

OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL
SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL
WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER
Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time
June 16, 2024



While mustard produces an urge for food,
the word of God arouses in the soul a hunger for the Heavenly Bread,
a thirst for salvation and justification in Christ the Savior.

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

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MASS INTENTIONS — LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Saturday, June 15 *Vigil of the 11th Sunday of the Liturgical Year*

4:00pm For the intentions of Luisa Alfonso

Sunday, June 16 *Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time — Father's Day*

7:30am +George Perri & for the intentions of Rita & Wayne

4:00pm +John Sheeran, Ralph White, and Eugene Foley

Monday, June 17

12:00nn For the intentions of Max K'andre

Tuesday, June 18

12:00nn For the intentions of Irene Kozlowski

Wednesday, June 19 *Saint Romuald, abbot*²

12:00nn For the intentions of Brendan DeLongchamp

Thursday, June 20

12:00nn +John & Mary Murray by their family

Friday, June 21 *Saint Aloysius Gonzaga, religious*¹

12:00nn +Bridget Norman by a dear friend of the family

Saturday, June 22 *Vigil of 12th Sunday of the Liturgical Year*

4:00pm +Lucille Cunic, recalling her day of birth by her daughters

Sunday, June 23 *Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time*

7:30am +James Groccia — 28th anniversary

4:00pm For Mary, a beloved sister, requested by her brother

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 memorial¹ or an optional memorial².*

Toward a Better Understanding of the Gospels during Ordinary Time

Unlike the other evangelists, Saint Mark's Gospel contains only two discourses – the discourse in parables (Mk 4:1-34) and the discourse on the end time (Mk 13:1-37). The first of those discourses is comprised of five parables: the Sower (Mk 4:1-9) and its explanation (Mk 4:10-20); the lamp (Mk 4:21-24); and the measure (Mk 4:24-25). The last two parables concern the seed that grows by itself (Mk 4: 26-29) and the mustard seed (Mk 4:30-32), along with Jesus giving the reason why He taught in parables (Mk 4:33-34). The last three, taken together, constitute this week's Gospel. The seed that grows in silence along with the mustard seed describe the burial of the word along with the necessary conditions for its growth. In the parable of the Sower and its explanation (Mk 4:1-20), the kingdom of God begins in earnest. This does not mean that before Christ nothing was sown, though with the coming of Jesus, the final sowing of the last season has begun. The time in which we now live is the period of the seed's sprouting and its growing and, then, will come the harvest, followed by the storing of its good fruit in heaven after the last judgment. At the outset of this parabolic discourse, Saint Mark declared, "Hear this! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path...other seed fell on rocky ground...some seed fell among thorns...some seed fell on rich soil and produced fruit" (Mk 4:3-8). Thus, an attitude of attentive listening is required in regard to all that Jesus taught. The Gospel's initial verses describe the seed that grows by itself, which implies that God is its principal agent and omnipresent during both the initial sowing and at the harvest as He wields the sickle. Those two moments evoke the final judgment. Until that ultimate day, the seed and the kind of soil in which it is planted, work out of sight. Germination takes place and growth follows, though even the sower "knows not how" nor is it possible to even identify when that will happen. Frequently, in parables, some element seems out of place or it might even be counterintuitive. Any home gardener knows that you cannot just sow good seed and, then, do nothing more. Going from seed to sprouting seedling must be understood as transformative and almost inevitable – "first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear." It is likewise so with the seeds of faith that are sown, they possess an innate fertility that is incomparable. For those reasons, God trusts the seed since He knows the profound ability that the word has to germinate and multiply. The Lord's apparent inaction is not indifference nor does it imply inevitability or divine naïveté. Instead, a bad harvest is attributable to the soil in which it was sown—seed falling on the path is eaten by birds, if it falls on rocky thin soil it springs up but withers, the seed that lands among thorns is choked. There's no need to unnecessarily worry,

Dag Hammarskjöld — *Markings*

There are actions — justified only by faith — which can lift us into another sphere, where the battle is with “Principalities, Dominions and Powers.” Actions upon which — out of mercy — everything is staked. “For thy holy life is our way, and your adorable patience the road by which we must approach Thee.”

though, because the harvest will inevitably come. Divine inaction, then, is not indifference; instead, it illustrates the human need for watchfulness and an appeal for personal responsibility, while God alone ensures the growth of those seeds that were planted in moist, rich soil. From meager beginnings, in an out-of-the-way part of the Empire, the adventure of Christian faith began. A handful of Galileans accepted the invitation that Jesus issued to come and follow Him. As an itinerant preacher, Jesus goes throughout the land talking about the reign of God while healing the lame and curing the sick. Increasingly, the public rallies around Him, though the vast crowds were not sufficient to prevent Jesus from being betrayed and dying on the Cross. Stunned by the horrors of the death of the Man from Nazareth that they believed would save the nation, most of His inner circle sought to save themselves. Even the news that Jesus was alive sowed confusion since the Resurrection seemed too good to be true! While His post-resurrection appearances increased the faith that Jesus, the Man they had seen crucified was now their Risen Lord, but not soon afterward, He left them again and ascended back to the Father. With the outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost, however, their faith assumed a distinct missionary fervor. By the middle part of the latter part of the first century of the Christian era, like-minded believers in Christ as Lord could be found in many of the major cities in the eastern part of the Empire – even in Rome itself, among members of the imperial household! While that breathless spread of the Gospel continues, the pace in which it is pursued and its fervor has waxed and waned. Paganism was never totally uprooted and periodically is reborn. Instead of the outward thrust, characteristic of the earliest Christian period, contraction in the size of the Church and shrinking numbers instill gloom and drive self-centered thinking like this, “I’ll worry about my faith alone.” Jesus used parables to both aid in the crowd’s understanding of who He was as well as what He was doing. Whereas with His inner circle, He explained the meaning of a parable to the Apostles in private. The deeper meaning of those vignettes do not require intellectual ability since they are aimed at the “little or simple ones” in the evangelical sense of simple because they are open to divine action. To penetrate the veil that envelopes parables requires a willingness to learn and to be taught, doing so enlightened by the Spirit, and within the penumbra of prayer. Those little ones or anawim, freed from prejudices, are impressed by the authority with which Jesus spoke and acted. Thus, intuitively, they perceive that He knows the secrets of God. Having those secrets privately explained to them, the Twelve realize that those moralist tales reveal “the mysteries of the kingdom of God” and the secret that Jesus unveils for them is not private and, as glad tidings, they must be proclaimed from the roof tops.

Jubilaem 2025 — Pilgrims of Hope

In preparation for the 2025 Jubilee Year *Pilgrims of Hope*, the current year has been designated a Year of Prayer by Pope Francis. He asks us all to join in a great “symphony” of prayer, “to renew our desire to be in the presence of the Lord, to listen to him and to adore him.” Jubilee is the name given to a particular year. A time to re-establish a proper relationship with God, with one another, and with all of Creation. the name comes from the instrument used to mark its launch. In this case, the instrument in question is the *yobel*, the ram's horn, used to proclaim the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). This (Jewish) holiday occurs every year, but it takes on special significance when it marks the beginning of a Jubilaem. We can find an early indication of it in the Bible: a Jubilee year was to be marked every 50 years, since this would be an “extra” year, one which would happen every seven weeks of seven years, i.e., every 49 years (cf. Leviticus 25:8-13). Even though it was not easy to organize, the year is meant to restore a proper relationship with God, with others, and with all creation. Thus, it involves the forgiveness of debts, the return of misappropriated land, and allowing a fallow period for the fields. Quoting the prophet Isaiah, the Gospel of Luke describes Jesus’ mission in this way: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord,” (Lk 4:18-19; cf. Is 61:1-2). Jesus lives out these words in His daily life, in His encounters with others and in His relationships, all of which bring about true freedom and conversion. In 1300, Pope Boniface VIII called the first Jubilee, now also known as a “Holy Year,” since it is a time in which God’s holiness transforms us. The frequency of Holy Years has changed over time: at first, they were celebrated every 100 years; later, in 1343 Pope Clement VI reduced the gap between Jubilees to every 50 years, and in 1470 Pope Paul II made it every 25 years. There have also been Extraordinary Holy Years: in 1933 Pope Pius XI chose to commemorate the 1900th anniversary of the Redemption, and in 2015 Pope Francis proclaimed the Year of Mercy as an extraordinary jubilee. The way in which Jubilee Years are marked has also changed through the centuries: originally the Holy Year consisted of a pilgrimage to the Roman Basilicas of St. Peter and St. Paul, later other basilicas were added, along with the act of passing through their Holy Doors. By proper participation in the Holy Year, one is granted a plenary indulgence — a full removal of all the temporal (not eternal) punishment due to the attraction that sin entails that can be relieved by indulgences while alive or in purgatory, before entering heavenly glory.

Understanding the Mass as a Sacrificial Memorial

Introduction

In Part Two of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the Eucharist is identified as the sacramental sacrifice made manifest in terms of these elements: thanksgiving, memorial, and presence, "If from the beginning Christians have celebrated the Eucharist and in a form whose substance has not changed despite the great diversity of times and liturgies, it is because we know ourselves to be bound by the command the Lord gave on the eve of his Passion: 'Do this in remembrance of me.' We carry out this command of the Lord by celebrating the *memorial of his sacrifice*. In so doing, we offer to the Father what he has himself given us: the gifts of his creation, bread and wine which, by the power of the Holy Spirit and by the words of Christ, have become the body and blood of Christ. Christ is thus really and mysteriously made *present* (CCC, nn. 1356-1357).

Sacrifice – Memorial – Thanksgiving – Presence

The Eucharist (Gk. *Εὐχαριστία*) is the supreme act of thanksgiving and praise to God the Father. The Breaking of the Bread (Lat. *fractio panis*) is the sacrificial memorial of Christ and His Body and the presence of Christ by the power of His word and of His Spirit. Jesus said: "I am the living bread that came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live forever; . . . he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life and . . . abides in me, and I in him" (Jn 6:51, 54, 56). The Eucharist is the heart and the summit of the Church's life, for in it, Christ associates the Church and all her members with His sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving offered once for all (Gk. *ἐφάπαξ*) on the Cross to the Father; by this sacrifice He pours out the graces of salvation on His Body, which is the Church. The Eucharistic celebration always includes these elements: the proclamation of the Word of God; thanksgiving to God the Father for all His benefits, above all the gift of His Son; the consecration of bread and wine; and participation in the liturgical banquet by receiving the Lord's Body and Blood. These various elements constitute one single act of worship. The Eucharist is the *memorial* of Christ's Passover, that is, of the work of salvation accomplished by the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, a work made present by the liturgical action. It is Christ Himself, the eternal high priest of the New Covenant who, acting through the ministry of the priest, offers the Eucharistic sacrifice. And it is the same Christ, really present under the species of bread and wine, who is, also, the offering of the Eucharistic sacrifice. Only validly ordained priests can preside at the Eucharist and consecrate the bread and the wine so that they become the Body and Blood of the Lord. The

essential signs of the Eucharistic sacrament are wheat bread and grape wine, on which the blessing of the Holy Spirit is invoked (Gk. *ἐπίκλησις*) and the priest pronounces the words of consecration spoken by Jesus during the Last Supper: "This is my body which will be given up for you. . . . This is the cup of my blood. . . ." By the consecration, the transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ is effected. Under the consecrated species of bread and wine, Christ Himself, living and glorious, is present in a true, real, and substantial manner: His Body and His Blood, with His soul and His divinity (cf. Council of Trent: *DS* 1640; 1651). As sacrifice, the Eucharist is also offered in reparation for the sins of the living and the dead and to obtain spiritual or temporal benefits from God. Anyone who desires to receive Christ in Eucharistic communion must be in the state of grace. Anyone aware of having sinned mortally must not receive communion without having received absolution in the sacrament of penance. Communion with the Body and Blood of Christ increases the communicant's union with the Lord, forgives venial sins, and preserves those who receive from grave sins. Since receiving this sacrament strengthens the bonds of charity between the communicant and Christ, it also reinforces the unity of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ. The Church warmly recommends that the faithful receive Holy Communion when they participate in the celebration of the Eucharist; she obliges them to do so at least once a year. Because Christ Himself is present in the sacrament of the altar, He is also meant to be honored with the worship of adoration. "To visit the Blessed Sacrament is . . . a proof of gratitude, an expression of love, and a duty of adoration toward Christ our Lord" (Pope St. Paul VI, *Mysterium fidei*, n. 66). Having passed from this world to the Father, Christ gives us in the Eucharist the pledge of glory with Him. Participation in the Holy Sacrifice identifies us with His Heart, sustains our strength along the pilgrimage of this life, makes us long for eternal life, and unites us even now to the Church in heaven, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all the saints (CCC, nn. 1406-1419).

O Sacrum Convivium

O sacrum convivium, in quo Christus sumitur:
recolitur memoria passionis eius; mens impletur
gratia et futurae gloriae nobis pignus datur.

O sacred banquet,
in which Christ is received,
the memory of his Passion is renewed,
the mind is filled with grace,
and a pledge of future glory is given to us.