

**OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL**  
**SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL**  
**WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER**  
**Seventh Sunday of Easter**  
**May 21, 2023**



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*The Hour Has Come*

Through all the shame and horror of Gethsemane to Golgotha,  
the Father will reveal Christ magnificently in His Son's true messianic divinity

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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, May 20 *Vigil of the 7th Sunday of Easter*

4:00pm +Sophia Groccia — 22nd anniversary

Sunday, May 21 *Seventh Sunday of Easter — World Day for Social Communications*

7:30am +C. Marie Walsh

4:00pm +Joseph Walsh, Sr.

Monday, May 22 *Saint Rita of Cascia, religious*<sup>2</sup>

12:00nn Healing for Eileen Sheehan

Tuesday, May 23

12:00nn Healing for Paul Eager

Wednesday, May 24

12:00nn +Stephen L'Esperance — 8th anniversary — by his family

Thursday, May 25 *Ss. Bede, Gregory VII, and Marty Magdalene de Pazzi*<sup>2</sup>

12:00nn Seeking divine help in dealing with substance abuse

Friday, May 26 *Saint Philip Neri, priest*<sup>1</sup>

12:00nn Souls in purgatory — OLP Purgatorial Society

Saturday, May 27 *Vigil of the Solemnity of Pentecost*

4:00pm For Tina Donahue and for the organ donor

Sunday, May 28 *Solemnity of Pentecost—Descent of the Holy Spirit*

7:30am + Julia & Gilbert Burke

4:00pm +Edwin “Ed” Lopes by his friends

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 the Gospels of Eastertide**

In Chapter 4 of *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week – From the Entrance in Jerusalem to the Resurrection*, the late Pope Benedict XVI examines Jesus' High-Priestly Prayer which he also did at a General Audience on Wednesday, 25 January 2012. In those instances, the Pope identified three parts to that prayer: (1) Jesus praying for Himself and His glorification; (2) the Lord interceding for the disciples with Him; and, then, (3) Jesus praying for those who will eventually believe in Him in the future. The prayer that Jesus offers for Himself is the request for His glorification or for His exaltation in the ultimate Hour. Yet, it is more than simply a prayer of petition, even more than the declaration of His full willingness to enter freely and generously into the plan of the Father. All that and more was fulfilled in Jesus being condemned and through His death and resurrection. The glorification that Jesus asks for Himself as High Priest is the entry into full obedience to the Father, an obedience that leads to His completed filial condition. The second part of the prayer is the intercession that Jesus makes for the disciples who were with Him. They are those of whom Jesus can say to the Father, “I have revealed your name to those whom you gave me out of the world. They belonged to you and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word” (Jn 17:6). The third part of this priestly prayer, though not part of this week's Gospel, is eschatological in nature and, as such, it extends to the end of time. In that section, Jesus turns to the Father in order to intercede for all those who will be brought to the faith through the mission inaugurated by the Apostles and continued in history: “I do not pray for these only, but also for those who believe in me through their word so that they may all be one” (Jn 17:20-21). Jesus prays for the Church of all ages and, so, He also prays for us now. In the end, “The central request of the priestly prayer of Jesus dedicated to his disciples of all epochs is that of the future unity of those who will believe in him. This unity is not a worldly product. It comes exclusively from the divine unity and reaches us from the Father, through the Son and in the Holy Spirit. Jesus invokes a gift that comes from Heaven and has its effect—real and perceptible — on earth. He prays “that they may all be one; even as you, Father are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me” (Jn 17:21). While chapter seventeen of Saint John's Gospel is the final part of the Lord's Farewell Discourse (Jn 14-17), this week's Gospel constitutes the third part of that extended discourse—collectively called the Lord's High Priestly Prayer—which was first described in those terms by Saint Clement of Alexandria. In the fifth century, Saint Clement remarked that in this prayer, Jesus was acting

### Saint Bernard of Clairvaux—Sermon on the Song of Songs

You will ask me how I could know his presence. Because he is living and active; scarcely had he entered me than he awakened my slumbering soul. My heart was as hard as a rock and stricken; he shook it, softened it, and wounded it. He it is who uproots, builds up, plants, waters the dry earth, lightens the dark places, opens locked rooms, and heats what was cold: even better, he straightens the crooked paths and levels the rough places, so much and so well that my soul blesses the Lord and all my being sings praises to his holy name.

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as a high priest on behalf of His people – it is a prayer of thanksgiving and intercession directed to the Father as Jesus bids farewell to the world and His disciples. Since the time had come for the Risen Christ to return to the Father, Jesus places all that He has accomplished into the Father’s hands. This prayer is not only to be considered a memorial (Gk. ἀνάμνησις—remembrance) of what Jesus had done, but also understood as a thanksgiving offering (Gk. εὐχαριστία). The Eucharistic Prayer or Anaphora follows that same pattern – memorial and thanksgiving. The Gospel passage begins with Jesus looking heavenward and expressing His gratitude to the Father for the divine assistance in preparing hearts to receive Jesus and His message. Yet, as Christ’s disciples, we must make His thanksgiving ours, too. Through baptism, by becoming sons and daughters of God, we believe that Jesus is sent from the Father. Taught by the Lord Himself, we are privileged to address God as our own Father *who art in heaven*. Having been sealed with the Spirit, our hearts are, thereby, enflamed to seek a deeper knowledge of God, in order that one day, “we shall see him as he is” (1 Jn 3:2). The greatest sign of the Father’s love is the gift of His Son. At some unknown time, in heaven, only praise and thanksgiving will be necessary—a celestial hymn fully in accord with that of Christ glorified because He promised to share His glory with every disciple. Then, becoming one as the Father and Son are one, all will become one in glory. This unity or communion will only be fully realized when all those deserving of salvation will be gathered around Christ in heaven, before the Father’s throne. However, such oneness is also meant to be an earthly reality or prerequisite in order for the whole world to come to believe that Jesus was sent by the Father. Moreover, as a visible testament or sign of the Father’s universal love, it is manifested in the love that God has for His own Son. Any assault on that sacred communion also undermines credence in the Father and the Son. The mission once given to Jesus constitutes Christ doing the Father’s will – Jesus died on the Cross in order to reconcile the whole world to God and to create one universal human family or an entirely new corporate personality in Christ. Now risen and ascended, this priestly prayer turns our thoughts heavenward toward the glorified Christ, standing at the Father’s right hand. From that vantage point, Christ watches over His own, while awaiting the fateful day when He will return in order to bring all of us, disciples of every age, to the new and eternal Jerusalem. Christ was the first to enter through the reopened gates of heaven and He did so as the bright morning star. Daily the Church cries out her hope to see that Star rising – Come, Lord Jesus!

### Easter to Pentecost—Fifty Days Yet One Great Feast

The Greek word *arrabōn* (Gk. ἀρραβών), which is a transliteration of a Hebrew word, only appears three times in the New Testament (2 Cor 1:22; 2 Cor 5:5; and Eph 1:4). When the Hebrew was translated into Greek or in the Septuagint (LXX) that word appears in Genesis 38:17 when Judah gave Tamar his seal, cord, and staff, as a pledge that he would send her a goat from his flock. Fundamentally, the word is a legal and commercial term signifying a first installment, deposit, or down payment. Arrabon pays part of a purchase price and does so in advance, thus securing a legal claim to the article in question. It is common in the Egyptian papyri for this word to be rendered as *earnest money* in a some type of purchase to endow a future wife’s dowry. So, the word is variously translated into English as *first installment, pledge, deposit, or guarantee*. At his Ascension, the Risen Jesus returns to His heavenly Father and His testament is filled with divine promises to the disciples. On the verge of leaving them, Christ promised the gift of the Holy Spirit because the disciples, the Apostles and the Church would neither have the courage nor the wisdom to boldly proclaim the Lord’s life-giving message without the strength of the Holy Spirit. The rarity of the Greek word *arrabon* requires interpretation; thus, rather than thinking of that word in terms of a deposit followed by future installments, it is equally plausible to think that the gift of the Holy Spirit was the surety or guarantee that the possession of the Spirit of truth is already a present reality. Having the miraculous powers of the Holy Spirit can be seen as the visible seal or proof of that heavenly Personality. To fix that in your mind, distinguish the *seal of the guarantee* from *that which was guaranteed*, such as redemption or salvation. When understood from such a perspective, the Spirit is not salvation or inheritance, but the guarantee of salvation and the likelihood of a future inheritance. Then, to explain *arrabon* in contemporary terms consider this: Almost everyone has made a major purchase, whether a house or a car and, so, you know that once you make a down payment, a pledge, or a first installment, if you do not end up purchasing the item or redeeming it, you do not get the down payment back. Once you hand over the pledge, that pledge or down payment is now belongs to the sellers. Having been anointed in Baptism and, thereby, setting His seal of ownership on us, coupled with putting the Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, the Spirit is properly understood as the Guarantor of our salvation that is yet to come.

# FIFTY DAYS FROM EASTER TO PENTECOST

## Priest—Prophet—King

A classic characterization of Jesus is that He is priest, prophet, and king. As priest, Jesus sanctifies, that is to say, He reestablishes the lost link between divinity and humanity; as prophet, He speaks and embodies divine truth; and as king, He leads us on the right path, giving guidance to the human project of life. You might say that, as priest, Jesus is the life; as prophet, He is the truth; and as king He is the way. Immediately after the actual baptism with water, the priest anoints the candidate on the crown of the head with Sacred Chrism saying, “God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has freed you from sin and given you a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit. He now anoints you with the chrism of salvation. As Christ was anointed Priest, Prophet, and King, so may you live always as a member of His body, sharing everlasting life. Amen.” This anointing is a stirring reminder of the sublime dignity conferred on the baptized. Freed from original sin, with sanctifying grace once again dwelling in the soul of the newly-baptized, that anointing becomes an imperative that as members of the priesthood of all believers, that the baptized embrace those shared offices of priest, prophet, and king. Not only is this triple office (Lat. *munus triplex*) a theological rich way to characterize the Lordship of Jesus; it is also a very good way to designate who the baptized are supposed to be. According to Catholic theology, baptism is much more than merely a symbolic sign of belonging to the Church because it is the means by which a person is incorporated into Christ, becoming a member of His mystical body.

## Priestly Action

How is priestly life manifested in the lives of ordinary believers? Let us look at priesthood first. In the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, you will find that the liturgy is “an action of Christ the priest” (SC n.7) and, with him, his Body, the Church (SC nn. 7, 26, 83). As priest, Christ offers a perfect sacrifice and worship to God the Father on our behalf, and, still as priest, He offers us the grace of God, a share in God’s own divine life. Elsewhere, you will find that all of the faithful, in virtue of their baptism, share in this one priesthood of Christ (SC, n.14). Quoting the first Letter of Saint Peter, the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* recalls that we are “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people” (1 Pet. 2:9; cf. 2:4-5). While all of the baptized share in the priesthood of Christ, so that Christ acts through the baptized and His priests in the Church, Jesus does not act in the same way in each. So, what is the difference? Every priest fosters holiness, precisely in the measure that he serves as a bridge between God and humanity. In ancient Roman times, the priest was described as a *pontifex* or bridge-builder, which remains a valid designation in the contemporary context. The reconciliation of divinity and humanity produces in human beings a wholeness or integration, a coming together of the often warring elements within the self. The same dynamic obtains on a grander scale as well: when cities, societies, cultures rediscover a link to God, they find an inner peace. And therefore, the baptized have a priestly function: first, to embody the harmony that God wants between Himself and those made in His image and likeness, doing so through their intense devotion to prayer, the sacraments, and the Mass. It is in someone’s cultivation of a real friendship with the living Christ that the faithful act out their priestly identity and purpose. From there, they are sent out into families, communities, places of work, the political and cultural arenas, and so forth, in order to carry the integration they have found like a holy contagion. Members of the clergy—bishops, priests, and deacons—are called to serve Christ the priest in a way that is essentially different from that of the baptized. In

virtue of the sacrament of orders or by ordination, the clergy are called to take up the ministry of Christ. By the sacrament of baptism, the faithful receive the duty and power to act like Christ, that is, to be Christians, whereas, by the sacrament of orders, the clergy receive the duty and power to act in the person of Christ the Head (Lat. *in persona Christi capitis*) the sacrament of orders calls the clergy to work in the spiritual and sacramental realm, serving (ministering to) the work of the baptized. This latter form of priesthood is called the “ministerial priesthood of the ordained,” and no Eucharistic celebration is possible without it. What is more, the bishop, priest, and deacon, by their respective ordinations, are conformed to Christ and the Lord’s priesthood in different ways and to different degrees.

## The Prophetic Role

Someone is a prophet to the degree that he or she bears the truth of God. G.K. Chesterton in his autobiography of Saint Francis said that seeing the world upside entails seeing the world’s utter dependence on God. In an increasingly upside-down world, the prophet stands on his head so that he might see things aright. This is why, of course, prophets have always appeared more than a little insane. In fact, the Hebrew word for prophet comes from the root word *nabi* and carries a number of different usages. It is sometimes used for someone who is just a spokesman or a speaker. It is also used for another who makes an announcement. To a certain degree, the term *nabi* has overtones of a madman. In a world that has lost its moral compass, those who speak the divine truth will appear unhinged. How does one cultivate this salutary madness? Baptized prophets should exercise their brains by studying philosophy, theology, spirituality, church history, and the lives of the saints or intellectual giants like Augustine, Origen, Bernard, Thomas Aquinas, Ignatius, John Henry Newman, Chesterton, and Benedict beckon. Though not easy reading, others like Fulton Sheen, C.S. Lewis, Peter Kreeft, et al. provide substantive, more digestible intellectual fare. Having been enlightened, endowed with the prophetic office, the baptized are sent out into their various worlds as beacons of light. God knows that in this increasingly secularized society, such illumination is desperately needed, but if baptized prophets stop studying and stop speaking, they are like lamps over which a bushel basket has been placed.

## The Royal Designation

What does it mean for the ordinary Catholic to be a king? In the theological sense, a king is someone who orders the charisms within a realm so as to direct that community toward God. In this way, that royal leader is like the general of an army or the conductor of an orchestra, who coordinates the efforts and talents of a conglomeration of people in order to help them achieve a common purpose. Thus, a Catholic parent directs her children toward the accomplishment of their God-given missions, educating them, shaping them interiorly, molding their behavior, disciplining their desires, etc. A Catholic politician appreciates the moral dimension of her work, and legislates, cajoles, and directs others accordingly. A Catholic private equity investor saves a company that provides indispensable jobs in a declining neighborhood, etc. How does one grow in the capacity to exercise kingly leadership? One can do so by overcoming the cultural prejudice in favor of privatized religion. Most of the avatars of secularism would accept religion as a personal preoccupation, something along the lines of a hobby. Yet, such an attenuated spirituality has nothing to do with a robustly biblical sense of religion. In the Catholic perspective, religious people—the baptized—come forth boldly and publicly and are more than willing to govern, to be kings, and act out of their religious convictions.