

**OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL**  
**SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL**  
**WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER**  
**Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**August 24, 2025**



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The narrow gate is the seeking and possession of true wisdom  
and the path to life found by focusing upon God and doing His will

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**CHAPEL SCHEDULE**

*Weekday Mass:* (Monday-Friday at 12 noon)

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

*Holyday 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](http://www.ourladyofprovidence.net)

## MASS INTENTIONS — LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Saturday, August 23 *Vigil of the 21st Sunday of the Liturgical Year*

4:00pm For the intentions of Ken Gagnon

Sunday, August 24 *Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time*

7:30am For the priests of the Diocese of Worcester

4:00pm For the intentions of Michael Barrett

Monday, August 25 *Saint Louis IX, holy man and Joseph Calasanz, priest*<sup>2</sup>

12:00nn +Josephine Zalansky

Tuesday, August 26

12:00nn Intentions of Crystal & Johnny Gil and family

Wednesday, August 27 *Saint Monica, holy woman*<sup>1</sup>

12:00nn For the intentions of the Whalen family

Thursday, August 28 *Saint Augustine of Hippo, bishop & doctor*<sup>1</sup>

12:00nn +Robert and Edward Parzych

Friday, August 29 *The Passion of Saint John the Baptist*<sup>1</sup>

12:00nn +Eugene Camosse — 28th anniversary by his wife

Saturday, August 30 *Vigil of the 22nd Sunday of the Liturgical Year*

4:00pm For the good health of Donna Jo Burns by the Hagars

Sunday, August 31 *Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time*

7:30am +Andrew Shea & Bill Rourke

4:00pm +For the deceased members of the Tamalavitch family

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**<sup>1</sup> or an **optional memorial**<sup>2</sup>.*

### Toward a Better Understanding of the Gospels during Ordinary Time

The three Synoptic Gospels agree on the various sayings of Jesus, yet, those pithy statements are found in different parts of them. This week's Lucan passage can be described as a mosaic of some of those sayings. While the passage is taken from Chapter 13 (Lk 13:22-30), it can also be seen as the conclusion to a sequence of sayings found in the prior chapter (Lk 12:49-53). The evangelist compiles these sayings in response to this question by an unnamed person, "Lord, will only a few people be saved?" Having carefully listened to what preceded, bristling under the changes that abiding by those sayings demand and coupled with an awareness of personal weakness, almost anyone would ask the same question. Hope hinges on the answer to such a question either prompted by discouragement at ever warranting salvation or by the desire to know that being saved would not be too hard. If the Lord's answer is that not that many will be saved, then despair could set in and the thought "why bother" follows rapidly in its wake. Conversely, if many or even most will be saved, there is no demand to make much of an effort to be saved, with God's help. On another occasion, in reply to a rich official's question about what he had to do to inherit eternal life, Jesus noted how difficult that is saying, "How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God" (Lk 18: 24-25). However, Jesus did not leave it that because He adds, "What is impossible for human beings is possible for God." While you might think about that while it is all well and good to rely on God's grace, the question about how many will be saved does not go away that easily. Saint Luke notes that the gate that opens up to the banquet in the Kingdom of God is narrow (Gk. στενής) or it is a closely-defined path that God has set out for us to travel in order to gain His approval. The Gospel notes that many will attempt to enter through that gate but too many "will not be strong enough" to be saved. The focus must be on the *narrowness* of the gate and not agonizing over how many of those who are strong enough to enter through it. The hall where the feast of heaven will be celebrated is not limited and its seats are not reserved for the influential because the hall's capacity is unlimited and the guests in the Kingdom are seated according to when they arrive. Even in the Book of Revelation, with the endless stream appearing before the Lamb, wearing white and holding palm branches, there is no attempt to denote how many comprise that "great multitude." The condemned, whether cowards who have denied Christ in time of trial or other abominations are destined for "the burning pool of fire and sulfur, which is the second death" (Rev 21:8). The biblical literary form known as *apostrophe* is a figure of speech in which an exclamation is addressed to an object as if it were a person, e.g., "Outside are the dogs, the sorcer-

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## The Birth & Martyrdom of John the Baptist

Every saint's feast day is celebrated on the day of the person's death, the day presumed to mark that saint's entrance into heaven. The only two exceptions are the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist, who both have feast days marking their births. Long ago, St. Augustine noted that the reason for this is the Church's common belief that John entered the world freed (in the womb) from original sin. This condition designates the state of detachment from God into which all humans are born. It is not about personal sin, but rather the inherited condition of sinfulness and absence of sanctifying grace. Such an inherited sin refers to the sinful state that all human beings are born in due to the sin of Adam and Eve, involving a loss of original righteousness and a tendency towards sinning. While not conceived without original sin as was true in regard to Jesus or Mary, some theologians contend that John the Baptist, though conceived with original sin, yet he was cleansed from it before his birth. This pious belief is supported by the scriptural account of the Visitation (Luke 1:41), where John leaped in Elizabeth's womb upon sensing Jesus' presence, "When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, 'Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb'" (Lk 1:41-42). This event is seen as a purification, since the presence of the Holy Spirit has to be incompatible with original sin. According to the Synoptic Gospels, John the Baptist was executed by beheading at the order of Herod Antipas, ruler of Galilee. The Baptist had publicly criticized Herod Antipas for marrying Herodias and, for that, the king had John arrested and imprisoned. During Herod's birthday celebration, Herodias' daughter, whose name tradition identifies as Salome, danced for Herod and his guests. Herod was so pleased by her performance that he made a rash oath, promising her anything she desired, up to half his kingdom. Prompted by her mother, Salome requested the head of John the Baptist on a platter. Reportedly perturbed by the request, though the king felt obligated to fulfill his oath. Herod dispatched an executioner to behead John in prison. After being beheaded, his head was brought to Salome on a platter, who then presented it to her mother. John's disciples later buried his body and, according to tradition, did so except for his head in Sebastia. The Jewish historian Josephus, however, wrote that John the Baptist was beheaded in Machaerus, not Sebastia. There are various, though differing, accounts regarding the burial site of the head of John the Baptist. Some accounts suggest it was buried in a dung heap by Herodias, while others propose different locations like the Mount of Olives or even Herod's palace in Jerusalem. See [www.vaticannews.va](http://www.vaticannews.va). Christopher Wells, "An unbelievable discovery: Uncovering the site of John the Baptist's martyrdom."

# Understanding the Mass—Both Memorial & Sacrifice

## The Preface

While the entire Eucharistic Prayer is praise and thanksgiving, the Preface at Mass is primarily thanksgiving, too. The section's title originates from the Latin word *prae-fatio* meaning fore-speaking or the speaking out that takes place in the presence of God and among His people. The preface immediately precedes the Eucharistic Prayer and the Sanctus (or Holy, Holy, Holy). It starts as a dialogue between the priest and people, culminating in the Sanctus. It sets the tone for the Eucharistic Prayer. This introductory section begins with a dialogue that serves not only as an invitation to prayer, but also as a call to give thanks to God. This exchange is not a mere

formality because it has deep theological significance. The priest's greeting, "The Lord be with you," is a prayer for God's grace to be with those present, and the people's response "And with your spirit," acknowledges the priest's role in leading the prayer. The following invitation to "Lift up your hearts" is a call asking the participants to elevate their thoughts and focus their attention on God in preparation for the Eucharistic prayer. It is a phrase found in the Book of Lamentations (Lam 3:41). The final exchange, "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God," and the response, "It is right and just," are ancient acclamations rooted in Jewish prayer that were likely used in Judaism as the invitation to the prayer of blessing (Heb. *berakah*) over the cup. To recognize that it is right and just can also be derived from a Hellenistic background where it was used as an acclamation of agreement with what had been previously expressed. According to the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, in regard to the Preface, you read this, "The thanksgiving (expressed especially in the Preface), in which the Priest, in the name of the whole of the holy people, glorifies God the Father and gives thanks to him for the whole work of salvation or for some particular aspect of it, according to the varying day, festivity, or time of the year" (*GIRM*, n. 79a).

## The Body of the Preface

The body of the Preface is a solemn declaration in regard to the variable reasons for praising God for the Fa-

ther's work in creation and redemption. Taken together, the preface incorporates two topics: the beginning of the Eucharistic Prayer and expresses in the language of prayer the Church's theology of the liturgical year and the saints. The preface is a prayer that "glorifies God the Father and gives thanks to Him for the whole work of salvation or for some particular aspect of it, according to the varying day, festivity, or time of year." The early Church saw a multiplication of prefaces, especially for martyrs. A partial manuscript from the sixth century had 267 prefaces. A text from the eighth century reduced that number to 14. By the beginning of the 11th century, the number of prefaces stabilized at 11, and this collection was confirmed by the Roman Missal of 1570, produced under Pius V following the Council of Trent. The current *Missale Romanum* has around eighty prefaces. In the churches whose origins where in the Eastern part of the Mediterranean, the preface is lengthy and fixed in nature, offering a general overview of salvation history. Whereas in the West, the dominant type of Preface is variable, highlighting a particular aspect of God's saving work. The beginning dialogue between the priest and people asks them to lift up their hearts and give thanks to God. Usually, the Preface concludes with an invocation of the angels and the heavenly host. This invocation varies in length, from "with all the Angels and Saints" to "the Angels praise your majesty, Dominions adore, and Powers tremble before you. Heaven and the Virtues of heaven and the blessed Seraphim worship together with exultation." These are based on biblical passages such as Colossians 1:16, which refers to thrones, dominions, principalities, and authorities, and Ephesians 1:21, which speaks of "rule and authority and power and dominion." This invocation leads smoothly to the angelic song "Holy, Holy, Holy." The preface is an excellent example of the ancient saying that "the law of prayer is the law of faith" (*lex orandi, lex credendi*)—the Church expresses what she believes in her public, liturgical prayer. Consider these examples from the prefaces for the Proper of Time. In Advent, we relive when Christ "assumed at His first coming the lowliness of human flesh" and anticipate that He will come "again in glory and majesty." At Christmas, we rejoice that "a new light of your glory has shown upon the eyes of our mind" and "we, too, are made eternal." At Epiphany, God "revealed the mystery of our salvation in Christ as a light for the nations." Lent is "God's gracious gift," "a sacred time for the renewing and purifying" of our hearts so that we might be "freed from disordered affections," and that as Lenten disciples, God would "help us imitate you in your kindness." As we approach Holy Week, we recall that "through the saving Passion of your Son the whole world has received a heart to confess the infinite power of your majesty." Easter praises Christ, for "dying he has destroyed our death, and by rising, restored our life," and "the halls of the heavenly Kingdom are thrown open to the faithful." Christ, who "showed himself the Priest, the Altar, and the Lamb of Sacrifice" now continually "defends us and ever pleads our cause before you." The prefaces for Sundays in Ordinary Time praise God, who has "freed us from the yoke of sin and death," "called us out of darkness into your own wonderful light," and made us "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation." In God "we live and move and have our being, and...experience daily the effects of your care." The Lord continually gathers His scattered children, formed "by the unity of the Trinity, made the body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit...manifest as the Church." The prefaces for the Proper of Saints similarly instruct us. On feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary we thank God for giving us through her "the author of our salvation." On feasts of the Apostles, we praise God that the Church stands "firm on apostolic foundations, to be a lasting sign of your holiness on earth and offer all humanity your heavenly teaching." We thank God for his work in the saints, for "by their way of life you offer us an example, by communion with them you give us companionship, by their intercession sure support." We praise His wonders in the martyrs, for "in your mercy you give ardor to their faith, to their endurance you grant firm resolve, and in their struggle the victory is yours, through Christ our Lord." The Church rejoices with a saint who was a pastor, for "you strengthen her by the example of his holy life, teach her by his words of preaching, and keep her safe in answer to his prayers." Through holy virgins and religious "you call human nature back to its original holiness and bring it to experience on this earth the gifts you promise in the new world to come." Each Mass brings special graces, and it is the Holy Spirit who makes these present, for "in each celebration there is an outpouring of the Holy Spirit that makes the unique mystery present." The prefaces are sure guides for the graces that God wants to pour out on us in each season, each feast, and each celebration, so that with the saints "we may run as victors in the race before us and win with them the imperishable crown of glory, through Christ our Lord." Excerpted from [www.etcatholic.org](http://www.etcatholic.org). Father Randy Stice. "An exploration of the Prefaces at Mass." 21 January 2024.

## THE MASS

- I. Introductory Rites
- Entrance
- Veneration of the Altar
- Greeting
- Penitential Rite
- Kyrie Eleison
- Gloria in excelsis Deo
- Collect
- II. Liturgy of the Word
- Scripture Readings
- Homily
- Nicene/Apostles Creed
- Prayers of the Faithful
- III. Liturgy of the Eucharist
- Preparation of the Gifts
- Eucharistic Prayer
1. Preface
2. Sanctus
3. Epiclesis
4. Consecration
5. Mystery of fidei
6. Anamnesis
7. Offering
8. Intercessions
9. Doxology and Amen
- Communion Rite
- Lord's Prayer
- Rite of Peace
- Breaking of the Bread
- Communion
- Prayer after Communion
- IV. Concluding Rites
- Blessing
- Dismissal
- Veneration of the Altar
- Personal Thanksgiving

ther's work in creation and redemption. Taken together, the preface incorporates two topics: the beginning of the Eucharistic Prayer and expresses in the language of prayer the Church's theology of the liturgical year and the saints. The preface is a prayer that "glorifies God the Father and gives thanks to Him for the whole work of salvation or for some particular aspect of it, according to the varying day, festivity, or time of year." The early Church saw a multiplication of prefaces, especially for martyrs. A partial manuscript from the sixth century had 267 prefaces. A text from the eighth century reduced that number to 14. By the beginning of the 11th century, the number of prefaces stabilized at 11, and this collection was confirmed by the Roman Missal of 1570, produced under Pius V following the Council of Trent. The current *Missale Romanum* has around eighty prefaces. In the churches whose origins where in the Eastern part of the Mediterranean, the preface is lengthy and fixed