

OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL
SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL
WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER
Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time
October 5, 2025



The Christian life consists in "being a living mystery ...
[in living] in such a way that one's life would not make sense if God did not exist.

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 4 *Vigil of the 27th Sunday of the Liturgical Year*

4:00pm +John and Mary Murray by their family

Sunday, October 5 *Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time*

7:30am For the intentions of the celebrant

4:00pm Asking God to increase Danielle's faith

Monday, October 6 *St. Bruno, priest and Bl. Marie-Rose Durocher, virgin* ²

12:00nn +Russell Myjak

Tuesday, October 7 *Our Lady of the Rosary* ¹

12:00nn +James (Seamus) Flynn — 1st anniversary by his wife

Wednesday, October 8

12:00nn For the intentions of the celebrant

Thursday, October 9 *Ss. Denis, bishop & companions, martyrs and John Leonardi, priest* ²

12:00nn +Stephen Minardi by his wife, children and grandchildren

Friday, October 10

12:00nn In gratitude to God for a favor obtained

Saturday, October 11 *Vigil of the 28th Sunday of the Liturgical Year*

4:00pm +Alan Lee Pipen & the Nacamo family

Sunday, October 12 *Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time*

7:30am For a personal intention

4:00pm In honor of October as the month of the Rosary of the BVM

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** ¹ or an **optional memorial** ².

Toward a Better Understanding of the Gospel for the Sundays in Ordinary Time

Whether in the apostolic era or now, when faced with the inexorable demands of conversion of mind and heart, the obvious petition is to say to the Lord, "Increase our faith." While the Apostles trailed behind Jesus, the journey to Jerusalem must have seemed interminable and the unadulterated demands of discipleship nearly impossible! It is significant, then, that the request for an increase in faith came from them who eventually would know the Easter (or paschal) faith and who were destined to be entrusted with continuing what Jesus had begun. Acknowledging that Jesus is Lord may be ordinary in our day and age, but that august title was only used by those who believed that Jesus was the Christ, God's Anointed and seated at the Father's right hand sharing in heavenly glory. If the Apostles had to ask Jesus to increase their faith, we need to do likewise and even more so! In addressing their request, Jesus illustrates the enormous power that faith has and He does so by juxtaposing two images, thereby, creating a true paradox. The mustard seed (Gk. σίνι) is so small that it is almost invisible to the naked eye. So, if the Apostles had even as little faith as that they would be able to command a mulberry tree (Gk. συκάμινος = a sycamore/black mulberry tree) to be "uprooted and planted in the sea, and it would obey" them. Never did the Lord exercise His divine power merely to illustrate strength because the miraculous was always intended to constitute a sign that illustrated salvation, healing, and life. Regardless of life's trials, along with its seemingly insurmountable difficulties, no obstacle is impossible to confront when faith guides and undergirds whatever is done. If this passage is seen as a two-part reflection, its subsequent part does not specifically address faith as it does disinterested service. Within the context of first-century reality, Jesus refers to the servant (Gk. δοῦλος = bond-slave) who has no ownership or personal rights. Having only done what was expected of him, Jesus describes such a servant as useless, worthless, or unprofitable (Gk. ἀχρεῖος). The Greek word literally means *unneeded or behavior that lacks any usefulness*. Regardless of what English word best translates the adjective *archreioi*, these are servants who have only "done what [they] were obliged to do" or simply done their duty. This minimal action requires those servants to be satisfied with what they were paid and not to act as if they were owed something more. Descriptions of retribution or reward are sprinkled throughout Saint Luke's Gospel (e.g., Lk 6:23; 6:35; 6:38, et al.). Easily overlooked is the implication that the faithfulness of the servant, which is its own reward, is not achieved by personal effort. Instead, fidelity to the Master is a freely given grace that is Christ's gift since He is the one who issues the invitation "come follow me." The servant either positively or negatively responds to it and, since it originates with the Lord, it also incorporates the ability to persevere in faith to the end. As

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I know someone who so loves God, though he weeps that he does not love him as he should, that his soul constantly desires to see God glorified in him, and he himself regarded as nothing. This man hardly knows who he is, even when his praises are sung; for in his fervent desire for humility he does not think of his own worth; he celebrates the divine service as is befitting to a priest, but, in his intense love for God, he throws away the memory of his own dignity into the gulf of his charity for God, burying the glory that he might draw from it under a spirit of humility, in order to appear at all times to his own eyes and in his own estimation as only a useless servant, as excluded from his own dignity by his desire for humiliation. This is what we must do as well, in any way possible, fleeing all honor, all glory, because of the overwhelming richness of love from the one who has so well loved us.

both a gift and a guarantee, always as a recipient, any disciple has no reason to boast or seek remuneration for discipleship – it merely constitutes “doing what we were obliged to do.” Realistically, though, there is the human tendency to envision the master-servant relationship on a more “equal” basis or give-and-take. Many people conceive of religion as a reward and, so, a sort of financial transaction. When properly understood, faith in Christ compels a generosity toward others, but one that is inverse in nature – the greatest reward for the least effort. If that be the case, the designation worthless or unprofitable servant is justified because God could never rely on the fidelity of a servant who thought in seeking a reward for doing so. Jesus notes that after doing “all [that] we have been commanded” to do, such total devotion never arises from a calculating angle, but only from totally loving Him as the Master who is well-served by the disciples who have such an unqualified devotion to Him. Having faith in a faithful God, then, yields unshakeable faith in Him and affirms belief that God will provide what He has promised. God alone is also faithful in fulfilling the promises He has made. When life turns against us or the trials that living entails appear to be overwhelming, turn to the faithfulness of God and remembering His promises and how they have been fulfilled is the corrective. While our prayers may be riddled with doubt and we agonize over God’s delay in taking action on what we have asked Him for, this is not rank doubt as it is an act of faith in God. Since He alone is without deception, eventually the proper time will come, the time will inevitably come when that what we have asked for is fulfilled. Faith can move mountains and, by asking God to increase our faith, its unheard of power is enhanced and the seemingly impossible can happen, because nothing is impossible with God.

Les Arbres dans la Mer—Trees in the Sea

The Apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!” So the Lord replied, “If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this black mulberry tree, ‘Be pulled out by the roots and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.” There is a principle of vitality in the grain of seed stretching forward to achieve great results, which illustrates the nature of faith. Everyone’s faith should be like that. This is probably the true meaning; yet, there are two further conclusions about the effects of faith. In the first, faith can move mountains. The implication is obvious: faith allows us to do the impossible because nothing will be impossible for God. Yet, less attention is given to the second context—the moving of the mulberry tree and planting it in the sea. Surely this is a greater impossibility—the ‘planting’ of a tree in the waves of the sea. This seems to be a physical impossibility for there is nothing for the roots of the tree to take hold of. It would be immediately swept away. Doing so would be like building a house on quicksand, except even worse. But Jesus is saying it is possible. In other words, faith allows us to remain rooted and grounded even in the most seemingly unsettled of situations. Answering the question “why a black mulberry tree?” is complicated by the fact that scholars are not 100% sure how to translate the word used there. It is *sukaminos* in the Greek original. There are two different trees that this word could represent (1) Black mulberry tree (*Morus nigra*). This is the English equivalent chosen by several modern translations including the New English Translation (NET). The NET’s footnote says, “A black mulberry tree is a deciduous fruit tree that grows about 20 ft (6 m) tall and has black juicy berries. This tree has an extensive root system, so to pull it up would be a major operation.” Other translations favor the (2) Sycamine tree (*Ficus sycomorus*), such as the KJV. With either translation, either of those trees both have tree a large root system. It would be extremely difficult to dig a large, full-grown mulberry or sycamine tree out of the ground—much less pluck it up by the roots and plant it in the sea. Yet Jesus says, “If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this *sukaminos* tree, ‘Be pulled out by the roots and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.” This impossible thing is made simple with God’s help. One of the reasons some translators opt for sycamine tree over mulberry tree is because the sycamine’s fruit is bitter. God’s perfectly capable of moving trees, but the chances of you literally needing to yank up a tree with faith are slim. Jesus is not talking about how to clear land here; instead, He is talking about faith and forgiveness. And it is not just any forgiveness—this is forgiveness that keeps giving over and over again. From other passages, you can conclude that someone does not even need to turn to you and say “I repent” in order for you to forgive (Mt. 6:15; 18:21-35). We need to forgive always, in every situation where someone offends, hurts, or sins against us. We are called to participate in God’s forgiveness—showing to others the same sort of mercy God shows toward us. This makes the tree a great analogy for the “root of bitterness” that can block us from forgiveness. The Bible does speak of people being rooted in bad things that are not associated with bitterness (for example: “the love of money is the root of all evils”). However, if we are looking for verses that speak of a specific thing that can take root in us, damage our hearts, and block forgiveness then bitterness is the most likely suspect in both the Old and New Testament.

www.catholicexchange.com. Stephen Beale. “The Deeper Meaning of How Faith is ‘Like a Mustard Seed.’” 05 August 2019. Also, www.likeananchor.com. Marissa. “Uprooting Your Sukaminos Trees.” 9 April 2022.

Understanding the Mass—Both Memorial & Sacrifice

The Offering or Oblation

St. Justin Martyr, in about the year 155 A.D. described the practice of the faithful bringing bread and wine to the altar in order to present them to the priest for the celebration of the Mass (St. Justin, Apol., 65-67). St. Hippolytus also mentions this holy custom in the third century. Other gifts such as oil, honey, fruit, wax or flowers were also presented. The bread and wine were used in the Eucharistic Sacrifice. The other gifts were given to the priests and the poor.

The offering of bread and wine in sacrifice to God has an even earlier origin. We read in Genesis, chapter 14, about the priest king Melchizedek's offering of bread and wine. "And Melchizedek, King of Salem, brought out bread and wine; he was a priest of God Most High. And he blessed him (Abram) and said, 'Blessed be Abram by God Most High, maker of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand'" (Gen. 14:18-20). Commentators on Sacred Scripture tell us that Melchizedek was seen also as a messianic figure in Psalm 110, "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." Then in the sixth and seventh chapters of the Letter to the Hebrews, Jesus Christ is presented as the great High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. Christ's priesthood is not according to the law of bodily descent, but because He has the power of "an indestructible life" (Heb. 7:16). He is a priest not because of His heritage but because of His identity. The offering of bread and wine is also taken up by the Lord Jesus Himself. Jesus offered bread and wine during the Passover Supper on the first Holy Thursday. He took the

bread and blessed it saying a prayer probably very similar to the prayer the priest says at Mass at the offering of the bread. The priest says "Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the bread we offer you; fruit of the earth and work of human hands. It will become for us the bread of life." Following that prayer, the priest says a prayer again likely very similar to the one Jesus prayed at the Last Supper. Taking the chalice containing wine the priest says. "Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the wine we offer you; fruit of the vine and work of human hands, it will become our spiritual drink." A few minutes later at Mass the priest prays the words of conse-

cration that Lord Jesus said over the bread, "Take this, all of you, and eat of it, for this is My Body, which will be given up for you." And then the priest says the words of consecration over the chalice, "Take this, all of you, and drink from it, for this is the chalice of My Blood, the Blood of the new and eternal Covenant, which will be poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in memory of Me." Bread and wine used at Mass carry on the long tradition of offering bread and wine to God as a sacrifice or oblation. The difference is that at Mass the bread and wine do not remain bread and wine, rather, they become Jesus Christ Himself, Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. Jesus shares His Sacrifice with us and invites us to be united with it. Let's take a look at the other prayers of the Preparation Rite at Mass to understand this more clearly. For example, the comingling of the wine with a tiny amount of water in the chalice symbolizes for us how we truly are called to share in the divinity of Christ, who became a man like us. The priest prays, "By the mystery of this water and wine, may we come to share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled Himself to share in our humanity." This indicates to us the mystery of the Incarnation, God becoming man, and our being called to share in His divine nature. This happens by the Sacrifice of Jesus which is made present for us at Mass. We are united with Him with His Sacrifice at Mass in a powerful way. The priest also prays quietly, "With humble spirit and contrite heart, may we be accepted by you, O Lord, and may our sacrifice in your sight be pleasing to you, Lord God." This prayer begs the Lord God to accept all present at Mass along with the offering of the bread and wine, which will become the Body and Blood of Christ in His Sacrifice. We become immersed in this Sacrifice, which is offered to God by the hands and ministry of the priest, who is configured to Christ by His ordination. How awesome it is to believe in and enter into this great mystery of Christ's Sacrifice! The tremendous mystery is then further exposed when the priest speaks to the faithful present, "Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father." The priest's sacrifice is the sacrifice of Jesus Himself. In it, the priest offers himself in his humanity and all of the faithful along with their sacrifices together with the Sacrifice of the great High Priest. As the priest asks the people present that his offering and theirs may become acceptable to God the Father, they respond, "May the Lord accept this sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good, and the good of all his holy Church." We could say that the response of the people to this prayer explains why the Mass is so important to us, why it is at the very heart of our life and the life of the Church. We come to Mass to enter into the Sacrifice of Christ, to praise and glorify the name of God, to adore Him, and to pray for all of our needs and the needs of the Church. We come to seek our salvation and the salvation of all. At Mass we discover who we are, how much God loves us, and what life is all about.

Excerpted from www.diopitt.org, Bishop William Waltersheid. "Bring Your Gift to the Altar – Our Participation in the Offering Made at Mass." December 14, 2022

THE MASS

- I. Introductory Rites
- Entrance
- Veneration of the Altar
- Greeting
- Penitential Rite
- Kyrie Eleison
- Gloria in excelsis Deo
- Collect
- II. Liturgy of the Word
- Scripture Readings
- Homily
- Nicene/Apostles Creed
- Prayers of the Faithful
- III. Liturgy of the Eucharist
- Preparation of the Gifts
- Eucharistic Prayer
1. Preface
2. Sanctus
3. Epiclesis
4. Consecration
5. Mysterium fidei
6. Anamnesis
7. Offering
8. Intercessions
9. Doxology and Amen
- Communion Rite
- Lord's Prayer
- Rite of Peace
- Breaking of the Bread
- Communion
- Prayer after Communion
- IV. Concluding Rites
- Blessing
- Dismissal
- Veneration of the Altar
- Personal Thanksgiving