

OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL
SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL
WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER
Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
September 21, 2025



God vs. Mammon

Money is not the kind of god that demands exclusive loyalty or direct worship; no prostration is necessary. Money is a god in a polytheistic land. It just wants a spot in the pantheon; a few other demigods can reside there too: status, power, pleasure.

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, September 20 *Vigil of the 25th Sunday of the Liturgical Year*

4:00pm +Henry & Helen Alexander and Robert James

Sunday, September 21 *Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time*

7:30am For the intentions of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

4:00pm For the deceased Bishops of the Diocese of Worcester

Monday, September 22

12:00nn +Fr. Harold B. Murphy by a brother priest

Tuesday, September 23 *Padre Pio: Saint Pius of Pietrelcina, priest* ¹

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

Wednesday, September 24

12:00nn +Fr. Thomas Garlick by pastoral care confrere

Thursday, September 25

12:00nn Requesting the Father for help in revival of devotion to the Sacred Heart—Ametur cor Iesu!

Friday, September 26

12:00nn +Edward, LucJan & Stanislaw Janeczak

Saturday, September 27 *Vigil of the 26th Sunday of the Liturgical Year*

4:00pm +Lucille Cunic on her anniversary by her daughters

Sunday, September 28 *Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time*

7:30am Asking divine help for those who seek inner peace

4:00pm +For the repose of the souls of the Most Rev. George Rueger

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

The temptation to misuse authority, to falsify documents, or even outright forgery is not uncommon today and was even more so in the time of Christ. Thus, the incident recounted in today's Gospel likely drew upon what was common knowledge. After elaborating on the despicable behavior of the dishonest steward, you would expect Jesus to roundly condemn his actions, but the gospels seldom address commonplace situations in a predictable manner. This passage must be analyzed in terms of the expression "comfort the disturbed and disturb the comfortable." The prior, unanswered question is to determine whether or not the steward was guilty? However, that question is not germane because the accent is placed on the rapid action that ensues after his mismanagement was discovered. In that man's mind, he quickly eliminates other prospects – ditch digger is ruled out and begging is out of the question! Told by the rich owner to render "a full account of [his] stewardship," it is within that demand that he finds a solution. The disgraced steward approaches each debtor and, after asking them how much they owe, he reissues their promissory notes for a reduced amount. In an ingenious scheme, the steward retaliates against his master and lures those debtors into doing his bidding because of their greed. Even while rejecting the tactics as dishonest, you have to admit that his attempt to save himself is imaginative – in fact, even impressive! From within that scenario, Jesus elicits an important lesson when He says, "...the children of this world are more prudent in dealing with their own generation than are the children of the light." Thus, the Lord emphasizes the fact that no one should delay in affirming a secure future because, before too long, it will soon be too late to do so. Money can become a false friend because by chasing after it those who do so can be easily be led astray. The only way to use money so that it yields a true profit and leads its users to what is eternal is by sharing with those whose lives are plagued by a lack of life's basic needs or by giving to those who are true, needy beggars. Immediately following that insight, another maxim is expounded, "The person who is trustworthy in very small matters is also trustworthy in great ones; and the person who is dishonest in very small matters is also dishonest in great ones." The steward, obviously, was dishonest and that would seem to undermine any trust the rich man or others should have in him. However, the maxim goes on to say, "If you are not trustworthy with dishonest wealth, who will trust you with true wealth?" This true wealth is a reference to friends already in heaven, who will remain faithful at the hour of death and beyond! Earthly goods and monetary wealth, in fact, belong to someone else. They are meant to be used according to how God has deter-

The riches of iniquity are the riches of this world, from wherever they come. Whatever their origin, they are *mammon*, that is to say the riches of iniquity. What does this mean, the riches of iniquity? It is money that iniquity dresses up with the name of riches. If you seek true riches, they lie elsewhere. Such are the riches that Job possessed in abundance, when, stripped of everything, his heart was full of God, and after losing everything, he offered to God, as so many priceless pearls, the tribute of his praises (Job 1:21). From what treasure-trove could he have drawn them, since he had nothing? These are the true riches. As to others, it is iniquity that gives them this name. Your owning them, I do not call a crime; it is an inheritance that came to you; your father was rich and left you wealthy. Or you acquired them legitimately; your house is full of the just rewards of your labor; again, I do not blame you at all. Yet be wary of calling these goods riches. For, if you give them this name, you will love them, and if you bind your heart to them, you will perish with them. Be rid of them so as not to be lost with them; give in order to receive, sow in order to reap.

mined they should be used. If those goods have been mismanaged, those who act in that way have proved themselves to be unworthy of trust while on earth and, thereby, disqualify themselves from the heavenly inheritance that Jesus promises. He said, "Sell your belongings and give alms. Provide money bags for yourselves that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven that no thief can reach nor moth destroy" (Lk 12:33). The only prudent use of material assets, when seen in terms of eternity, is to use them to help the poor. According to Peter Brown, the early Bishops sought to shift the wealthy away from *euergetism* (Gk. εὐεργέτης = benefactor), the ancient Roman practice where the wealthy or rulers funded spectacles or civic buildings in exchange for public honors toward philanthropic giving for the poor, "For Christian bishops such as Augustine to preach in favor of giving alms to the poor was to do far more than stir the wealthy to occasional acts of charity and compassion. It was to undermine the traditional model of society that had directed their giving habits up to this time. Civic notables were challenged to abandon the notion of citizen entitlement. They were urged to look beyond their fellow citizens and to switch their giving toward the gray immensity of poverty in their city and in the countryside around them" (*The Ransom of the Soul: Afterlife and Wealth in Early Western Christianity*). Almsgiving, then, became a criterion for personal eligibility for a future heavenly inheritance. Accumulating wealth entailed an obligation to build up treasure in heaven by giving to the poor. The Gospel ends with a well-known saying of Jesus, "No servant can serve two masters... You cannot serve both God and mammon." To serve, when taken in reference to God, implies a total commitment wherein God is paramount and loved above all else. When to serve is applied to mammon (Gk. μαμωνᾶ), those same connotations are implied. Money is seductive and quickly becomes an idol. Those who are financially poor will do anything for money – allowing themselves to be bought and surrendering any aspect of human dignity for a nickel or dime. The choice between serving God or mammon is an either-or forced choice: you cannot serve both because "you will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other."

You cannot serve both God and Mammon

The biblical word mammon is derived from the Aramaic word māmōnā, which simply meant wealth or riches. In this week's Gospel, Jesus uses mammon with just such an implication (see also Mt 6:24). Even more so, the reference denotes material wealth in such a way that it is treated as a personal power competing with devotion to God. The term appears in the teaching of Jesus alone and it is always set as an antithesis to the true sovereignty owed solely to the Lord, particularly, in the extended discourse surrounding the Parable of the Unjust Steward. The imagery attached to the word's meaning exposes wealth's capacity to command loyalty, shape priorities, and demand sacrifice—traits that properly belong only to God (Ex 20:3; 1 Jn 5:21). By elevating possessions to such an unhealthy level, the heart becomes divided, resulting in contempt directed toward God (Mt 6:24). By the first century of the Christian era, Jewish writings oftentimes treated riches in a figurative sense—a power that could be enslaving. Jesus amplifies this conception, portraying money almost as a false deity competing with God's own claims. In a further development, medieval Christianity interpreted mammon as a personified demon of greed, a concept that likely grew from figures such as can be found in John Milton's epic poem *Paradise Lost*. In that poem, Mammon is a fallen angel characterized as the demon of avarice and greed, whose obsession with material wealth—like the gold of Heaven's pavement—led to his initial downfall among the angels following Satan. Moreover, those vices continued his focus pertaining to earthly treasures alone even after being consigned to Hell. As a character, then, Mammon reached a significant personification of this incipient concepts of greed and avarice, building on those earlier biblical references and subsequent medieval interpretations. Milton describes mammon as a spirit who is always looking "downward at Heaven's golden pavement" rather than upward at God. He physically describes the voracious Mammon as literally stooped over, with his "looks and thoughts / Were always downward bent". Even before the Fall, while in Heaven at that point, he was more interested in the golden pavements under his feet than in the divine glory above. This physical posture symbolizes Mammon's spiritual degradation. Even in Hell, Mammon is the driving force behind the construction of Pandemonium, the capital of Satan's realm. He organizes the fallen angels into a mining crew, teaching them to "ransack the center, and with impious hands / Rifled the bowels of their mother Earth" for her resources. Milton distinguishes between Mammon and other demons to show the different degrees of fallenness. Satan's evil is grand and intellectual, driven by a desire for power. In contrast, Mammon's evil is petty and earthbound, driven by a simple, obsessive greed.

Understanding the Mass—Both Memorial & Sacrifice

Mysterium Fidei—The Mystery of Faith

The expression the *mystery of faith* is originally an interpolation found in the Roman Canon, where it was inserted within Christ's words over the chalice and said inaudibly by the priest: "For this is the chalice of my blood, of the new and eternal testament: the mystery of faith (Lat. *mysterium fidei*): which shall be shed for you and for many unto the remission of sins". In the Tridentine Mass (the traditional Latin Mass), *Mysterium Fidei* is the phrase inserted by the priest over the chalice during the Words of Institution, signifying "the mystery of faith" or salvation through

Christ's death and resurrection made present in the Eucharist, focusing on the Real Presence. Placed within the consecration of the wine transforming it into the Precious Blood, the priest said, "For this is the chalice of my blood, of the new and eternal testament: the mystery of faith: which shall be shed for you and for many unto the remission of sins (Lat. *Hic est enim calix sanguinis mei, novi et aeterni testamenti: mysterium fidei: qui pro vobis et pro multis effundetur in remissionem peccatorum*)". The words *mysterium fidei* appear to be out of place in the middle of such a solemn proclamation. Moreover, the expression seemingly has little scriptural lineage, and were added to the words of consecration only in the Catholic church and done, sometime, around the year 500 AD. This placement within the words of consecration and their subsequent transfer to after Consecration after the liturgical changes of the Second Vatican Council is a key distinction between the Tridentine Mass and the post-Vatican II Mass. Prior to 1970, the congregation would not have a verbal response at this point. For four hundred years, from 1570-1970, after those words were spoken and the consecration completed, the priest would elevate the chalice for the adoration of the faithful. With the liturgical revisions following the Vatican II, the *mysterium fidei* acclamation was transferred from within the Words of Institution

over the chalice to become an invitation with the Consecration completed when that phrase was re-established as a separate invitation by the priest as the introduction for the people's subsequent acclamation of the paschal mystery as an acknowledgement of "the entire mystery of salvation through Christ's death, resurrection and ascension, which is made present in the celebration of the Eucharist." In the current setting, the meaning of *mysterium fidei* is, then, clarified by either one of the three acclamatory formulae of the people: (1) We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection, until you come again," (2) When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again," and (3) Save us, Savior of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection, you have set us free."

Analysis of the Acclamatory Formulae

The first two of those three responses are similar in their acclamation of the Paschal Mystery and acknowledgement of the Real Presence of Christ's Body and Blood on the altar: 1. We proclaim your Death, O Lord and profess your Resurrection until you come again and 2. When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again. The source is Saint Paul's first Letter to the Corinthians, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes" (1Cor 11:26). However, the second acclamation affirms something that we may not often think about – Communion as an act of faith, a proclamation that we believe in the passion of Jesus, and in His second coming. This is particularly important. Communion is not the final destination of our lives, but rather a proclamation that we know this life is incomplete until Jesus comes to fulfill it. When you look at the Latin notice that it uses slightly different words and so it's useful to look at that too: *Mortem tuam annuntiamus, Domine, et tuam resurrectionem confitemur, donec venias*. First, note that the Latin version is truer to the Scriptures, not referring to Jesus as coming again – but just to the Lord's coming. Latinists might also want to debate about the other verbs, despite the fact that English and Latin are not mirrors of each other, one author likes the sense of *god-spell* or of good news that comes from the verb *annuntiamus* – we announce the Death and Resurrection like a couple announcing their engagement or since a news broadcast usually has an announcer. When it comes to *confitemur*, the complication comes when most people think of confession as something only to do with sins, yet it also implies a profession of faith. The two expressions vary in that the first makes reference to the resurrection, which is an addition to what you find in the Scriptures, while the second acclamation is much closer to the Pauline Scriptural source and refers to eating and drinking, which can make this second option less appropriate in some circumstances. The third acclamation is a wonderful conglomeration of sources, it will take a little unpacking. While the English runs: 3. "Save us, Savior of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free" (Lat. *Salvator mundi, salva nos; qui per crucem et resurrectionem tuam nos liberasti*). The Latin begins with this title for Jesus, *Salvator mundi*. Now this is where things get informative. This title for Jesus shows up twice in the Scriptures. The first is in the fourth chapter of John's Gospel, in the story of the Samaritan woman at the well (Jn 4:42). After the locals have heard from the woman and, then, having heard from Jesus Himself, the townsfolk proclaim that they no longer rely on her testimony because they know for themselves that Jesus is the *Salvator Mundi* or Savior of the world. We should put ourselves in the shoes of those Samaritans – we know for ourselves that Jesus is the Savior of the world, and not only that, we ask him to *salva nos* to save us. The second half of this acclamation should also sound familiar – it is not unlike the dialogue from before each of the Stations of the Cross. "We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you. Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world." When we compare the Latin versions of these two prayers the parallel is really strong: In the acclamation before each of Stations of the Cross, the Latin equivalent is: *quia per sanctam crucem tuam redemisti mundum* versus this third Acclamation: *qui per crucem et resurrectionem tuam liberasti nos*. This third acclamation should clearly be a Lenten favorite, with the link to the Gospel of the Samaritan Woman (Lent 3A) and the link to the Via Crucis. The entire history of salvation, then, is made present in the Eucharist.

Excerpted from www.ocp.org. Dr. Glenn Byer. "The Mystery of Faith: Mysterium Fidei" 9 March 2018."

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