

OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL
SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL
WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER
Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time
October 29, 2023



Agape is the love that renewed the patriarchs and prophets of old and later renewed the holy apostles... it is the love that is now renewing the nations, and from among the universal race of man, which overspreads the whole world, is making and gathering together a new people, the body of the newly-married spouse of the only-begotten Son of God.

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, October 28 *Vigil of the 30th Sunday of the Liturgical Year*

4:00pm Seeking divine help for diligence in college

Sunday, October 29 *Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time*

7:30am +Herbert Morris, Sr. — 4th anniversary

4:00pm For pro-life prisoners especially Jean Marshall

Monday, October 30

12:00nn For family healing

Tuesday, October 31

12:00nn For those undergoing surgery

Vigil of the Solemnity of All Saints

4:00pm For God's help in nursing entrance exams and personal skills

Wednesday, November 1 *Solemnity of All Saints*

12:00nn For an increase a personal health

4:00pm For Jennifer — her health in body and soul

Thursday, November 2 *All Souls Day: Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed*

12:00nn +Stephen L'Esperance by his family

Friday, November 3 *Saint Martin de Porres, religious - First Friday: Devotion to the Sacred Heart*

12:00nn +Carolyn Minasian

Saturday, November 4 *Vigil of the 31st Sunday of the Liturgical Year*

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

Sunday, November 5 *Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time*

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

4:00pm +Bride Norman

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 This Sunday's Gospel

The question that the scholar of the law asked Jesus and the Lord's answer are so well-known that your reaction is probably ho-hum. Yet, the Lord's declaration of the Great Commandment is crucial, besides being written down in Saint Matthew's version as this week's Gospel, it is also recorded in the other two Synoptic Gospels (Mk 12:28-34 and Luke 10:25-28). Moreover, throughout the three-year Sunday cycle of readings and the two-year daily Gospel readings, the various versions of this Great Commandment are heard a total of seven times! Each of the evangelists, though, took into consideration the Christian community they were addressing, which accounts for their minor differences, coupled with the way we understand their testimony within our own period of time. The versions found in Saint Matthew and Saint Mark are each about seven verses long, whereas the same passage in Saint Luke is decidedly shorter, though it serves as an introduction to the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:29-37). The test question the lawyer asked Jesus in regard to which commandment was the greatest must be seen as a continuation of the earlier attempt by the Pharisees and Herodians to trip Jesus up (Mt 22:15). Like that earlier debate, over whether or not to pay the census tax, the question in regard to which of the commandments was the most important was widely debated in the first century. The Jewish legal scholars had deduced 613 precepts and 365 prohibitions that were arranged according to the gravity of the offense. Given the scope and complexity of those hundreds of legal proscriptions, in an attempt to gain a perspective on that mass of infractions against the Mosaic Law, they sought a mega-principle or one precept that would incorporate all the others. While that was then, even today, faithful people wonder if there isn't a quick or easier way to be in a right relationship with God rather than the demands the Church requires. The answer Jesus gave to the scholar's question identifies the greatest commandment as the supreme law which is everywhere and always the norm and not some vague principle that was only meant to be used in controversial situations. The first part of the commandment requires unequivocal love for God, incorporating the heart, mind and soul which was first enunciated in the Book of Deuteronomy (Dt 6:5). While considered a formal norm or established written rule, concrete demands are not easily deduced from such an all-encompassing love for God. The reason being is that love is never made visible by simply acting on a

Saint Augustine of Hippo — Homily on the Gospel of John

The love of God is the first in the order of precepts; the love of neighbor is the first in the order of practice. For he who prescribed this love in two precepts has not recommended neighbor first and God second, but God first and neighbor second. As for you, because you do not see God yet, you merit to see God by loving your neighbor. By loving your neighbor, you purify your gaze to see God. This is what St. John says very clearly, "For whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen." Here is what is said to you, "Love God." If you tell me, "Show me whom I must love," what shall I answer but what John says, "No one has ever seen God." But do not imagine that you are absolutely excluded from God's life. John tells us, "God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him" (1 John 4:20). Therefore, love your neighbor; look within yourself whence this love of neighbor comes; there you will see God in the measure in which this will be possible for you.

series of obligations. Instead, love is constantly attentive, eminently inventive, and never tolerates the agent's freedom from its demands. By commandeering heart, mind, and soul, concrete obligations derived from such devotion serve merely as reminders and not considered bills that are due. Even if someone has done everything that they were obligated to do for us, you cannot conclude from their fulfilling those obligations that love prevails. The second part of the Great Commandment states that "you shall love your neighbor as yourself." This second part of the supreme principle must be both understood and practiced in light of its first part, demanding unconditional love for God. Acting contrary to the good of any neighbor—in whatever domain the opportunity to do good arises—is contrary to God's will and a counter-sign to the love we profess for God. Concretely applying our love for God to specific situations requires recourse to the Golden Rule or the law of reciprocity – treat others as you would want to be treated if you were similarly situated. Specific commandments and various prohibitions become useful in this second-phase of the two-part commandment. Risk is never ruled out and, so, if an erroneous judgment is made in the concrete application of the commandment, both acknowledging the mistake and accepting responsibility are required, too. Then, practical wisdom (or prudence) and the humility to seek out others' advice are two other components of decision-making. There is often much uncertainty as to what is the good, better, or the best course of action. For Saint Matthew, an active faith is imperative and he is not an antinomian. Evil consists in living lawlessly, but not legalistically and outside of faith in Christ. Our attitude toward others manifests our discipleship and is the means that carries us along the road to the kingdom. In chapter twenty-five of Matthew's Gospel, the passage that deals with the final judgment (Mt 25:31-46, those judged unworthy are rejected from the kingdom, while the just are admitted into it. The basis of that judgment, separating the sheep from the goats, is what either group had done or not done for their neighbor in need.

National Eucharistic Revival - Phase Two: The Diocesan Year

In *Corpus Mysticum: The Eucharist and the Church in the Middle Ages*, the late Jesuit theologian Henri Cardinal de Lubac (1896-1981) expressed the profound insight that "the Eucharist makes the Church" whereas during the second millennium, the era of Scholasticism, theological thought held more to the notion that "the Church makes the Eucharist." By understanding the nature of the Church in terms of communion that served as the intellectual insight to return to the kind of thinking that marked the Fathers of the undivided Church of the first millennium. It also provided the key to an understanding of the Church (or ecclesiology), which overcomes the exaggerated individualism of modern times. Those two expressions, in fact, tend to identify two rather different perceptions of the Church. If we say that the Eucharist makes the Church then we will readily understand that the Church is itself a family of Eucharistic communities, a communion of local churches, which was the patristic model. However, de Lubac showed that the community dimension of the Eucharist suffered greatly as a result of the Eucharistic controversies at the start of the second millennium. Due to that, much more attention was paid to the fact that the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ than to the fact that the Church, then, receives these transformed gifts and that she herself is transformed in Christ. The particular perspectives that are derived from that insight highlight the links between the Eucharist and the Church community, the Holy Spirit and the future, respectively, all of which are profoundly scriptural and traditional. In the Eucharist, Christ is feeding the Church, and each of us as members of the Church. It is also an occasion when the Holy Spirit is powerfully active, not only transforming the gifts of bread and wine but also transforming those who receive. Finally, the Eucharist is not just a memorial of a past event, but a foretaste of the future kingdom.

ALL SAINTS EVE & DAY (October 31 & November 1)— ALL SOULS DAY (November 2)

In the Apostles' Creed, we profess to believe in the Communion of Saints or the Church in all her fullness as the assembly of all believers — those presently in the world, the saintly people who preceded us and are now in heaven, and the souls in purgatory awaiting entrance into the kingdom. Before his death, Saint Dominic said, "Do not weep, for I shall be more useful to you after my death, and I shall help you then more effectively than during my life." All Saints and All Souls comprise the two-day celebration of the Communion of Saints – those who are with God in heaven and those who are on their way to heaven being purged of sin's vestiges. These two days constitute the festival of the *Communio sanctorum*, associated with praying for the dead and meditating on the reality of heaven, hell and purgatory.

MASS SCHEDULE—All Saints Day

Tuesday, October 31 at 4:00pm

Wednesday, November 1 at 12nn & 4:00pm

All Souls Day: Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed

Thursday, November 2 at 12nn

Communio Sanctorum — The Communion of Saints

Introduction

The ninth article of the Apostles Creed attests to the Church's belief in "the communion of saints." The original Greek phrase (Gk. κοινωμία τῶν Ἁγίων) has been translated both as a sharing of the benefits of membership in the Church and as a communion with the saints or, understood in its biblical sense, the saints as all who have been baptized. Both the Latin expression *communio sanctorum* and its Greek equivalent accord with the New Testament doctrine that all the baptized are united with Christ, who shares in their human nature, and that our life's goal should be to share in the Lord's present glorified state — the three states of the Church: pilgrimage, purification, and glory. According to Pope Emeritus Benedict XIV, "The saying about the Communion of Saints [Communio Sanctorum] refers, first of all, to the eucharistic community, which through the Body of the Lord binds the churches scattered all over the earth into one church. Thus originally the word sanctorum (of the holy ones) does not refer to persons but means the holy gifts, the holy thing, granted to the Church in her Eucharistic feast by God as the palpable bond of unity. Thus the Church is not defined as a matter of offices and organization, as she is defined on the basis of her worship of God: as a community at one altar around the risen Christ, who gathers and unites the faithful everywhere. Of course, very soon people began to include in this notion the persons who themselves are united with one another and sanctified by God's one, holy self-gift. The Church began to be seen, not just as the unity of the Eucharistic banquet, but also as the community of those who through this sacred altar are united among themselves. Then, from such a point, a cosmic breadth or dimension soon entered into the concept of the Church: the Communion of Saints spoken about here, on earth, was extended beyond the frontier of death. It binds together all those who have received the one Spirit and his one, life-giving power (Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger. *Introduction to Christianity*). By the Middle Ages, there developed an emphasis on the benefits to be derived between the *church militant* (or the living members of the Church) through the intercession of the *church triumphant* or the saints in heaven and the *church suffering* or the souls in purgatory who were destined for glory but who have not yet been perfected. The living members can benefit from the intercession of the saints whereas the souls in purgatory can be aided by the sacrifices and prayers of the living, done on their behalf.

The Most Misunderstood Aspect of Catholicism

What is an indulgence? The Church explains, "An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains under certain defined conditions through the Church's help when, as a minister of redemption, she dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions won by Christ and the saints" (*Indulgentiarum Doctrina 1*). From the beginning the Church recognized the validity of praying for the dead so that their transition into heaven (via purgatory) might be swift and smooth. This meant praying for the lessening or removal of temporal penalties holding them back from the full glory of heaven. For this reason the Church teaches that "indulgences can always be applied to the dead by way of prayer" (*Indulgentiarum Doctrina 3*). The custom of praying for the dead is not restricted to the Catholic faith. In the Old Tes-

tament, Judas (or Judah) Maccabeus finds the bodies of soldiers who died wearing superstitious amulets during one of the Lord's battles. Judas and his men "turned to prayer, beseeching that the sin which had been committed might be wholly blotted out" (2 Macc. 12:42). Judas also "took up a collection, man by man, to the amount of two thousand drachmas of silver and sent it to Jerusalem to provide for a sin offering. In doing this . . . he made atonement for the dead, that they might be delivered from their sin" (2 Macc. 12:43, 46). In regard to having a proper understanding of indulgences, it is necessary to realize that sin has a double consequence. "To understand this doctrine and practice of the Church, it is necessary to understand that sin has a double consequence. Grave sin deprives us of communion with God and therefore makes us incapable of eternal life, the privation of which is called the 'eternal punishment' of sin. On the other hand every sin, even venial, entails an unhealthy attachment to creatures, which must be purified either here on earth, or after death in the state called Purgatory. This purification frees one from what is called the 'temporal punishment' of sin. These two punishments must not be conceived of as a kind of vengeance inflicted by God from without, but as following from the very nature of sin. A conversion which proceeds from a fervent charity can attain the complete purification of the sinner in such a way that no punishment would remain" (CCC, n. 1472). The eternal punishment due to grave or mortal sin is satisfied by confession, absolution and doing the prescribed penance. Yet, the temporal punishment still remains and is often understood as an "unhealthy attachment to sin" or concupiscence. The communion of saints testifies to the sharing of spiritual goods which is a divine exchange of intercession, prayers, or sacrifices that one state can do for the other, so that between those in heaven, sinners on earth, and the souls in purgatory, "a perennial link of charity exists between the faithful who have already reached their heavenly home, those who are expiating their sins in purgatory and those who are still pilgrims on earth. Between them there is, too, an abundant exchange of good things." In this wonderful exchange, the holiness of one profits others, well beyond the harm that the sin of one could cause others. Thus recourse to the communion of saints lets the contrite sinner be more promptly and efficaciously purified of the punishments for sin" (CCC, n. 1475).

Dante Alighieri and the Meaning of Purgatory

Dante's version of Purgatory is extraordinarily detailed and, in some key respects, strikingly original. First, he imagines Purgatory as being divided up into seven terraces, each one corresponding to a vice: Pride, Envy, Wrath, Sloth, Avarice and Prodigality, Gluttony and Lust. On each terrace, there is a slightly different form of suffering: the envious, for instance, have their eyes sewn up; the proud are weighed down by stones. The range of forms of suffering is therefore considerably greater. But perhaps the most original aspect of Dante's version of Purgatory is that the souls in Purgatory are in the process of moral change. They suffer, but not simply in order to repay a debt: they are suffering in order to become good. The consequence of this is that they willingly undergo the suffering, they understand the reasons for it, and they are acquiring the new habits of thought which will enable them to go to Heaven. Hymns and psalms are sung and prayers are said, which is in keeping with his imagining the general tendency of the souls of Purgatory to reflect on their failings.