

**OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL**  
**SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL**  
**WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER**  
**Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**November 12, 2023**



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*Vigilance for the Bridegroom - Certain things Cannot Be Borrowed — A Time that Is Too Late*  
As virgins they abstain from sin, their lamps showed their good works, yet, the oil manifests their love for God in abstaining from sin and doing what is good, rather than trying to win the praise of others

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**CHAPEL SCHEDULE**

*Weekday Mass:* (Monday-Friday at 12 noon)

*Weekend Masses:* Saturday: 4:00pm - Sunday: 7:30am & 4:00pm

*Holiday 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, November 11 *Vigil of the 32nd Sunday of the Liturgical Year* - Veterans Day (USA)

4:00pm +Marie M. Hagar—20th anniversary—Richard & Charlene Hagar

Sunday, November 12 *Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time — Stewardship Sunday*

7:30am Seeking divine help in regard to financial issues

4:00pm +Marie Walsh

Monday, November 13 *Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini, virgin*<sup>1</sup>

12:00nn For Jennifer's health in body, mind, and soul

Tuesday, November 14

12:00nn Asking God for better physical health

Wednesday, November 15 *Saint Albert the Great, bishop & doctor*<sup>2</sup>

12:00nn Seeking divine intercession in legal matters

Thursday, November 16 *Saint Margaret of Scotland, holy woman — Saint Gertrude, virgin*<sup>2</sup>

12:00nn For Sean, Richard, Susan and their families

Friday, November 17 *Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, religious*<sup>1</sup>

12:00nn +Patsy J. Pecorelli by his chapel-friends

Saturday, November 18 *Vigil of the 33rd Sunday of the Liturgical Year*

4:00pm For the intentions of both Mario and his son Mario

Sunday, November 19 *Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time*

7:30am +Mary O'Malley—9th anniversary

4:00pm +John Sheeran—35th anniversary—by his daughter

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 This Sunday's Gospel**

As the Liturgical Year begins winding down and approaches the last Sunday of the *tempus per annum* or the feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, the focus is upon the Lord's coming at the end of time or the Parousia (Gk. παρουσία). The last three chapters of Matthew's Gospel can be labelled as the Discourse on the End Times since it deals with the coming of the new age or the eschaton in its fullness. In apocalyptic imagery, Saint Matthew graphically describes the events that will precede the eschaton and how the disciples should live and conduct themselves while awaiting an event that is as certain as its exact time is unknown to all but the Father. This week and next, the two Gospels (Mt 25:1-13 and 25:14-30) are both parables illustrating the proper attitude for anticipating the Day of the Lord and that is active watchfulness, because no one can definitively say when the Lord Jesus as the Son of Man will come again. In the prior chapter, in describing the end of time, while sitting on the Mount of Olives with His disciples, the disciples asked Jesus, "Tell us, when will this happen, and what sign will there be of your coming, and of the end of the age?" In reply, He told them, "...of that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone (Mt 24:36). Thus, specifics as to the date of the end of the world are not enshrined in the New Testament. The one event Jesus did foretell was the destruction of the Temple and the city of Jerusalem in 70 AD. While this was not the first time the Temple was destroyed, that late first-century destruction was far worse. The siege of the city lasted for four months and it was directed by Titus, who later became Roman emperor. Famine and immense suffering prevailed in the city until the final assault in August. You could say that such a catastrophe could be described as the end of a world that evoked such end-time thought. While scholars believe that Saint Matthew's Gospel reached its present form ten or twenty years after that disaster, the Gospel is an exhortation to be prepared for the end-time in order to be saved. In addition to the two parables that have been selected as Gospels, there is a prior or third parable found in the twenty-fourth chapter in regard to the faithful servant (Mt 24:45-51). This week's Gospel is the Parable of the Ten Virgins and, so, it compares the dawning kingdom of heaven to a wedding feast. In that period, it was a custom for ten young girls to go to the bride's house and to wait with her until the bridegroom arrived to lead the woman to their future home as a married couple. Then,

### Saint Augustine - Sermons: The Paschal Vigil

All this time during which the ages flow is like one night. Throughout it, the Church watches, her eyes of faith intent on the Holy Scriptures, as on nighttime torches, until the Lord comes. This is what Peter the Apostle says: "We possess the prophetic message that is altogether reliable. You will do well to be attentive to it, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts" (2 Pet 1:19). Therefore, in the same way as I have just come to you in the Lord's name and have found you watching in his name, may the Lord himself in whose honor this solemn feast is celebrated, find, upon coming, his Church watchful in the clear-sightedness of the Spirit, so that he may awaken her also in her body, slumbering in many graces.

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the crowd went in a loose procession to the hall where the wedding banquet was going to be held. Stylistically, unlikely traits are inserted by the sacred author into the narrative in order to illustrate important points. Among those is the never-ending lateness of the bridegroom who only finally arrives in the middle of the night. Another is the inexplicable barring of the door to the banquet hall which violated the rules of hospitality and, then, the reaction of the groom who says to the latecomers, "...I do not know you." Parables are not meticulous narratives of what took place because the parabolic style deliberately allows for exaggerated elements to be inserted that serve to heighten its moralizing purpose. Despite such jarring elements, the central point of the parable is unequivocal – waiting for the Lord's return is inevitable and, when the end does come, it will be sudden and, to a certain degree, unexpected. When that day finally arrives, all will be lost for those who were unprepared and stunned by its suddenness. Those who were prepared, though, will not be able to help the ill-prepared because wherever the wedding of the Son of Man will occur, the dawn of the Kingdom those festivities that manifest the door opening onto heaven will be permanently barred to others who had lived as if the end would never come or were seduced by its overly-long delay. Those five maidens, identified as foolish because they had no extra oil, vividly illustrate everyone who ignored the eternal and wallowed in the passing nature of earthly life. While the invitation to the banquet of the Lord is universal in its scope, watchfulness and vigilance constitute the proper attitudes due to the inability to know when that fateful day will actually dawn. Faith in Jesus, then, "who is and who was and who is to come" (Rev 1:4) and in He whom we have placed our faith as God's only-begotten Son, demands waiting in joyful hope for His return that we are expecting. Such paschal faith is at the heart of the liturgical life of the Church. While delay can precipitate anxiety or even discouragement, when it is properly understood the uncertainty surrounding when Christ will come again is meant to incite watchfulness and readiness. Vigilance is the practice needed to safeguard those attitudes – ever-searching for the signs that promise the Bridegroom's return, while keeping silent vigil awaiting the dawn of the fullness of salvation, the Church and her people are enlightened by the Spirit to persevere. Even now, Christ is manifested under the veil of signs and both the living and the dead wait in joyful hope for the sound of the trumpet that announces the opening of the great door to the wedding feast of heaven and, then, all shall rise from their graves!

#### National Eucharistic Revival - Phase Two: The Diocesan Year

Throughout November, in the final chapters of Saint Matthew's Gospel, the emphasis is on the end of time, the glorious coming of Christ, the last judgment. This eschatological accent found in the Gospel passages is supported by the vibrant end-of-the-world imagery of Saint Paul's first Letter to the Thessalonians which is the source of the second reading. The liturgical life of these weeks is rich with the language of the harvest, the reality of death and dying, and the prospect of eternity. Thus, you can legitimately say that eternal life is the eschatological life, the life which we can receive and realize right now thanks to the Lord's Incarnation. Heaven and earth have been bridged. Time and eternity are united. The eschatological reality of Christ is something we are called to participate in. And once we do, we will follow after Him, realizing ourselves as the body of Christ. Then, we will be the continued presence of Christ in history, suffering like He suffered for all the victims of sin. The suffering that we endure, though, must be understood similarly to the suffering of Christ. In our actions and deeds for others, we might experience great trials and tribulations, but in our spirit, we should already be receiving some of the joy of the Kingdom of God, a joy which helps us transcend any pain associated with such suffering instead of being defined and limited by it. If we seek pain without love, if we seek to suffer by inflicting all kinds of pain and sorrow upon ourselves, we do not yet understand. Pain is never the point of such suffering because love is. And that love is revealed to us in the Eucharist as Jesus opens Himself up to us, continuing and fulfilling the eschatological work of the Incarnation in the world, as a never-ending principle. The Eucharist is preeminently the sacrament of Christian hope. Communion is a foretaste of the eschatological banquet. Saint Thomas Aquinas, in the antiphon for the Magnificat on the feast of Corpus Christi, described the Eucharist as the pledge of future glory (Lat. *futurae gloriae nobis pignus*). Excerpted from Henry Karlson. *The Eucharist and Eschatology*.



## QUATTUOR NOVISSIMA — DEATH, JUDGMENT, HEAVEN, HELL

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In Catholic theology, the last things (Gr. ἔσχατα; Lat. *novissima*), which man encounters at the end of life are, among other things, death, particular judgment, heaven or hell. The broader term eschatology applies above all to the ultimate destiny of all humanity. Recurring themes in the Church's Liturgy during late November turn toward prayers and readings that focus on the quattuor novissima: death, judgment, heaven, hell, and Purgatory, with an emphasis on the Communion of Saints, for as the Liturgical Year draws to a close, we also consider life's final ends—individually and communally. The Liturgical Year culminates in the celebration of the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. Honoring Christ as King is in harmony with the eschatological theme: "[W]e journey toward the consummation of human history, one which fully accords with the counsel of God's love: 'To reestablish all things in Christ, both those in the heavens and those on the earth' (Eph. 11:10). The Lord Himself speaks: 'Behold I come quickly! And my reward is with me, to render to each one according to his works. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end (Rev. 22:12-13)' (GS, n. 45). This end of the longer of the two segments of Ordinary Time presents an interesting time of year. Many Catholics do not even realize that the end of the liturgical year is now fast approaching. It certainly is a bit unusual to end a year in November, but every year the Church wraps up Ordinary Time then and transitions into Advent which inaugurates a new liturgical year. What can Catholics learn from the end of Ordinary Time? The readings in the last three weeks of Ordinary Time offer gloomy language about the end of time and a focus upon God's justice. In a given year, the Lectionary for the Latin Church makes use of texts from 2 Maccabees 6 and 7, along with texts from 1 Maccabees 1 to 6, in the weekday readings for the 33rd week in Ordinary Time, in year 1 of the two-year cycle of readings and as one of the options available for readings during a Mass for the Dead. In one passage from Second Maccabees that a man being tortured and near death says, "It is my choice to die at the hands of mortals with the hope God will restore me to life; but for you [the King], there will be no resurrection to life" (2 Mac. 7:14). Might not the Church offer a more hopeful message? On the contrary, Jesus "said to them, 'Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be powerful earthquakes, famines, and plagues from place to place; and awesome sights and mighty signs will come from the sky. Before all this happens, however, they will seize and persecute you, they will hand you over to the synagogues and to prisons, and they will have you led before kings and governors because of my name...You will be handed

over by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends, and they will put some of you to death. You will be hated because of my name, but not a hair on your head will be destroyed. By your perseverance you will secure your lives'" (Lk. 21:10-12, 16-19). Even Jesus—who we consider the most loving man of all, talks of division and hatred towards us simply because we believe in Him. The language from the Old Testament and from Jesus Himself can be startling and even frightening when we hear of apocalyptic images and of death. The beautiful thing about the end of Ordinary Time is that these readings have special meaning for the faithful. Eschatology, or "the branch of systematic theology that treats of the last things: death, particular and general judgments, heaven, hell, and purgatory" (*Catholic Dictionary*) is evident in the closing weeks of Ordinary Time. Pondering the end of life, eternity, and the possibility of hell can disturb one's mind and soul, but a closer look at the supposedly gloomy readings offers something more—everlasting hope. The study of the last things can often be too much to think about. These closing weeks challenge us to ponder our lives and the state of our soul. Psalm 17 says that "Lord, when your glory appears my joy will be full" (Ps. resp. 15b). It's a time to take this message and contemplate it. When Jesus comes again, He will come in glory to save the world once and for all from the depths of sin and injustice. The 34th Sunday in Ordinary Time, or the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, is the end of the liturgical year, and the end of the eschatology-themed readings. The Gospel gives Catholics the most comforting message, and is a fitting end to the Church year. The Gospel reading for last year was the familiar account of the good thief on the cross. While suffering Himself, Jesus turns to the condemned man next to Him and says, "Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise" (Lk. 23:43). Through this incident, Jesus offers us the ultimate promise of love and mercy in the midst of the dark readings. Jesus comes to us and accepts us as we are, amid our brokenness. Jesus promises us eternal life, even when we have not been perfect. This message and promise of "paradise" is the message of Ordinary Time that dominates the end of the liturgical year. We must contemplate the last things during this time of year because Jesus calls us to himself, for we do not know the time nor the hour when we will be called. This feast marks the end of the Liturgical Year with the tone not of fear or despair, but of hope. Hope and eschatology continue into the Advent season. In Advent, we are given a new beginning for self-examination and renewal so as to prepare for the two-fold coming: 1) remembrance of Christ's first coming as an infant at Christmas and 2) Christ's Second Coming and our Final Judgment.

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