

**OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL**  
**SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL**  
**WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER**  
**Fifth Sunday of Easter**  
**April 28, 2024**



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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, April 27 *Vigil of the 5th Sunday of Easter*

4:00pm For the intentions of Rebecca & Julia Chace

Sunday, April 28 *Fifth Sunday of Easter*

7:30am For Bridget & Ciara Kelly, Conal and Ciara Regan

4:00pm +Dr. James & Mrs. Cosgrove and Bridget

Monday, April 29 *Saint Catherine of Siena, virgin & doctor*<sup>1</sup>

12:00nn For the intentions of Owen Timothy & Luke Richard

Tuesday, April 30

12:00nn For the intentions of Paul Michael & Patricia Ann

Wednesday, May 1 *Saint Joseph the Worker*<sup>2</sup>

12:00nn For the gifts of the Holy Spirit upon Aaron & intercession of Saint Peregrine

Thursday, May 2 *Saint Athanasius, bishop & doctor*<sup>1</sup>

12:00nn For Peggy K and Rose G and their families

Friday, May 3 *Feast of Saints Philip and James, apostles*

12:00nn +C. Marie Walsh

Saturday, May 4 *Vigil of the 6th Sunday of Easter*

4:00pm For the intentions of a friend by Lou

Sunday, May 5 *Sixth Sunday of Easter*

7:30am For John Gallinagh and family

4:00pm For the intentions of the Rizzuto family and Madison

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 Gospel of Eastertide**

The expression *remain in me* or *abide in me* is a key notion in the Johannine vocabulary. In its strongest sense, the Greek verb *menein* (Gk. μένω) states the bond uniting the Father and the Son, as well as the Son and the Spirit. The same verbal expression also refers to the divine-human relationship that God establishes between Him and anyone who keeps the faith and His commandments. The verb *menein* also incorporates the connection between Jesus and those who are His disciples. Arguably, today's Gospel expresses those concepts most strongly – “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower.” The various statements begin with *I am* (Gk. ἐγώ εἰμι) and are a form of speech that Jesus used which often precedes great revelations such as “I am the bread of life,” “I am the good shepherd,” “I am the way and the truth and the life,” and along with several others, such as this week's statement, “I am the true vine...” In the Old Testament, the Israelites are often described as the vine that the God of Israel has planted. Thus, as the object of God's great love and His infinite care, the vineyard of Israel should have readily produced the fruits of justice and holiness, but too often did not. Whenever their infidelity arose, God was forced to intervene in order to save the shoots of those gifts that had not been corrupted in order to use that meager good fruit to replant His vineyard. God loved the vineyard so much that the very thought of destroying it filled the God of Israel with deep regret as is so eloquently expressed in what is known as Isaiah's Parable of the Vineyard (Is 5:1-7). The initial verses of Isaiah's parable reflect songs of the harvest and extol the master of the vineyard who took every opportunity to assure the vineyard's fruitfulness by planting the choicest vines in it. The fertile plot of land is described as a walled garden and the owner hews out a wine press and watchtower within it. Yet, those efforts did not result in sweet grapes but only sour grapes. Then, soliciting the citizens of Jerusalem and Judah, the master asks them what more could he have done? Unwittingly, they approve of the vineyard's destruction, yet, instead of destroying vines, the master removes the vineyard's protection and stops dressing the vines. The last verse reveals the master's true identity and power – the Lord of hosts is the owner and His vineyard is the house of Israel. Their punishment is commensurate with their sins. Now, as Jesus faces His final hour, poised to pass over from this world back to the Father, like in the Isaiah passage, the Lord Jesus reveals to the disciples His true identity by telling them about Himself through this I am statement – “I am the true vine...” In wine vintner's terms, you would

### Saint Cyril of Jerusalem - *Commentary on the Gospel of John*

On the part of those who come to the vine, their union with him depends upon a deliberate act of the will; on his part, the union is effected by grace. Because we had good will, we made the act of faith that brought us to Christ, and received from him the dignity of adoptive sonship that made us his own kinsmen, according to the words of Saint Paul: "He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him." From Christ and in Christ, we have been reborn through the Spirit in order to bear the fruit of life; not the fruit of our old, sinful life but the fruit of a new life founded upon our faith in him and our love for him. Like branches growing from a vine, we now draw our life from Christ, and we cling to his holy commandment in order to preserve this life.

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speaking about the hardness of the vine stock or the health of its shoots; however Jesus accentuates His authenticity – "I am the true (Gk. ἀληθινή) vine" and the adjective *alēthinē* or true emphasizes the organic link between what is true in fact with its origin or facticity. As the true vine, then, it is absolutely affirmed that Jesus can never deceive. Moreover, as both God and man, Jesus has a unique transcendent quality that is unlike anyone before or since; thus, while the true vine is an attribute of the man Jesus, also knowing He is the Son of God, there is no other substitute for His unique role in the world's salvation that could possibly be conceivable. Conversely, anyone who once had been grafted onto Christ and, now, has become a dry, fruitless branch should be cut off. The analogy between the vineyard owner in Isaiah's parable and what Jesus revealed to His disciples in the Gospel constitutes a comparison between the shared divine nature of the Father and the Son as well as what the future will hold for those unfaithful to Christ. Like a skilled vine dresser who prunes the good branches so they become more productive, those branches that are obviously dead must be cut down and laid aside so as to be burned. For those other branches that, for some unknown reason, have become separated from the root stock, since there is no chance whatsoever that they will ever bear fruit, they too must be pruned and burned. Finally, those shoots that spread out and are firmly attached to the vine stock will inevitably blossom and bear luscious fruit. In every wine-growing region, a sick, unhealthy vine is an image of unfruitfulness, even death, while a healthy, well-pruned vine is lush with leaves and blossoms. Thus, it incorporates the promise of a fruitful harvest. By saying "remain in me, as I remain in you," Jesus was telling the disciples that He is the vine-dresser who trims the vines. Heeding what Jesus said, trusting in Him alone, believing that He is the perfect image of the God we cannot see, grafted onto Jesus and knowing that He alone is ever-faithful, our fidelity to the cause of Christ is assured. The assurance is predicated upon whether or not our faith in Him remains constant and unwavering. An act of faith requires visible proof or deeds done to illustrate that such faith in Christ has been put into action. In Saint John's Gospel, the signs or miracles associated with Jesus affirm what He was saying and give glory to God the Father. Merely professing to believe is a countersign, such that mere lip service points others away from God. The visible sign of a good tree is its fruit; thus, the Father cannot allow dry, withered branches to cast doubt on the quality of the vine stock, which is the holiness of Christ and the truth of the good news that caused the Father to send His only Son to earth.

#### National Eucharistic Revival — The Vine & the Branches

Father Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM, Cap in his work entitled *The Eucharist, Our Sanctification* expounded on the fact that the scope of the Eucharist is not meant to solely be limited to the faithful gathered to hear the word of God and to proclaim the faith of the Church. The Eucharist is, first of all, the active presence of the sacrifice of Christ, who gathers His people together through the action of the Spirit and lets them partake of His divine life through his Body and Blood in Communion. In regard to the image found in today's Gospel, he wrote, "The vine and the branches share the same lymph (sap), the same life. ... But, being inanimate, neither the vine nor the branches are 'aware' of this union! ... The strength of Eucharistic Communion is precisely that we become one spirit with Jesus and this "one spirit" is ultimately the Holy Spirit. ... In other words, in the Eucharist what took place in the life of Jesus is repeated. It is the Holy Spirit that gave Christ to the world at the moment of his birth (in fact, Mary conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit); at the moment of his death, it is Christ that gave the Holy Spirit to the world (in fact, as he was dying, he 'gave of his Spirit' (John 19:30). Likewise in the Eucharist the Holy Spirit gives us Christ in the consecration and Christ gives us the Holy Spirit in Communion. ... It is the Holy Spirit that creates our intimacy with God. ... St. Thomas Aquinas calls the Eucharist the 'sacrament of love.' He explains that love alone brings about union with the living Christ. In fact, love is the only reality through which two separate living beings can become one without losing their individual identity. If the Holy Spirit is said to be 'the communion of Christ,' it is because he is God's love."



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## Easter 7 Weeks x 7 Days + 1 = Fifty Days of Rejoicing

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### Introduction

The Church believes that, while the Spirit is not visible to the naked eye, nor can be heard with the human ear, that the gift of the Spirit constitutes the seal of baptism. The Holy Spirit is known “only in the movement by which he reveals the Word to us and disposes us to welcome him in faith. The Spirit of truth who ‘unveils’ Christ to us ‘will not speak on his own.’ Such properly divine self-effacement explains why ‘the world cannot receive [the Spirit], because it neither sees him nor knows him,’ while those who believe in Christ know the Spirit because he dwells in them” (CCC, n. 687).

### Spirit's Gifts as Permanent Dispositions

The prophet Isaiah foretold that, in the Messianic age, the spirit of the Lord will be showered upon God's Anointed: a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of counsel and strength, a spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord (cf. Is 11,1-3). Yet, the Church believes that Christ also shares those gifts with the people who have been conformed to Him in baptism and confirmation. St. Ambrose wrote, “Recall then that you have received the spiritual seal, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of right judgment and courage, the spirit of knowledge and reverence, the spirit of holy fear in God's presence. Guard what you have received. God the Father has marked you with His sign; Christ the Lord has confirmed you and has placed His pledge, the Spirit, in your hearts” (*De mysteriis*, 7,42). If you were to look at the Hebrew text of Isaiah, you would find only six gifts mentioned, though Isaiah's prophesy mentions the fear of the Lord twice. When the Hebrew text of Isaiah was translated into Greek (viz. LXX—the Septuagint) and into the Latin Vulgate, that double-reference concerning fear of the Lord was reduced to a single statement and piety was added as the seventh gift of the Spirit. These are supernatural gifts that are constantly part of the spiritual life of a believing individual who possesses sanctifying grace. In the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Christian living is undergirded by those heavenly gifts, “[The gifts] are permanent dispositions which make man docile in following the promptings of the Holy Spirit” (CCC n. 1830). As permanent dispositions, then, these gifts are not intermittent; no, the gifts are habitual ways of acting and thinking that manifest the holiness of God and constitute a share in His divine nature, always at work within the baptized and confirmed. These seven-fold gifts also supplement and even perfect the

theological virtues (faith, hope and love) and the cardinal virtues (prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance). The ultimate aim is for the believer, infused with these heavenly gifts, to become docile so as to conform personal activity to the movement of the Holy Spirit. This attitude of docility is meant to give a supernatural tone to our way of thinking, acting and even to our human desires. The Spirit serves as the light that the faithful must follow and the divine strength needed to pursue life in terms of doing what the Lord has asked of us.

### Seven-fold Gifts of the Spirit

These heavenly gifts also have a dynamic and perfectible or perfecting quality. (1) *Fear of the Lord* (perfects hope) is a reverential and not a paralyzing kind of fear. This inner attitude creates a desire to do the will of God and avoid evil, out of love for Him. Awe or fear of God then drives the human soul to (2) *piety* (perfects justice) which is the proper attitude toward God who is the loving Father and it entails respect for others as sons and daughters of God. (3) *Knowledge* (perfects faith) is received or gained in order to judge correctly in regard to earthly things and their relationship to heavenly realities. Often, the gift of knowledge is framed in terms of illumination or divine enlightenment about the true nature of things. The fourth gift is (4) *fortitude* (perfects courage) that gives unheard of strength to overcome the sufferings of this life and yields the ability to resist what is evil and to persevere. The mind and heart need (5) *counsel* (perfects prudence) which aids in judging wisely the good to be done and the evil to be avoided, which must be seen in light of the eternity that lies ahead. Truth is often elusive and, so, the gift of (6) *understanding* (perfects faith) aids and abets the innate God-given ability to seek what is right and true or understanding is a penetrating intuition that takes the intellect to the heart of the matter at hand. The last gift is (7) *wisdom* (perfects charity) that pertains to contemplating God's nature and His plan, as well as the practical wisdom (or phronesis) needed in ordinary moral situations. Divine wisdom allows mere creatures to judge things from the long perspective of God's plan. These seven-fold divine gifts, then, build upon and perfect all of the virtues that constitute the good life in its moral sense. These gifts were manifested in the life of Jesus and His activity and, so, they are only truly ours in the sense that the gifts serve to make us more Christ-like.

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