

SAINT MARY of the Assumption



Roman Catholic Church
Manchester, Michigan



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Administrator

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WEEKEND MASSES:

Sunday 8:30 am and 10:30 am

Vigil Mass Saturday at 5:00 pm

21ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ◆ AUGUST 22, 2021

“Hard Sayings”

—Dcn. Dennis Walters —

IN TODAY'S GOSPEL, THE DISCIPLES REACT TO WHAT SOUNDS TO THEM LIKE CRAZY-TALK. Not only does it seem to violate the Mosaic prohibition against drinking blood, but it also appears to invite cannibalism. *We* react to these things, too. Whenever we take the time to read Scripture seriously, we will sooner or later stumble on something that causes us to think, “This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?” The Bible is full of “hard sayings” of one sort or another, and what we do with them depends on why we find them hard.

Some passages are hard because they're just plain dense or confusing. The translation may occasionally be part of the problem. King James English uses grammar structures and vocabulary choices unfamiliar to readers today. But even when the translation is clear, the meaning may not be. Scripture scholars themselves have trouble with certain passages. For example, commenting on St. Paul's discussion in Rom. 9-11 about why Israel rejects the Gospel, the footnote in the Ignatius Study Bible admits that it “is difficult to follow because the argument winds through a dense forest of echoes, allusions, and citations from the OT” (note at Rom. 9:1). In his second letter, St. Peter admits that there are some things in Paul's writings that are hard to understand and that can be twisted by the ignorant (2 Pet. 3:15-16).

Some passages are hard because they conflict with our understanding of how the world works. For example, the Bible is full of miracle stories. Two of those that most people find incredible are the stories of the crossing of the Red Sea in Exodus and the Resurrection of Jesus in the gospels. If, like certain commentators, you think miracles are



impossible, you might conclude that they are just mythical pieties. Or you might search for some non-miraculous explanation for them. Or you could compile for yourself a version of Scripture that leaves them out, as Thomas Jefferson did. Or you could simply skip over them to get to more “realistic” material.

Some passages are hard because we find them distasteful or hard to do, such as loving one's enemies or turning the other cheek, or committing ourselves to Jesus in preference to our parents and siblings. Some passages might go counter to what we want, such as those that condemn fornication and other sexual sins, and so we just ignore them. And some passages we reject because of ideology. A few years ago, a group of feminist theologians reading the Ephesians passage in today's second reading, about wives submitting to their husbands, publicly dramatized their position by claiming, “*This is not God's word for us,*” and tearing that page out of the Bible.

Finally, some passages are hard because they appear to make God into a vengeful, wrathful, or even monstrous personality. These are passages that Pope — *continued on p. 2*

St. Mary's Parish Weekly Calendar ♦ August 21-29, 2021
 Mass Intention [requested by], & parish activities

SAT. AUGUST 21	Memorial: St. Pius X, Pope
Ru 2:1-3, 8-11; 4:13-17 Mt 23:1-12	3:30-4:30pm Confession ► 5:00pm VIGIL MASS for the 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time: † Ann Becketel [Bill & Astrida Punches]
SUN. AUGUST 22	21st Sunday in Ordinary Time
Jos 24:1-2a, 15-17, 18b Eph 5:21-32 or 5:2a, 25-32 Jn 6:60-69	8-8:15 and 10-10:15am Confession ► 8:30am MASS: † Tom Kladzyk [The Selecki Family] ► 10:30am MASS: For the People
MON. AUGUST 23	Weekday (opt. mem. St. Rose of Lima, Virgin)
1 Thes 1:1-5, 8b-10 Mt 23:13-22	► No Monday Masses in Manchester during the summer months
TUES. AUGUST 24	Feast: St. Bartholomew, Apostle
Rv 21:9b-14 Jn 1:45-51	► 8:30am MASS: † Wilma Lentz [The Lentz Family]
WED. AUGUST 25	Weekday (opt. mem. St. Louis) (opt. mem. St. Joseph Calasanz, Priest)
1 Thes 2:9-13 Mt 23:27-32	► 8:30am MASS: In loving memory of † Chuck Cornell on his birthday [Kathy Cornell] 6:00pm Parish Appreciation Dinner/PC
THUR. AUGUST 26	Weekday
1 Thes 3:7-13 Mt 24:42-51	► 8:30am MASS: † Tom Burch [Jim & Dolores Bauer]
FRI. AUGUST 27	Memorial: St. Monica
1 Thes 4:1-8 Mt 25:1-13	► 8:30am MASS: † Don Christian [Karen Christian]
SAT. AUGUST 28	Memorial: St. Augustine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church
1 Thes 4:9-11 Mt 25:14-30	3:30-4:30pm Confession ► 5:00pm VIGIL MASS for the 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time: † Gerald Damian [Claudia Damian]
SUN. AUGUST 29	22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
Dt 4:1-2, 6-8 Jas 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27 Mk 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23	8-8:15 and 10-10:15am Confession ► 8:30am MASS: † Don Christian [Karen Christian] ► 10:30am MASS: For the People 6:30-8:30pm DIOCESAN REGIONAL MEETING regarding realignment of parishes ("Realign Resources for Mission") / Fr. Gabriel Richard High School, Ann Arbor OR Lumen Christi High School, Jackson OR virtual/online ■



**DCN. DENNIS' ARTICLE FROM PAGE 1, continued:
"Hard Sayings"**

Benedict XVI called the Bible's "dark passages." A little over a year ago, a friend in Poland contacted me with a question that his Bible study group had about why God would command King Saul to place all the Amalekites under the ban, a process of extermination that we would call genocide (1 Sam. 15). How is such a command compatible with the New Testament's portrayal of a loving God? Together, we set up a Zoom call to discuss that issue.

Accepting the "dark passages" in Scripture can be difficult because of the violence and immorality they occasionally contain. Examples include times when God's prophet commands the ban, or when Samson kills thirty Philistines apparently out of revenge for a bet he was tricked into losing (Judg. 14:19). The Bible reports these without denouncing their immorality. In his Apostolic Exhortation *Verbum Domini*, the pope said that it would be a mistake for us to ignore or avoid such passages. Rather, he explains, "*biblical revelation is deeply rooted in history*. God's plan is manifested *progressively*, and it is accomplished slowly, *in successive stages* and despite human resistance" (italics in original). The ministry of the prophets who "vigorously challenged every kind of injustice and violence, whether collective or individual, ... became God's way of training his people in preparation for the Gospel." However we think of such an explanation, it helps us to recall that human nature hasn't changed in four thousand years. As recent genocides prove, our race has a long way to go before we can say we've learned the Gospel's message of love.

Regardless of why we find certain passages "hard," we need to be careful of treating Scripture as if it is merely a human document, or allowing ourselves to feel that we have authority over what it says for our lives. Paul reminds us that "all scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). In Scripture, God teaches us, corrects us, trains us, and equips us.

So to read or hear it fruitfully, we need an attitude of humility before sayings we find hard to take. We should resolve to accept Scripture as it presents itself to us and obey whether we like it or not. Our attitude should be one of docility to sayings we find distasteful or hard to do. If we don't understand a passage or why it's even in Scripture, we can always search out an interpretation that clarifies things; owning a Bible with explanatory footnotes is especially helpful. And always we should pray for grace to do God's will, especially when it is hard. +

OUR NEW HYMNALS (and a note about the "old"...)

"THE NEW": The new CREDO hymnals are in the pews! And the reasons for this change are excellently explained by our music director, Benjamin Dahl, in the Fall Newsletter that you will be receiving in the mail soon. However, one thing to note is that

CREDO has all the Mass readings that we formerly had to find in a missalette. Take some time to leaf through the new hymnal and discover its many elements. Also, you will notice each new hymnal has a bookplate in the front dedicating the hymnal to the memory of Edward Haller. This beloved former parishioner left a generous bequest to the parish, and it was from those funds that the new hymnals were purchased. *May Ed rest in peace! Oremus...*

"THE PREVIOUS": When we bought the St. Michael Hymnals, parishioners donated each of them, choosing a prayer intention to place in their book. Those who donated are invited to take home their copies. They are sorted and available to pick up in Fr. Fisher Hall. If you have any questions about the old hymnals, please contact Tina Doyle at tdoyle@kw.com or phone 734-904-2841. ■

Holy Communion REALLY IS Jesus Himself

Think about this medically verified fact: Anne Katherine Emmerick, Luisa Piccaretta, Therese Neumann, Alexandrina da Costa, and others lived for years, even decades, without eating a morsel of food. They survived on the Consecrated Host – alone. How can a human being stay alive on 10 calories/day? Some of the doctors who testified to this impossibility were atheists! The six “Real Presence” sessions begin on **Mon., Sept. 13 at 12:45pm - AND - Thurs., Sept. 16 at 6:30pm.**

The same course will be offered on both days within a given week. *You can schedule either Mondays in the early afternoon - OR - Thursdays in the early evening.* Snacks will be available at all of the sessions. The videos, handouts and bonus videos for self study will also be posted for online viewing with a link provided to the parish at large. A printed study guide will be available for \$5. Join with your fellow parishioners. Over 30 have already signed up.

Special Thanks

- To **Linda McGee** and **Melissa Yekulis** (co-chairs) and **all the volunteers** who helped with this year's Rummage Sale: Your fellow parishioners say, "Thank you!" And Linda and Melissa especially want volunteers to know how very grateful they are for their support and teamwork! BTW: Sales totaled \$3,518.55.
- Special thanks to **Mr. Bruce Dettling** from the Knights of Columbus and from the parish for the clean-up of the St. Francis Cemetery after the storm knocked down some trees causing damage to some headstones.
- Also **Astrida Punches** sent a Prayer Tree update *thanking everyone* for praying for Paul Marion. He is out of the hospital and will continue to receive treatments from home.

— An Invitation from the Diocese — Realign Resources for Mission Regional Meetings Sunday, August 29, 2021 • 6:30pm to 8:30pm

"The Realign Resources for Mission committee invites you to join them on the evening of **Sunday, August 29, 2021** when they will present to you the proposed drafts of parish groupings within the Diocese of Lansing. Your feedback is important to them and to Bishop Earl Boyea.

 "There will be a virtual viewing option available to watch all the main presentations but only those who attend in person will be able to participate in the live Q&A. All participants, in-person and online, will have a survey available to give feedback. A recording of the meeting will be available at a later date.

Locations: Father Gabriel Richard High School, Ann Arbor; Powers Catholic High School, Flint; Lumen Christi High School, Jackson; and Lansing Catholic High School, Lansing. All are very welcome."

And our own Bill Kwolek, who has been working on the RRM planning process for our parish, provides this further detail:

The Diocese of Lansing RRM (Realign Resources for Mission) Committee has tentatively proposed parish groupings that will be further refined before being announced to us (the laity) at the **Sun., Aug. 29** in-person regional meetings [described above]. St. Mary's parishioners will have the opportunity to ask questions and make comments.

Our parish is tentatively planned to be grouped with 2 or 3 other parishes. As it stands now, the RRM Committee identified St. Andrew in Saline as a strong possibility for grouping with us. This is not set in stone, but our parish is NOT likely to be grouped with St. Mary in Chelsea.

A group of parishes is technically designated “In Solidum” (in solidarity, with each other). This is NOT the same as a merger of two or more parishes. According to Canon Law, parishes that are not merged remain financially distinct. In other words, our offertory collections and savings will continue to belong to us. We won't be bailing out another parish in financial difficulty.

Grouped parishes will retain their own Finance Councils, but will share priests, staff, and ministries in ways yet to be determined. **St. Mary Manchester will not be closed or merged.**

Anyone interested in the latest details about the Realignment can link to the Diocesan website: dioceseoflansing.org/RRM. Anyone interested in the “Changes That WILL Happen” [RRM Committee’s words] to our parish is encouraged to visit the Diocesan link. ■

 **The SANCTUARY LAMPS are burning this week for the following intentions:**
PLEASE PRAY THIS WEEK...

- 1) In loving memory of +Wilma Lentz on the day of her memorial (*Jim & Marja Warner*)
- 2) For the repose of the soul of +Maureen Tobin (*Jim & Marja Warner*)

 **Sacred Heart of Jesus,
Your kingdom come.**

Please Pray for...

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Cardinal Raymond Burke | • Kristy Raab |
| • Mike Gibbons | • Bill Schaffer |
| • Sylvie's mother | • Kay Lantis |
| • Luise Kienzle | • Christy Woody and family |
| • Adamo Venditti | • Barbara (Kemner) Haas |
| • Mikaylah Duffield | • Jerry Kripas |
| • Dallas Bradbury | • Delores Oakley |
| • Susie (from the Flower Garden) | • Joe Kirk |
| • Larry Lehmann | • Bruce Sommers |
| • Pam Wils | • Joyce Stein |
| • Colleen Whitten | • Loretta Widmayer |
| | • Connie Stancato |
| | • Duane Beuerle |
| | • Paul Whelan |

Please contact the Parish Office to remove a name from this prayer list.



St. Mary Roman Catholic Church Stewardship

WEEKLY COLLECTION Sunday, August 8, 2021

Sunday Env (53)	\$ 6,177.00
Welcome & Loose	199.00
E-Giving (8)	314.20

Combined toward budget: ... \$ 6,690.20

Budget goal: 5,300.00

Amt ABOVE goal: + 1,390.20

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS:

Bldg. & Maint (1) \$ 25.00

Bldg & Maint E-Giving (1) .. 414.00

Poor Box 46.28

Votive candles 42.00

NEED HELP?
ALTERNATIVES TO ABORTION:
Call (800) 57WOMAN (800-579-6626) – OR – Text for Help:
“HELPLINE” to 313131

Need Help? PROJECT RACHEL
(post-abortion reconciliation and healing) Call the confidential phone line: 517-993-0291, or email nlc@resurrectionlansing.org

NEED HELP? “COURAGE” is a *Catholic* spiritual support group for those struggling with same sex attraction. “ENCOURAGE” is a separate support group for families & friends. For info in the Diocese of Lansing, call 517-342-2596 or email caverart@comcast.net

NEED HELP? An “AA” group meets Fridays at 7:00pm at Emanuel Church, 324 W Main St. (next door to St Mary’s)