

**OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL**  
**SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL**  
**WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER**  
**Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**November 5, 2023**



Φυλακτήριον - Phylactery

Phylacteries or leather boxes are strapped to one arm (tefillin shel yad) or the forehead (tefillin shel rosh) with Scriptures inside (Ex 13 & Dt 6). The phylacteries are worn in a prescribed manner so as to represent the Hebrew letters *shin*, *daleth*, and *yod*, which taken together form the divine name Shaddai. Fringes, or tassels, are dangling bits of thread, with a blue cord, attached to the four corners of a Jewish man's garment.

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, November 4 *Vigil of the 31st Sunday of the Liturgical Year - Turn Clocks Back*

4:00pm +Dr. James Cosgrove by his son

Sunday, November 5 *Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time - National Vocations Awareness Week*

7:30am +Names enrolled in OLP Purgatorial Society 2023

4:00pm +Piera Ceste—5th anniversary

Monday, November 6

12:00nn Asking God's help for Jennifer in both body and soul

Tuesday, November 7

12:00nn +Father Louis J. Gould — 4th anniversary

Wednesday, November 8

12:00nn +Bride Norman

Thursday, November 9 *Feast of the Dedication of the Basilica of Saint John Lateran*

12:00nn Asking God's help in nursing studies & its subject material

Friday, November 10 *Saint Leo the Great, pope & doctor*<sup>1</sup>

12:00nn For Donnie

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

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

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

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

4:00pm +Marie Walsh by her 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**

The Gospels relentlessly highlight the Lord's contentious relationship with political groups and religious parties in first-century society, primarily the scribes and Pharisees. By priding themselves on the minute observance of the Law, the Pharisees often criticized Jesus and His disciples for not doing likewise along with their association with sinners and tax collectors. In reply, Jesus often accused the scribes and Pharisees of being hypocrites, betraying the prophets, and having distorted religious priorities. Yet, it is important to avoid the some-all fallacy – while sources other than the Gospels corroborate these depictions of them, it would be wrong to conclude all scribes and Pharisees held those religious attitudes. Though rare, at times, the evangelists even praised some of their practices such as fasting (Mt 9:24). Since the scholarly consensus is that Saint Matthew's Gospel was written down in the last decades of the first-century, it is likely that the memory of those two groups in Judaism had grown dim. Even that early on in Christian history, though, there were already good and bad (Mt 13:43-52) within the community of believers and vainglorious leaders, too! The question, both then and now, is not only how to react toward flawed disciples and leaders, but also what can be done to avoid falling into that same behavior. In the Gospel, Saint Matthew addresses those issues by recalling what Jesus had once said in regard to the reprehensible behavior of the scribes and Pharisees. In ecclesiastical settings, anyone in a leadership role is not only a teacher because, if that were true, competent knowledge would be sufficient to assume such a role. An additional requirement is that a religious leader must exhort those under their care or supervision to live according to the dictates of the Gospel and follow behind Jesus as a disciple who learns from where Jesus went and what He did. Thus, leaders must "preach" by example – deeds and not merely words. Everyone needs to perceive the two-fold aspect of leadership: word and action. When followers see their leaders acting in a way that is not consonant with their teaching, the Gospel which they are meant to proclaim is no longer the glad tidings of salvation it was intended to be and becomes a contradiction in terms. So, Jesus exhorted His disciples to "do and observe all things whatsoever [the scribes and Pharisees] tell you, but do not follow their example. For they preach but they do not practice." Achieving what the Lord demands requires strength of character and an almost unheard of level of spiritual maturity! Disreputable religious leaders, then, are not only accountable to God for their own personal shortcomings, but they will also be held responsible for misleading those whose spiritual well-being has been entrusted to them. This admonition should not be forgotten, "Woe to the world because of things that cause sin (Gk. σκάνδαλον)! Such things must come, but woe to the one through whom they come!" (Mt 18:7) In that one verse of chapter eighteen, the Greek word *skándalon* (lit. the trigger of a trap or

## Saint Vincent de Paul - The Exaltation of the Humble of Heart

You must ask God to give you power to fight against the sin of pride which is your greatest enemy – the root of all that is evil, and the failure of all that is good. For God resists the proud. The most powerful weapon to conquer the devil is humility. For as [the devil] does not know at all how to employ [humility], neither does he know how to defend himself from it.

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the mechanism closing a trap on an unsuspecting victim) and its derivatives is used three times as (1) temptations to sin; (2) trespasses; and (3) offense. Having admonished leaders whose actions contradict their preaching, the Lord then censures their vainglory or excessive display of some attribute or a visible mark of honor in order for the Pharisees to draw attention to themselves such as phylacteries [or small cases attached to the left arm and forehead that contained the essentials of the Mosaic Law (Ex 13:1-10; 14-16; Dt 6:4-9; 11:13-21) and overly-long tassels or fringes affixed to the corners of a cloak. Then, Jesus notes the inordinate desire for places of honor and the craving after various honorific titles as vainglorious, too! Authority of any kind whatsoever often brings with it these pitfalls and, yet, chasing such worldly trappings flies in the face of the nature of the Church and servant leadership which should be the hallmark of anyone leading a group of like-minded believers, various Church-related institutions or institutes of consecrated life because “the greatest among you must be your servant.” Knee-jerk conclusions from this passage need to be avoided. The Church is hierarchically gathered and not an accidental coming together. Each individual has a role that must be fulfilled without bragging about it. Titles are not outlawed, yet regardless of how exalted the title might sound, any title is a demand and not simply honorific. Insignia illustrate who’s who and who does what and that is equally true in regard to designated places to sit. Conversely, responsibilities bestowed often carry with them some honor and the concomitant right to honors. Yet, the ultimate honor is directed to God the Father and every honor is lived out as Christ did – acting as servant Leader and humble of heart which are the preludes to being exalted. Love for God and love for neighbor are one and the same, encompassing the Law and the prophets. According to Saint Augustine, “Be what you see; receive what you are.” The most effective leader is able to connect with others in a human and heartfelt way. All disciples long for leaders who imitate Christ and put the interests of others ahead of their own, who are willing to do what is right above what is easy or expedient, and who are not afraid to lay their reputation on the line for a cause and a vision that is vastly bigger than themselves – the cause of Christ.

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

O sacred Banquet (O sacrum convivium), in which Christ is received (in quo Christus sumitur). The memory of his Passion is recalled (recolitur memoria passionis eius). The Mind is filled with grace (mens impletur gratia). And Pledge of future Glory is given to us (et futurae gloriae nobis pignus datur). The prior antiphon known by the Latin title *O sacrum convivium*, is partly inscribed under the tabernacle of this chapel and was written by Saint Thomas Aquinas for the Office of Corpus Christi. It is a wonderful summary of Eucharistic theology. While the English word banquet is a proper translation, convivium emphasizes much more: a coming together in a festive celebration of life itself. The compound word composed of *con* (with) plus *vivere* (to live) entails that the banquet is no mere supplying of food alone as it is a coming together of disparate people to celebrate the new life that is theirs in Christ. Then, in adding *in quo Christus sumitur* though properly translated as received, the verb *sumitur* could be more literally be translated as taken up. The expression is a present passive indicative form of the verb of *sūmō*. And this indicates the great humility of the Lord. The exalted Christ lets Himself be taken up by those who receive and His humility is meant to conquer our pride and, then, we are taken up in the Lord. The memory of His passion is recalled (*recolitur memoria passionis eius*) because the Eucharist is not only a meal, it is the making present of the Paschal Mystery: the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Christ. The Latin verb *recolere* means to cultivate anew. This slightly agrarian image points to a kind of careful, intentional growing and the tender fostering of something, in this case cultivating the memoria or the memory of Christ’s Passion. To cultivate in agriculture also means to prepare for understood as to pave the way for the growth of something. Outside of agrarian settings, to cultivate anything implies a kind of care for an object with the intention to foster its growth, so as to further or encourage what is already there. In all of these images we see that the memory of Christ’s Passion is something that we should cherish, encourage and foster. By recalling, while the past cannot be repeated, the fruit of Calvary is eternal and it is something in which we should prepare the ground of our hearts to probe for the deeper insights and, so, yield new growth in the memory of what Christ has done for us. Think about how does memory work and, then, what does it mean to remember? To remember is to have deeply present in the mind and heart what Christ has done for us, so that gratitude is memory’s result and, thus, those who are truly-grateful are changed. It means to have it finally dawn on us what Christ has done for the salvation of the world in such a vivid and real way that heart and mind are grateful, transformed, and different. Then, in receiving, the mind is filled with grace (*mens impletur gratia*). There are many graces derived from receiving Holy Communion: Venial sins are forgiven, holiness is increased, the union with Christ becomes increasingly perfect, strengthened and fed by the Lamb of God as we travel across the desert of the world into the Promised Land of heaven. In communion, we begin to share in eternal life and our union with Christ, with one another, and with the saints in heaven is realized. And the pledge of future glory is given to us (*et futurae gloriae nobis pignus datur*) – with the reception of Communion come promises from Christ: I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world” (Jn 6:51).

# QUATTUOR NOVISSIMA — DEATH, JUDGMENT, HEAVEN, HELL

## Parousia—Second Coming—Day of the Lord

The ancient Greek word *parousia* (Gk. παρουσία) originally meant several things: presence, arrival, or an official visit. Its main use, among the ancients, was in regard to either the physical presence or the advent or arrival of a person, usually a royal official such as a king or emperor. In the New Testament, the term *parousia* predominantly refers to the Second Coming of Christ or the Day of the Lord. According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, *parousia* is defined as “The glorious return and appearance of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as judge of the living and the dead, at the end of time; the second coming of Christ, when history and all creation will achieve their fulfillment” (CCC, Glossary, s.v. *parousia*). The specifics of when Christ will come again still remain unknown because it is stated that no one knows when that will happen except God the Father (Mt 24:36), nor can you find any definitive indication in either of the two testaments as to how this ultimate fulfillment of history will be accomplished. Popularly speaking, this is described as the end of the world, which is not completely accurate, because *parousia* does not mean that the universe will be annihilated, but only that it will be changed into something new and more wonderful that will surpass the wildest idea that human imagination can muster! The New Testament does provide some hints in regard to the signs that the coming of the Lord is imminent or at hand, when He will “come to judge the living and the dead.” Some signs are general, future-oriented events concerning the evangelization of the world and the universal acceptance of Christ. Other signs are more proximate such as natural disasters (e.g., wars, famines, earthquakes), as well as happenings that are cosmic in scope (e.g., upheavals in the planets and stars). All those signs are described with apocalyptic images principally borrowed from the Old Testament and predominantly found in the writings of the prophets Daniel and Joel. Identifying the literary genre of a specific book of the Bible is crucial to a proper understand of its meaning and that is even more essential when it comes to apocalyptic literature. Contrary to a literal interpretation, the apocalyptic genre is more an escape from history than it is meant to be actual history or prophecy in the strict sense. The device that dominates apocalyptic writing is persecution. The situation is portrayed in such bleak terms that suffering believers can only look to the distant future for any type of relief. Apocalyptic authors and passages often speak about the future in symbolic terms. Yet, while trying to avoid instilling false hope, they frequently remind their listeners that things are going to get much worse before they begin to get better. One of the more interesting, yet often overlooked aspects of apocalyptic writing is that many of the events that those authors appear to predict as happening in the future, in fact, have often already taken place before their predictions. Each of the three Synoptic Gospels (Mt, Mk, Lk) includes apocalyptic sections, but given the preponderance of apocalyptic literature during the early decades of the Christian era, when those Gospels were written down, those evangelists and other Christian authors generally avoided conveying the Christian faith exclusively in an apocalyptic manner. They were not so concerned with describing a distant future as they were with making certain they recounted the basic events and instructions around which Jesus’ public life had unfolded and which undergirded the fact that Jesus was the Christ – both Lord and Son of God. This was not the case for the Daniel

passage, especially chapters 7-12. They were written during the second century B.C., in the midst of Greek persecution of the Jews by Antiochus IV Epiphanes. The sacred author directs his readers’ eyes to the future. The Second or final Coming of the Lord Jesus in glory also occurs in stark contrast with His first coming in humility as the Son of Mary and Joseph. Thus, the Incarnation is described as the Lord’s first appearance or *parousia*. Through his Death-Resurrection-Ascension, Jesus passed from this life to a new and glorious life in heaven. In addition, because the Eucharist is the real presence of Jesus it too is a true *parousia* of Jesus in sacramental form, “The Church knows that the Lord comes even now in his Eucharist and that he is there in our midst. However, his presence is veiled. Therefore we celebrate the Eucharist ‘awaiting the blessed hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ,’ asking ‘to share in your glory when every tear will be wiped away. On that day we shall see you, our God, as you are. We shall become like you and praise you for ever through Christ our Lord” (CCC, n. 1404). In other places, the New Testament mentions this about the *Parousia* of the Lord: “They will see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven” (Mt 24:30); “If it is my will that [John] remain until I come, what is that to you?” (Jn 21:23); “This Jesus will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11). When Jesus comes again in glory, human history will come to an end and, then, the ultimate triumph of Christ will be made manifest and the establishment of His kingdom of peace and justice will mark the Reign of Christ, the Universal King. All creation will be transformed and both those who are alive at His coming and all the dead will be raised and reunited with their bodies. The final judgment will take place – resulting either in eternal salvation or damnation. There was a current of thought among early Christians, reflected strongly in St. Paul’s two letters to the Thessalonians, that the glorified Lord would come very soon. This is to be understood as a hope and an expectation that the Lord would quickly come and establish His definitive kingdom by destroying all of the powers of sin and evil. It was not a firm conviction or a certain judgment. To the early Christians the Second Coming of Jesus, which was understood as the consummation of God’s work in redeeming the human race, was not something to be feared; rather, it was meant to be hoped in and longed for. They fervently prayed, *μαρὰν ἀθά* or “Come, Lord” (1 Cor 16:22). The next-to-last verse of the entire Bible reflects this longing, first by quoting Jesus himself, and then by adding a prayer: “the one who gives this testimony says, ‘Yes, I am coming soon.’ Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!” (Rev 22:20). The Aramaic expression *Maranatha* is found in the first Letter of the Corinthians (1 Cor 16:22) and is not translated into NT Greek, yet, instead it is transliterated into Greek letters. Text critics are hard-pressed to determine which are the two Aramaic words that constitute the one Greek expression. Possible English translations can be “Our Lord, come” or “Our Lord has come.” In the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the expression is described as an “exclamation full of trust and hope: *Maran atha* (“Our Lord, come!”) or *Marana tha* (“Come, Lord!”) — “Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!” If properly understood in the latter sense it is a prayer asking for Christ to return and if the former division of the word is accurate then it is a credal statement. This interpretation finds some support in Revelation (Rev. 22:20). *Maranatha—Come Lord Jesus!*