

August 10, 2025 • The 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time

# St. Mary St. Michael

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

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



*Pastor: Rev. Michael Hodges*

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

### Saint Mary Parish Staff

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

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

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

**Parish Secretary**  
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**Director of Faith Formation**  
Debbie Veneklase  
[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  
[gkarr@saintmarysmarne.org](mailto:gkarr@saintmarysmarne.org)

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

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

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

**Deacon**  
Tom Roberts  
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**Parish Secretary**  
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**Director of Faith Formation**  
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**Director of O.C.I.A**  
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616.437.5318

**Maintenance**  
David Goosen

**Custodian**  
Carol Reens

**Liturgical Minister**  
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[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 August 9

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

## Sunday August 10

8:30AM † Eli O'Bradovich by the O'Bradovich Family.....MI  
 10:30AM † Gene Hodges by Family .....MA

## Monday August 11 No Mass

## Tuesday August 12 Communion Service

12:00PM † Kathleen Sobie by M/M Jerry Willcome .....MA  
 Adoration begins after Communion Service until 3:30pm

## Wednesday August 13 Communion Service

12:00PM † Bill Smith by Ruth Hecksel.....MI  
 Adoration begins after Mass until 3:30pm

## Thursday August 14 Communion Service

12:00M † Jim Potts by M/M Larry Antcliff .....MA

## Friday August 15 The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

12:00PM Our Parish Family.....MA

## Saturday August 16

4:00PM † Al & Winnie Spencer by The Spencer Family.....MI  
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 3:00 PM—3:45 PM - St Michael

## Sunday August 17

8:30AM † John Kirkwood by Chris Albrecht .....MI  
 10:30AM † Agnes Schwartz by Leon Schwartz.....MA

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



### Scripture Readings for the Week of August 10, 2025

Sunday	Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Wis 18:6-9; Ps 33:1, 12, 18-19, 20-22; Heb 11:1-2, 8-19 or Heb 11:1-2, 8-12; Lk 12:32-48 or Lk 12:35-40
Monday	Memorial of Saint Clare, Virgin Dt 10:12-22; Ps 147:12-13, 14-15 19-20; Mt 17:22-27
Tuesday	Dt 31:1-8; Dt 32:3-4ab, 7, 8, 9 and 12; Mt 18:1-5, 10, 12-14
Wednesday	Dt 34:1-12; Ps 66:1-3a, 5 and 8, 16-17, Mt 18:15-20
Thursday	Memorial of Maximilian Kolbe, Priest and Martyr Jos 3: 7-10a, 11, 13-17; Ps 114: 1-2, 3-4, 5-6; Mt 18:21-19:1
Friday	Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Vigil: 1 Chr 15:3-4, 15-16; 16:1-2; Ps 132:6-7, 9-10, 13-14; 1 Cor 15:54b-57; Lk 11:27-28 Day: Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab; Ps 45:10, 11, 12, 16; 1 Cor 15:20-27; Lk 1:39-56
Saturday	Jos 24:14-29; Ps 16:1-2a and 5, 7-8, 11, Mt 19:13-15
Sunday	Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time Jer 38:4-6, 8-10; Ps 40:2, 3, 4, 18; Heb 12:1-4; Lk 12:49-53

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

## St. Michael's Liturgical Ministers

	Aug 16—4:00PM	Aug 17 —8:30AM
Altar Servers	Dylan Ranney NEED ONE	Adalyn Taylor Clare Taylor
Eucharistic Ministers	Deacon Tom Rob Guilbault	Deacon Tom Jennifer DeMull Sharon Carlson Chris Albrecht Rosemary Weigel Jennie Taylor Cindy Lindberg
Lector	Mary Guilbault	Carl Pohlman
Sacristan	Sue DeVos	Judy Driedger
Ushers	Ray Maka NEED ONE	Jim Ponshair Calvin Lindberg Greg Helsen Duane Snowdin
Music	Craig Bleckley	Craig Bleckley

## St. Mary's Liturgical Ministers

	August 17 —10:30AM
Sacristan	Need one
Altar Servers	Lauren LeMieux Madeline Serge Lauren Serge
Precious Body	Deacon Tom Becky Warners Geary Farrell
Precious Blood	Mary Kirkwood June Stevenson Need Two
Hospitality	Leonard Horter
Lector	Nicolette Looks
Music	Bernie Stanko

### Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

The Assumption Of Mary is a feast day that is celebrated on August 15th every year. This feast day commemorates Mary's death and her assumption into heaven. Because it commemorates this sacred occasion – which is viewed by many as Mary's divine birthday.

Almighty ever-living God, who assumed the Immaculate Virgin Mary, the Mother of your Son, body and soul into heavenly glory, grant we pray, that, always attentive to the things that are above, we may merit to be sharers of her glory. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.



Amen

**Mass- Friday, August 15, 12PM at St Mary**

# 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: \$47,855.00 (95%)  
 Balance: \$2,661.00  
 Participation: 97 of 260 Active - Households (38%)

### St Michael

CSA 2025 Pledge Goal: \$52,297.00  
 Total Pledges Made: \$ 33,960.00 (65%)  
 Balance: \$18,337.00  
 Participation: 83 of 255 - Active Households (32%)  
 Totals as of August 4, 2025

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



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

Diocese of Grand Rapids  
 Catholic Services Appeal

## Fr Mike's Musings



Last week we heard Jesus urging to store up treasure in heaven rather than being rich in what does not matter to God. This week Jesus urges us to be ready for the time when He will call us from this life, to be ready like the servants in the parable awaiting their master to return. How do we make sure we are ready? By living our life with God at every moment. We could sum it up by saying we will be ready for Jesus' call by loving God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves.

Above all, we love God by meeting Jesus in the Eucharist. The strange thing in Jesus' parable is that when the master returns, it is He, the master, who feeds His servants, not the servants who feed Him. When we come to Mass, we are like those servants waiting for Jesus our master. We come here to praise Him, and then the role is reversed: Jesus feeds us with Himself in the Eucharist.

One of the ways we are ready for the time when Jesus will call us is by making prayer an important part of every day. Some are called to do this in a special way: the monks in monasteries and the nuns in cloistered convents—for example: the Cistercians, the Benedictines, the Poor Clares, and the Carmelites, among others. Each day five or seven times, they gather in their chapels for community prayer as well as Mass. Each time they gather for prayer, their prayer consists of singing three psalms, followed by a reading from Sacred Scripture and other prayers. Some of these monasteries around the world livestream their chapels so others can join them online in these moments of prayer.

If you are ever organizing a tour or a vacation/retreat, perhaps consider visiting one of these monasteries or cloistered convents to join in their prayer or Mass. Some of them have guesthouses with meals provided where you could stay to spend some quiet time with the Lord. If going with a group, it would be good to arrange it in advance so a monk or nun could explain their life and what they do.

Three weeks ago, we heard about Mary sitting at Jesus' feet when He visited her and her sister Martha's house. These monks and nuns have received a special call to sit at Jesus' feet spending hours each day in chapel singing Psalms and praying Sacred Scripture. Their prayers for us help us in ways that we cannot see now, but will, I am sure, in the next life. They are answering their special call to sit at Jesus' feet in that way but all of us are called to sit at Jesus' feet in prayer every day. Doing so is one of the ways to be ready for the time when Jesus will call us to Himself. .

## Meal Train for Fr Mike

We have created a Meal Train to help Fr Mike while he is home recuperating. Visit this link <https://mealtrain.com/631558> or scan the QR Code: to get all of the details.

Please sign up: 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 rectory. Please have meal fully cooked in a microwaveable container.

(Fr Mike does not use his oven) The container will be cleaned and returned to the church community room for you to pick up. Meals can be dropped off at the rectory on the covered front porch. There will be a tote to place the meal in. (if the 4-5PM drop off time does not work for you, please call the parish office to make other drop off arrangements that are more convenient for you. THANK YOU.



Monday  
 August  
**11**  
 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM



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

For eligibility questions please call 866-642-5663

### St. Vincent de Paul Hall Community Blood Drive

LOCATION  
 St Vincent de Paul Hall  
 21130 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave  
 Conklin, MI 49403

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

\*Walk-ins welcome, as schedule allows!

Score a limited-edition football t-shirt when you donate, while supplies last!



## Bulletin Sponsor of the Week



THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR BULLETIN!

## Women's Book Club- DATE CHANGE

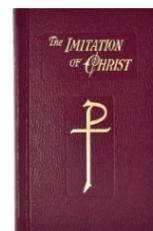
All Ladies of St. Mary's Catholic Church - Marne and St. Michael's Church - Coopersville are welcome!

**TUESDAYS 10:00 AM in the St Mary Community Room.**

New Book begins September 16.

**The Imitations of Christ**, by Thomas à Kempis

For More Info please contact Mary Guilbault 810.397.4461.



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## 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.

This is the Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time. Luke 12:32-48, tells children that God, their loving Father, wants to give them the Kingdom of Heaven and that they should not be afraid. It encourages them to focus on serving God and building treasures in heaven by being generous and doing good works, rather than worrying about worldly possessions. The passage also reminds them to be watchful and ready for Jesus' return, like faithful servants waiting for their master.

**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.

## St Mary Parish Picnic News

The Next Planning Meeting will be on **Monday, August 19 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.

### St Mary's Mass & Parish

#### Family Picnic September 7.

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.. (food will be served from 12:30-2:00PM) Please bring a **DESSERT** 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, BINGO, 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 or email secretary@saintmarysmarne.org



Registration is now open for the 2025/2026 school year.

Forms are available online or in the Narthex.

Register ONLINE HERE:

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

Classes resume in September. We are working on class lists and ordering books and supplies. To help us get an accurate number of students, please take a minute and register your child(ren) today.

**For more information** or any questions on any of these programs Please contact Debbie Veneklas at dre@saintmarysmarne.org or 616.677.3934

## 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 / Phone 616-780-4941



### Upcoming Blood Drive & Community Breakfast

**Pre-Register here:**

**Oct 12**

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



### Cor- Prayer, Formation & Fraternity for Men

is open to all men of our parish cluster, not just knights. If you have any questions, please reach out to Robert L at 616.292.5964  
**Upcoming COR Dates: Aug 23-7AM - Community Room**

### Fall (self-serve) Scrap Metal Drive - Watch for more Details

Trash Bin will be in the Parish Hall Parking Lot.. All proceeds benefit the K of C charitable donations.



## St Mary Choir

Choir practice will resume again on Wednesday, September 4 at 7pm in church. We are always looking for new members. People who love to sing and are not afraid of the weekly commitment are encouraged to join us. If interested, please talk to Bernie after any Mass. For further information please contact our Music Director Bernie Stanko at (616) 490-3836 and leave a message.

Or by email: berniestanko@hotmail.com



## Giving Back to God

<b>Mass: Attendance 8/3- 10:30AM:</b>	<b>158</b>
Adult Contributions	\$4275.00
Children Contributions	\$19.75
Loose Contributions	\$232.00
Capital Improvement	\$505.00
Online Giving	\$2280.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7311.75</b>
Weekly Offertory Needed for Budget	\$5441.97
Offertory-YTD Budget vs YTD-Actual	+\$1715.39

**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**— Scrip totals will be updated next week.



### St. Michael's Parish Family

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

### St. Michael's VBS 2025: True North

This past week we had an ultimate Alaskan adventure at VBS. The northern lights glowed over majestic mountains, racing rivers, and glistening glaciers. A sight that we will not soon forget. We had a fun time learning we can trust and rely on God in a wild world.

Thank you to the Station Leaders, Crew Leaders, Kitchen Crew, decorators and to the many behind-the-scenes volunteers who helped wherever they were needed throughout the week! Thank you all for helping make this program a special time of spiritual growth for the children! A special thank you to everyone who helped transform our facility into a Christ-centered landscape. All your time and talents really showed! Thank you to everyone who so generously donated to our VBS program. It is greatly appreciated.

### Festival News

**Come one, come all!** Our Parish Festival is August 24, 2025! We will have a large raffle, chicken dinner, country store, mini-affle, kids' tent, grocery wheel . . . something for all ages! We will need many volunteers to help out. Look for sign-up sheets 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. If you would like to buy some from the people handing them out, you may.

**Mini Raffle:** You may bring donated items into the office during regular hours. Think of how you can donate— a service (babysitting, baked goods once a month, etc), experiences (zoo, museums, etc), crafts that you have made, etc. If you would like to donate money for the committee to purchase items, please do so by August 17.

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

**Grocery Wheel:** Please take a grocery bag and fill with non-perishable items or cleaning supplies for the Grocery Wheel. Return by August 22.

**Beverage/Snack Tent:** Please call or text Kelli Ferguson at (616) 437-5194 to donate pop, water, chips or money to purchase these items. *Please donate pop cases and cases of the 16.9 oz of water. We've noticed the preferred types of pop are Mountain Dew, Coke, Diet Coke, RC, Root Beer, Sprite and Pepsi.*

**Pie Collections:** We will take a special collection for pies on August 10.

**Bingo:** Donations of small items (\$5 or less) for bingo prizes i.e. golf balls, towels, hair & beauty items, lotions, nail clippers, fans, etc.

Please contact our co-chairs, Cindy Lindberg (616) 822-1213 or Cindy Bleckley (616) 460-2004 with any questions.

\*\*\*Save your paper and plastic grocery bags. Please place them in the container in the glass hallway.



### St. Michael's Sanctuary Lamp

for +Caroline Idziak  
by Bob Idziak

### St. Michael's Faith Formation

**Faith Formation Registration** school year 2025-2026: Attention families with children ages 3 through grades 12. You can find registration forms on the parish website and forms are also located in the church narthex.

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

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

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

**Children's Liturgy of the Word:** We are currently on Summer Break. We will see you in September. In this Sunday's Gospel we are reminded that Jesus Christ will return. For this reason we wait with hope and confidence. We must trust in God's love, focus on serving Him, and be ready for Jesus' return by living a good life. We do not know the moment when, so we must always be ready.

**Elementary Faith Formation:** The elementary program is for students in grades 1-5. We meet on Wednesday from 6:00- 7:30 pm. Class will resume on Wednesday, September 17th.

**Middle School Faith Formation:** Grades 6, 7 and 8 meet on Sundays from 9:45-11:15am. The 8th Grade students will also receive Confirmation Preparation. Our programs are on Summer break. Class will resume on Sunday, September 28th.

### Giving Back to God

August 2/3 2025

<b>Mass: Attendance 8/2- 4:00PM:</b>	68
<b>Mass: Attendance 8/3- 8:30AM:</b>	141
Adult Envelopes	\$4,270.00
Loose Cash	\$355.00
Children's Envelopes	\$14.00
Online Giving	\$1,345.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,984.00</b>
Building Fund	\$155.00
Pie Collection	\$636.00
<i>Weekly Offertory Needed for Budget</i>	\$5,180.00
<i>Offertory-YTD Budget vs YTD Actual</i>	+ \$6,802.00

**Thank you for your continued support!**

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## Baptism Consecrates Time for Us

**B**aptism is sometimes called “christening” or “into Christ-ing.” It is also a “chrisming.” At our Baptism we were anointed on the top of the head with chrism, the word from which “Christ, the Anointed,” comes. And that chrism, that anointing, marks us forever. It is a seal upon our hearts, our minds, our destiny.

Anointing gives us a destiny: something to fulfill, to await. Because we are anointed, we are conscious—and we should be constantly conscious—that there is something we are destined for, something we are looking forward to. We are sealed with expectation, and we live our lives as an interim period between that sealing and its accomplishment. Because of our anointing, time for us takes on a different value.

Aristotle defined time as “the measure of motion.” Time tells us how long it takes an egg to move from raw to hard boiled and how long it takes us to get from birth to death.

But the measure of motion doesn’t tell us if we are going anywhere. There is no value in time as such; the value is in the movement, the activity time measures. A long life is no better than a short one if life itself has no direction or purpose. Time can be the measure of boredom, and boredom is the experience of getting nowhere at all.

Baptism anointed our time on earth. Time for us measures, not just a motion, but a motion towards. The time we spend between Baptism (our second birth) and death is consecrated to something we were anointed to do. At every moment the seal, the feel, of our anointing reminds us, binds us, summons us to something we are consecrated to accomplish.

That something is a Someone. Baptism binds us to Jesus Christ, not only with bonds of love, but with bonds of partnership. By Baptism our lives were bound up with his, our destiny identified with his. At Baptism Jesus became the whole meaning of our life, because his life, his mission, his destiny all became ours. We were baptized “into Christ” to be sharers in his life. We were consecrated, “chrismed,” to his triple mission as Proph-

AUGUST 10, 2025

19TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Wisdom 18:6-9; Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19;  
Luke 12:32-48

et, Priest and King. Baptism made us co-workers with Jesus (1 Corinthians 3:9), and by that fact we became co-heirs with him of the happiness of heaven and the glory of co-redeeming the world.

Baptism identified us with Jesus Christ, gave us his direction, his purpose in life, and made the destiny of Jesus our destiny. The true movement time measures for us is not the movement that appears, that is visible in what we do and accomplish on earth. The true movement going on in us is a movement toward total identification with Jesus Christ, total sharing in his life and glory. As Saint Paul puts it, “Since you have been raised up in company with Christ, set your heart on what pertains to higher realms where Christ is seated at God’s right hand. Be intent on things above rather than on things of earth. After all, you have died! Your life is hidden now with Christ in God. When Christ our life appears, you shall appear with him in glory” (Colossians 3:1-4).

In a word, life for us is stewardship. We have been made one with Jesus Christ, and now the whole purpose and value of our lives is to continue his work, his mission, on earth as faithful stewards of the gifts and life that have been entrusted to us. Our lives are a period of fidelity, of faithful stewardship, until Christ comes again. Everything we have, we hold in trust from him: our lives, our talents, our energy, even our relationship with others and with the world that surrounds us. We are what we are to others because of what Baptism has made us. We are what we are to the world because of



what we are by Baptism. We are what we are in our own eyes because of the transformation Baptism worked in us. The future we look forward to is what it is to us because of Baptism. Our treasure lies where it does because of Baptism, and because of Baptism our hearts are sealed in expectation.

## REFLECTING ON THIS WEEK'S GOSPELS

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### Nineteenth Week of the Year

***Pray daily:** Lord, you entered time from eternity in order to give our time eternal value. Teach me to seek the eternal value in everything you do. Show me how to make my time on earth count forever. Amen.*

**Monday:** Matthew 17:22-27: Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised.” And they were overwhelmed with grief. Do you prefer for yourself and for others a long life or a short one? Why? What gives value to our time on earth?

**Tuesday:** Matthew 18:1-5, 10, 12-14: Jesus said, “Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” What gives children their value? What do you think would make you great? What is the best investment you can make of your time?

**Wednesday:** Matthew 18:15-20: Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” How often do you think about the effect your actions are having on the way things will be in heaven? What effect could you be having through the things you do?

**Thursday:** Matthew 18:21-19:1: Jesus told about a slave who said to the master to whom he owed money, “Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.” Moved with compassion the master of that servant let him go and forgave him the loan. Does God require you to spend your life paying off the debt you owe him because of your past sins? What does he require? How do you do this?

**Friday:** Matthew 19:3-12: Jesus said, “Whoever divorces his wife (unless the marriage is unlawful) and marries another commits adultery.” What eternal benefits is marriage intended to give? When is a marriage failing to give those? What means has God provided to help a couple make their marriage a school of love and holiness?

**Saturday:** Matthew 19:13-15: Then little children were being brought to Jesus in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked them, but Jesus said, “Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” What do you wish for the children you see? Is everything you do for your own children a blessing to them for eternity? Or do you give priority to what has value only in this life?

## LIVING THIS WEEK'S GOSPELS

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**As Christian:** For a week, change the wrist you wear your watch on or the place you keep your most-used clock. Do it to remind yourself that your time is consecrated to bringing about the eternal happiness of people.

**As Disciple:** Read Vatican II's document on “The Church in the Modern World” (“*Gaudium et Spes*”), no. 39, on the value and direction Christians see in earthly progress.

**As Prophet:** Every time you aim at achieving something during the week, ask yourself what difference it will make to you a hundred years from now. Do the same when something angers you.

**As Priest:** Before each action of the day, offer what you are about to do to God to be transformed. Ask God to show you how to make it an action of divine value and eternal significance.

**As King:** Look carefully at your activities the way a manager would to see if they are serving the ends of the company. See if you can relate everything you do to the goal of serving God and establishing his reign on earth.

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