

June 1, 2025 • The Ascension of the Lord

# St. Mary



# St. Michael

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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  
[troberts@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:troberts@saintmarysmarne.org)

### Business Manager

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

### Parish Secretary

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

### Director of Faith Formation

Debbie Veneklasen  
[dre@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:dre@saintmarysmarne.org)

### Director of O.C.I.A.

**Adult Bible Study**  
Jill Brown

### Maintenance

Jim Looks

### Custodian

Marian Looks

### Liturgical Minister

Gary Karr  
[gakarr@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:gakarr@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

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

### Business Manager

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[bsmgr@saintmichaels.us](mailto:bsmgr@saintmichaels.us)

### Parish Secretary

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[secretary@saintmichaels.us](mailto:secretary@saintmichaels.us)

### Director of Faith Formation

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[childrensministry@saintmichaels.us](mailto:childrensministry@saintmichaels.us)

### Director of O.C.I.A.

Cliff Kozminski  
616.437.5318

### Maintenance

David Goosen

### Custodian

Carol Reens

### Liturgical Minister

Kevin Kilpatrick  
[liturgy@saintmichaels.us](mailto:liturgy@saintmichaels.us)

### Scrip Coordinator

Brenda Kilpatrick  
616.837.6363

### St Michael

### Prayer Line

Chris Albrecht  
616-403-7110

Judy Driedger  
616-899-2470

## 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 May 31

4:00PM † Waldon & Nancy Phillips by Mark & Donna Phillips ..... **MI**  
Sacrament of Reconciliation: 3:00 PM—3:45 PM - St Michael

## Sunday June 1

8:30AM † Lucille O'Bradovich by the O'Bradovich Family ..... **MI**  
10:30AM † Mary Klein by Family ..... **MA**

**Monday June 2** No Mass

**Tuesday June 3** No Mass / No Adoration / No Confessions

**Wednesday June 4** No Mass / No Adoration / No Confessions

**Thursday June 5** No Mass/ No Confessions

**Friday June 6** No Mass/ No Confessions

## Saturday June 7

4:00PM † Dave Balkon by the Kilpatrick Family..... **MI**  
Sacrament of Reconciliation: 3:00 PM—3:45 PM - St Michael

## Sunday June 8

8:30AM Our Parish Family ..... **MI**  
10:30AM † Robert Karr Jr. by M/M Gary Karr ..... **MA**

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



## Scripture Readings for the Week of June 1, 2025

Sunday	Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord Acts 1:1-11; Ps 47:2-3, 6-7, 8-9; Eph 1:17-23 or Heb 9:24-28; 10:19-23; Lk 24:46-53
Monday	Acts 19:1-8; Ps 68:2-3ab, 4-5acd, 6-7ab; Jn 16:29-33
Tuesday	Memorial of Saint Charles Lwanga and Companions, Martyrs Act 20:17-27; Ps 68:10-11; 20-21; Jn 17:1-11a
Wednesday	Acts 20:28-38; Ps 68:29-30, 33-35a, 35bc-36ab; Jn 17:11b-19
Thursday	Memorial of Saint Boniface, Bishop and Martyr Acts 22:30; 23:6-11; Ps 16:1-2a and 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11; Jn 17:20-26
Friday	Acts 25:13b-21; Ps 103:1-2, 11-12, 19-20ab; Jn 21:15-19
Saturday	Acts 28:16-20, 30-31; Ps 11:4, 5 and 7; Jn 21:20-25
Sunday	Pentecost Sunday Acts 2:1-11; Ps 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34; 1 Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13 or Rom 8:8-17; Jn 20:19-23 or Jn 14:15-16, 23b-26

## St. Michael's Liturgical Ministers

	June 7 —4:00PM	June 8 —8:30AM
Altar Servers	Dylan Ranney NEED ONE	Adalyn Taylor Clare Taylor
Eucharistic Ministers	Sue Felicioni NEED ONE	Jennifer DeMull Denise Nelson Jennie Taylor Joe Hitchings Pete Nielsen NEED TWO
Lector	Mark Phillips	Cindy Lindberg
Sacristan	Sue DeVos	Rosemary Weigel
Ushers	Ray Maka NEED ONE	Greg Helsen Wade Lindberg Jim Ponshair Duane Snowdin
Music	Bernie Stanko	Greg Kelly

## St. Mary's Liturgical Ministers

	June 8 —10:30AM
Sacristan	
Altar Servers	Sela Ricord Ty Ricord
Precious Body	Deacon Tom Mary Kirkwood Need One
Precious Blood	Christina Withers Marge Jirous Geary Farrell
Hospitality	Leonard Horter
Lector	Nicolette Looks
Music	Bernie Stanko

## Prayer for The Ascension of The Lord

O Lord Jesus, I adore you, Son of Mary, my Savior and my Brother, for You are God. I follow You in my thoughts, O first-fruits of our race, as hope one day by Your grace to follow You in my person into heavenly glory. Until then, do not let me neglect the earthly task which You have given me. Let me labor diligently all my life with a greater appreciation for the present. Let me realize that only by accomplishing true human fulfillment can I attain Divine fulfillment and ascend to You at the completion of my work. Amen



## 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: \$28,785.00 (57%)

Balance: \$21,731.00

Participation: 61 of 260 Active - Households (24%)

#### St Michael

CSA 2025 Pledge Goal: \$52,297.00

Total Pledges Made: \$18,370.00 (35%)

Balance: \$33,927

Participation: 42 of 255 - Active Households (16%)

Totals as of May 27, 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.



### St Mary - St Michael Women's Book Club

#### Coming Soon! A women's book club!

All Ladies of St Mary and St

Michael are welcome! Beginning

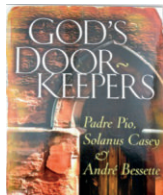
Thursday, June 19, 10 - 11:30AM

in the St Mary Community Room. First

book we will read is **God's Door-**

**Keepers**, by Joel Schorn, a short book

that tells the stories of Padre Pio, Solanus Casey and Andre Bessette who were all humble men obedient to God and who are becoming more and more well known because of their healing and compassionate ministries. Andre and Solanus were gate keepers in that they literally stood and opened the doors at their monasteries while Padre Pio opened the doors of the confessional and there led people to healing relationships with God. All three were humble men giving their lives to God and thus opening the way for God to work through them. For More Info please contact Mary Guilbault 810.397.4461 **Please purchase the book and bring it to our 1st session on June 19.**



### Bulletin Sponsor of the Week

**DAVID SHABLUK D.D.S.**  
**MARIELLE MAY D.D.S.**

616.837.6521

THANK YOU FOR  
SUPPORTING OUR  
BULLETIN!



### Fr Mike's Musings



Among the deeper mysteries in life, perhaps the one we struggle with the most is the mystery of 'the Ascension'. It's not so much that we misunderstand it—we simply don't understand it. What is 'the Ascension'?

Historically it was an event within the life of Jesus and the early Church and is now a feast-day for Christians, one that links Easter to Pentecost. But it is more than an historical event, it is at the same time a theology and a spirituality. It is an insight into life that we need to understand to better sort out the paradox between life and death, presence and absence, love and loss. 'The Ascension' names and highlights a paradox that lies deep at the center of life, namely, that we all reach a point in life where we can only give our presence more deeply by going away so that others can receive the full blessing of our spirits.

When Jesus was preparing to leave this world, He kept repeating the words: *"It is better for you that I go away! You will be sad now, but your sadness will turn into joy. If I don't go away, you will be unable to receive my spirit. Don't cling to me, I must ascend."*

Why is it better sometimes that we go away?

Any parent has heard similar words from their children, unspoken perhaps, but there, nonetheless. When young people leave home to go to college or to begin life on their own, what they are really saying to their parents is:

*"Mom and dad, it is better that I go away. You will be sad now, but your sadness will turn into joy. If I don't go, I will always be your little boy or little girl, but I will be unable to give you my life as an adult. So please don't cling to the child you once had, or you will never be able to receive my adulthood. I need to go away now so that our love can come to full bloom."*

The pain in this kind of letting go is often excruciating, as parents know, but to refuse to do that is to limit life and its experiences.

The mystery of love and intimacy is part of this paradox of separation: to remain present to someone we love we have to sometimes be absent, in ways big and small. In the paradox of love, we can only fully bless each other when we go away. That is why most of us only "get" the blessing our loved ones were for us after they have left us.

This is true, perhaps particularly so, in cases where our loved ones were difficult characters who struggled to bring peace or to bless anyone in this life with their presence. Like Jesus, they could only give us their real presence by going away. (This is not to imply that Jesus was an obnoxious or unlikable person.)

*"It is better for you that I go away!"* These are painful words most of the time, from a young child leaving her mother for a day to go to school, to the man leaving his family for a week to go on a business trip, to the young man moving out of his family's house to begin life on his own, to a loved one saying goodbye in death. Separation hurts, goodbyes bring painful tears, and death of every kind wrenches the heart. That is part of the mystery of love. Eventually we all reach a point where what is best for everyone is that we go away so that we can give our spirit. The gift that our lives are can only be fully received after we ascend.

### St Mary & St Michael Annual Baby Bottle Drive!

Please take a Baby Bottle and fill it with your "extra change!" (dollar bills and checks are also welcome) Supporting the drive will benefit HELP Pregnancy's ministry in so many ways: Keeping them supplied with some of the most needed baby essentials such as pack-n-plays, diapers, wipes, formula, bottles, baby wash, lotion etc. It will also help them provide walk-in hours for a free ultrasound with a qualified ultrasound technician for those who may be considering abortion.



**Please return Father's Day Weekend. Thank You!**

### Please Pray for our Engaged Couple

**Sam Felicioni and Lindsay Ebling**

Wedding date: ..... June 14, 2025 (St Michael)

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



**June 1, 2025 ~ The Ascension of the Lord**

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 is on Summer break.**

Today is the Seventh Sunday of Easter. The Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord  
 In today's Gospel Jesus' final instructions to his disciples before he goes back to heaven.

He tells them that he had to suffer, die, and rise again, and that they must share this message with everyone.  
 Then, Jesus blesses them and ascends into heaven.  
 teach them and guide them, just like he has taught them.

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

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

Faith Formation classes will be on break until the fall.  
 Keep your eye on the bulletin for next year's registration information. Have a fun and safe summer.

**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

#### **Vacation Bible School**

**July 6 -10, 2025 \* 6PM-8:30PM**  
 For ages 4-10

Ages 11 and up can volunteer.

#### **The Great Journey with Jesus!**

Come join us as we walk with Jesus through The Liturgical Church Year.

We will journey through Advent, Christmas, Ordinary Time, Lent and Easter.

**Registration Now Open.** Forms available in Narthex.

Or Online. <https://www.saintmarysmarne.org/vacation-bible-school>



### 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 COR Dates: Jun 14, 28 -7AM - Community Room**

**Upcoming Blood drives: June 8 & October 12, 2025.**

**Pre-Register here:**

**June 8**

[https://donateblood.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive\\_schedule/11598499](https://donateblood.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/11598499)

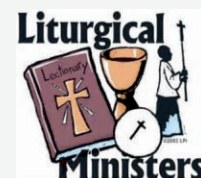
**Oct 12**

[https://donateblood.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive\\_schedule/11598498](https://donateblood.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/11598498)



### Liturgical Ministers Needed

**Would you like to volunteer your time and talents to the church?** St. Marys Church is looking for volunteers to help celebrate Sunday Mass. **Areas of Need: MINISTERS OF HOSPITALITY, EUCHARIST MINISTERS, ALTAR SERVERS, LECTORS, MONEY COUNTERS and COFFEE & DONUT SERVERS.** ST MARY'S ADULT is also looking for new members.



Learn how you can share the treasures you have been blessed with by God at St Mary. <https://www.saintmarysmarne.org/liturgical-ministers>

"As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace." 1 Peter 4:10

Please contact the parish office to express your interest and get the dates for the next training sessions.

### St Mary Adult Bible Study

Wednesdays 9:00-10:30 in the community room Newcomers are invited to join at any time. For more info contact Jill : 616.947.2054.



### Adopt-A-Garden

We are looking for parishioners to "adopt" an outdoor area on our parish grounds to help keep that area looking good and creating a great first impression for all who come to our parish. Sign-up for a small, specific area on the Parish grounds and keep your area cleaned-up on a regular basis. Sign up Sheets in the Narthex. For more info please call the parish office. Thank You.



### Parish Picnic Planning Meeting June 9 at 6PM

Please come and share your thoughts and comments on food, games, activities and help in the planning discussion for our annual parish picnic. Meeting will be held in the Church Community Room. **Parish Picnic will be Sept 7, 2025.**



### Giving Back to God

<b>Mass: Attendance 5/25- 10:30AM:</b>	<b>118</b>
Adult Contributions	\$4430.00
Children Contributions	\$2.00
Loose Contributions	\$125.00
Capital Improvement	\$70.00
Online Giving	\$895.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5522.00</b>
Weekly Offertory Needed for Budget	\$8255.80
Offertory-YTD Budget vs YTD-Actual	\$-13,330.00

**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 10 families who purchased Scrip this week. Our total profit was \$126.80.



### 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.

**Thank you!** — A HUGE St. Michael "thank you" to all the parishioners who came out last weekend to help with the spring cleanup around the grounds. Everything went quickly and smoothly with all the extra hands. We appreciate you all very much!



## St. Michael's Faith Formation

**Children's Liturgy of the Word:** 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 are currently on Summer Break. We will see you in September. This Sunday is The Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord. It is a liturgical feast celebrated by all Christian churches, commemorating Jesus's bodily ascension into heaven.



**Elementary Faith Formation:** The elementary program is for students in grades 1-5. We meet on Wednesday from 6:00- 7:30 pm. **Middle School Faith Formation:** Grades 6, 7 and 8 meet on Sundays from 9:45-11:15am. Our programs have ended for this school year. We are on Summer break. Class will resume in September. Please watch the bulletin for registration information.

## St. Michael's Catholic Church 2025 Vacation Bible School

**Date:** Monday, July 28 – Thursday, July 31  
**Time:** 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.



### 2025 Vacation Bible School: Explore mountains of fun!

This year we will guide children through an engaging journey of faith, focusing on the theme of friendship with God amidst the beauty of Alaska's wilderness.

It's hard to find your way in a world gone wild. But we have Jesus-our "True North!" Together, let's give kids a rock-solid foundation and point them to Jesus - their unmovable, unshakable friend forever!

Registration forms are in the narthex and on parish website. Many volunteers are needed! This is a great way to help our parish and get involved. If interested, please contact Debbie Veneklas with any questions. (616) 384-4026



## St. Michael's Sanctuary Lamp

for +Dave & Sandy Balkon  
by Calvin & Cindy Lindberg

## Festival News

### Save the Date for Festival:

August 24, 2025

Now is the time to begin thinking about how you can volunteer or contribute to the festival! Stay tuned to the bulletin for more information in the coming months.



What is it? The PaperGator® is a fundraiser where St. Michael's is paid to collect paper products for recycling.

### What CAN go in the bins?

Newsprint  
Catalogs/Magazines  
Junk Mail  
Phone Books  
Office/School paper  
Hard and soft cover books

### What CANNOT go in the bins?

Paperboard  
(Grocery Item boxes)  
Plastic  
Metal  
Trash  
Glass  
Cardboard

## Giving Back to God

May 24/25 2025

<b>Mass: Attendance</b> 5/24– 4:00PM:	74
<b>Mass: Attendance</b> 5/25 8:30AM:	137
Adult Envelopes	\$2,266.00
Loose Cash	\$221.00
Children's Envelopes	\$11.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,498.00</b>
Weekly Offertory Needed for Budget	\$4,165.36
Offertory-YTD Budget vs YTD Actual	+\$1698.19

**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.



**June 1, 2025 ~ The Ascension of the Lord**

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

## "The Lord Be With You"

**B**efore Jesus ascended into heaven he did two things: He sent his disciples to carry out his mission in the world: "Go... and make disciples of all nations..." (see Matthew 28:19) and he promised to be with them and to work with them forever: "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (see Matthew 28:20).

What does Jesus mean when he says "I am with you"? An echo of this is one of the most frequent expressions in the Mass: "The Lord be with you!" It is the same expression as our English departure-prayer, "good-bye," which is an abridgment of "God be with you." This wish became such a standard Christian expression that we have stopped paying attention to what it means. Even when we do think what we are saying, we may not be conscious of the depth and mystery we as Church express when we use those words.

"The Lord be with you" is both a prayer and a reminder. It reminds us that by grace the Lord is with us. But he doesn't just watch over us and hover above us to be our guide and help. The Lord is not with us just as a companion, the way human beings often are with each other. The Lord is with us within us! He is with us as only he can be: sharing his life with us, sharing our actions with us, speaking and smiling and touching and working through us, with us, and in us.

The most solemn and significant response we make during the whole Mass is the Great Amen that concludes the Eucharistic Prayer. In this Amen we own—express union of heart with—everything the ordained priest has said during the Eucharistic Prayer. And the words which invite this Amen are always the same: "Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, forever and ever."

This is what "The Lord be with you" means. It is the recall of what each one of us as a Christian has recognized and celebrated during the Mass: that in everything we do we are acting "through him, with him, and in him" because we are one with him and he is acting through us, with us, and in us at every moment of our lives. "The Lord be with you!" sums up the Mass. To say it to each

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Acts 1:1-11; Ephesians 1:17-23;  
Matthew 28:16-20

other is to say in one phrase everything we say to God and to one another in the Mass, because being with Christ as his Body on earth is the fruit of his passion and the commitment we make in response to it. This is the Christian life.

To be with him is to be dedicated to Christ's mission. It is to accept Jesus' words to the Father, "As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world" (John 17:18). And it is to accept this mission knowing that the world as Saint John uses the word is an environment alien to the Gospel, even closed and at times hostile to it. To go into the world is to go as the Lamb of God, expecting the sacrifice. It is to offer one's body as the bread is offered at Mass, to become the bread of life for others: blessed and broken and given for the life of the world.

We do this by offering the truth of Christ embodied in our lives. We offer proof of the Good News by maintaining the purity of our ideals within a culture where deadly poison and the demonic assail us daily (see Mark 16:17-18). Our resistance is the sign of Christ's presence.

This is scary. The prospect of his passion made Jesus sweat blood beforehand. He even asked the Father to take this mission away from him. If we don't feel eager to confront the world of business and politics or even of family and social life with the differentness of lives lived in radical witness to the gospel, that does not mean we love less, any more than Jesus' feelings diminished his love. Love consists in choices, not feelings. And our strength comes from trust in our union with Christ, not from any confidence we feel in ourselves. That is why





Jesus told his disciples not to begin their mission until they were “clothed with power from on high” by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49).

And it is why we keep saying to each other, “The Lord be with you!” It reminds us that the Lord is with us and within us to be our strength.

## REFLECTING ON THIS WEEK'S GOSPELS

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### Seventh Week of Easter

**Pray daily:** *Lord, you came to transform human life on earth. You have called me, commissioned me, and sent me to bring everything I can influence under the life-giving reign of your love. Give me the courage to work for unity through peace. Amen.*

**Monday:** John 16:29-33: Jesus said to his disciples, “In the world you face persecution. But take courage, I have conquered the world!” Do you ever experience rejection, hostility or failure because of your efforts to change things? When this happens, do you draw strength from remembering and believing—that Jesus has overcome the powers of this world?

**Tuesday:** John 17:1-11: Jesus prayed to the Father, “I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do.” Does this mean the reign of God is completely established? What did Jesus accomplish? What is left for him to accomplish through us?

**Wednesday:** John 17:11-19: Jesus prayed to the Father for his disciples, “I am not asking you to take them out of the world but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world.” In what sense do Christians belong to the world? In what sense do we not belong? How do you experience being different or emancipated from your culture and society?

**Thursday:** John 17:20-26: “The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me....” Does the obvious love and unity that people see in Christians, in our parish, draw people to the faith? Do you express or encourage any criticism

that perpetuates division between people, groups, races or religions?

**Friday:** John 21:15-19: Jesus said to Peter, “Do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.” What does Jesus ask you to do if you love him? What good are you in a position to do? What are you able to change in the world?

**Saturday:** John 17:20-25: When Peter saw John following, he said to Jesus, “Lord, what about him?” Jesus said to him, “What if I want him to remain until I come? What concern is it of yours? You follow me.” Do you ever let what others are doing-or failing to do-keep you from taking responsibility for changing what you can change or doing what you can do to initiate change?

## LIVING THIS WEEK'S GOSPELS

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**As Christian:** Kneel before Jesus and formally accept responsibility for extending his reign over every area and activity of human life that you can influence. Think about how you can begin: what needs changing in your family or social environment, business or civic life?

**As Disciple:** Read Vatican II’s “Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity.” This is one of the fundamental documents for Christian life in our times. If you don’t have a copy of the Vatican II documents, purchase a copy, find them free online, or ask any priest or nun to lend you a copy.

**As Prophet:** Ask yourself what false attitudes or damaging ways of acting you are implicitly supporting by just “going along” with what everyone around you is doing. Stop going along, and be prepared to say why if you are questioned about it.

**As Priest:** Take responsibility for changing the impact of the Sunday liturgy by participating actively and fully yourself. Learn the hymns and responses. Think of yourself as a minister and player, not just as a spectator or someone being ministered to.

**As King:** Make a list of those policies, practices or areas over which you have actual authority or share authority with another-at home and at work. Ask whether everything you have authority over is being done according to the standards of Christ.



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