

Saint Mary's Church

15164 Juniper Dr. Marne, MI 49435 / 616.677.3934 / www.saintmarysmarne.org

August 27, 2023 ~ The 21st 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@gpriests.org
616.677.3934

For emergency please call: 616.745.1409

Deacon:

Deacon Tom Roberts / troberts@saintmarysmarne.org
616.677.3934

Business Manager:

Todd Kline / businessmanager@saintmarysmarne.org

Parish Secretary:

Cathie VanGessel / secretary@saintmarysmarne.org

Director of Religious Education:

Rebecca Chicklon / dre@saintmarysmarne.org
616.677.5065

Youth Minister

Rebecca Chicklon / 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

Music Director:

Dr. Bernie Stanko 616.490.3836 /
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

Our Cluster Parish:

St Michael's - 17150 - 88th Avenue
Coopersville, MI 49404
616.384.4026
www.saintmichaels.us

Mass Intentions

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**

Monday August 28 No Mass

Tuesday August 29

9:00AM † Carmen Dietrich by M/M Jim Harlett..... **MA**
 Adoration begins after Mass until 2pm
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 2:00 PM—3:00 PM - St. Mary

Wednesday August 30

9:00AM † Lucy Marshall by the Family of the late Edna Schumaker..... **MI**
 Adoration begins after Mass until 2pm
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 2:00 PM—3:00 PM - St. Michael

Thursday August 31

9:00AM † Betty Oziemkiewicz by M/M Duane Perrin..... **MA**

Friday September 1

9:00AM Ruth Hoffman 100th Birthday by Ruth Hecksel **MI**

Saturday September 2

4:30PM † Edmund "Trey" Eisenhower by M/M Richard Baker **MA**
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 3:30 PM—4:15 PM - St Mary

Sunday September 3

8:30AM † Elaine Schoenborn by Friends **MI**
 10:30AM † Daniel Drong by Todd Davis Family **MA**
 4:30PM † Sherman Hecksel by Ruth Hecksel..... **MI**
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 3:30 PM—4:15 PM - St Michael

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



For the Week of August 26, 2023

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

Monday Memorial of Saint Augustine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church
 I Thes 1:1-5, 8b-10; Ps 149:1b-2, 3-4, 5-6a & 9b; Mt 23:13-22

Tuesday Memorial of the Passion of Saint John the Baptist
 I Thes 2:1-8; Ps 139:1-3, 4-6; Mk 6:17-29

Wednesday I Thes 2:9-13; Ps 139:7-8, 9-10, 11-12ab; Mt 23:27-32

Thursday I Thes 3:7-13; Ps 90:3-5a, 12-13, 14 & 17; Mt 24:42-51

Friday I Thes 4:1-8; Ps 97:1 & 2b, 5-6, 10, 11-12; Mt 25:1-13

Saturday I Thes 4:9-11; Ps 98:1, 7-8, 9; Mt 25:14-30

Sunday Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
 Jer 20:7-9; Ps 63:2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9; Rom 12:1-2; Mt 16:21-27

St. Michael's Liturgical Ministers

	Sep 3 / 8:30 AM	Sep 3 / 4:30 PM
Altar Servers	Lauren Meerman Alivia Kosten	Madelyn Jonaitis Molly Jonaitis
Eucharistic Ministers	Sharon Carlson Andrew Bonter Denise Nelson Kenny Harker Rosemary Weigel Debbie Veneklas Paul Schmidt	Ken Schwallier Greg Helsen
Lector	Lyndsey Kosten	Joe LeMieux
Sacristan	Chris Albrecht	Karen Helsen
Ushers	Ed Irwin Curt DeVos Joe Meerman Ray Maka	Bob Jonaitis Greg Helsen
Music	Craig Bleckley	Craig Bleckley

St. Mary's Liturgical Ministers

	September 2 - 4:30PM	September 3 - 10:30AM
Sacristan	Matt Karr	Gary Karr
Altar Servers	Bryson Potts MJ Potts	Lauren LeMieux Ty Ricord
Precious Body	Deacon Tom Lori Rander Rob Rander	Margie Jirous Geary Farrell Paul Madura
Precious Blood	Austin Lampe Michelle Lampe Steve Lampe Lisa Potts	Janette Ney Christina Withers Jim Looks Marian Looks
Hospitality	Jeff Schneider Need Three	Anthony Leale Nettie Leale Leonard Horter Need One
Lector	Nicolette Looks	Rita Carmody
Music	Bernie Stanko	Bernie Stanko



21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

"And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it."

Matthew 16:18

Jesus Restoring the Keys to St. Peter by Jean-Auguste Dominique Ingres, 1825 © Thomson

Cluster News and Community News and Events

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



• SHARE YOUR ENCOUNTER •

Please Pray for our Engaged Couples

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

Fr. Mike's Musings



You may have noticed that there are now signs on the fire doors at St. Mary noting that these are for emergencies ONLY. However, these are being used with increasing frequency by those who seem to think that they have somewhere more important to be and simply cannot wait for the final conclusion of the Mass. Is McDonald's going to run out of coffee? The game requires your presence immediately. The golf course (beach, campground, etc.) will vanish from the face of the earth in the next fifteen minutes? I know that these examples come across as being snide in their tenor, but it is difficult to fathom what could possibly take precedence over Jesus Christ and His presence in the Eucharist.

Watching a person leaving immediately from Holy Communion, you wonder if the person is sick (valid reason). Was there an emergency? But no, after a while, you realize that the situation is not uncommon. Much like habitually arriving late for Mass, it may be discourteous, impolite and irreverent, but it is not uncommon in our parishes.

In the course of events, it seems odd that we can't organize our lives in such a way that we can attend Mass in its entirety. It isn't as if we are spectators at a stage play or ballgame and decide to show up at the bottom of the second inning or arbitrarily leave before the event is over. At the play or the game, neither the actors nor the players leave before the curtain goes down or the last out is made. Similarly, they are on hand when the curtain goes up or the first pitch is made. During the Mass, we are the players; we are the participants.

If we are invited into the presence of a president, a queen or the Pope, wouldn't we arrive before the dignitary and stay until the function is complete? It's protocol, respect and good manners. Doesn't God our Creator, who gave His life for us, deserve the same respect? What if Jesus asked us to attend the Last Supper; would we come late or leave before the meal was over? The Mass begins with the entrance procession and hymn. It ends with the dismissal. Everything in between is the Mass.

There was a time in Church history when people rationalized that their Mass obligation was satisfied if they attended the offertory, the consecration and holy Communion. Any such thinking was eliminated with the Second Vatican Council. Sacrosanctum Concilium (Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy), reads: "The two parts, which in a certain sense, go to make up the Mass, namely, the liturgy of the word and the eucharistic liturgy, are so closely connected with each other that they form but one single act of worship. Accordingly, this sacred Synod strongly urges pastors of souls that, when instructing the faithful, they insistently teach them to take their part in the entire Mass, especially on Sundays and feasts of obligation."

The Code of Canon Law likewise claims, "On Sundays and other holy days of obligation the faithful are obligated to assist at Mass." And the Catechism of the Catholic Church repeats the exact words of canon law regarding our Mass obligation. The first precept of the Catholic Church also tells us that we are obligated to attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation. There is no ambiguity here. None of these documents even hint or remotely infer that we can arrive late or leave early or that it's somehow OK to miss part of the Mass. In the words of Yogi Berra, "It ain't over till it's over." It is over when the celebrant has physically departed from the nave (congregational area) of the church.

Setting aside for the moment the mentioned documents and laws of the Church, there are other reasons for arriving on time and remaining until Mass ends. Those moments before Mass when we walk into this holy place, go to our knees before the throne of grace and revere our merciful God are moments to express our love. This is a time of personal preparation to meet God in the Eucharist. Likewise, the time after participation in holy Communion is a special period of reflection. We have just received the Body and Blood of Christ and to simply walk out makes a mockery of this glorious treasure. By showing up late or leaving early, we not only trivialize the real presence of Jesus, not only trivialize the Eucharist, but we also miss the full richness of the Mass. Remember who it was who left the Last Supper before it was over, and his fate? Do we really want to imitate that example of "discipleship" in our faith lives?

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 your 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>

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View this bulletin online at www.DiscoverMass.com

St. Mary's Parish News

Religious Education

Religious Education meets on Wednesdays, 6:15-7:30 p.m. and will begin **September 27**.



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

Questions or comments:

Please contact Rebecca Chicklon-at-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

Physical Photo:
Send us your printed photo or digital photo on a memory stick
Envelope at Church or Mail To:
15164 Jupiter Drive
Marne, MI 49435
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

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

Save the Dates

August 27	St Michael Parish Festival
Sep 10	St Mary Parish Picnic
Sept 30 & Oct 1	Knights of Columbus Scrap Metal Drive Parish Hall Parking Lot
Oct 8	Knights of Columbus Council #11581 Breakfast & Blood Drive
Oct 24	Flute Recital - St Mary 7:30PM
Nov 3	Mass of Hope, Health & Healing St Mary 7:00PM
Nov 22	Thanksgiving Eve Mass, Grocery Collection
Nov 23	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, thank you! If you have not responded, please do so as soon as possible



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

The Next Planning Meeting will be on Tuesday, September 5 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: robrander82@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

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 service and commitment to our Parish Family



Saint Mary Short Sleeve T-Shirt and Long Sleeve Crewneck Sweatshirt Sale!

Short Sleeve T-Shirts - \$15.00

Youth - S-XL & Adult -S-XL \$18.00 - 2XL, 3XL

Crewneck Sweatshirt - \$25.00

Youth - S-XL & Adult - S-XL \$28.00 - 2XL, 3XL

Samples & Order Forms available in the Narthex and Online. **Deadline to receive order and payment Sept.15.**



Share your FAITH & spread Our Church Mission!

Giving Back to God

	August 19/20
Regular Contributions	\$4501.00
Capital Improvement	\$60.00
Online Contributions	\$1325.00
Children's Contributions	\$39.00
Holy Day	\$340.00
Total	\$6265.00

Thank you for your continued support and generosity!

St. Mary's Sponsor of the Week

THE PICKLEBACK

616.677.5180 ~ Downtown Marne

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

St. Michael's Parish News



Scrip News— Scrip numbers will be updated next week.



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

Amelia Jean Wolgamott

daughter of Lucas & Christina Wolgamott
Baptized on August 20, 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!

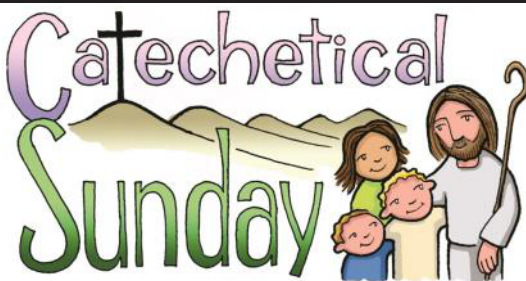


St. Michael's Faith Formation

Catechetical Sunday is September 17. The blessing of Catechists will be at the 8:30 AM Mass.

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 Sanctuary Lamp

for +Caroline Idziak
by Bob Idziak and Family

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 Hefflin, Payton Patterson, Winnie Spencer, the victims of abortion, & the men and women in the military.



Welcome Festival Guests!

Information and Schedule of Events:

Chicken Dinners will be served from 11 am—3:00 pm. Adults: \$12.00; Seniors: \$9; Kids 6-12; \$6; 5 & Under: Free

The Dinner Tickets are sold in front of the Family Center. The Dining Room is located inside the Family Center. Take out is located at the Parish Office Entrance and the Dining Tent is near the playground.

Large Raffle Tickets are still available, \$5 ea. 1st prize is \$2,000, 2nd & 3rd Prize is \$500, 4th - 8th Prizes are \$100.

The Large Raffle drawing is at 4:00p.m., after the drawings for the Mini-Raffle and Country Store.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: All packets of raffle tickets need to be accounted for. Please return them to the Large Raffle Ticket sales table in front of the family center as soon as possible.

50/50 Raffles are scheduled all day.

Also... check out the Kids Game Tent, Kiddie Train Mini-Raffle, Country Store & Grocery Wheel! Games will close at 3:30pm.

Giving Back to God

August 20, 2023

Adult Envelopes	\$3,668.00
Loose Cash	\$292.00
Children's Envelopes	\$18.00
Holy Day (the Assumption)	\$323.00
Total	\$4,301.00
Building Fund	\$25.00
Financial Assistance	\$20.00

Thank you for your continued support!

August 27, 2023 ~ The 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

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Is the Pope Catholic?

The guiding principle of Christian spirituality is to understand Jesus as “fully human, fully divine.” This is the rule preachers, theologians and other individuals must navigate by to remain on course amid the diverse currents and shifting winds of changing cultures. And the “rule of the rule” is “never ‘either-or’; always ‘both-and’.”

The Church teaches that Jesus made Peter the head of the universal Church. Because both Peter and Paul died as witnesses to the faith in Rome, the Church recognizes the bishop of Rome as heir to that office. But every bishop is true head of the Church in his own diocese, holding authority directly from Christ, not as a delegate or branch manager for the pope. Although the pope as bishop of Rome has supreme teaching authority in the Church, every bishop is the chief teacher in his diocese. Just as the whole Church remains united through union with the bishop of Rome, every diocese remains united as a faith community through union with its bishop. If we see ourselves as faced with the choice of following either the pope or our local bishop, we are in trouble.

We are on track when we try to follow *both* the bishop *and* the pope. In practical terms, this means that if we ignore papal teaching and focus exclusively on our local bishop’s preoccupations, we are not Catholic. On the other hand, if we look to the bishop of Rome for leadership and ignore what our own bishop is pointing to on the local scene, we are not Catholic either. And most of us tend to do one or the other: We take sides by choosing what to read and hear.

What do we do when there are differences of opinion in the Church, as there are about birth control? Suppose our bishop does not agree with a particular direction in which the pope is leading the Church (which we may see as “right,” or “left,” “forward” or “backward”)? What if our bishop disagrees with a policy the pope supports, for example, the exclusion of married men from the ordained priesthood? As loyal Catholics should we line up behind our pope or behind our bishop?

To keep on track, we must accept fully the divine au-

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Isaiah 22:19-23; Romans 11:33-36;
Matthew 16:13-20

thority of both pope and bishop while at the same time fully accepting their human limitations. The Gospel shows us in one and the same scene Jesus giving to Peter the “keys of the kingdom,” supreme authority in the Church, and Peter immediately teaching error and trying to lead the Church down a path contrary to the way of God. Jesus has to say to him, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

We reconcile apparent contradictions by precision. We preserve our belief in the divine presence of God teaching through pope and bishop by asking very precisely, “Is he speaking here and now under the conditions required for divine guidance?” We believe, for example, that the pope is infallible when he uses his full authority as pope. But when he is not formally defining a doctrine as the revealed truth of God, the pope himself would warn us not to take his teaching as infallible. To accept ordinary papal teaching as totally divine, as if there could be no mix of human error in it, would be making ourselves more Catholic than the pope.

The same is true of directions and policies, whether of popes or bishops. To be authentically Catholic we must give full value both to the divine guidance God promised to our teachers and to the human limitations under which they, like us, continue to act and to do their best.

This is the glory of the Church: we don’t get angry



or rebellious or lose our faith in God or in the Church because a particular pope or bishop leans—as we do—to the right or left, or seems to be going too fast or too slow. We accept the human in our Church's teaching and government without ever denying the divine. We respect the divine in the human and accept the human in the divine. And we glory in the mix!

REFLECTING ON THIS WEEK'S GOSPELS

Twenty-First Week of the Year

***Pray daily:** Father, help us to seek the values that will bring us lasting joy in this changing world. In our desire for what you promise, make us one in mind and heart. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Monday: Matthew 23:13-22. Jesus said, "Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever swears by the sanctuary is bound by nothing, but whoever swears by the gold of the sanctuary is bound by the oath.'" What effect do the big buildings, rich art works, pomp and ceremony in the Church have on you? Are you judging reality by its wrappings?

Tuesday: Matthew 23:23-26. "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites. For you tithe mint, dill, and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith." Which commandments do you think of most often? How often do you confess sins of not showing mercy, of not making judgments according to the mind of Christ about the needs of those around you?

Wednesday: Matthew 23:27-32. "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which on the outside look beautiful, but inside they are full of the bones of the dead and of all kinds of filth." Do you judge values by appearances—importance by dress, dignity by titles, acceptability by signs of success? When and with whom do you do this? What is the result?

Thursday: Matthew 24:42-51. "Who then is the faithful and wise slave, whom his master has put in charge of his household, to give the other slaves their allowance of food at the proper time?" What is it that inspires you to trust Church leaders (laity and clergy)? What makes you feel trust in business and professional people? In politicians?

Friday: Matthew 25:1-13. "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom." When you go to various Church services, what are you looking for? Are you consciously seeking an encounter with Jesus?

Saturday: Matthew 25:14-30. The king in today's parable said, "[T]o all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away." How can you lose your spiritual gifts by not using your human gifts and talents?

LIVING THIS WEEK'S GOSPELS

As Christian: Ask yourself what external thing in your religion you like most: building, decoration, music, statue, devotional practice or something else? How does this particular thing affect your relationship to Christ?

As Disciple: Read an encyclical of the pope or a pastoral letter from your bishop.

As Prophet: Begin asking what each Church title, dress or gesture expresses and whether what each one expresses is real.

As Priest: Identify three "ritualistic" forms of self-expression in your personal life—words or gestures you frequently use—and ask if you mean and do what you express.

As King: Ask what one thing you can do here and now to bring the Church's external expression a little more into conformity with its interior truth, values and reality.

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