

Sacred Heart

CATHOLIC CHURCH

Corner of E. First Avenue
& Hamlet Street

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

Parish Office
(614) 294-5319

Msgr. Frank Lane, Administrator

(Territorial Parish ~ Est. 1875)

MASSES:

Saturday: 4:00 p.m.; **Sunday:** 11:00 a.m.

WEEKDAYS & HOLY DAYS:

See Mass Schedule inside the Bulletin.

PARISH OFFICE/STAFF:

Administration is done through the office of Saint John the Baptist, 168 Lincoln Street. Requests for copies of sacramental records, scheduling of Masses and other sacramental celebrations, and 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 number, etc., by calling during regular office Hours.

MUSIC MINISTRY:

Gina M. Bishop, Music Director
John C. Huffman, Organist

PARISH MEMBERSHIP:

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

Registration: Please complete the parish registration and return to Parish Office.

OFFICE STAFF

Aggie Howard, Executive Assistant, ahoward@sjbitaliana.org
Victoria Scruggs, Secretary & Bulletin Editor, vgammell@sjbitaliana.org
Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

RECONCILIATION:

Saturday: 3:30 p.m.; **Sunday:** 10:30 a.m.

BAPTISM:

Preparation is required for the reception of the sacrament.
Parents are encouraged to call the office
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.

BULLETIN DEADLINE:

Announcements must be submitted in writing by Tuesday at noon.

www.sacredheartchurchcolumbus.org

SACRED HEART

Dear Sacred Heart Parishioner

100th ANNIVERSARY MASS at SACRED HEART

A reminder to everyone of both Sacred Heart and St. John the Baptist Parish – on **November 19th** after the **11:30 a.m. Mass** at Sacred Heart, celebrated by **Bishop Fernandes**, there will be an informal social gathering in **Ryan Hall**. The parishioners of **St. John the Baptist** are invited to join the people of **Sacred Heart** and attend the **Mass** and the **after-Mass Gathering**.

The **Young Catholic Professionals** are arranging to have food trucks in the parking lot and there will be refreshments and dining tables in **Ryan Hall**.

A Reminder: There are **RCIA** classes on **Wednesday** evenings at **7:00 p.m.** in the **Library** at **St. John the Baptist**. While it is preparatory for those entering the **Church**, it is also open to all adults, **Catholic** or not, who would like to expand their understanding of the **Faith**.

Please remember to vote on November 7, this coming **Tuesday**, if you have not already done so. Help all who value the dignity of women and children and all human persons by voting:

NO on Issue #1.

Thank you and many Blessings!
Msgr. Frank Lane

If you are interested in becoming Catholic, receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation, or Baptism, please contact Sacred Heart Office at 614-294-5319 for more information.

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

MASSES AT SACRED HEART

Saturday 11/4	4:00 p.m.	+ Albert Root by Patrick Martin & Thomas Sinacola
Sunday 11/5	11:00 a.m.	Carole Morbitzer by William & Suzanne Paszke
Thursday 11/9	6:30 p.m.	+ George E. Hardgrove Sr. by Mary Hardgrove Sutphen
Saturday 11/11	4:00 p.m.	+ Ann M. Pizzurro by John & Nancy Pawlowski
Sunday 11/12	11:00 a.m.	+ Clara L.

**Weekly Stewardship at Sacred Heart
October 29, 2023**

Number of Envelopes used Sunday 12

In Env:	\$ 526.00
Loose:	\$ 632.25
Holy Day:	\$ 5.00
Total	\$ 1,163.25
Less Diocesan 8% Assessment	\$ -(93.06)
	\$ 1,070.19
Votives	\$ 122.00
World Mission Sunday	\$ 20.00
Community Outreach	\$ 2.00
Total	\$ 144.00

Mass Time Change: Mass times at Sacred Heart are **Thursdays** at 6:30 p.m. and **St. John the Baptist** are **Mondays, Tuesdays** at 9:00 a.m. and **Wednesday evenings** at 6:00 p.m. followed by **OCIA** at 7:00 p.m. at **St. John the Baptist Parish Library** on the second floor.

?? ?? *How is Sacred Heart Doing?* ?? ??

Budgeted Offertory for Fiscal Year (7/1/23-6/30/24)

	Budgeted	Actual	Difference (\$)
This Wk.:	\$ 2,800.00	\$ 1,163.25	-(\$ 1,636.75)
FYTD:	\$ 43,400.00	\$ 32,907.25	-(\$ 10,492.75)

**Income and Expenses from September 1,
through September 30, 2023.**

Income:	\$ 15,440.20
Expense:	\$ 25,023.45
Difference:	- \$ 9,583.25

Donate 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 for Monday, November 6, 2023
Rita Ward and Mike Padovan

SH Collection Counters for Monday, November 13, 2023
Donna Bowers and Rita Ward



Office Hours: Parish office hours are Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

RCIA: Classes are now being offered for both **Sacred Heart** and **St. John the Baptist** parishes on **Wednesday** evenings right after the **6:00 p.m. Mass** at **St. John**. **RCIA** class starts at **7:00 p.m.** in the Parish Library located on the **second** floor. This class is required for anyone who wants to enter the **Catholic Church**, for those Baptized **Catholic** but did not complete the Initiation **Sacraments**, as well as those who simply desire to deepen their understanding of **Catholicism**. **Questions? Contact Sharon Curtin at 614-563-8405, or at SCurtin@sjbitaliana.org.**

S.H. Young Adult Group: Reminder that the **Sacred Heart Young Adult Group** will meet after **6:30 p.m. Mass** followed by **30 minutes** of Adoration and Confession on **November 16**. Please join us afterwards in **Ryan Hall** for fellowship and a talk with **Msgr. Frank Lane!**

Praying the Rosary: You are invited to join fellow **Sacred Heart Parishioners** in praying the **Rosary** prior to **Sunday Mass**. Parishioners meet at **10:30 a.m.**

Mass Intentions: Sacred Heart is in need of **Mass Intentions** to cover **Thursdays, Saturdays, and Sundays**. Please consider having a **Mass** said for your loved ones. Thank you!

Memorial Book: Once again, this year, we have an opportunity to list loved ones in our **Memorial Book**. The book is located at the rear of the church near the center aisle. The names entered in the book will be remembered at every **Mass** celebrated at **Sacred Heart** during the month of **November**.

Volunteers Needed to Clean Church: In preparation for the **100th Anniversary** of the first **Mass** offered in this building, we will do a cleaning of the church on **Saturday, November 11 at 9:30 a.m.** Many hands will make short work of a large task. While we have a company that takes care of general cleaning, we will be cleaning in the sanctuary to include both **altars, marble steps** on the high altar, **ledges** on the high altar, **all furniture** i.e. **ambo, stalls, presiders chair, credence table, communion rail**, and anything else that doesn't move. We will also clean the chapel and side altars to include kneelers and votive candle stands. The **Sacristy** and main body of the church, we will clean the door ledges, pews, **Stations of the Cross, confessionals**, and anything else that may have dust on it. With a large turnout, we should be able to complete the task in less than **two hours**. Sign-up sheets will be at all entrances. Please print your name and telephone number legibly so that in case something causes a change in the schedule, we can notify you. Questions? See **Jim** before/after **Mass**.

Announcement

Sacred Heart's 100th Anniversary Celebration will be **November 19, 2023, at 11:30 a.m. Mass**. If you would like to volunteer to put this celebration together, sign-up sheets will be in the back of the church and the side entrance of the church. Thank you!



Join Us in Ryan Hall: Please consider coming over to **Ryan Hall** after **Mass** on for coffee, donuts, and fellowship. This is a time to get to know fellow parishioners and just relax with a good cup of coffee. We look forward to seeing you there!

Parish School of Religion: Growing in faith means living a life centered on **Christ**, through active participation in **Sunday** liturgy (**Mass**), the sacraments, and generous service to others. Children with strong faith and values make for happier homes and have proven to do better in school.

Our Parish School of Religion is held every **Sunday** at **St. John the Baptist** following the **9:30 a.m. Mass** in the Parish Library on the second floor. Everyone is welcome, including non-**Catholic** children. Hope to see you there! Questions? Contact **Sharon Curtin** at **614-563-8405**, or **SCurtin@sjbitaliana.org**.

AROUND US

Liturgical Year: The entire month of **November** falls during the liturgical season known as **Ordinary Time**, which is represented by the liturgical color green. The month is dedicated to the **Holy Souls in Purgatory** whose feast is celebrated on **November 2**.

The Holy Father's Intentions for the Month of November 2023: *We pray for the Holy Father; as he fulfills his mission, may he continue to accompany the flock entrusted to him, with the help of the Holy Spirit.*

November 26: Solemnity of Christ the King: The last **Sunday** of the **Liturgical Year**. This feast is a public, social, and official declaration of the royal rights of **Jesus**, as **God the Creator**, as **The Word Incarnate**, and as **Redeemer**.

National Vocation Awareness Week: Did you know that in our country, compared to **60** years ago, there are **20,000** fewer priests and **129,000** fewer religious sisters? At the same time, the **Catholic** population has grown steadily. During **Vocation Awareness Week**, please pray that young people in today's society will hear and respond to **God's** call. And do your part to encourage them to consider the priesthood and consecrated life.

Gold Mass: **Dr. Richard Fitzgerald, Diocesan Director of Music**, would like to encourage parish members throughout the **Diocese**, as well as **Christians** from other church communities, to attend the **Second Annual Gold Mass at St. Joseph Cathedral on Friday evening, November 17 at 7:30 p.m.** The **Gold Mass** is the **Votive Mass** of the **Holy Spirit** offered for our musicians, to affirm them in their ministries, and to foster a greater sense of community among them. The color gold has been chosen because of its association with instruments, celebration, and performance. Priests from the **Diocese** are welcome to concelebrate with **Bishop Earl Fernandes** for this joyful and majestic liturgy, enhanced by the exquisite music of **Palestrina, Orlando di Lasso**, and current **Mass** settings by **Dr. Fitzgerald**. **Musicians** from various parishes will be participating along with the renowned cathedral choir, and all will be uplifted by the magnificent resonance of the **Fritts Grand Gallery Organ**. Priests desiring to concelebrate should **RSVP** to the **Chancery Office**. Following the **Mass**, all are invited to a reception in the undercroft to congratulate and thank the musicians.

Today's Gospel: The **Gospel** is from **Matthew 23:1-12**. As this picture of the **Pharisees** is painted by none other than **Christ** himself, we can have no doubt but that the description given is the truth. Despite their great knowledge of "the law and the prophets" – and of their many strict observances of that law, they were not pleasing to **God**. All their good works and all their learning were spoiled by the vice of pride which made them seek earthly glory for themselves and prevented them from giving glory or thanks to **God**. Our divine **Lord** warned His disciples, and through them, all of us, to avoid the vice of pride. We know that every material and spiritual talent we have has been given us by **God**, so we must give glory to **God** for any gifts we possess and not to ourselves. **St. Paul** reminds us of this fact when he asks us: "**What have you that you have not received, and if you have received it, why glory in it as if it were your own?**" We owe everything we have to **God**, and we should use all the gifts He has given us for His honor and glory, and for that purpose alone. Do we always do this? Are we never tempted to look down on our less fortunate brothers? The best of us can profit from an examination of conscience along these lines. If our external observance of the **Christian** rule of life is motivated by love and gratitude to **God**, all is well. But if our hearts and our motives in our religious behavior are self-glorification, we are in a dangerous position. The sinners and harlots of **Christ's** day repented and were received into His kingdom; the **Pharisees**, unable to repent, were left outside.

– Excerpted from *The Sunday Readings*
by Fr. Kevin O'Sullivan, O.F.M.



Prayer:
Almighty and merciful God, by whose gift Your faithful offer You right and praiseworthy service, grant, we pray, that we may hasten without stumbling to receive the things You have promised. 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 November is dedicated to the Holy Souls in Purgatory.

"Short and fleeting are the joys of this world's pleasures which endeavors to turn aside from the path of life those who are called to eternity. The faithful and religious spirit, therefore, must desire the things which are heavenly, and being eager for the Divine promises, lift itself to the love of the incorruptible Good and the hope of the true Light." +POPE SAINT LEO THE GREAT

Monday, November 6 ~ Thirty-First Week in Ordinary Time

Holy Gospel: Luke 14:12-14 On a Sabbath Jesus went to dine at the home of one of the leading Pharisees. He said to the host who invited him, "When you hold a lunch or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or sisters or your relatives or your wealthy neighbors, in case they may invite you back and you have repayment. Rather, when you hold a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; blessed indeed will you be because of their inability to repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

Meditation: The Lord is always ready to receive us at his table. As far as we can tell from the gospel accounts, Jesus never refused a dinner invitation! Why, in this particular instance, does Jesus lecture his host on who he should or shouldn't invite to dinner? Did his host expect some favor or reward from Jesus? Did he want to impress his neighbors with the honor of hosting the "miracle worker" from Galilee?

Prayer: Almighty and merciful God, by whose gift your faithful offer you right and praiseworthy service, grant, we pray, that we may hasten without stumbling to receive the things you have promised. 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 probes our hearts as well. Do you show favor and generosity to those who will repay you in kind? What about those who do not have the means to repay you – the poor, the sick, and the disadvantaged? Generosity demands a measure of self-sacrifice. It doesn't impoverish, but rather enriches the soul of the giver. True generosity springs from a heart full of mercy and compassion. God loved us first, and our love is a response of gratitude to his great mercy and kindness towards us. We cannot out give God in his generosity towards us. Do you give freely as Jesus gives without expectation for personal gain or reward?

Tuesday, November 7 ~ Thirty-First Week in Ordinary Time ~ Election Day ~

Holy Gospel: Luke 14:15-24 One of those at table with Jesus said to him, "Blessed is the one who will dine in the Kingdom of God." He replied to him, "A man gave a great dinner to which he invited many. When the time for the dinner came, he dispatched his servant to say to those invited, 'Come, everything is now ready.' But one by one, they all began to excuse themselves. The first said to him, 'I have purchased a field and must go to examine it; I ask you, consider me excused.' And another said, 'I have purchased five yoke of oxen and am on my way to evaluate them; I ask you, consider me excused.' And another said, 'I have just married a woman, and therefore I cannot come.' The servant went and reported this to his master. Then the master of the house in a rage commanded his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in here the poor and the crippled, the blind and the lame.' The servant reported, 'Sir, your orders have been carried out and still there is room.' The master then ordered the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedgerows and make people come in that my home may be filled. For, I tell you, none of those men who were invited will taste my dinner.'"

Meditation: What does it mean to “eat bread in the kingdom of heaven?” In the ancient world the most notable sign of favor and intimate friendship was the invitation to “share bread” at the dinner table. Who you ate with showed who you valued and trusted as your friends. A great banquet would involve a lavish meal of several courses and a large company of notable guests and friends. One of the most beautiful images of heaven in the scriptures is the royal wedding celebration and banquet given by the King for his son and close friends. We, in fact, have been invited to the most important banquet of all! The last book in the Bible ends with an invitation to the wedding feast of the Lamb and his Bride, the Church: The Spirit and the Bride say, Come! (Revelations 22:17). The ‘Lamb of God’ is the Lord Jesus Christ and his bride is the people he has redeemed by his own precious blood which was shed upon the cross for our salvation.

Prayer: Almighty and merciful God, by whose gift your faithful offer you right and praiseworthy service, grant, we pray, that we may hasten without stumbling to receive the things you have promised. 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.

Prayer Before an Election: Lord God, as the election approaches, we seek to better understand the issues and concerns that confront our city/state/country, and how the Gospel compels us to respond as faithful citizens in our community. We ask for eyes that are free from blindness so that we might see each other as brothers and sisters, one and equal in dignity, especially those who are victims of abuse and violence, deceit and poverty. We ask for ears that will hear the cries of children unborn and those abandoned, Men and women oppressed because of race or creed, religion or gender. We ask for minds and hearts that are open to hearing the voice of leaders who will bring us closer to your Kingdom. We pray for discernment so that we may choose leaders who hear and embrace your Word, live your love, and keep in the ways of your timeless truths as they follow in the steps of Jesus and his Apostles and guide us to your Kingdom of justice and peace. We ask this in the name of your Son Jesus Christ and through the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

A Prayer Before I Vote: Gracious and loving God, let your Spirit be with us (me) today as I participate in voting. Hear our (my) prayers, and increase in us (me) the will to follow your Son Jesus Christ. Help us (me) to draw on the resources of our (my) faith as we (I) use the opportunities of our democracy to shape a society more compatible with doing Your will, and respectful of the life, dignity, and rights of the human person, especially the poor, the unborn children, the elderly, and the protection and support of the family. We (I) ask this through Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: Notice how Jesus probes the reasons why people make excuses to God's great invitation to “eat bread” with him at his banquet table. The first excuse allows the claims of one's personal business or work to take precedence over God's claim. Do you allow any task or endeavor to absorb you so much that it keeps you from the thought of God? The second excuse allows our possessions to come before God. Do you allow the media and other diversions to crowd out time for God in daily prayer and worship? The third excuse puts home and family ahead of God. God never meant for our home and relationships to be used selfishly. We serve God best when we invite him into our work, our homes, and our personal lives and when we share our possessions with others. Do you make excuses to God's great invitation to “eat bread” with him at his banquet table?

Wednesday, November 8 ~ Thirty-First Week in Ordinary Time

Holy Gospel: Luke 14:25-33 Great crowds were traveling with Jesus, and he turned and addressed them, “If anyone comes to me without hating his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. Which of you wishing to construct a tower does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if there is enough for its completion? Otherwise, after laying the foundation and finding himself unable to finish the work the onlookers should laugh at him and say, ‘This one began to build but did not have the resources to finish.’ Or what king marching into battle would not first sit down and decide whether with ten thousand troops he can successfully oppose another king advancing upon him with twenty thousand troops? But if not, while he is still far away, he will send a delegation to ask for peace terms. In the same way, every one of you who does not renounce all his possessions cannot be my disciple.”

Meditation: What does the parable of the tower builder and a ruler on a war campaign have in common? Both risk serious loss if they don't carefully plan ahead. In a shame and honor culture people want to avoid at all costs being mocked by their community for failing to complete a task they began in earnest.

This double parable echoes the instruction of Proverbs: "By wisdom a house is built" and "by wise guidance you can wage a war" to ensure victory (Proverbs 24:3-6). Every landowner who could afford it walled in his orchard as a protection from intruders who might steal or harm his produce. A tower was usually built in a corner of the wall and a guard posted especially during harvest time when thieves would likely try to make off with the goods. Starting a building-project, and leaving it unfinished because of poor planning would invite the scorn of the whole village. Likewise a king who decided to wage a war against an opponent who was much stronger, would be considered foolish if he did not come up with a plan that had a decent chance of success. Jesus tells his would-be disciples that they, too, must count the cost if they want to succeed as his disciples. Jesus assures success for those willing to pay the price. All it cost is everything! What does Jesus have to offer that's worth giving up everything else? More than we can imagine! Jesus offers the gift of abundant life and everlasting peace and happiness with God.

Prayer: Almighty and merciful God, by whose gift your faithful offer you right and praiseworthy service, grant, we pray, that we may hasten without stumbling to receive the things you have promised. 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 used strong language to make clear that nothing should take precedence or first place in our lives over God. Jesus knew that the way of the cross was the Father's way to glory and victory over sin and death. He counted the cost and said 'yes' to his Father's will. We, too, must 'count the cost' and be ready to follow Jesus in the way of the cross if we want to share in his glory and victory. What is the 'way of the cross' for you and for me? When my will crosses with God's will, then his will must be done. The way of the cross involves sacrifice, the sacrifice of laying down my life each and every day for Jesus' sake. What makes such sacrifice possible and "sweet" for us is the love of God poured out for us in the blood of Jesus Christ. Paul the Apostle reminds us that "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit" (Romans 5:5). We can never out give God. He always gives us more than we can expect or imagine. Do you allow the Holy Spirit to fill your heart with the love of God?

Thursday, November 9 ~ Thirty-First Week in Ordinary Time Feast of the Dedication of Saint John Lateran Basilica

Holy Gospel: John 2:13-22 Since the Passover of the Jews was near, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. He found in the temple area those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves, as well as the money-changers seated there. He made a whip out of cords and drove them all out of the temple area, with the sheep and oxen, and spilled the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables, and to those who sold doves he said, "Take these out of here, and stop making my Father's house a marketplace." His disciples recalled the words of Scripture, Zeal for your house will consume me. At this the Jews answered and said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and you will raise it up in three days?" But he was speaking about the temple of his Body. Therefore, when he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they came to believe the Scripture and the word Jesus had spoken.

Meditation: What can keep us from the presence of God? Jesus' dramatic cleansing of the temple was seen by his disciples as a prophetic sign of God's action. The temple was understood as the dwelling place of God among his people. When God delivered his people from slavery in Egypt, he brought them through the sea, and finally to Mount Sinai where he made a covenant with them and gave them a new way of life embodied in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17). God gave Moses instruction for worship and for making the Tabernacle, or tent of meeting, which was later replaced by the temple. The New Testament tells us that these "serve as a copy and shadow of the heavenly sanctuary" – God's Temple in heaven (Hebrews 8:5). Jesus' cleansing of the temple is also a prophetic sign of what he wants to do with each of us – a cleansing of the mind, heart and soul.

Prayer: O God, who from living and chosen stones prepare an eternal dwelling for your majesty, increase in your Church the spirit of grace you have bestowed, so that by new growth your faithful people may build up the heavenly Jerusalem. 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: It is understandable that Catholics might ask what the significance is of celebrating the anniversary of the dedication of St. John Lateran Basilica. This particular Basilica is the Cathedral Church of Rome – just as St. Joseph Cathedral is the "mother church" of the Diocese of Columbus, and is the "Bishop's Church." The Holy Father – Pope Francis – is also the Bishop of Rome, thus the Lateran Basilica

is his Church as Bishop. St. John Lateran is Christendom's earliest basilica. Ordered by Rome's first Christian Emperor, Constantine the Great, it became the Popes' own cathedral and official residence for the first millennium of Christian history. Today, standing before the basilica's ponderous eighteenth-century facade, assailed by ear-splitting Roman traffic snarls on every side, we can hardly imagine this as the cradle of our religious heritage. It was to Jesus the Savior that Constantine dedicated the original church, confirming Christ's superiority over the Capital's pagan gods and assuring the worldwide expansion of the Christian religion. The dedication of a church is a feast for all its parishioners. St. John Lateran is, in a sense, the parish church of all Catholics, for it is the Pope's parish, the Cathedral Church of the Bishop of Rome. This church is the spiritual home of the people who are the Church.

Friday, November 10 ~ Thirty-First Week in Ordinary Time **Saint Leo the Great, Pope**

Holy Gospel: Luke 16:1-8 Jesus said to his disciples, "A rich man had a steward who was reported to him for squandering his property. He summoned him and said, 'What is this I hear about you? Prepare a full account of your stewardship, because you can no longer be my steward.' The steward said to himself, 'What shall I do, now that my master is taking the position of steward away from me? I am not strong enough to dig and I am ashamed to beg. I know what I shall do so that, when I am removed from the stewardship, they may welcome me into their homes.' He called in his master's debtors one by one. To the first he said, 'How much do you owe my master?' He replied, 'One hundred measures of olive oil.' He said to him, 'Here is your promissory note. Sit down and quickly write one for fifty.' Then to another he said, 'And you, how much do you owe?' He replied, 'One hundred measures of wheat.' He said to him, 'Here is your promissory note; write one for eighty.' And the master commended that dishonest steward for acting prudently. For the children of this world are more prudent in dealing with their own generation than the children of light."

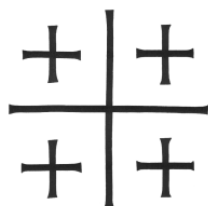
Meditation: Notice how the dishonest steward is commended not for mishandling his master's wealth, but for his shrewd provision in averting personal disaster and in securing his future livelihood. The original meaning of "shrewdness" is "foresight." A shrewd person grasps a critical situation with resolution, foresight, and the determination to avoid serious loss or disaster. Jesus is concerned here with something more critical than a financial or economic crisis. His concern is that we avert spiritual crisis and personal moral disaster through the exercise of faith and foresight. If Christians would only expend as much foresight and energy to spiritual matters which have eternal consequences as much as they do to earthly matters which have temporal consequences, then they would be truly better off, both in this life and in the age to come.

Prayer: O God, who never allow the gates of hell to prevail against your Church, firmly founded on the apostolic rock, grant her, we pray, that through the intercession of Pope Saint Leo, she may stand firm in your truth and know the protection of lasting peace. 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: Saint Ambrose once said: "The bosoms of the poor, the houses of widows, the mouths of children are the barns which last forever." So, thus, true wealth consists not in what we keep but in what we give away. Possessions are a great responsibility. The Lord expects us to use them honestly and responsibly and to put them at his service and the service of others. We belong to God and all that we have is his as well. He expects us to make a good return on what he gives us. God loves generosity and he gives liberally to those who share his gifts with others. The Pharisees, however, had no room for God in their hearts. The gospel says they were lovers of money (Luke 16:14). Love of money and wealth crowd out love of God and love of neighbor. Jesus makes clear that our hearts must either be possessed by God's love or our hearts will be possessed by the love of something else. What do you most treasure in your heart? What do you love the most – better yet, who do you love the most. God? I hope so!

Scripture passages (NAB translation) courtesy of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops;
prayers are from *The Roman Missal*, Catholic Book Publishing, 2011;
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