

OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL
SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL
WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER
Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
August 4, 2024



Saint Ambrose of Milan

You know now what is more excellent: light is preferable to its shadow,
reality to its symbol, the body of the Giver to the manna he gave from heaven.

CHAPEL SCHEDULE

Weekday Mass: (Monday-Friday at 12 noon)

Weekend Masses: Saturday: 4:00pm - Sunday: 7:30am & 4:00pm

Holiday Mass Schedule: afternoon prior at 4:00pm

Holy day proper at 12 noon and 4:00pm

Confessions: First Saturday of every month at 3:30pm

Department Telephone: 508.363.6246

Chapel Website: www.ourladyofprovidence.net

MASS INTENTIONS — LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Saturday, August 3 *Vigil of the 18th Sunday of the Liturgical Year*

4:00pm Asking God to help Caid and his family

Sunday, August 4 *Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time*

7:30am For divine protection for all single women

4:00pm +Tara Wright & Mary Barrette by one of their SVH colleagues

Monday, August 5 *Dedication of the Basilica of St. Mary Major, Rome*²

12:00nn +Robert H. Chysna

Tuesday, August 6 *Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord*

12:00nn May faith, hope & love increase by contemplating the Lord's Transfiguration

Wednesday, August 7 *St. Sixtus II., pope & companion martyrs and St Cajetan, priest*²

12:00nn For all chaplains and lawyers

Thursday, August 8 *Saint Dominic de Guzman, priest*¹

12:00nn Encouraging all to pray for the nation and the world

Friday, August 9 *Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, virgin & martyr*²

12:00nn For the intentions of a mother's children

Saturday, August 10 *Vigil of 19th Sunday of the Liturgical Year*

4:00pm +Joseph & Clarissa McGrath

Sunday, August 11 *Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time*

7:30am +Carroll Gray by his daughter

4:00pm For the safety of those running for political office

The Key to Understanding the Day's Liturgical Significance: **Sunday** is the day that the Church celebrates the Paschal mystery—the Lord's Day—which, according to apostolic tradition, is the day of Christ's Resurrection. The Sundays of Advent, Lent, and during the Easter Season take precedence over other celebrations. **Solemnities** honor significant religious events, beliefs or saints of the greatest importance and universal in their observance that begin at Vespers (or Evening Prayer) the day before. **Feasts** must be observed, though, less important than solemnities, hence, feasts are only observed on the natural day. **Memorials** are of two types: Either the observance is an **obligatory memorial**¹ or an **optional memorial**².

Toward a Better Understanding of the Gospels during Ordinary Time

After the multiplication of the loaves, since Jesus realized that the crowd wanted to make Him king, He left the mountain, initially unnoticed. After discovering that neither Jesus nor His disciples were with them, the now well-fed crowd re-crossed the Sea of Galilee and found them in Capernaum. In an exchange of questions and answers, when taken cumulatively, Jesus embarks on a discourse concerning the sign of the multiplied loaves in order to help the people understand its true meaning. The first question concerning when Jesus got to the town goes unanswered, though rephrased. Such that the Lord's reply is intended to point to the deeper reasons why they were together, "... you are looking for me not because you saw signs but because you ate the loaves and were filled." In the Western world, too many people absent themselves from what is spiritually essential, "to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers" (Acts 2:42) for a similar reason. Tangible demands on Sunday mornings often intrude on the spiritual—even displace it! The instructions that Jesus gives should challenge that thinking. He tells them not to work "for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him the Father, God, has set his seal" (Jn 6:27). While it is obvious that people must earn a living to put bread on the table, earthly food can only sustain someone for a lifetime and, inevitably, such life has death as its inevitable end. Conversely, there is another kind of food that "endures for eternal life," which is a gift from the Son of Man, who has been given the Father's seal of approval and demands our attention. This superessential food cannot be passively waited because it requires hard work that must be done. The crowd understood this, in fact, so well that they replied, "What can we do to accomplish the works of God?" In one form or another, that question is asked again and again. The reason for posing it can run the gamut from maximum to minimum: from being open to doing God's will in all things down to articulating the minimum demands needed to do so. Whenever there is a mystagogue (Gk. μυσταγωγός) or a spiritually-mature believer who has knowledge of the mysteries of faith, such a spiritual guide could provide a short-cut through the maze of do's and don'ts because even amid those parameters it is too easy to lose your way. Jesus, then, answered them by saying that "the work of God, [is to]...believe in the one he sent." In other words, Jesus did not come to propose new spiritual works that had to be done nor did He abolish earlier precepts. Instead, the only thing needed is to place faith in the only-begotten Son whom the Father has sent in His name. This revelation is unprecedented – the demand is for a total commitment to Christ and not simply by abiding by

The Rev'd William Temple — *Readings in St. John's Gospel*

The crowd is excited, and, as is usual with excited people, has not considered the grounds of its own excitement. There were two possible grounds: one was that here was a wonder-worker who could supply their bodily needs; the other was that in doing so He had given proof of the presence with them of One in whom the Kingdom of God—love endowed with power, power subordinate to love—is already actualized. The Lord knows that their excitement about Him really rests on the former ground. *Ye seek me, not because ye saw signs—not because you knew that what happened was significant of something beyond itself—but because ye ate of the loaves and were filled.* Whenever we try to use our religion as a solution of our temporal problems, caring more for that than for God and His glory, we fall under the same condemnation. It is very natural; it is a state of mind with which we must all sympathize; but it is at best sub-Christian. If what is eternal is valued chiefly as a means to any temporal result, the true order is inverted, and it is likely that the eternal and temporal goods will be missed alike.

the 613 precepts of the Mosaic Law. Faith in Jesus must be made visible by concrete acts and what must be done is to imitate what He said and did in all circumstances or situations. In responding, His interlocutors said, “What sign can you do... Our ancestors ate manna in the desert, as it is written: ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat’” (Jn 6:30-31). Given the earlier enthusiasm displayed by the crowd, when the boy’s meager lunch was miraculously multiplied and the crowd clamored to make Jesus their king, this demand for a sign seems out of place. Ironically, such always tends to be the case – in the desert, despite repeated signs and wonders, the Israelites quickly forgot what they had seen and cried out to God for more! Jesus avoids being drawn into a protracted debate about the signs He has done compared to those that Moses did – even the very one they had just witnessed. Instead, it is enough for Him to remind the crowd that manna was God’s gift and was not attributable to Moses. He adds, “...my Father gives you the true bread from heaven,” which was obviously prefigured by the manna in the desert because “the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” Both the manna and the multiplied barley loaves only satisfy earthly hunger. The true bread of God is life-giving and nourishes true life. Formulated that way, everyone would want that bread always and they say, “Sir, give us this bread always.” Jesus, then, makes this solemn declaration, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.” This statement constitutes the first theological summit in this Johannine discourse that has been reached by what scholars call chiasmus. Chiasm is the use of a balance of words, phrases, or themes that coalesce around a pivotal central idea, when or if the order of those words, phrases, or themes is inverted in the second half over against the ordering of the first half. Thus, the manna God gave through Moses points toward another food that comes directly from God – or through Jesus, the eternal Word of the Father. As the Word-made-flesh, Jesus is the promised Bread of Life. Then, the only condition necessary to eat this Life-giving Bread is faith in Christ. As once happened to Moses, Jesus uses the Greek phrase *ego eimi* (Gk. ἐγώ εἰμι). Scholars believe the declaration *I am* is related to the Hebrew expression *ehyeh* [(I am or I will be (come))] in Exodus 3:14 wherein God revealed His name to Moses as YHWH. Jesus says all this in order to issue an invitation to the crowd surrounding Him that “whoever comes to [him] will never be hungry.” For the wandering Israelites, the desert experience was a trial of faith and, often, despite the wonders and signs God made through Moses, they murmured against the Lord their God. The crowd was thrilled with the multiplied loaves that Jesus provided, but questioned how and why they had been fed. Their unbelief is the background to the Discourse on the Bread of Life – whereas faith in Christ is its sole focus.

Eucharistic Revival — Year of the Mission, the Revival's Concluding Year

Following the arrest of John the Baptist, Jesus announced the dawn of the Kingdom declaring, “This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel!” (Mk 1:15). In order to do so, the Lord demanded two responses: trust (or believing) and metanoia (or conversion). It was this believing and willingness to change that led so many to listen to Jesus’ words and eventually to be fed by Him. Now, as the national Eucharistic Revival has instilled hope in the hearts of those who have allowed the Spirit to revive their faith, in this current Year of Mission, Jesus wants to spark a relationship with those whose belief in His presence in the Eucharist has grown dim, to bless them with a return to communion in all its manifestations and the other sacraments, too. A special form of heart-to-heart accompaniment is being called for that is to be provided by those who are devoted to Christ’s presence in the sacrament of the altar, in the tabernacle and adored in the monstrance. This is an opportunity to be God’s instrument in the life of some other person. Personal preparation for doing so requires adopting the practice of a *Eucharistic Examen*. Recall these words of Jesus as His Public Ministry unfolded: trust and conversion. Education and other human activities do have a place in Christian living but they can never usurp the primacy of being in communion with Jesus who blesses believers with the Gift of the Holy Spirit to be drawn to God our Father (cf, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 426). The Fathers of the Church preferred catechesis as the term to describe being formed as a disciple of Christ, not education. True, catechesis involves imparting knowledge about Jesus but such knowledge is always in service to trust and conversion, never an end in itself. Saint Irenaeus taught that Christianity is not about acquiring secret knowledge but that faith is fundamentally relational, grounded in the very relational living of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. The *Four R's of the Examen*: Each day, **Relish** the moments that went well and all the gifts of the day; **Request** the Spirit to lead you through your review of the day just done; **Recall** all the people you encountered today and what happened between you and them; **Repent** of mistakes made in them. Amen.

Manna - The Bread from Heaven

The fact that the Eucharist is literally the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus comes from the Lord Himself. This belief in the true Presence is clearly expressed in chapter six of Saint John's Gospel and in the Last Supper accounts that are found in Matthew (Mt 26:17-30), Mark (Mk 14:12-26) and Luke (Lk 22:7-38). This solemn revelation from Jesus flows from the Old Testament, too. In the Hebrew Bible, there are three threads that eventually come together in Jesus and His teaching on the Eucharist. Those threads are the Passover sacrifice and meal that began at the time of the Exodus from slavery in Egypt, the miraculous bread (manna) the Israelites ate in the desert when they were journeying from Egypt to the Promised Land, and the bread the priests ate in the tabernacle and later in the temple of King Solomon. Of those three sources, an examination of the manna in the desert can prove fruitful. Manna (Gk. μάννα) is an edible substance which God provided for the Israelites during their sojourn in the desert during the 40-year period following the Exodus and prior to the conquest of Canaan. Scholars believe the name manna is derived from the question, *man hu* meaning "What is it?" Its historical context is the Exodus from Egypt and the aftermath. You read in Exodus 14 about the crossing of the Red Sea (Ex 14:19-31), when God saved the people from the armies of Pharaoh, while the Egyptians pursued the fleeing Hebrews. Unfortunately, after being miraculously saved from that threat, within a brief period of time, the people begin complaining about their difficulties and yearning for the their life in Egypt in the first verses of Exodus chapter 16 (Ex 16:2-3). Further along in that same chapter, you will find the Lord's answer to their grumbling, "I am going to rain down bread from heaven for you. Each day the people are to go out and gather their daily portion; thus will I test them, to see whether they follow my instructions or not. On the sixth day, however, when they prepare what they bring in, let it be twice as much as they gather on other days" (Ex 16:4-5). In addition to providing manna, the Lord told Moses, "Tell them: In the evening twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will have your fill of bread, and then you will know that I the Lord, am your God (vv. 11-12)." Thus, God provided them with manna for the entire time they wandered in the desert. In other words, the God of Israel provided this daily miracle to feed the Israelites for 40 years. When they finally entered the Promised Land, the manna ceased. The

food that the Lord God provided for them comprises several theologically significant elements. (1) The bread from heaven is miraculous. No matter how much or how little the people collected, there was always the same amount, which lasted for no more than a day. The manna appeared daily for those forty years. (2) Another notable aspect of the manna is its double nature. When combined together, there were two miracles and not just one. After God provided manna in the morning, the God of Israel gave them quail in the evening. At dawn and in the evening the people would be fed, "in the evening twilight, you will eat meat, and in the morning you will have your fill of bread" (Ex 16:12). Thus, the people would not only consume bread from heaven, but flesh from heaven as well. (3) A third intriguing aspect of the manna that proves interesting is that the Aaronic priests took some of the manna and placed it before the Lord, that is, in the Holy of Holies within the tabernacle or the portable temple in which they worshiped God. The significance of the fact that they placed some of the manna in the tabernacle implies that the manna was not only miraculous, but it was also holy; so holy, in fact, that it was to be kept in the Holy of Holies within the tabernacle. In fact, in the Letter to the Hebrews, the sacred author reveals that the manna was actually kept inside the Ark of the Covenant, and, for God's people, the Ark was their most holy object (Heb 9:4). Also interesting about this preservation of the manna in the tabernacle is the reason for it. Further along in this chapter, you discover that God commanded Moses to do so, so that they may see it! Moses said, "This is what the Lord has commanded. Keep a full omer of it for your future generations, so that they may see the food I gave you to eat in the wilderness when I brought you out of the land of Egypt. Moses then told Aaron, "Take a jar and put a full omer of manna in it. Then place it before the Lord to keep it for your future generations" (Ex 16:32-33). So in the manna in the desert, God miraculously provided His people with both bread and flesh, which they both ate and kept enshrined in the tabernacle so they might look upon it. The connection to the Eucharist is clear: The Body of Christ is bread that becomes flesh, which the faithful consume in order to be spiritually nourished, and which the Church reserves in the tabernacles so that Communion with Christ might be extending by adoring Him.

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