



SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH

Corner of E. First Avenue and Hamlet Streets

Church Address: 893 Hamlet Street, Columbus, Ohio 43201

Office Mailing Address: 168 E. Lincoln Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215

(Territorial Parish ~ Est. 1875)

(614) 294-5319

Fax: (614) 294-4303

www.sacredheartchurchcolumbus.org

Msgr. Frank P. Lane, Parochial Administrator

MASSES:

Saturday: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday: 11:00 a.m.

Weekdays and Holy Days:

(See Mass Schedule inside Bulletin)

PARISH OFFICE/STAFF:

Aggie Howard, Executive Assistant, ahoward@sjbitaliana.org

Victoria Scruggs, Secretary, vgammell@sjbitaliana.org

Office Hours, St. John the Baptist and Sacred Heart Church:

Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Administration of both parishes is done through the office at St. John the Baptist – 168 E. Lincoln Street. Requests for copies of sacramental records, scheduling of Masses and other sacramental celebrations, hall rental and other non-emergency needs should be made during regular office hours or email info@sjbitaliana.org. Please notify the Parish Office of any changes, such as address or telephone, etc., by calling during regular hours or email info@sjbitaliana.org.

MUSIC MINISTRY:

Gina M. Bishop, Music Director

John C. Huffman, Organist

BULLETIN DEADLINE:

Announcements must be submitted in writing by Tuesday at noon.

PARISH MEMBERSHIP: We welcome you into our Parish Families. Membership in the parish consists of two parts:

Registration: Please fill out form and return to Office.

Participation: As a member of the Church, you are accepting the responsibility of weekly worship as well as supporting God's work here through giving of yourself, your time and talents, and a worthy Sunday offering to show your love for God and your gratitude for His many favors.

RECONCILIATION: Saturday: 3:00-3:45 p.m.

BAPTISM:

Preparation is required for the reception of the sacrament. Parents are encouraged to call the Rectory and set up an appointment before the birth of their child.

MATRIMONY:

Arrangements should be made at least six or more months in advance. A marriage preparation program is required.

SACRAMENT OF THE SICK:

In cases of emergencies, please call anytime. Please notify the Parish Office for Communion calls to the sick, shut-ins. Due to privacy laws, if parishioners wish to be visited in the hospital, they should contact the Parish Office directly and give the information regarding the hospitalization. **If you are scheduled for surgeries or other medical procedures**, please contact the Parish Office in advance so that a priest can administer Anointing of the Sick prior to the procedure.

SACRED HEART

Dear Friends in Christ,

I want to thank the people of **Sacred Heart** parish for their generous response to the “**Appeal.**” We have exceeded our goal and earned some financial rewards for the parish. Every dollar over goal remains with **Sacred Heart**. Our goal was **\$13,338.74** So far, we have pledged **\$16,326.74** with an average of **\$2,988.00**. There were **47%** of parishioners that pledged.

Just a reminder, we will have a bumpy schedule during the first **two weeks of July**. I will be on vacation from **July 1-12**. We will not have daily **Masses** in both parishes and will not have **Adoration on the 4th of July**. We will have **Adoration on July 11th** and, if I can find a substitute, **Mass** that evening at **6:30 p.m.** I hope this is not an inconvenience for anyone. There are ample opportunities for daily **Mass** in surrounding parishes. I will clarify this within the next week.

Roberts Electric has said that the electrical work for the air conditioning will be completed by **July 12**. Let's hope they come through!

Have a great week!
Msgr. Frank Lane

Please contact Sacred Heart or St. John the Baptist Church if you are interested in becoming Catholic, receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation or Baptism. For more information, contact the Parish Office at 614-294-5319.

For Weddings and Funerals, please contact Aggie Howard at ahoward@sjbitaliana.org or call the office at 614-294-5319.

PLEASE SIGN UP FOR ADORATION: In celebration of the Jubilee 350th year of the Apparition of the Sacred Heart to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, Sacred Heart Church will be open from **10:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.** every **Thursday** until the **Feast of the Sacred Heart on June 27, 2025**. During that time, the **Blessed Sacrament** will be exposed for **Adoration**, there will be **Mass at 6:30 p.m.**, followed by **Confessions and Benediction until 7:30 p.m.** There must be someone present throughout the entire day and help is needed! Please, sign up for an hour or half-hour of **Adoration on Thursday**. There are sign-up sheets at both church entrances. **Your help is needed for this especially important mission!** In these troubled times in the country, the Church, and the world, this is a wonderful opportunity for us to seek our own personal freedom from all darkness and to help heal all in our world that is so broken.

**MASS SCHEDULE
 AT SACRED HEART AND
 ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST IN JULY.**

There will be NO MASS or Adoration at Sacred Heart on July 4th. Adoration and Benediction will still take place from 10:00 a.m.-7:30 p.m. on July 11th. There will be NO MASSES said at St. John the Baptist beginning July 1-3rd, and July 8th-10th.

LECTORS

Saturday, June 22, 2024, 4:00 p.m.	Joe Stefanov
Sunday, June 23, 2024, 11:00 a.m.	Chris Urban
Saturday, June 29, 2024, 4:00 p.m.	Neil Sika
Sunday, June 30, 2024, 11:00 a.m.	Dennis Jacob

If you are unable to attend Mass, please contact Bob Longstreth. Thank you!

MASSSES FOR THE WEEK

- Sunday:
June 23** St. John the Baptist – 9:30 a.m.
 + **Cesidio Capoccia & Gerardo Cugini**
by Capoccia & Cugini Family
 Sacred Heart – 11:00 a.m.
 + **Bud L.**
- Monday:
June 24** St. John's – 9:00 a.m.
 + **Richard Lumpe**
by Fr. Michael Lumpe
- Tuesday:
June 25** St. John's – 9:00 a.m.
 + **Uncle Joe Pishitelli & Intention for Judy Pishitelli**
by Mr. & Mrs. John McAvoy
 Padre Pio – 1:00 p.m.
 + **Cesidio Capoccia**
by Maria Capoccia & Family
- Wednesday:
June 26** St. John's – 6:00 p.m.
Living & Deceased Members of St. John's
- Thursday:
June 27** Sacred Heart – 6:30 p.m.
Family of Ms. Colleen Kent
by the McCallum Family
- Friday:
June 28** No Mass
- Saturday:
June 29** Sacred Heart – 4:00 p.m.
Living and Deceased Members of Sacred Heart
- Sunday:
June 30** St. John's – 9:30 a.m.
 + **Vincent Catalogna**
by "Friends of St. John's"
 Sacred Heart – 11:00 a.m.
 + **Deanna Wilson**
by Aggie Howard & Family

Confession and Adoration

- Confessions:** St. John's – Sunday – 8:30 a.m.
 Sacred Heart – Saturday – 3:00 p.m.
 Sacred Heart – Thursday – 7:00 p.m.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: Sacred Heart Thursdays, 10:00 a.m.-7:30 p.m.

We cannot speak of Jesus without joy, because faith is a wonderful love story to be shared. Bearing witness to Jesus, and doing something for others in His name, means testifying to this beautiful gift that words alone cannot express. @Pontifex

2024 THE APPEAL – “RESPOND TO HIS LOVE”: The theme of **The Appeal**, inspires us, as people of faith, to share joyfully the **Good News of Christ** to those who most need to feel **His** love. Works of kindness and assistance, sometimes in the smallest way, can bring about a profound change in a person’s life. Through **The Appeal**, we have an opportunity to bring about a positive change in the lives of many of **God’s** people. As of **June 16, 2024**, our **Goal** is **\$13,338.74**, **Pledged: \$16,326.74** and **Balance** is over **\$2,988.00**. Thank you in advance for your prayerful generosity.

WEEKLY STEWARDSHIP AT SACRED HEART

June 16, 2024

Number of Envelopes used Sunday 20

In Env:	\$	840.00
Loose:	\$	1,455.00
Total	\$	2,295.00
Less Diocesan 8% Assessment	\$	-(183.60)
	\$	2,111.40

	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Difference (\$)</u>
This Week:	\$2,800.00	\$2,295.00	-\$505.00

DONATION QR CODE AND WEBSITE INFORMATION



Please help Sacred Heart maintain this beautiful 100-year-old building with a donation by using the QR code. Thank you!



SH Collection Counters – Monday, June 24, 2024

Donna Bowers and Rita Ward

SH Collection Counters - Monday, July 1, 2024

David and Gilda Cottrill

PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION 2024-2025

One of the most important aspects a parish must have to survive is a strong religious education program. **Sacred Heart** classes will begin on **September 15th** in the **Rectory Office**, regardless of the number of students who are registered. **Grandchildren of grandparents are welcome if the grandparents are registered in the parish.** Class begins immediately following the **11:00 a.m. Sunday Mass** and will last **45 minutes**. Please call **Sharon Curtin** at **614-563-8405**, or email sharon@mcurtin.com for information. Thank you.



AROUND US

LITURGICAL CALENDAR: The month of **June** falls within the liturgical season of **Ordinary Time**, which is represented by the liturgical color green and is dedicated to **The Sacred Heart of Jesus**.

YOU ARE INVITED TO PRAY FOR THE HOLY FATHER’S JUNE INTENTION: *We pray that migrants fleeing from war or hunger, forced to undertake journeys full of danger and violence, find welcome and new opportunities in the countries that receive them.*

AN ACT OF CONSECRATION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

*Most sweet **Jesus**, humbly kneeling at Thy feet, we renew the consecration of our family to **Thy Divine Heart**. Be **Thou our King forever!** In Thee we have full and entire confidence. **May Thy spirit** penetrate our thoughts, our desires, our words and our deeds. Bless our undertakings, share in our joys, in our trials, and in our labors. Grant us to know **Thee** better, to love **Thee** more, to serve **Thee** without faltering. **Amen***

PETER’S PENCE COLLECTION: Today is the **Peter’s Pence Collection**, a worldwide collection that supports the work of the **Universal Church**, including the work of the **Holy See** and the charitable works of **Pope Francis**. Take this opportunity to join with **Pope Francis** and be a sign of mercy to our suffering brothers and sisters. Please be generous today. **For more information, visit www.obolodisanpietro.valen.html.**

PILGRIMAGE TO ITALY: Please join **Fr. Timothy Huffman**, from the **Diocese of Steubenville**, on a pilgrimage to **Italy!** Highlights include the **Sistine Chapel**, the **Vatican Museums**, the **Holy House of Loretto**, **San Giovanni Rotondo** (home of **St. Padre Pio**), **Assisi** and so much more! **November 1-11, 2024.** **\$4,299.00/per person** based on double occupancy. Registration deadline is **June 28, 2024.** **For more information, please visit www.QoHTours.com or call us at 1-800-213-4295**

ST. MOTHER TERESA CATHOLIC WOMEN RECOGNITION AWARDS: Each year, this program recognizes and honors those lay women within the **Diocese of Columbus** who have, in their everyday lives, striven to exemplify the work of **Christ**. The **St. Mother Teresa Catholic Women Recognition Awards Luncheon** will take place **August 18th, 1:00-3:30 p.m.**, at **St. Agatha Church, Monsignor Kennedy Parish Hall, 1860 Northam Road, Columbus, Ohio 43221**. Register at dioceseofcolumbus.org/teresaaward. Nominations with essays are due **June 30** and can be submitted at columbuscatholic.org/teresanom. Please reach out to **Annette Roth, President, Diocesan Council of Catholic Women**, with any questions at DCCW@columbuscatholic.org.

Give thanks to the Lord; his love is everlasting



Grant, O Lord, that we may always revere and love Your Holy Name, for You never deprive of Your guidance those You set firm on the foundation of Your love. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen

Lectio Divina

SCRIPTURE READING + MEDITATION + PRAYER + CONTEMPLATION

“What page, what passage of the inspired books of the Old and New Testaments is not the truest of guides for human life?” ~Saint Benedict, from the *Rule of Saint Benedict* (73:3)

The month of June is dedicated to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

"Don't forget that you are a temple of God. The Holy Spirit – the Paraclete – is in the center of your soul: listen to Him, and follow His inspirations with docility."

+SAINT JOSEMARIA ESCRIVÁ

Monday, June 24 ~ Twelfth Week in the Season of Ordinary Time Solemnity of the Nativity of John the Baptist

Holy Gospel: Luke 1:57-66,80 When the time arrived for Elizabeth to have her child she gave birth to a son. Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy toward her, and they rejoiced with her. When they came on the eighth day to circumcise the child, they were going to call him Zechariah after his father, but his mother said in reply, "No. He will be called John." But they answered her, "There is no one among your relatives who has this name." So they made signs, asking his father what he wished him to be called. He asked for a tablet and wrote, "John is his name," and all were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened, his tongue freed, and he spoke blessing God. Then fear came upon all their neighbors, and all these matters were discussed throughout the hill country of Judea. 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. The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the desert until the day of his manifestation to Israel.

Meditation: John the Baptist's life was fueled by one burning passion – to point others to Jesus Christ and to the coming of God's kingdom. Scripture tells us that John was filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb (Luke 1:15, 41) by Christ himself, whom Mary had just conceived by the Holy Spirit. When Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth, John leaped in the womb of Elizabeth as they were filled with the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:41). The fire of the Spirit dwelt in John and made him the forerunner of the coming Messiah. John was led by the Spirit into the wilderness prior to his ministry where he was tested and grew in the word of God. John's clothing was reminiscent of the prophet Elijah (see Kings 1:8). John broke the prophetic silence of the previous centuries when he began to speak the word of God to the people of Israel. His message was similar to the message of the Old Testament prophets who chided the people of God for their unfaithfulness and who tried to awaken true repentance in them. Among a people unconcerned with the things of God, it was his work to awaken their interest, unsettle them from their complacency, and arouse in them enough good will to recognize and receive Christ when he came. What is the significance of John the Baptist and his message for our lives? When God acts to save us he graciously fills us with his Holy Spirit and makes our faith come "alive" to his promises. Each and every day the Lord is ready to renew us in faith, hope, and love. Like John the Baptist, the Lord invites each of us to make our life a free-will offering to God. God wants to fill us with his glory all the days of our lives, from birth through death. Renew the offering of your life to God and give him thanks for his mercy and favor towards you.

Prayer: Grant, we pray, almighty God, that your family may walk in the way of salvation and, attentive to what Saint John the Precursor urged, may come safely to the One he foretold, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: Do you marvel at the grace and work of God, especially in your personal life? The friends of Zechariah and Elizabeth marveled at the wonderful way in which God blessed them with a child. This child was destined by God for an important mission. The last verses in the last book of the Old Testament, taken from the prophet Malachi, speak of the Lord's messenger, the prophet Elijah who will return to "turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers" (ref. Malachi 4:6). We see the beginning of the fulfillment of this word when the Angel Gabriel announced to Zechariah the marvelous birth and mission of John the Baptist (ref. Luke 1:17). When this newly born child was about to

be named, as customary on the eighth day, his relatives quibbled over what name to give him. This child, however, has been named from above! And Elizabeth is firm in her faith and determined to see that God be glorified through this child. The name "John" means "the Lord is gracious". In the birth of John and in the birth of Jesus the Messiah we see the grace of God breaking forth into a world broken by sin and without hope. John's miraculous birth shows the mercy and favor of God in preparing his people for the coming of its Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Of Note: The Jewish historian Josephus, giving testimony to the holiness of John the Baptist, wrote: "He was indeed a man endued with all virtue, who exhorted the Jews to the practice of justice towards men and piety towards God; and also to baptism, preaching that they would become acceptable to God if they renounced their sins, and to the cleanness of their bodies added purity of soul." Thus Jews and Christians unite in reverence and love for this prophet-saint whose life is an incomparable example of both humility and courage.

Tuesday, June 25 ~ Twelfth Week in the Season of Ordinary Time

Holy Gospel: Matthew 7:12-14 Jesus said to his disciples: "Do not give what is holy to dogs, or throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them underfoot, and turn and tear you to pieces." Do to others whatever you would have them do to you. This is the Law and the Prophets. "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction and those who enter through it are many. How narrow the gate and constricted the road that leads to life. And those who find it are few."

Meditation: Jesus' expression about "pearls before swine" is concerns not exclusivity, but with purity — the purity of the faith which has been entrusted to us by an all-loving and all-wise God. The early church referenced this expression with the Eucharist or the Lord's Table. In the liturgy of the early church, a proclamation was given shortly before communion: Holy things to the holy. The *Didache*, a first century church manual stated: Let no one eat or drink of your Eucharist except those baptized into the name of the Lord; for, as regards this, the Lord has said, "Give not that which is holy unto dogs." The Lord invites us to his table, but we must approach worthily.

Prayer: Grant, O Lord, that we may always revere and love your holy name, for you never deprive of your guidance those you set firm on the foundation of your love. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: Jesus concludes his discourse with the reminder that we must treat our neighbor in the same way we wish to be treated by God and by others. We must not just avoid doing harm to our neighbor, we must actively seek his or her welfare. In doing so, we fulfill the law and the prophets, namely what God requires of us – loving God with all that we have and are and loving our neighbor as ourselves. The personal love we show to our neighbor is fueled by the love that God has poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5). The Holy Spirit is every ready to transform our lives in Jesus' way of love. Do you thirst for holiness and for the fire of God's love? If not, or if you find yourself repeatedly falling short in this regard, pray the prayer of St. Clement XI of Rome: "Let me love you, my Lord and my God, and see myself as I really am – a pilgrim in this world, a Christian called to respect and love all whose lives I touch, those in authority over me or those under my authority, my friends and my enemies. Help me to conquer anger with gentleness, greed by generosity, apathy by fervor. Help me to forget myself and reach out towards others."

Wednesday, June 26 ~ Twelfth Week in the Season of Ordinary Time Saint Josemaría Escrivá, Priest; Founder of Opus Dei

Holy Gospel: Matthew 7:15-20 Jesus said to his disciples: "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but underneath are ravenous wolves. By their fruits you will know them. Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? Just so, every good tree bears good fruit, and a rotten tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a rotten tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. So by their fruits you will know them."

Meditation: What do grapes, thorns, figs, and thistles have to teach us about the kingdom of God? The imagery used by Jesus would have been very familiar to his audience. A certain thorn bush had berries which resembled grapes. And a certain thistle had a flower, which at least from a distance, resembled the fig. Isn't it the same today? What we "hear" might have a resemblance of the truth, but, in fact, when you inspect it closely, it's actually false. False prophets or teachers abound today as much as they did in biblical times. But with the internet and plethora of cable TV channels, the messages of an army of false

prophets have the ability to work their way into our homes, into our family lives, and – if we're not careful – into our minds and hearts. Keep up your spiritual guard! Don't let your moral compass be misguided by false prophets!

Prayer: O God, who alone are holy and without whom no one is good, command, we pray, through the intercession of Saint Josemaría Escrivá, that we be numbered among those who do not deserve to be deprived of your glory. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: What's the test of a true or false teacher? Jesus connects soundness with good fruit. Something is sound when it is free from defect, decay, or disease and is healthy. Good fruit is the result of sound living – living according to moral truth and upright character. The prophet Isaiah warned against the dangers of falsehood: Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness (ref. Isaiah 5:20). The fruits of falsehood produce an easy religion which takes the iron out of religion, the cross out of Christianity, and any teaching which eliminates the hard sayings of Jesus, and which push the judgments of God into the background and makes us think lightly of sin. How do we avoid falsehood in our personal lives? By being true – true to God, his word and his grace. And that takes character! Those who are true to God know that their strength lies not in themselves but in God who supplies what we need. The fruit of a disciple is marked by faith, hope and love, justice, prudence, fortitude and temperance. Do you cultivate good fruit in your life and reject whatever produces bad fruit?

Thursday, June 27 ~ Twelfth Week in the Season of Ordinary Time Saint Cyril of Alexandria, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Holy Gospel: Matthew 7:21-29 Jesus said to his disciples: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name? Did we not drive out demons in your name? Did we not do mighty deeds in your name?' Then I will declare to them solemnly, 'I never knew you. Depart from me, you evildoers.'" "Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. But it did not collapse; it had been set solidly on rock. And everyone who listens to these words of mine but does not act on them will be like a fool who built his house on sand. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. And it collapsed and was completely ruined." When Jesus finished these words, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.

Meditation: What's the significance of the story for us? The kind of foundation we build our lives upon will determine whether we can survive the storms and trials of life that are sure to come. Builders usually lay their foundations when the weather and soil conditions are at their best. It takes foresight to know how a foundation will stand up against adverse conditions. Building a house on a flood plain, such as a dry riverbed, is a sure bet for disaster! Jesus prefaced his story with a warning: We may fool one another with our words, but God cannot be deceived. He sees the heart as it truly is – with its motives, intentions, desires, and choices (Psalm 139:2). There is only one way in which a person's sincerity can be proved, and that is by one's practice. Fine words can never replace good deeds. Our character is revealed in the choices we make, especially when we must choose between what is true and false, good and evil. Do you cheat on an exam or on your income taxes, especially when it will cost you? Do you lie, or cover-up, when disclosing the truth will cause you pain or embarrassment? A true person is honest and reliable before God, neighbor, and oneself. Such a person's word can be taken as trustworthy.

Prayer: O God, who made the Bishop Saint Cyril of Alexandria and invincible champion of the divine motherhood of the most Blessed Virgin Martyr, grant, we pray, that we, who believe she is truly the Mother of God, may be saved through the Incarnation of Christ your Son. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: If you could foresee a threat to your life and the loss of your home and goods, wouldn't you take the necessary precautions to avoid such a disaster? Jesus' story of being swept away by flood waters and wind storms must have caught the attention of his audience who knew that terrific storms did occasionally sweep through their dry arid land without any warning signs. When Jesus described the builders who were unprepared for such a life-threatening storm, he likely had the following proverb in mind: When the storm has swept by, the wicked are gone, but the righteous stand firm for ever (ref. Proverbs 10:25).

About Saint Cyril of Alexandria: Saint Cyril is one of the great Greek Fathers of the Church. He was chosen by Divine Providence to be the shield and champion of the Church against Nestorius, who denied the unity of persons in Christ. If this heresy had succeeded, Mary would not be called the Mother of God. Excepting Sts. Athanasius and Augustine, his equal as a defender of orthodoxy can hardly be found in the Church's history. His greatest achievement was the successful direction of the ecumenical council at Ephesus (431), of which he was the soul (Pope Celestine had appointed him papal legate). In this council two important dogmas were defined—that there is but one person in Christ, and that Mary (in the literal sense of the word) can be called the Mother of God (*Theotokos*). His successful defense of the latter doctrine is his greatest title to honor. His writings show such depth and clarity that the Greeks called him the "seal of the fathers." He died in 444 A.D., after having been bishop for thirty-two years. In Rome, the basilica of St. Mary Major stands as a most venerable monument to the honor paid Mary at the Council of Ephesus. On the arch leading into the sanctuary important incidents in the lives of Jesus and Mary are depicted in mosaic.

**Friday, June 28 ~ Twelfth Week in the Season of Ordinary Time
Saint Irenaeus, Bishop and Martyr**

Holy Gospel: Matthew 8:1-4 When Jesus came down from the mountain, great crowds followed him. And then a leper approached, did him homage, and said, "Lord, if you wish, you can make me clean." He stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, "I will do it. Be made clean." His leprosy was cleansed immediately. Then Jesus said to him, "See that you tell no one, but go show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them."

Meditation: What can hold us back from approaching the Lord with faith and confidence that he can change and transform us – perhaps fear, pride, and the risk of losing one's reputation and friends? Jesus did something which was both remarkable and unthinkable at the same time. He approached the "unapproachables" – he touched the untouchables. Lepers were outcasts of society. Their physical condition was terrible as they slowly lost the use of their limbs and withered away with open sores over their entire bodies. They were not only shunned but regarded as "already dead" even by their relatives. The Jewish law forbade anyone from touching or approaching a leper, lest ritual defilement occur. The leper did something quite remarkable. He approached Jesus confidently and humbly, expecting that Jesus could and would heal him. Normally a leper would be stoned or at least warded off if he tried to come near a rabbi. Jesus not only grants the man his request, but he demonstrates the personal love, compassion, and tenderness of God in his physical touch. The medical knowledge of his day would have regarded such contact as grave risk for incurring infection. Jesus met the man's misery with compassion and tender kindness. He communicated the love and mercy of God in a sign that spoke more eloquently than words. He touched the man and made him clean – not only physically but spiritually as well.

Prayer: O God, who called the Bishop Saint Irenaeus to confirm true doctrine and the peace of the Church, grant, we pray, through his intercession, that, being renewed in faith and charity, we may always be intent on fostering unity and concord. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: There once was a man named Francis, who at one point in his life met a leper on the road as he journeyed towards Assisi in Italy. "Though the leper caused him no small disgust and horror, he nonetheless, got off the horse and prepared to kiss the leper. But when the leper put out his hand as though to receive something, he received money along with a kiss" (from *The Life of St. Francis* by Thomas of Celano). Francis did what seemed humanly impossible because he was filled with the love and compassion of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit inflames our hearts with the fire of Christ's love that we may reach out to others with compassionate care, especially to those who have been rejected, mistreated, and left utterly alone. This begs the question: do you allow the Holy Spirit to fill your heart with the love and compassion of Christ for others so that you may reach out and help others, serve others?

Scripture passages (NAB translation) courtesy of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops;
prayers are from *The Roman Missal*, Catholic Book Publishing, 2011;
information about saints, solemnities, feasts and memorials courtesy of Catholic Culture.

frlumpe:2024



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