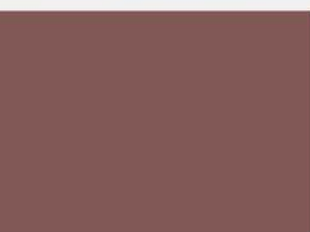




# EVERY SACRED FAMILY

*A 52 Week Catholic Mass Discussion Guide*  
*2022-2023*



*Ablaze Families* ✕ *Every Sacred Sunday*

# *Every Sacred Family*

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### *Any questions?*

We're here to help! Email us at [hello@everysacredsunday.com](mailto:hello@everysacredsunday.com) and we'll be glad to answer your question. Thanks!



# Welcome!

*we're so glad you're here*

One of the greatest joys and tasks God gives us as parents is the opportunity to share the love of Christ with our kids. We are their parents, and they trust us above all other people. Who else in our lives will absorb our words and actions like they will?

The goal of this guide is to provide a simple framework centered around the Mass for you to lead your family by example and catechize through conversation. We encourage you to read the Gospel together before Mass and use the discussion questions whenever works for your family - for example around the dinner table or in the car on the way to Mass. Print it out or keep it bookmarked on your phone. Store this guide in the car, your purse, or by the coffee maker - there is no wrong answer!

However you use this resource, our top tip is to commit to using it, even if that means starting small with a single question before or after Mass. We're praying for you and your family, that the Holy Spirit will lead you to fruitful conversations and a renewed love for God and one another!

In Him,  
Ablaze Families and Every Sacred Sunday



*before we dive in...*

## WHY A MASS DISCUSSION GUIDE?

The Church says that as parents, we are our child's "primary catechists", which means that it is primarily up to us to teach them about the faith. This calling is both exciting and terrifying! Not one of us has all the answers - not even close - but the thought that we are "cooperating" with God in bringing our children to heaven is an honor.

One of the best opportunities we have for bringing our children to Jesus is through the Mass! And although many of us struggle with bringing our kids to Mass, it is always a place for you to belong, and it is always a place where your kids belong. With this in mind and guided by the Holy Spirit, we are so excited to offer you this resource! *Every Sacred Family: A 52 Week Catholic Mass Discussion Guide* was intentionally created to help you talk with your kids about faith, because conversation is foundational to catechesis!

Developed by Every Sacred Sunday, creators of the ESS Mass journal, and Ablaze Families, a ministry dedicated to raising saints, this guide is designed to help you dive deeper into the Mass as a family, with a focus on fostering Christ-centered conversations. In the following pages, you'll find tips to prepare for Mass, how to engage children of different ages at Mass, conversation starters for after Mass, and a full liturgical year's worth of discussion questions for each Sunday. These questions highlight the weekly Gospel readings and were written by Jennifer Stavinoha, Co-Director of Ablaze Families, mom, and theologian. We saw the need for a Mass discussion guide in our own families, and hope that this resource helps your family grow closer to Christ - one Sunday at a time!



# introducing

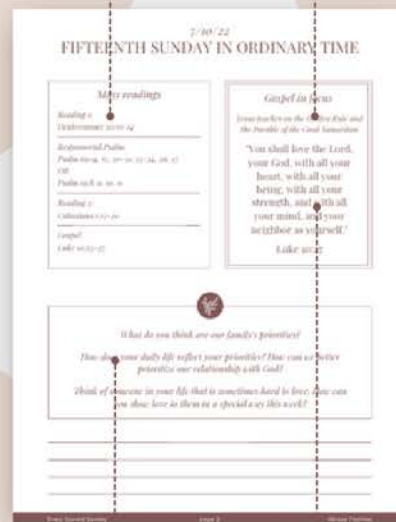
## THE WEEKLY DISCUSSION PAGES

### MASS READINGS

Reflecting on the readings before Mass primes our hearts to hear the Word proclaimed. If preparing for Mass is new for you, start by focusing on the Gospel reading! You can find the full readings in your Bible, on the USCCB website, or in an ESS Mass journal.

### GOSPEL SYNOPSIS

If you didn't have time or forgot what was in the pre-reading (we get it!) the synopsis is the perfect reminder to jog your memory. You can then confidently dive into the discussion questions, for example in the car on the way to Mass!



### FAMILY DISCUSSION

This is the meat of the weekly page! These questions were curated by a Catholic mom and theologian to spark conversation and authentic connection. Read on in the "Prepare" section for more tips on using these questions!

### MEMORY VERSE

Words we repeat influence who we are! Memorizing or repeating a Bible verse throughout the week is a wonderful practice for both adults and kids. Put this page on your fridge for reference throughout the week, or discuss it as a family.

# 3 SIMPLE STEPS

## FOR MASS-CENTERED FAMILY CATECHESIS



*Before Mass:  
Prepare*



*During Mass:  
Engage*



*After Mass:  
Continue*

Preparing for Mass as a family is the first step! In this guide, we'll show you how to integrate Mass preparation with activities you already do with your family. You can start small, even just in the car on the way to Mass, trusting God can multiply any effort for His glory! Read more on pages 7-8 for details on preparing for Mass as a family, logistical tips to set you up for success, and a prayer for parents before Mass.

The most important hour of the week is Mass! Your Mass experience won't look the same with kids as it was without – and that's okay! Our kids learn what is important by watching what is important to us. Model engagement during Mass by singing, following along with the readings (a Mass journal can be a useful resource for notes), and participating fully. Your child might need help engaging, and we've provided age-appropriate ideas on pages 9-10.

Immediately after Mass is a wonderful opportunity to continue the conversation with your family! If you didn't have time to use the discussion guide before Mass, the car ride home can be a great time to revisit this guide. If one question leads to another fruitful topic, go where the Holy Spirit leads you! It's okay not to do every question in the guide – the point is to grow closer to God and one another! Page 11 also includes our favorite categories for conversation starters.



# STEP 1: PREPARE

## *A simple method to catechize with conversation*



What does Sunday morning look like in your house? For so many of us, it sometimes feels like complete chaos! The thought of adding something to do before we make it to Mass can seem daunting. How can we prepare our hearts to meet Jesus when we are barely making it out of the house?

But Jesus doesn't want to make mornings harder for you - He wants to redeem them, and orient our hearts towards Him in the midst of everything!

Reading and discussing the Gospel readings before Mass is a simple way to refocus as a family on what you are about to experience at Mass and bring greater peace in your life. If this is new for your family, take it one small step at a time.

You can make it a goal to read the Gospel together and use at least one question from the weekly discussion pages before Mass. If that feels like too much, then read the provided synopsis and re-tell the story in a way that your kids might understand. You could also invite your older kids to read aloud or be responsible for reminding the family when it is time to read the Gospel. By starting small, it's easier to build consistency - and Jesus takes even the smallest gift of self and makes it something beautiful!

Another key tip is that Mass preparation can happen at any time during the week and in any place that works for your family! For your family this may mean reading the Gospel at dinner together the night before Mass. Or maybe it looks like reading aloud in the car on the way to Mass. It could be something earlier in the week, scheduled for a specific day. When possible, it helps to connect Mass preparation with routines that are already well established in your family and to put it on the calendar.



For example you can tape the memory verse on the mirror to read while brushing teeth, or keep this guide on the kitchen table with a Bible or Mass journal to read scripture aloud and ask one discussion question before starting homework. By connecting the new habit of preparing for Mass with an already established routine, you'll have a much better likelihood of keeping up with it!

Separately from pre-reading and discussing the readings as a family before Mass, it's important to prioritize personal prayer time for each parent. When can you dedicate time during the week to read the Mass readings? If you are struggling in your current season to prioritize prayer, we recommend the books *A Mother's Rule of Life*, by Holly Pierlot, *Searching for and Maintaining Peace* by Fr. Jacques Philippe. If you're not sure how to pray, *Conversation with Christ*, by Peter Rohrbach details St. Teresa of Avila's excellent step-by-step method of prayer. Additionally, having a personal Mass journal with the readings, such as the one from Every Sacred Sunday, can be a wonderful resource to help you spend time in scripture.

Finally, here are a few of our favorite logistical tips for the "day of":

- Try to choose outfits the night before for a morning Mass.
- Make sure everyone has eaten well. Bring a snack in the car to prevent "hangry" kids.
- Have everyone go to the bathroom before Mass starts.
- Say a prayer as you walk into Mass, or use the prayer below!
- Keep your "tools" in a handy place - for example a faith-based book for littles or a Mass journal and pen for homily notes.

And please remember - you and your kids are wanted at Mass. Always. The Church needs your family and thank you for joining in worship!

### *A Parent's Prayer Before Mass*

Lord, prepare my heart to receive you today. Open my heart and ears to hear your word. Send your Holy Spirit to give me patience with my family, and show me how to lead my kids closer to you through the Mass. Amen.

## STEP 2: ENGAGE

### *Our top tips to help engage kids of any age at Mass!*

One of the best opportunities we have for bringing our children to Jesus is through the Mass. How ironic that the very thing many Catholic parents struggle with the most is one of the most effective avenues for grace in the family! Many people have asked us "How can I get my kids to behave at Mass?", and there is no magic answer. What we do know is that the Mass is still a place for you to belong, and it is still a place where your kids belong! Rather than behavior modification ("sit still and be quiet") instead seek to engage your kids in what is going on. It might mean accepting that your own experience at Mass will look different, but the reward in the long run is worth it!



#### *Babies - <18 months old*

Congrats on your new arrival! If your baby is young enough, you can time your Mass attendance with your baby's nap time. As your little one starts getting mobile and talkative, remember that your baby sounds much louder to you than anyone else around you. You belong in Mass, and so does your little one. Engage your baby by pointing out the stained glass, candles, and Jesus on the cross.



#### *Littles - 18 months to 5 years*

Having a toddler at Mass can be one of the most drastic changes in terms of our Mass experience. Rather than behavior modification - "sit still and be quiet" - seek rather to engage them in what is going on. This means accepting that your own experience at Mass will look different. To engage littles, have them count the candles, or find Mary. Make a big deal during the transubstantiation, and point out the bread becoming Jesus' body. Remember that Mass is for them too, and they just need a little help. And most of all, give yourself a lot of grace!





### *Elementary - 6 to 11 years*

At this age, your child has either received their first Holy Communion, or soon will. This is a great age for your child to start learning the Bible, imagining what life would be like in Jesus' time, and practice memorizing the verse for the week. Help them read along with the readings, follow the music notes in the missal with their finger, or draw a picture of something that stood out to them about the Gospel. This can be a time to get them involved, such as with altar serving or singing in the children's choir.



### *Middle School - 12 to 14 years*

This is a great age to encourage your kids to take ownership in their prayer life! Ask your middle schoolers to lead your family discussion, and give them the responsibility of quizzing the younger kids on the verse to memorize that week. Encourage them to invite friends to Mass, and get them involved with a middle school youth group. At this age they could also start using a Mass journal!



### *High School - 15 to 18 years*

At this age, your kids will have received their Confirmation, or soon will. Encourage them to take their initiation into the Church seriously by serving in some way, whether by becoming a reader, an usher or greeter, someone that takes communion to the elderly and homebound, or some other way. Encourage them to join youth group, or serve on mission. Invite your high schooler to take a regular Holy Hour to encourage personal prayer and love of the Eucharist.



## STEP 3: CONTINUE

*After Mass, it's time to continue the conversation!*

At the end of Mass, we "Go Forth" into the world - raising Catholic kids is an action we carry forth into the entire week! If you didn't have a chance to go through the weekly discussion questions before Mass, you can start on the car ride home or at your next meal time. You can also naturally continue the conversation by referencing these three categories of conversation starters: Truth, Beauty, and Goodness.

### TRUTH

*What is true and builds our knowledge?*

Part of being a disciple is building up our minds with knowledge as we journey towards Truth. No matter how much we study and pray, there will always be something new to learn about God! What did you learn about God at Mass? What did you learn about how God has interacted with His people throughout salvation history in the Scriptures? Share this insight with your family.

### BEAUTY

*What is beautiful and points to Christ?*

Cultivating our awareness of beauty can direct us to Christ. Take note of your senses. What beauty do I notice at Mass? This could be something like a candle, the music, or the way the person in front of you was praying. Maybe it was a certain word in the readings, or worship that caught your attention. How did beauty elevate you to experience God?

### GOODNESS

*What is good and how can we share it?*

God is always present in our lives, even when we don't notice it! How have you seen God's goodness moving in your life? Take time in thanksgiving! The next step is to share God's goodness with others. God speaks to us through the Scriptures, even though they were written long ago. How is God asking you to love those around you better, and how is He calling you to serve Him?

# A NOTE FOR PARISHES

## A FEW TIPS AND TRICKS

*Thank you for investing in your parish families!  
Here are two potential ways to use this guide in your parish.*

### *Option 1: Provide weekly handouts after Mass*

This is a simple way to start using this resource at your parish! Hand out printouts for that day's Mass as parishioners are leaving Mass, or give them to kids in CCE to bring home and use with their family.

This way, families just heard the readings proclaimed and they are primed to dive into the discussion questions. This method also makes it easy to adjust print volume weekly and introduce this guide over time.

### *Option 2: Provide the full discussion guide*

Another great option is to print off this full guide and bind multiple copies, providing each family with their own copy. Three ring binders or spiral binding at a local print shop can be good options here. A benefit of this is that you invest the time once to print, announce, and distribute this resource, and then each family is able to take ownership from there to use before or after Mass, however works for them!

*Once you've decided which method works  
for your parish, don't be shy!*

Announce the new resource after Mass, provide handouts of the introduction pages, or even host a kickoff evening "Catechize with Conversation: How to Discuss the Mass Readings as a Family" using the information on pages 3-12.



# MEET THE TEAM

## *We're so happy you're here!*

This guide was created with lots of prayer and by combining the expertise of Ablaze Families and Every Sacred Sunday - we hope you love it!

### ABLAZE FAMILIES

#### *Dedicated to raising saints*

We are a nonprofit on a mission to equip and empower parents to lead their kids to Heaven! Our resources include online courses, e-books, and intentional Catholic communities. Come say hi and get connected!



[ablaze.us/ablaze-families](https://ablaze.us/ablaze-families)



[everysacredsunday.com](https://everysacredsunday.com)

### EVERY SACRED SUNDAY

#### *Creator of the ESS Mass Journal*

Hello from Kassie & Christie, co-founders of Every Sacred Sunday! We were in a Bible study together in 2017 when the Holy Spirit placed the idea on our hearts to publish Mass journals that were beautiful, functional, and 100% Catholic. Thanks for joining us!





SAY "YES!" TO GOD,  
ONE SUNDAY AT A TIME

*let's dive in!*

11/27/22

## THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Isaiah 2:1-5*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 122:1-2, 3-4, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Romans 13:11-14*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 24:37-44*

### *Gospel in focus*

*The Lord will return when we  
least expect, so be vigilant!*

"So too, you also must  
be prepared, for at an  
hour you do not expect,  
the Son of Man will  
come."

Matthew 24:44



What do you feel when you think about Jesus coming back? Why?

What would you change about your life if you knew  
Jesus would return tomorrow?

What do you imagine Jesus' return will be like?



12/04/22

## THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Isaiah 11:1-10*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Romans 15:4-9*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 3:1-12*

### *Gospel in focus*

*John the Baptist calls for  
repentance of sin and to  
prepare for Jesus.*

"Produce good fruit as  
evidence of your  
repentance."

Matthew 3:8



Why is it hard to admit our sins?

How do you think people responded to John the Baptist?

What is justice? What good comes from it?

12/08/22

# SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

## *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Genesis 3: 9-15, 20*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 98:1, 2-3, 3-4*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12*

---

*Gospel:*

*Luke 1:26-38*

## *Gospel in focus*

*The angel Gabriel recognizes  
Mary's sinlessness when he calls  
her "full of grace" at the  
Annunciation.*

"Mary said, 'Behold, I am  
the handmaid of the Lord.  
May it be done to me  
according to your word.'  
Then the angel departed  
from her."

Luke 1:38



What do you feel when you think about Jesus coming back? Why?

What would you change about your life if you knew  
Jesus would return tomorrow?

What do you imagine Jesus' return will be like?



12/11/22

## THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Isaiah 35:1-6A, 10*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10*

---

*Reading 2:*

*James 5:7-10*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 11: 2-11*

### *Gospel in focus*

*John is the prophet who has come  
before Jesus, the Messiah,  
to make straight his paths.*

"This is the one about  
whom it is written:  
'Behold, I am sending my  
messenger ahead of you;  
he will prepare your way  
before you.'"

Matthew 11:10



How might we prepare for the arrival of an important guest?

How do you think John the Baptist felt when he heard  
Jesus was the Messiah?

How would you feel if you knew you were standing in front of the  
Messiah? What do you think He would say to you?

12/18/22

## THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Isaiah 7:10-14*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Romans 1:1-7*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 1:18-24*

### *Gospel in focus*

*God speaks to Joseph in a dream, telling him that Mary has conceived Emmanuel through the Holy Spirit.*

"Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,' which means 'God is with us.'"

Matthew 1:23



How might Joseph have felt when the angel told him about Mary?

Why is it hard to trust that God will come through for us?

Share a time when God asked you to do something hard.



12/25/22

# SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

## *Mass readings*

*The below readings are for Mass during the day.  
For additional readings see the ESS Mass journal  
or USCCB website.*

### *Reading 1:*

*Isaiah 52:7-10*

---

### *Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6*

---

### *Reading 2:*

*Hebrews 1:1-6*

---

### *Gospel:*

*John 1:1-18*

## *Gospel in focus*

*God became man to save us  
from our sins!*

"And the Word became  
flesh and made his  
dwelling among us, and  
we saw his glory, the glory  
as of the Father's only Son,  
full of grace and truth."

John 1:14



What does "glory" mean to you?

Why do you think God chose that time period to come in the flesh?

Share a time when God came through for you.

01/01/23

# SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

## *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Numbers 6:22-27*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Galatians 4:4-7*

---

*Gospel:*

*Luke 2:16-21*

## *Gospel in focus*

*The shepherds visit Jesus after his birth and praise God for what they have seen.*

"And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart."

Luke 2:19



What is something you are thankful for this week?

How has God been a Father to you? How has Mary been a mother to you?

Share something that the Lord has done in your life that you keep in your heart.



01/08/23

# SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

## *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Isaiah 60:1-6*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Ephesians 3:2-3A, 5-6*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 2:1-12*

## *Gospel in focus*

*The Magi visit the Holy Family,  
while Herod plots to kill Jesus.*

"Where is the newborn  
king of the Jews? We saw  
his star at its rising and  
have come to do him  
homage."

Matthew 2:2



Why do you think Herod was threatened by Jesus?

How might Herod's life have been different if he had  
embraced Jesus?

How is Jesus a guiding light in your life?

01/15/23

## THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Isaiah 49:3, 5-6*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 40:2, 4, 7-8, 8-9, 10*

---

*Reading 2:*

*I Corinthians 1:1-3*

---

*Gospel:*

*John 1:29-34*

### *Gospel in focus*

*John the Baptist testifies that  
Jesus is the Son of God.*

"Now I have seen and  
testified that he is the  
Son of God."

John 1:34



Share a time when you were really excited to tell others about something important to you. How did you feel? How did they receive it?

Share a time when someone talked to you about Jesus.  
How did you receive it?

What holds us back from sharing Jesus with others? What do you think God says to that?

01/22/23

## THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Isaiah 8:23 - 9:3*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 27:1, 4, 13-14*

---

*Reading 2:*

*I Corinthians 1:10-13, 17*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 4:12-23*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus fulfills Isaiah's prophecy  
when he moves to Galilee, where  
he calls his first disciples.*

"...the people who sit in  
darkness have seen a great  
light, on those dwelling in  
a land overshadowed by  
death light has arisen."

Matthew 4:16



What do you think of when you hear, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand"?

What do you think other people thought of Jesus when  
he started performing miracles?

How is God calling you to follow him this week?



01/29/23

## THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10*

---

*Reading 2:*

*I Corinthians 1:26-31*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 5:1-12A*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus preaches the Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount.*

"Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven. Thus they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

Matthew 5:12



Which one of the beatitudes do you embrace well?

Which one is most difficult for you?

Which of the beatitudes does your family embrace well?

Which one is most difficult for your family?

Grab a piece of paper, and come up with ways you can embrace each beatitude as a family.

02/05/23

## THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Isaiah 58:7-10*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 112:4-5, 6-7, 8-9*

---

*Reading 2:*

*I Corinthians 2:1-5*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 5:13-16*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus tells us to not be ashamed  
of the light he has given us.*

"Just so, your light must  
shine before others, that  
they may see your good  
deeds and glorify your  
heavenly Father."

Matthew 5:16



How is our faith like a light?

What keeps us back from letting our light shine?

What is the difference between bragging about good deeds, and  
letting our light shine? How can we stay humble, while also  
being a light for the world?

02/12/23

## THE SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Sirach 15:15-20*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 119:1-2, 4-5, 17-18, 33-34*

---

*Reading 2:*

*I Corinthians 2:6-10*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 5:17-37*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus gets to the heart of the Jewish Law, and calls the people to something higher.*

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill."

Matthew 5:17



Why do you think Jesus asks us to go beyond just obeying the Law?

Which do you think Jesus values more: obeying the letter of the law, or our change of hearts? Why?

How can you go above and beyond to love your family and friends this week?



02/19/23

## THE SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Leviticus 19:1-2, 17-18*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 103:1-2, 3-4, 8, 10, 12-13*

---

*Reading 2:*

*I Corinthians 3:16-23*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 5:38-48*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus tells us we need to love others, even our enemies and those who wrong us.*

"But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you"

Matthew 5:44



Who can be hard for you to love for you? Why?

Share a time when you were persecuted.

Pray together as a family for those who have persecuted each of you.

02/22/23

## ASH WEDNESDAY

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Joel 2:12-18*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 51:3-4, 5-6AB, 12-13, 14 and 17*

---

*Reading 2:*

*2 Corinthians 5:20 - 6:2*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Be sincere in prayer and  
fasting, without boasting about  
what you're doing.*

"But when you pray, go to  
your inner room, close the  
door, and pray to your  
Father in secret. And your  
Father who sees in secret  
will repay you."

Matthew 6:6



What are you doing for Lent?

What can we do as a family for Lent?

How do we balance Jesus' call to pray and fast in secret with  
being a shining light, a city on a hill?

02/26/23

## THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Genesis 2:7-9, 3:1-7*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 51:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 17*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Romans 5:12-19*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 4:1-11*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus is the New Adam, as he  
refuses to succumb to the devil's  
temptations.*

"At this, Jesus said to him,  
'Get away, Satan! It is  
written: "The Lord, your  
God, shall you worship  
and him alone shall you  
serve."'"

Matthew 4:10



Why do you think the devil thought he could tempt Jesus?

How are the devil's temptations towards us different  
from how he tempted Jesus? How is it the same?

How can we respond to temptation?



03/05/23

## THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Genesis 12:1-4A*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 33:4-5, 18-19, 20, 22*

---

*Reading 2:*

*2 Timothy 1:8B-10*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 17:1-9*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus reveals his glory with  
Moses and Elijah to Peter,  
James, and John.*

"But Jesus came and  
touched them, saying,  
'Rise, and do not be  
afraid.'"

Matthew 17:7



What do you think it would be like to see Jesus in his glory?  
How would that change our experience of the Mass?

Why do you think Peter wanted to make tents for Moses and Elijah?

Share a time when Jesus has told you, "Rise, do not be afraid".

03/12/23

## THE THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Exodus 17:3-7*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Romans 5:1-2, 5-8*

---

*Gospel:*

*John 4:5-42*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus shares Words of Knowledge to a Samaritan woman at the well, and changes her life as he invites her to new life in the Holy Spirit.*

"But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth; and indeed the Father seeks such people to worship him."

John 4:23



What does it mean to worship the Father in "spirit and in truth"?

The woman at the well received Jesus completely. How could she have reacted when he revealed her sins to her?

What does it mean to have "hardened hearts"?  
In what ways are our hearts hardened?

03/19/23

## THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*1 Samuel 16:1B, 6-7, 10-13A*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 23:1-3A, 3B-4, 5, 6*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Ephesians 5:8-14*

---

*Gospel:*

*John 9:1-41*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus heals a blind man, and teaches us that there are more ways of being blind than just being unable to see.*

"Then Jesus said, 'I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see might see, and those who do see might become blind.'"

John 9:39



How were the Pharisees blind to Jesus?

How was the blind man able to see, other than just with his eyes?

In what ways are we blind?



03/20/23

## SOLEMNITY OF SAINT JOSEPH

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*2 Samuel 7:4-5A, 12-14A, 16*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Romans 4:13, 16-18, 22*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 1:16, 18-21, 24A*

*OR*

*Luke 2:41-51A*

### *Gospel in focus*

*An angel appears to Joseph and tells him to not be afraid to take Mary as his wife (Matthew); Mary and Joseph find Jesus in the temple after searching for three days (Luke).*

"Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?"

Luke 2:49



What is something you once thought was lost and then found?

How did you feel when you found it?

What characteristics make a good father?

As a family, how can we spend more time in our "Father's house"?

03/25/23

# SOLEMNITY OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

## *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Isaiah 7:10-14; 8:10*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 40:7-8A, 8B-9, 10, 11*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Hebrews 10:4-10*

---

*Gospel:*

*Luke 1:26-38*

## *Gospel in focus*

*The angel Gabriel visits Mary  
and shares that she has found  
favor with God.*

"...The holy Spirit will  
come upon you, and the  
power of the Most High  
will overshadow you."

Luke 1:35



The angel Gabriel tells Mary to not be afraid. How does it make you feel to know you can ask the angels to intercede for you?

What does it mean to be overshadowed? When can it be a good thing to be overshadowed?

"Nothing is impossible for God" - Is there a time when something felt impossible to you, but God led you to an answer?

03/26/23

## THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Ezekiel 37:12-14*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Romans 8:8-11*

---

*Gospel:*

*John 11:1-45*

### *Gospel in focus*

*In Jesus' grief over the death of his friend, he raises Lazarus from the dead to show that he is the Son of God.*

"Jesus told her, 'I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live...'"

John 11:25



Why do you think Jesus wept over Lazarus, if he knew he would see him again soon?

How do you think the people reacted when Lazarus walked out of the tomb?

What kind of miracle would you wish to see?



04/02/23

# PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION

## *Mass readings*

*Gospel at the Procession:*

*Matthew 21:1-11*

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*Reading 1:*

*Isaiah 50:4-7*

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*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Phillipians 2:6-11*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 26:14 - 27:66*

## *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus celebrates the Last Supper, is betrayed by his friend, and dies on the cross for our sins.*

"He advanced a little and fell prostrate in prayer, saying, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will.'"

Matthew 26:39



Share a time when you were betrayed. How did you feel?

Take time as a family to thank Jesus for his sacrifice.

How can we enter into Holy Week as a family?

04/06/23

# MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

## *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 116:12-13, 15-16BC, 17-18*

---

*Reading 2:*

*1 Corinthians 11:23-26*

---

*Gospel:*

*John 13:1-15*

## *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus washes the feet of the  
disciples while celebrating  
Passover.*

"If I, therefore, the  
master and teacher,  
have washed your feet,  
you ought to wash one  
another's feet."

John 13:14



Why do you think Jesus washed the disciples' feet?

How is God calling us to serve others?

Share a time when someone else served you, and it  
made a difference in your life.

04/07/23

# GOOD FRIDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION

## *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Isaiah 52:13 - 53:12*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-16, 17, 25*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9*

---

*Gospel:*

*John 18:1 - 19:42*

## *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus is convicted by Pontius Pilate, sentenced to death on a cross, dies, and is buried.*

"When Jesus had taken the wine, he said, 'It is finished.' And bowing his head, he handed over the spirit."

John 19:30



What sticks out to you about this Gospel?

How do you think Jesus' sacrifice changed the course of history?

How does it change our lives?

What is a difficult situation, area of grief, or suffering you can unite to the cross?



04/09/23  
EASTER SUNDAY

*Mass readings*

*The below readings are for Mass during the day.  
For Easter Vigil readings see the ESS Mass journal  
or USCCB website.*

*Reading 1:*

*Acts 10:34A, 37-43*

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23*

*Reading 2:*

*Colossians 3:1-4 or 1 Corinthians 5:6B-8*

*Gospel:*

*John 20:1-9, Matthew 28:1-10, or*

*Luke 24:13-35*

*Gospel in focus*

*Mary Magdalene, Peter, and  
John find Jesus' tomb empty!*

"Then the other disciple  
also went in, the one  
who had arrived at the  
tomb first, and he saw  
and believed."

John 20:8



What do you think Mary Magdalene was expecting when she came by Jesus' tomb? How do you think she felt when she found it was empty?

What does Jesus' resurrection change about my life?

What do you think most people in our world think about Jesus' resurrection? How can we be a witness to them?

04/16/23

## SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Acts 2:42-47*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24*

---

*Reading 2:*

*1 Peter 1:3-9*

---

*Gospel:*

*John 20:19-31*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus reveals Himself to  
Thomas, who doubts Jesus'  
resurrection.*

"And when he had said  
this, he breathed on  
them and said to them,  
'Receive the Holy Spirit.'"

John 20:22



What would you think if you were one of Jesus' disciples, and  
someone told you that Jesus rose from the dead?

What do you think Jesus means when He tells us, "peace be with  
you"? Where do you need peace in your life?

Share a time when God showed up for you in a big way.

04/23/23

## THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Acts 2:14, 22-23*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11*

---

*Reading 2:*

*1 Peter 1:17-21*

---

*Gospel:*

*Luke 24:13-35*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus reveals Himself to two  
disciples on the road to Emmaus  
in the breaking of the bread.*

"Then the two  
recounted what had  
taken place on the way  
and how he was made  
known to them in the  
breaking of the bread."

Luke 24:35



Why do we sometimes forget to talk to God?

How do you think the disciples felt after they realized they had been  
walking and talking with the risen Jesus?

Make a plan to pray together as a family this week.



04/30/23

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Acts 2:14A, 36-41*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 23:1-3A, 3B-4, 5, 6*

---

*Reading 2:*

*1 Peter 2:20B-25*

---

*Gospel:*

*John 10:1-10*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus tells His disciples that we  
are His sheep, and to listen to  
His voice.*

"A thief comes only to steal  
and slaughter and destroy;  
I came so that they might  
have life and have it more  
abundantly."

John 10:10



What stuck out to you in these readings?

What does it mean for Jesus to be "the gate"?

What are some false paths to righteousness that we see around us?

05/07/23

## FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Acts 6:1-7*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 33:1-2, 4-5, 18-19*

---

*Reading 2:*

*1 Peter 2:4-9*

---

*Gospel:*

*John 14:1-12*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus is the only way to  
the Father.*

"Amen, amen, I say to  
you, whoever believes in  
me will do the works  
that I do, and will do  
greater ones than these,  
because I am going to  
the Father."

John 14:12



What has troubled your heart this week?

If you saw Jesus face to face, what would you say?

Why do you think Jesus willed that we would do  
greater works that He did?

05/14/23

## SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Acts 8:5-8, 14-17*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 66:1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 16, 20*

---

*Reading 2:*

*1 Peter 3:15-18*

---

*Gospel:*

*John 14:15-21*

---

*In parishes where the Ascension will be celebrated the following Sunday, 1 Peter 4:13-16 and John 17:1-11A are alternate readings.*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus never planned to leave us alone; He sends His Holy Spirit to make us holy.*

"I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you."

John 14:18



Which commandment is hardest for you to follow?

Why do you think the world rejects the Holy Spirit?

Share a time when you felt abandoned by God. What happened?



05/21/23

## SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION

### *Mass readings*

*In the US, most dioceses celebrate this Solemnity on the 7th Sunday of Easter. This Solemnity is a Holy Day of Obligation on May 18 in select dioceses that have not moved the celebration.*

#### *Reading 1:*

*Acts 1:1-11*

#### *Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 47:2-3, 6-7, 8-9*

#### *Reading 2:*

*Ephesians 1:17-23*

#### *Gospel:*

*Matthew 28:16-20*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus commands His disciples to make disciples of all nations.*

"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit"

Matthew 28:19



What stuck out to you about the readings this week?

What does being a disciple mean to you?

What makes it hard to be a disciple?

How can we as a family follow Jesus this week?

05/21/23

## SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

### *Mass readings*

*In most dioceses in the US, the readings for the Solemnity of the Ascension replace these readings. For parishes that celebrate the Ascension on May 18, the following readings may be used on May 21.*

#### *Reading 1:*

*Acts 1:12-14*

#### *Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 27:1, 4, 7-8*

#### *Reading 2:*

*1 Peter 4:13-16*

#### *Gospel:*

*John 17:1-11A*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus gives glory to God, and expresses the unity of the Father and the Son.*

"Now this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ."

John 17:3



How did you get to know your closest friend?

What makes someone a friend?

How can God be glorified in suffering?

How has God blessed you this week?

05/28/23

## SOLEMNITY OF PENTECOST

### *Mass readings*

*The below readings are for Mass during the day.  
For additional readings see the ESS Mass journal  
or USCCB website.*

#### *Reading 1:*

*Acts 2:1-11*

#### *Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34*

#### *Reading 2:*

*1 Corinthians 12:3B-7, 12-13*

#### *Gospel:*

*John 20:19-23*

### *Gospel in focus*

*The resurrected Jesus comes to  
the disciples in a locked room  
and gives them the Holy Spirit.*

"And when he had said  
this, he breathed on  
them and said to them,  
'Receive the holy  
Spirit.'"

John 20:22



What gifts of the Holy Spirit would you like to receive?

How have you seen the Holy Spirit work in your life?

Spend a few minutes together as a family asking the Holy Spirit into your life. Consider the different events you have in your week, such as school, work, sports, or hobbies. Invite the Holy Spirit into these places by praying "come Holy Spirit" throughout the week.

06/04/23

# SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

## *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Exodus 34:4B-6, 8-9*

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*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Daniel 3:52, 53, 54, 55, 56*

---

*Reading 2:*

*2 Corinthians 13:11-13*

---

*Gospel:*

*John 3:16-18*

## *Gospel in focus*

*God loved us so much that  
He became man to save us  
from our sins.*

"For God so loved the  
world that he gave his  
only Son, so that  
everyone who believes in  
him might not perish but  
might have eternal life."

John 3:16



What does it mean to "believe in him"? How do we live  
out that belief?

Which member of the Trinity do you feel closest to?

Spend time in prayer together as a family  
thanking God for His mercy.



06/11/23

# SOLEMNITY OF THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST

## *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14B-16A*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 147:12-13, 14-15, 19-20*

---

*Reading 2:*

*1 Corinthians 10:16-17*

---

*Gospel:*

*John 6:51-58*

## *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus tells His disciples that His body and blood are true food and drink, and that we need to partake in His body and blood to have eternal life.*

"Jesus said to them, 'Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you.'"

John 6:53



How do you think the disciples felt when Jesus told them to eat His flesh and drink His blood? How would you have felt if you were there?

Why do you think Jesus wanted to give us the Eucharist?

What can you do during Mass to help get in the right mindset during the Transubstantiation?

06/16/23

# SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS

## *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Deuteronomy 7:6-11*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 103:1-2, 3-4, 6-7, 8, 10*

---

*Reading 2:*

*1 John 4:7-16*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 11:25-30*

## *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus praises the Father and describes that he gives rest to the burdened.*

"I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike."

Matthew 11:25



In what ways are we called to be childlike?

What are things that feel like heavy burdens this week? Hand them over to Jesus, praying "Jesus, I trust in you."

What is restful for you? How can we prioritize intentional rest this week?

06/18/23

## ELEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*2 Kings 4:8-11, 14-16A*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 100:1-2, 3, 5*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Romans 5:6-11*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 9:36-10:8*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus summons twelve disciples  
to teach and to send out into  
towns.*

"At the sight of the crowds,  
his heart was moved with  
pity for them because they  
were troubled and  
abandoned, like sheep  
without a shepherd."

Matthew 9:36



Who has been the biggest influence on your relationship with God?  
What made them so influential?

What does the phrase, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand"  
mean to you?

Where do you need guidance in your life this week?  
How can you let Jesus be your shepherd?

06/24/23

# SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

## Mass readings

*The below readings are for Mass during the day.  
For Vigil readings see the ESS Mass journal or  
USCCB website.*

### Reading 1:

*Isaiah 49:1-6*

### Responsorial Psalm:

*Psalm 139:1B-3, 13-14AB, 14C-15*

### Reading 2:

*Acts 13:22-26*

### Gospel:

*Luke 1:57-66, 80*

## Gospel in focus

*Elizabeth and Zechariah obey  
God and name their son John.*

"All who heard these  
things took them to  
heart, saying, 'What,  
then, will this child be?'  
For surely the hand of  
the Lord was with him."

Luke 1:66



Why do our names matter? Do you know why your parents  
chose your name?

Why is it important to celebrate in other's blessings, as Elizabeth's  
family rejoiced at the birth of John the Baptist?

If someone asked, "What then, will you be?", how would you reply?  
Parents, what do you pray and hope for your children?



06/25/23

## TWELFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Jeremiah 20:10-13*

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*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 69:8-10, 14, 17, 33-35*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Romans 5:12-15*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 10:26-33*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Do not be afraid of those  
that can only hurt your  
body, because they cannot  
hurt your soul.*

"So do not be afraid; you  
are worth more than  
many sparrows."

Matthew 10:31



What are you afraid of? Where would God be if you faced that fear?

Why is it sometimes hard to acknowledge God in front of others?

Share a time when God was there for you.

06/29/23

# SOLEMNITY OF SAINTS PETER AND PAUL

## Mass readings

*The below readings are for Mass during the day.  
For Vigil readings see the ESS Mass journal or  
USCCB website.*

### Reading 1:

*Acts 12:1-11*

### Responsorial Psalm:

*Psalm 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9*

### Reading 2:

*2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18*

### Gospel:

*Matthew 16:13-19*

## Gospel in focus

*Jesus asks the disciples who  
they say that he is, and declares  
Peter the "rock" on which he will  
build his Church.*

"He said to them, 'But who  
do you say that I am?'  
Simon Peter said in reply,  
'You are the Messiah, the  
Son of the living God.'

Matthew 16:15-16



*Jesus asks the disciples, "Who do you say that I am?"*

*Why is this question so important, both for the disciples and us?*

*What does it mean to have a personal relationship with someone?*

*How does it make you feel that the Pope can be traced back to Peter, and  
that you are part of the Church founded by Jesus?*

07/02/23

## THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*2 Kings 4:8-11, 14-16A*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 89:2-3, 16-17, 18-19*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Romans 6:3-4, 8-11*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 10:37-42*

### *Gospel in focus*

*When we serve those who serve  
God, we are also serving God.*

"Whoever receives you  
receives me, and  
whoever receives me  
receives the one who  
sent me."

Matthew 10:40



What is a gift you remember receiving? How did you feel  
when you received it? How would you feel if someone  
rejected a gift you gave them?

Share a time you noticed someone serving God.  
How does it inspire you?

How is God asking you to serve Him?

07/09/23

## FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Zechariah 9:9-10*

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*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 145:1-2, 8-9, 10-11, 13-14*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Romans 8:9, 11-13*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 11:25-30*

### *Gospel in focus*

*God is the Lord of heaven and earth; we can give Him our burdens, and He will give us rest.*

"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves."

Matthew 11:29



What was your greatest burden this past week?  
How did the Lord walk with you?

How can we give praise to God while going through something hard?

What is the biggest thing you can think of, in creation? (mountains, oceans, a star, etc.) Spend time in prayer bringing your burdens to the Lord, in the light of creation.



07/16/23

## FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Isaiah 55:10-11*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 65:10, 11, 12-13, 14*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Rom 8:18-23*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 13:1-23*

### *Gospel in focus*

*When we make our hearts fertile  
ground for the Lord, He will  
produce good fruit in us.*

"But the seed sown on rich  
soil is the one who hears the  
word and understands it,  
who indeed bears fruit and  
yields a hundred or sixty or  
thirtyfold."

Matthew 13:23



*What steps does a farmer or a gardener take to produce a good harvest?  
How can our family do that with the Word of God?*

*What makes it harder to hear the Word of God?*

*How can we make our hearts like "rich soil", as open for God as possible?*

07/23/23

## SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Wisdom 12:13, 16-19*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 86:5-6, 9-10, 15-16*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Romans 8:26-27*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 13:24-43*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus tells parables to describe  
the Kingdom of Heaven as a  
mustard seed, yeast that leavens  
the dough, and wheat that grows  
with weeds in a field.*

"Then the righteous will  
shine like the sun in the  
kingdom of their Father.  
Whoever has ears ought to  
hear."

Matthew 13:43



What stuck out to you about the readings this week?

Which parable makes the most sense to you? Why?

Which parable challenges you the most? Why?

07/30/23

## SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*1 Kings 3:5, 7-12*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 119:57, 72, 76-77, 127-128, 129-130*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Romans 8:28-30*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 13:44-52*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus likens the Kingdom of Heaven to a treasure buried in a field, a pearl of great price, and a net of fish.*

*"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net thrown into the sea, which collects fish of every kind...What is bad they throw away. Thus it will be at the end of the age."*

*Matthew 14:47-49*



*What would you do if you found a buried treasure? How can you respond to the treasure that Jesus died on the cross for you?*

*The parable of separating the good and bad fish is a reminder of heaven and hell. Why are consequences important?*

*In the first reading, Solomon asks for Wisdom. If God told you that He would give you anything you wanted, what would you ask for?*

08/06/23

# FEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD

## *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14*

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*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 97:1-2, 5-6, 9*

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*Reading 2:*

*2 Peter 1:16-19*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 17:1-9*

## *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus reveals His glory to Peter,  
James, and John.*

"...from the cloud came a  
voice that said, "This is  
my beloved Son, with  
whom I am well pleased;  
listen to him."

Matthew 17:5



What is hard about listening to Jesus?

What do you think seeing Jesus' face shining like the  
sun would be like?

What is Jesus asking from us this week?



08/13/23

## NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*1 Kings 19:9A, 11-13A*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 85:9, 10, 11-12, 13-14*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Romans 9:1-5*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 14:22-33*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus tells Peter to walk out  
on the water with Him  
during a storm.*

"Immediately Jesus  
stretched out his hand  
and caught him, and said  
to him, 'O you of little  
faith, why did you doubt?'"

Matthew 14:31



Has God ever spoken to you in a tiny whisper? How did it feel?

Share a time in your life when God saved you during a stormy situation.

What does it mean to be an adoptive son or daughter of God?

08/15/23

## SOLEMNITY OF THE ASSUMPTION

### *Mass readings*

*The below readings are for Mass during the day.  
For Vigil readings see the ESS Mass journal or  
USCCB website.*

#### *Reading 1:*

*Revelation 11:19A; 12:1-6A, 10AB*

#### *Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 45:10, 11, 12, 16*

#### *Reading 2:*

*1 Corinthians 15:20-27*

#### *Gospel:*

*Luke 1:39-56*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Elizabeth greets Mary with joy,  
and Mary proclaims the  
greatness of the Lord.*

"For he has looked  
upon his handmaid's  
lowliness; behold,  
from now on will all  
ages call me blessed."

Luke 1:48



How do you think Mary felt when Elizabeth greeted her in that way?

What may it have been like for Elizabeth to know that  
Mary was carrying her Savior?

How can we pursue a relationship with Mary this week?

08/20/23

## TWENTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Isaiah 56:1, 6-7*

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*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8*

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*Reading 2:*

*Romans 11:13-15, 29-32*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 15:21-28*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus heals the daughter of a  
persistent Canaanite woman  
who asks for help and mercy.*

"Then Jesus said to her in  
reply, 'O woman, great is  
your faith! Let it be done  
for you as you wish.' And  
her daughter was healed  
from that hour."

Matthew 15:28



What does persistence in prayer look like?

What does "mercy" mean to you?

Share a time when God showed mercy to you.

08/27/23

## TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Isaiah 22:19-23*

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*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 138:1-2, 2-3, 6, 8*

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*Reading 2:*

*Romans 11:33-36*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 16:13-20*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus gives Peter the keys to the Kingdom, and the power to bind and loose.*

"And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it."

Matthew 16:18



Who is Jesus to you? A friend, an acquaintance, a teacher?

How do you think Peter felt when Jesus said He would build  
His Church on him?

Peter accepted the call to leadership. Who have we led to Jesus?



09/03/23

## TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Jeremiah 20:7-9*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 63:2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Romans 12:1-2*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 16:21-27*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus tells His disciples that He will be killed, and that we must all take up our crosses and follow Him.*

"Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.'"

Matthew 16:24



Share a time in your life when God brought you down a challenging path.

What does it mean to thirst for the Lord?

In what ways are you tempted to conform to the world?

09/10/23

## TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Ezekiel 33:7-9*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Romans 13:8-10*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 18:15-20*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus tells His disciples what to  
do when someone does  
something wrong, or hurts  
someone else.*

"For where two or three  
are gathered together in  
my name, there am I in  
the midst of them."

Matthew 18:20



When you see someone doing something wrong, how do you respond?  
With gentleness or spite? Or are you afraid to speak up? How can we  
imitate Christ in these situations?

What communities are you a part of? Why is it important  
to be a part of a community?

How does loving your neighbor go beyond just the commandments?

09/17/23

## TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

Sirach 27:30—28:7

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*Responsorial Psalm:*

Psalm 103:1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-12

---

*Reading 2:*

Romans 14:7-9

---

*Gospel:*

Matthew 18:21-35

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus teaches His disciples  
about forgiveness through a  
parable of the unmerciful  
servant.*

"Moved with compassion,  
the master of that  
servant let him go and  
forgave him the loan."

Matthew 18:27



How would you describe mercy? Does it come easily, or is it a challenge? Share a time you experienced mercy.

Who is someone in your life who is slow to anger and rich in compassion?

Share a time when it was difficult to forgive someone.

09/24/23

## TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Isaiah 55:6-9*

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*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 145:2-3, 8-9, 17-18*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Phillipians 1:20C-24, 27A*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 20:1-16A*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus teaches His disciples  
about the mercy of God in His  
kingdom through the parable of  
the vineyard owner who paid all  
the workers, even those who  
arrived later.*

"Thus, the last will be  
first, and the first will  
be last."

Matthew 20:16



How often do you call upon the Lord? How can we create the habit to frequently call upon the Lord?

How would our lives be different if we treated one another as if the Lord was near to all who call upon Him?

Would you be frustrated with the landowner's generosity? How can we be more generous to one another and with others in our community?



10/01/23

## TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Ezekiel 18:25-28*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Phillipians 2:1-11*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 21:28-32*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus teaches the chief priests  
that those who do the will of the  
Father will enter the Kingdom.*

"When John came to you in  
the way of righteousness,  
you did not believe him;  
but tax collectors and  
prostitutes did..."

Matthew 21:32



How do you think the chief priests reacted when Jesus told them the story? How did the tax collectors and prostitutes do the will of the Father that the priests did not?

How does Jesus' story change our hearts towards our enemies?

What did God ask of you this week? How did you respond?

10/01/23

## TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Isaiah 5:1-7*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 80:9, 12, 13-14, 15-16, 19-20*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Phillipians 4:6-9*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 21:33-43*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus prophesies about His death and the worldwide Church.*

"Therefore, I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that will produce its fruit."

Matthew 21:43



What does the world "expectation" mean to you? Do we ever expect God to answer our prayers?

In the second reading, St. Paul tells us to pray having no anxiety, in prayer, petition, and thanksgiving. What is your favorite way to pray?

Gather in prayer as a family to present to God what you need.

10/15/23

## TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Isaiah 25:6-10A*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 23:1-3A, 3B-4, 5, 6*

---

*Reading 2:*

*Phillipians 4:12-14, 19-20*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 22:1-14*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus teaches us that all who  
respond to Him will be invited  
to the Kingdom.*

"Go out, therefore, into  
the main roads and  
invite to the feast  
whomever you find."

Matthew 22:9



What stuck out to you about the readings this week?

How do you think the people in the story who came to the feast felt  
when they received an invitation?

Share a time when you did not respond to what God asked.  
How did that change you?

10/22/23

## TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Isaiah 45:1, 4-6*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 96:1, 3, 4-5, 7-8, 9-10*

---

*Reading 2:*

*1 Thessalonians 1:1-5B*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 22:15-21*

### *Gospel in focus*

*The Pharisees try to trap Jesus  
with his words, but Jesus  
responds with wisdom.*

"At that he said to them,  
"Then repay to Caesar  
what belongs to Caesar  
and to God what  
belongs to God."

Matthew 22:21



Who represents "Caesar" – someone or something who oppresses  
you – in your life? A person, a group, a habit, a technology device?

How is God calling you to respond?

What does it mean to "give glory"?

How can we give the Lord glory as a family this week?



10/29/23

## THIRTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Exodus 22:20-26*

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*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 18:2-3, 3-4, 47, 51*

---

*Reading 2:*

*1 Thessalonians 1:5C-10*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 22:34-40*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus teaches us the greatest  
commandment: to love the Lord  
with our whole selves.*

"You shall love the  
Lord, your God, with all  
your heart, with all your  
soul, and with all your  
mind."

Matthew 22:37



Is it harder for you to love God, or love our neighbor? Why?  
How are they related?

What does it mean to love the Lord with all your mind? What about  
your heart? Your soul?

Share a time when you did something for your neighbor because of  
your love for God.

11/01/23

# SOLEMNITY OF ALL SAINTS

## Mass readings

Reading 1:

Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14

---

Responsorial Psalm:

Psalm 24:1BC-2, 3-4AB, 5-6

---

Reading 2:

1 John 3:1-3

---

Gospel:

Matthew 5:1-12A

## Gospel in focus

Jesus preaches the Sermon on the Mount.

“Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.”

Matthew 5:8



What does "sainthood" mean to you? Do you feel like it's possible for your life?

If you could be the patron saint of something, what would it be?

Which of the Beatitudes gives you hope?

11/05/23

# THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

## *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Malachi 1:14B—2:2B, 8-10*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 131:1, 2, 3*

---

*Reading 2:*

*1 Thessalonians 2:7B-9, 13*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 23:1-12*

## *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus calls out the hypocrisy of  
the Pharisees and scribes.*

"Whoever exalts himself  
will be humbled; but  
whoever humbles  
himself will be exalted."

Matthew 23:12



What does true humility mean to you?

Why do you think people brag or boast? What does it give us?

What are you proud of in your life? Is it hard to practice  
true humility around it? Why?

11/12/23

# THIRTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

## *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Wisdom 6:12-16*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 63:2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8*

---

*Reading 2:*

*1 Thessalonians 4:13-18*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 25:1-13*

## *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus calls us to stay awake and  
be ready for His return, as the  
wise women with oil for their  
lamps were ready for the  
bridegroom's arrival.*

"Therefore, stay awake,  
for you know neither  
the day nor the hour."

Matthew 25:13



What can we do to grow a deeper love for Jesus and His  
Church in our hearts?

What distracts us from our faith?

What can we do as a family to be focused on Jesus this week?



11/19/23

## THIRTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 128:1-2, 3, 4-5*

---

*Reading 2:*

*1 Thessalonians 5:1-6*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 25:14-30*

### *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus teaches us about using the gifts God has given us.*

"His master said to him, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities. Come, share your master's joy.'"

Matthew 25: 21



What small responsibilities do you have? How can you do them with a faithful heart?

What gifts has God given you? How is He asking you to use them for His Kingdom?

What keeps you from using the gifts God has given you?

11/26/23

# SOLEMNITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

## *Mass readings*

*Reading 1:*

*Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-17*

---

*Responsorial Psalm:*

*Psalm 23:1-2, 2-3, 5-6*

---

*Reading 2:*

*1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 28*

---

*Gospel:*

*Matthew 25:31-46*

## *Gospel in focus*

*Jesus tells of the final judgment,  
and how all will be judged on what  
we did for the least among us.*

"Then the king will say to  
those on his right, 'Come,  
you who are blessed by my  
Father. Inherit the kingdom  
prepared for you from the  
foundation of the world.'"

Matthew 25:34



The Corporal Works of Mercy are: feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, shelter the homeless, visit the sick, visit the prisoners, bury the dead, and give alms to the poor. How can we live these out in our home and community?

Which of Jesus' commands on how we treat the poor is the most difficult?  
Why? Which one is easiest?

What can your family do this week to serve someone else?

*before you go*

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



### Ablaze Families Community

*[ablaze.us/ablaze-families](https://ablaze.us/ablaze-families)*

Join the Ablaze Families online community and find more parenting resources to raise saints.



### Ablaze Parent Courses

*[ablazefamilies.mykajabi.com](https://ablazefamilies.mykajabi.com)*

Online Catholic parenting courses that help you bring your kids to heaven while growing in faith yourself.



### ESS Mass Journal

*[everysacredsunday.com/journal](https://everysacredsunday.com/journal)*

A keepsake quality hardcover journal with full Sunday Mass readings and space for notes to help you prepare and pray.



### The Sunday Series

*[everysacredsunday.com/sundayseries](https://everysacredsunday.com/sundayseries)*

Free weekly reflections on the Sunday Mass readings from a variety of Catholic writers, sent directly to your inbox.

## Questions or comments?

*We'd love to hear from you! Email us at [hello@everysacredsunday.com](mailto:hello@everysacredsunday.com), and thank you for joining us in saying "yes!" to God, one Sunday at a time!*