human race. The same is true of any religion incarnated as Church.

## REFLECTING ON THIS WEEK'S GOSPELS

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### Twentieth Week of the Year

***Pray daily:** Lord, you came to draw everything in heaven and on earth into unity under your headship. Open my mind and my heart to accept diversity in the Church so that you can use me to bring about the unity you desire. Amen.*

**Monday:** Matthew 19:16-22. Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." Do you identify religion with observing commandments and customs or with following the words and example of Jesus?

**Tuesday:** Matthew 19:23-30. Peter said to Jesus, "Look, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?" What have you renounced to follow Jesus? Is giving up sin enough to make you a follower of Jesus?

**Wednesday:** Matthew 20:1-16. "So, the last will be first, and the first will be last." What practical effect do these words have on your life? How do you respond to them in action?

**Thursday:** Matthew 22:1-14. "But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe...." If you accept the invitation to the wedding feast and show up, but do not have deep respect and appreciation for what is going on, where does this leave you?

**Friday:** Matthew 22:34-40. A scholar of the law tested Jesus by asking, "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" What commandment looms largest in your own consciousness?

**Saturday:** Matthew 23:1-12. "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do." In what ways do you go beyond "cultural Catholicism"? Beyond the example of the clergy, the hierarchy and your peer group?

## LIVING THIS WEEK'S GOSPELS

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**As Christian:** Identify the title of Jesus which says the most to you: Savior, Teacher, Friend, Model, Leader, Priest, Victim, Lord or any other.

**As Disciple:** Write down five things that are rule or policy for Catholics in the Latin rite but which do not have to be this way in the whole Catholic Church. Can you name five things that other Catholic rites do which differ from Latin rite practice?

**As Prophet:** Choose a concrete, visible way to express the relationship you have with Jesus, using the title you identified under "Christian" above.

**As Priest:** In some specific way this week share the "children's food" with someone who does not have what is available to Catholics: the saints, the Mass, a Catholic conference or retreat, the writings of the mystics, a good pastoral letter from a bishop or the pope, or this book!

**As King:** To break down the parochial narrowness that makes us tend to identify the Catholic Church with our own rite, go with a friend to experience the Mass in the church of some other Catholic rite.



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