

OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL
SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL
WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER
Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time
November 10, 2024



The poor woman approached unknown, without renown.
The Son of Man looked and saw the heart that gave everything.

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 November 9 *Vigil of the 32nd Sunday of the Liturgical Year*

4:00pm +Bridget Anne Wetmore

Sunday, November 10 *Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time - Stewardship Sunday*

7:30am Asking God to safeguard women in need of prenatal care

4:00pm +Piera Ceste

Monday, November 11 *Saint Martin of Tours*¹ - Veterans' Day

12:00nn Asking God to grant Meg's intentions

Tuesday, November 12 *Saint Josaphat, bishop & martyr*¹

12:00nn Asking God to grant Meg's intentions

Wednesday, November 13 *Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini, virgin*¹

12:00nn For the intercession of the Carmelite saints to help others follow the Way of Perfection

Thursday, November 14

12:00nn +Francis "Frank" Carroll

Friday, November 15 *Saint Albert the Great, bishop & doctor*²

12:00nn For the intentions of Sr. Paulette Gardner, SSA

Saturday, November 16 *Vigil of 33rd Sunday of the Liturgical Year*

4:00pm +Deceased members of the Brennan family

Sunday, November 17 *Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time*

7:30am For the names enrolled in the OLP Purgatorial Society 2024

4:00pm +John Sheeran —36th anniversary

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

During the days leading up to His passion and death, Jesus often taught in the Temple. Such frequent visits allowed Him to observe what was going on in the Temple precincts. Like almost everyone, Jesus observed the scribes who went back and forth in the Court of the Gentiles. As members of one of the learned classes in ancient Israel, scribes studied the Scriptures from age 14 to 40 and, so, served as copyists, editors, and teachers. Their official interpretation of the meaning of the Mosaic Law, over time, became more important than the Law itself. This position of influence allowed early scribes to enforce their rules and practices with a binding authority. To speak of the scribes as interpreters of Scripture meant that they provided rules for human conduct out of their study. It can also happen that the focus of someone with a studied eye can zero in on someone who stood out amid the frenzied activity of those Temple officials. Time and again, Jesus exhibited such a discerning eye, but He also could penetrate to the content of their hearts and understand their motivation. The Gospel begins with a critical assessment of the scribes; yet, guard against what is known as the some-all fallacy or hasty generalization. This invective is a literary genre, while biting, does not necessarily apply to all scribes. In last week's Gospel, Jesus praised one of the scribes for not being far from the Kingdom (Mk 12:34). Finger-pointing at those heirs of bad scribes that you might encounter today is an abuse of the description Jesus used for them because the Gospel is meant to be a mirror held up before ourselves. The striving after honors is a real temptation, but undermines the divine order that is serving others and not being self-serving. On a given day, Jesus observed a poor widow among the hordes of people in the Court of the Women, where thirteen wooden boxes with trumpet-shaped bronze funnels were used to guide the contributions into the Treasury. It is important to realize that these financial offerings were for the upkeep of the Temple and not for the poor; thus, in a certain way, they were offerings made directly to God. He observed the widow putting "two small coins worth a few cents" into one of the funnels. The sound those contributions made against the bronze metal gave a good idea of the amount contributed. Jesus says, "...she, from her poverty, has contributed all she had, her whole livelihood," while the "rich people put in large sums." The amount that each made to the Temple is not the reference point. Instead, the stark contrast is drawn between the rich who while giving large sums of money did so "from their surplus wealth," whereas the widow gave "all she had, her...livelihood." The well-to-do certainly honored God by their generosity, but still kept great wealth at their disposal while the widow, in giving all her money, consecrates herself to God and trusts that the Lord will take care of her. In what earlier English translations of the Bible called the widow's mite, Jesus saw happening in the Temple that day as a foreshadowing of the total gift of Himself which He would soon have to make.

Rabindranath Tagore—L'offrande lyrique

I had gone begging from door to door...when your golden chariot appeared in the distance, and I was wondering who was thus king of all kings! My hopes rose and I was thinking, "The bad days are over" and I was already expecting spontaneous alms and riches scattered all over the dust. The chariot stopped where I stood. Your eyes rested on me and you got down with a smile. Suddenly, you extended your right hand and said, "What do you have to give me?" Ah! What royal game was this, to beg from the beggar. I was at a loss and perplexed; finally, I slowly took from my bag a very small kernel of wheat and gave it to you. But how great was my surprise when, at day's end, emptying my bag on the ground, I found a very small grain of gold in the middle of the heap of poor grains of wheat. I bitterly wept and thought, "Would that I had the courage to give everything I had!"

During the time of Elijah, when a famine afflicted the land, that prophet encounters the widow of Zarephath (1 Kgs 17:8-24) who was gathering sticks to make a fire for the last meal she and her son would eat. After first asking her for a drink of water, Elijah asks her for bread, too. Facing imminent death from starvation, she agrees to share her meager meal with him. The pagan woman tells the prophet, "As the Lord, your God, lives, I have nothing baked; there is only a handful of flour in my jar and a little oil in my jug. Just now I was collecting a few sticks, to go in and prepare something for myself and my son; when we have eaten it, we shall die" (1 Kgs 17:12). Like the widow in the Gospel who entrusted "her whole livelihood" to the Temple treasury, the widow of Zarephath did not die. The generosity of the poor toward those who are even poorer happens more often than you think. Often, after a personal tragedy, someone quickly establishes a GoFundMe page or crowdfunding. Then, in widespread catastrophes, relief agencies organize efforts to aid the suffering and frequently cite the contributions of others of modest means who did so. Those who have little often bemoan the fact that they could not do more. These meager gifts may generate a positive reaction, yet prudence must also govern generosity. Saint Paul spent close to ten years soliciting funds for what Pauline scholars refer to as the Jerusalem collection. Those monies he solicited from the Gentile churches to help Judean believers who were facing harder than usual economic times as a result of a famine during the mid to late 40 AD. Two chapters of the Corinthian correspondence (2 Cor 8-9) apparently contain material from what appear to be two other letters on the subject of the collection. In them Paul gives us his fullest exposition of the meaning he sees in the financial undertaking, presenting it as an act of Christian charity and an expression of the unity of the church, both at that time and in her eschatological fulfillment. He tells the Corinthians, "not that others should have relief while you are burdened, but that as a matter of equality your surplus at the present time should supply their needs, so that their surplus may also supply your needs, that there may be equality" (2 Cor 8:13-14). Unlike giving until it hurts, Saint Paul appeals to the duty of sharing. While the Lord's criticism of the scribes, bemoaning their obvious piety and chasing after prestige might be exaggerated, those biting words are meant to prompt self-examination. To do so, by looking at how we behave whenever we try to secure or maintain our social standing or by abusing whatever authority is ours. Yet, the occasional self-punishing generosity of the poor, the humility of those who seem little in worldly eyes or even the wealthy, those worldly insights pale when compared to Christ, who spared nothing—even His life—to save sinners. The poor in spirit and the humble of heart reflect the image of Christ and since they do, the Father's eyes gaze upon them with benevolence and joy in seeing His Son's teaching at work in the hearts of those who love Christ.

Pilgrimage: End of the Beginning or Beginning of the End

Pilgrimage is multi-faceted concept that incorporates several notions: journey, experiencing exile, living as a pilgrim or sojourner, and the quest for a true homeland. There are three forms of pilgrimage: moral, voluntary, or interior. Moral pilgrimage entails a daily life of obedient service to God and others in the place of one's calling. Voluntary pilgrimage required incorporating a spiritual devotion represented by journeys to holy places. Interior pilgrimage highlights the call and acceptance of living the vowed religious life. Since the exile from the Garden of Eden was the result from the disobedience of Adam and Eve, earthly life can be framed as making the way needed in order to reach the heavenly homeland. To do so, the pilgrim must be prepared to seek forgiveness for sins and commit themselves to a life of obedience, serving God and others. Thus, journeying to heaven can be seen, in essence, as journeying back to God, overcoming the spiritual separation caused by sin. The pilgrim, while still remaining on earth, remains trapped in a fallen world, confronted by sin, exposed to temptation and often unable to clearly discern the will of God. Spiritual progress is frequently erratic, with individuals demonstrating a lack of understanding and repeated falls from grace, a pattern illustrated in the late fourteenth-century poem *Piers Plowman*. The earthly pilgrim's great enemies are the Seven Deadly Sins, ready to waylay travelers on the road to heaven, yet there is also the hope of forgiveness, available through the sacrament of Penance. Christians must be alert in order to make use of the resources for the journey offered by the Church as shown by Jesus describing Himself as 'The Way, the Truth and the Life' (Jn 14:6). The core requirement for the would-be pilgrim wishing to reach the Heavenly Jerusalem is to imitate Christ, obey God, resist temptation and to use their talents and resources to serve others, whether as humble laborer, lord or lady of the manor, whatever station in life happens to be. The Church constantly emphasizes the dangers of sin, the need to resist temptation and the distractions of earthly possessions. There is also an emphasis on the love shown by Christ in dying for the sins of the world and the forgiveness which His death on the Cross makes available to all. The reality of sin and the hope of forgiveness must be the pilgrim's constant companions on the road of life to the heavenly homeland as we make our way through the spiritual hazards of this world. Excerpted from www.york.ac.uk. Miriam Gill and Dee Dyas. "

Eschatology - What is heaven like?

During November as we see the natural world around us preparing for its long winter rest, the Church's liturgy and many popular customs invite us to reflect on what we call the four last things: death, judgment, heaven and hell. This is no morbid fascination, but a sober reminder of the transitory nature of this world and a bold summons to hope. We began the month celebrating the saints in glory on All Saints Day. On November 2, we observed the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls Day) and later this month, on the last Sunday of the liturgical year, we celebrate the triumphant Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. Those Four Last Things (Lat. *quattuor novissima*) or the stages of the soul in life and the afterlife are these: death, judgment, heaven and hell.

Heaven

In the Glossary of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, heaven is summarized this way, "Eternal life with God; communion of life and love with the Trinity and all the blessed. Heaven is the state of supreme and definitive happiness, the goal of the deepest longings of humanity." Thus, heaven must be the ultimate hope for believers—a place of eternal communion with God, where peace, joy, and love abound. As the ultimate stage, heaven implies the fulfillment of human destiny, and the culmination of a life lived in faith and virtue. The promise of heaven must inspire earthly Catholics to strive for holiness and to cultivate a deep relationship with God. As a state of being in which all are united in love with one another and with God, where those who, having attained salvation, are in glory with God and enjoy the beatific vision—heaven is the perfect knowledge of God as He is. The bliss or happiness of heaven will consist in both the vision and love of God and the knowledge and love of all others in Him. We will, therefore, be reunited with our family and friends as well as with the saints from the past and future generations. The Church teaches that we will experience perfect happiness in heaven. However, some people, because of their lives on earth, will experience greater happiness than others will. Just as both a large glass and a small glass can be filled to capacity but one will hold more than the other, so will some people have a greater capacity for happiness, but all will be completely happy. The Catechism specifies this about heaven, "Those who die in God's grace and friendship and are perfectly purified live for ever with Christ. They are like God for ever, for they 'see him as he is,' face to face" (CCC, n. 1023). In heaven there is a communion of life with the Holy Trinity, the Virgin Mary, angels, and all the blessed. This glory in heaven is also called "the beatific vision". Those who die in God's grace and friendship yet are not perfectly purified un-

dergo purgation or a cleansing, in preparation for being in the presence of God. For those souls being purified, the Church offers the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and recommends that the faithful engage in almsgiving, indulgences, and penances to benefit the Holy Souls. At the end of life's journey, perfect love will make possible the immediate entrance into heaven. If our love is imperfect and still mingled with selfishness, we will need further purification. However, a total lack of authentic love will mean eternal separation from God because God is love.

Biblical Images of Heaven

The Bible uses images such as a wedding banquet as a glimpse of heaven (Mt 22:1-14). The parable is a metaphor for God's love and the culmination of that love in heaven. Jesus is the groom, the banquet, the wedding garment, and Love incarnate. Then, in the image of being welcomed into the Father's house (Jn 14:2-6), as in the parable of the Prodigal Son, yields a glimpse of the happiness of heaven (Lk 15:11-32). The celebration in heaven is for the Savior, not the sinner. In the Book of Revelation, heaven is described as "the new heaven and new earth" followed by the appearance of the new Jerusalem. There is the present heaven, which is where we go when we die. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord (2 Cor 5:8). That's a great thing, to die and be with Christ, Paul says, is better by far. That's the present heaven where God dwells now, where God's throne is enshrined, where God's people dwell now. But here's the radical teaching of the Bible. There will be resurrection, and after the resurrection, there will be a new heaven and a new earth (Rev 21:1). And then God will relocate heaven from where it is presently, the present heaven, to the new earth. And all His resurrected people will live on this new earth. The reason we don't go immediately to the new earth when we die is that the last judgment hasn't happened yet. God creates the new earth after the bodily resurrection and says, "Here's my place for you to live forever says the Lord and I will dwell with you (Ps 132:14)."

The Beatific Vision

The beatific vision is knowledge of God as He truly is. It is the moment when a person or an angel reaches perfect salvation or heaven and, there, directly experiences God. The vision is called *beatific* because in that vision created intelligence finds perfect happiness in beholding God face to face. It is identified as *vision* to distinguish it from the mediate knowledge of God that the human mind may attain in the present life. The bliss of heaven will consist in both the vision and love of God and the knowledge and love of all others in God. We will, therefore, be reunited with our family and friends as well as with the saints from past, and future, generations. Maranatha - Come, Lord Jesus!