

OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL
SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL
WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER
Third Sunday of Lent
March 23, 2025



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

MASS INTENTIONS — LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Saturday March 22 *Vigil of the 3rd Sunday of Lent*

4:00pm +Joseph McGrath — recalling the day of his 85th birthday

Sunday, March 23 *Third Sunday of Lent*

7:30am God's blessings upon Mary for her better health

4:00pm Asking God for blessings and health for Grzegorz Leszynski

Monday, March 24

12:00nn Asking for healing from a serious illness for Renata

Tuesday, March 25 *Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord*

12:00nn For the intercession of the Virgin Mary, Our Lady Queen of Peace

Wednesday, March 26

12:00nn For a special intention requested

Thursday, March 27

12:00nn For Helene, Stanislaw Ryszard & Krystyna, Tadeus, Zofia Breczynski

Friday, March 28 *Day of Abstinence*

12:00nn For the intentions of James Cotter

Saturday, March 29 *Vigil of the 4th Sunday of Lent*

4:00pm For Kathy, a beloved sister

Sunday, March 30 *Fourth Sunday of Lent — Laetare Sunday*

7:30am +Siu Bee Go Osorio — 5th anniversary

4:00pm For the intentions of Jack Woods

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 of Lent

In the first decades of Christianity, before the definitive establishing of the canon of the New Testament, the biblical readings were usually organized on the simple basis of continuity or in a semi-continuous manner. The reading picked up from where the passage had ended during the previous Sunday. As the liturgical year developed, certain readings began to be reserved for particular feast days or seasons and so a thematic cycle developed. When the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council asked for the selection of readings used at Mass to be increased, the experts took inspiration from those two ancient methods of continuity and thematic readings. For Sundays they developed a three-year cycle, one for each synoptic gospel: A for Matthew, B for Mark (with five readings from John 6, inserted after the 16th Sunday), and C for Luke. During the season of Lent, since at least from the time of Pope Saint Leo, the Gospel for the season's first two Sundays have been from the various accounts of two incidents in the life of Christ: The Lord's Temptation in the Desert and His Transfiguration. Then, from the Third to the Fifth Sundays of Lent, unless there are candidates seeking to be initiated into the Church during the Easter Vigil, the weekly series of three Gospels varies. Since Year C is the current cycle, those mid-Lenten weeks highlight its penitential nature and they point towards the universal need for having sins forgiven. That series begins with this weekend's Gospel highlighting the Lord's urgent call for conversion (Lk 13:1-9), followed by the parable of the Prodigal Son (Lk 15:13:1-3, 11-32) and, finally, taking a passage from the Gospel according to Saint John recounting the woman caught in adultery (Jn 8:1-11). Of the various intellectual forms that can characterize justice, the form of immanent justice implies ascribing a deserved outcome to someone's prior moral deed or character. When that kind of justice thinking involves God, immanent justice occurs when the observer of some injustice is scandalized that God did not immediately punish the perpetrator. Such thinking happens by framing life's misfortunes of other people into divine reprimands. Thus, making God accountable for difficulties that were deemed undeserved or searching for others responsible for those problems. While evil does beget evil, the scope of sinfulness is such that it is impossible to assign the responsibility for evil or sin to specific people while exonerating ourselves or acting as if no one else had any causal relation to the harm committed. God is the only Author of life. He alone does what is absolutely good so that misfortune can never originate with God. Unlike contemporary thought, such a realization like that does not lead to the conclusion that life is absurd or that people are subject to whim or mere chance. No one should ever stop from seeking a plausible answer as to why or despair of

The Galileans & the Collapse of the Tower of Siloam

These unfortunate victims were no worse sinners than anyone else in Jerusalem. Jesus uses the Greek word *opheilētēs* (ὀφειλέτης), "one who is guilty, in debt." Not a typical word for sin, yet *opheilētēs* expresses the accountability of all mankind for the guilt of their sins. The sudden collapse of the tower or the slaughter of worshiping Galileans brought them to their judgment far sooner than anyone of them expected, but sudden death is a possibility for any of us. For destruction awaits everyone, whether by political reprisal, architectural error, car crash, malignant disease, or old age. Just as in the parable, the vinedresser earned additional time to cultivate and fertilize it, so too does repentance by time and abiding by that invitation, God's grace fertilizes the recalcitrant heart. Two possibilities lie open: One, that we may bear fruit in keeping with repentance or two that time will run out when the earthly reign of God's mercy yields to the coming judgment and the advent of eternal justice.

ever being able to find the means needed to prevent life's adversities. In the Gospel, some Pharisees had been slaughtered by Pilate and their blood commingled with the blood of their animal sacrifices. In the annals of the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus, such a slaughter would be in keeping with the character of Pontius Pilate. The historian recounts that Pilate had disrupted a religious gathering of Samaritans on Mount Gerizim and slaughtered its participants (*Jewish Antiquities* 18:86–87). Then, when Pilate wanted to build an aqueduct from Solomon's Pools to the city of Jerusalem, in order to pay for it, he demanded money from the temple treasury, money that had been dedicated to God — and this outraged the people. When the Jews sent a delegation to beg for their money back, Pilate sent a crowd of soldiers among them, dressed as common people, at a certain signal they took out daggers and attacked the people asking for the money (*The Jewish War* 2:175–77; *Jewish Antiquities* 18:60–62). Then, Jesus gave a second example of eighteen people who died with the collapse of the tower at Siloam. The earlier deaths of the Galileans at the hand of Pilate and the accidental deaths in Siloam serve as graphic reminders of the need to repent because the victims of those two tragedies were innocent and not notorious sinners who had been singled out for divine punishment for their sins. In addition, while exonerating the victims in regard to deserving what befell them, Jesus also rejects any attempt to blame God for those or any catastrophe. The only talk allowed in regard to sin is within the recognition that we all are sinners. Jesus issues the same call that John the Baptist and all the prophets had repeatedly proclaimed — REPENT! After correcting such erroneous thinking, Jesus tells the people a parable concerning a barren fig tree. It illustrates God's enormous patience and His divine forbearance. Despite the tree being fruitless for three years, the owner told the gardener to give the barren tree another year of tender care. In God's forbearance, He refrains from the enforcement of the punishment due to sin. The Lord often grants sinners a delay, hoping the additional time, along with His providential care, will bring about their conversion and a more fruitful life. This unflappable, divine patience should not be taken for granted because its aim is to make every sinner aware of the urgent need for conversion, by untiring patience, in ever-hopeful likelihood that the sinner change. Yet, God is powerless to save those who refuse to heed His unceasing calls to "turn away from sin" and to live a more fruitful life with His grace.

Lent—A Time to Choose Mercy

Jesus challenges us to go "and learn the meaning of the words, 'I desire meaning, not sacrifice'" (Mt 9:13). Jesus is inspired from the prophet Hosea who said, "...it is loyalty that I desire, not sacrifice" (Hos 6:6). Chapter six of Hosea begins with a call to return to the Lord who "will heal us but will bind our wounds." Lent is a time for Christ to encourage a metanoia or turn: For sinners, recognizing their brokenness and shortcomings, realizing that Jesus does not only seek to punish, but even more to heal. Mercy is an integral aspect of love, but mercy is an aspect of love that is ordered to removing the causes of misery in others. St. Thomas Aquinas in expounding on Saint Paul's description of God as rich in mercy said, "When love causes goodness in the beloved, it is love proceeding from mercy." And the Angelic Doctor adds that because God's mercy is "the root of divine love," then, mercy is at the root of everything God does. Mercy has its origin in the Blessed Trinity; the Trinitarian Persons eternally giving themselves totally to one another. Having been made in God's image such an unwarranted gift means that we are made for such relationships of love with God and others. As a result of the Fall of Adam and Eve, sin has entered creation that infects all creation and, so, sin is an infection that causes untold misery. Because of God's overflowing love, creation has become the embodiment of divine love. Fallen nature needed to be recreated by the Incarnation whose ultimate manifestation is the Passion of Christ as the perfect image of re-perfected humanity. Thus, Christ's resurrection restored what had been lost. Those saving events of salvation, you could say, are the result of God's merciful love or hesed that elicits the rediscovery of original innocence and the restoration of fallen creation. So, hesed or God's loving kindness is a sheer gift — undeserved and unmerited, but bestowed on humanity from the first moment of creation and tenderly, yet faithfully and strongly maintained for eternity. In the Book of Exodus, God is revealed as "gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in love and fidelity (Ex 34:6) and that declaration takes place at the very moment the people of Israel have broken their covenant with the Lord their God. The God of Israel goes on being faithful even when His people have failed to do so. God's merciful love is the mark of divine fidelity to the relationship that God called into being and often comparing it to a marriage bond, the Scriptures stress both the obligations it imposes and the huge dignity conferred on humanity by God.

Excerpted from www.christendom-awake.org. Fr. John Saward. "Love's Second Name." 25 February 2009.

Understanding the Mass—Both Memorial & Sacrifice

According to the *General Instruction on the Roman Missal*, “The main part of the Liturgy of the Word is made up of the readings from Sacred Scripture together with the chants occurring between them” (GIRM, n. 55). So, the first of two liturgies of the Mass has three other components (the homily, creed, and universal prayer) that are meant “to develop and conclude” those biblical readings. Before the liturgical reforms of the Vatican II (1962-1965), there were only two biblical readings, normally referred to as The Epistle and The Gospel. Unlike today, readings from the Old Testament were practically non-existent on Sundays. In the

Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (Lat. Sacrosanctum concilium), the Council Fathers decreed that “The treasures of the bible are to be opened up more lavishly, so that richer fare may be provided for the faithful at the table of God’s word. In this way a more representative portion of the holy scriptures will be read to the people in the course of prescribed number of years” (SC, n.51). Even before promulgating the actual lectionary of readings, the *Ordo Lectionum Missae* or the Order for the Readings at Mass (1969) is not to be confused with the Lectionary for Mass. The *OLM* was merely a list of what the lectionary would eventually contain. It declared there would be three readings on Sundays, with a psalm or Gradual between the first and second readings. The four Gospels are read on a three-year, rotating cycle that are alphabetically identified as Cycle A (Matthew), Cycle B (Mark, supplemented with Chapter 6, the Gospel of John), and Cycle C (Luke). The Fourth Gospel or the Gospel of John is read throughout Eastertide and during other liturgical seasons. For weekday Masses, though, there are usually only two readings with an intervening psalm, readings recur on a two-year cycle. As a rule, Year I corresponds to odd-numbered years and Year II to even-numbered years. The Gospel is common to both cycles, yet the first reading and psalm are variable.

Two Testaments – One Bible

The traditional text of the Hebrew Bible, known as the Masoretic Text, comprises twenty-four (24) books with three subdivisions: the Torah (or Instruction) made up of the Five Books of Moses, the Prophets (Heb. *Nevi'im*), and the Writings (Heb. *Ketuvim*). By taking the first letter of each section, you create the acronym *TaNakh* also known in Hebrew as *Miqra*, either is the title for the canonical collection of the Hebrew testament. In Christian circles, usually labeled as the Old Testament, not only are there differences between the prevailing title, but also differences among Christian denominations in regard to the number and names of those ancient writings. Most Protestant denominations agree on the number of the primarily Hebrew books as thirty-nine (39) in total. The Roman Catholic version of the Old Testament recognizes forty-six (46) books. Eastern Orthodox and the vari-

ous Oriental Churches of the East acknowledge fifty-one (51) books as comprising the Old Testament. By disregarding the additional Old Testament books in the Catholic, Orthodox and Oriental canonical Scriptures, you reach the result that the thirty-nine (39) Old Testament books that are common to all Christian denominations and how those writings correspond to the twenty-four approved writings that constitute the Hebrew *TaNakh*. The differences in the number of recognized works is attributable to the fact that some books are divided into two in the Christian version of the Old Testament: 1&2 Kings, 1&2 Samuel, 1&2 Chronicles, as well as Ezra and Nehemiah as separate books. The one Hebrew book of the minor prophets is divided into twelve separate books in the Christian version. Other writings, not found among the recognized Hebrew texts are considered deuterocanonical (or “belonging to a second canon”) by the Catholic Church: Tobit, Judith, additions to Esther, Wisdom, Sirach (or Ecclesiasticus), Baruch, and the Letter of Jeremiah, additions to Daniel, and 1&2 Maccabees. The large majority of Old Testament books, incorporated into the Christian Bible, is taken from the Greek translation of the extant Hebrew works or the Septuagint or LXX. This third century BC translation of the Hebrew into Greek includes the deuterocanonical or apocryphal (or hidden) writings and the other works mentioned above. Orthodox Christians consider these writings as *anagnoskomena* (Gk. *αναγνωσκόμεν*) or “worthy to be read.” Several of these hidden or worthy to be read books appear to have been originally written in Hebrew, though the original Hebrew text has been lost, yet the Septuagint or Greek version were extant. In the twentieth century, archeological finds have provided almost two-thirds of the Book of Sirach and fragments of some of the other seven or so secondarily canonical books have been unearthed, too. The Septuagint or LXX was widely accepted by Greek-speaking Jews in the first century of the Christian era, even in the region of Judaea.

The First Reading

Before the introduction of the new version of the lectionary, the Old Testament was only publicly read at the Easter Vigil, the Vigil of Pentecost, the feast of Epiphany and during that feast’s octave. The Hebrew Scriptures were also read during Holy Week, and at some weekday Masses, particularly during Ember Days, weekdays of Lent, as well as feasts of various saints, as well as at a few votive Masses. To illustrate the dramatic difference in reading from the Old Testament in the time before the liturgical reforms of Vatican II and afterwards, prior to the new lectionary, only about 2.3% of the Pentateuch the first five books of the Old Testament) was read whereas after those reforms about 15% of those five books are heard in Church. Two other parts of those thirty-nine books are identified as the Historical Books and Wisdom literature (omitting the Psalms) and were never heard before the Council. Now, about 10% and 12% are proclaimed. Then, two-and-a-half percent of the twelve minor prophets (only one book in the *TaNakh* or twelve in Christian numbering) are read. Only two percent of the material found in the major prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, & Daniel) was once read and, now, twenty-percent is read. These Old Testament texts were carefully selected to prepare for the Gospel and the psalm is intended to correspond with the first reading. According to the *General Introduction to the Lectionary*, “The best instance of harmony between the Old and New Testament readings occurs when it is one that the Scripture itself suggests. This is the case when the doctrine and events recounted in texts of the New Testament bear a more or less explicit relationship to the doctrine and events of the Old Testament texts mainly because of their correlation with the New Testament texts read at the same Mass, and particularly with the Gospel text” (GIL, n. 67). Two testaments one Bible.

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. Mysterium 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