

# OUR LADY OF MERCY PARISH BULLETIN

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August 23, 2026 Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time



## 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday

I N O R D I N A R Y T I M E

"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. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of



Dear Our Lady of Mercy Parish Family and Friends,  
Greetings in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ!

As summertime slowly begins to wind down, I am grateful for the simple moments that remind us what parish life is really about: faith, friendship, service, gratitude, and growing together as one family in Christ.

Recently, we had a wonderful Fun Day with our parish Altar Servers at Hudson Lanes, where we enjoyed an afternoon of bowling, laughter, food, and fellowship. *(See picture below.)* It was our simple way of saying “thank you” to these young people who faithfully serve at the altar Sunday after Sunday.

To all our Altar Servers: thank you wholeheartedly for your faithful service! You may sometimes think that what you do is small—carrying the cross, holding the candles, preparing the sacred vessels, assisting the priest and deacons—but your presence at the altar is a beautiful witness to our entire parish. Every time you put on your alb and serve at Mass, you are saying in your own way, “Lord, I am here to serve You.”

I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all the parents who helped make our Altar Servers’ Fun Day possible. Thank you to those who helped organize and prepare for the day, and especially to the parents who came with us, stayed with us, assisted our young people, and remained until the end of the day. Your presence, patience, generosity, and willingness to help made the day even more enjoyable and meaningful.

And to all the parents and families of our Altar Servers, thank you for supporting your children in this beautiful ministry. Behind every young person who faithfully shows up to serve at Mass is often a parent or family member who wakes them up, prepares them, drives them to church, waits for them, and encourages them to remain committed. Your sacrifice is also a form of service to God and to our parish. We may not always see everything you do behind the scenes, but please know that it is deeply appreciated.

Our young people remind us that the Church needs them, not only someday in the future, but now. And when parents, families, and the whole parish encourage them in their faith, we are helping to form the next generation of disciples of Christ.

Speaking of our young people, school will soon begin again. Summer vacation is almost over, classrooms will reopen, backpacks will be filled, schedules will become busy again, and parents will return to the familiar rhythm of the school year.

Let us pray especially for our students, teachers, administrators, school staff, and parents as they prepare for a new academic year. May the Lord keep them safe, give our students wisdom and perseverance, bless our teachers with patience and dedication, and help our families remember that education is not only about preparing children for a career—it is also about forming them to become good, responsible, compassionate, and faithful human beings. *(continued on next page)*



But before the busyness begins again, make the most of these remaining days of summer. Spend time with your family. Rest. Enjoy one another. Take a walk. Share a meal. Laugh. Pray together. Put down the phone for a while and actually talk to the people that God has placed in your life.

Sometimes we become so busy preparing for tomorrow that we forget to be grateful for today. This Sunday's readings invite us to think about something even deeper.

In the Gospel, Jesus asks His disciples a question that every Christian must eventually answer "Who do you say that I am?" Peter responds: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus entrusts Peter with a tremendous responsibility: "You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church."

Notice that Peter does not simply know something about Jesus. Peter comes to know Jesus Himself. There is a difference. We can know prayers without becoming prayerful. We can attend Mass without allowing Mass to change us. We can serve in ministries without becoming servants. We can know Catholic teachings without living them. We can spend years inside a church building and still remain far from the heart of Christ.

So perhaps Jesus is asking each of us today "Who do YOU say that I am?" Not your parents. Not your spouse. Not your ministry. Not your friends. Not the parish community. You. And our answer cannot simply come from our lips. Our lives must answer the question.

If Jesus is truly the Christ, then He must have a place in our decisions. If Jesus is truly Lord, then His teachings must influence the way we speak and behave. If Jesus is truly our Savior, then we must learn to forgive, to reconcile, to serve, and to love—even when it is difficult.

This is especially important for us as a parish community. Our parish will never become stronger simply because we have many activities, organizations, ministries, celebrations, or programs. Those things are good, but they must lead us somewhere. They must lead us closer to Jesus and closer to one another. What good is serving the Church if we are fighting with each other? What good is belonging to a ministry if we refuse to forgive? What good is knowing Scripture if our words hurt others? What good is receiving

the Eucharist if our hearts remain filled with resentment, jealousy, gossip, division, or pride?

Our ministries should not become territories. Our parish groups should not become competing camps. And service should never become about who gets the recognition, who is in charge, or whose idea wins. Everything belongs to God.

Saint Paul reminds us today: "For from him and through him and for him are all things." That includes our parish. The altar is His. The ministries are His. Our talents are His. Our time is His. Our resources are His. And ultimately, we are His.

That is why we must continue working—not only on our parish programs, buildings, finances, ministries, and activities—but most importantly on our relationship with God and our relationships with one another. Let us become better at listening. Better at forgiving. Better at welcoming. Better at encouraging instead of criticizing. Better at appreciating instead of complaining. Better at working together instead of insisting on our own way. And better at recognizing Christ in one another. Because the strongest parish is not necessarily the parish with the most programs or the biggest attendance. The strongest parish is one whose people are becoming more like Jesus.

As summer comes to an end and another busy season begins, perhaps this is a good time for all of us to ask: Am I closer to God today than I was a year ago? Am I becoming a better person because of my faith? Is my presence helping our parish become more loving, united, prayerful, and Christ-centered? And above all: If Jesus stood before me today and asked, "Who do you say that I am?" what would my life say?

May Peter's profession become ours: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And may we not only say it on Sunday. May we live it on Monday.

God bless you all and enjoy the remaining days of summer!

Love,

+ *Father Marty*



**SATURDAY, August 22**

5pm Isidro Escarez (Death Anniversary) r/b Gatchalian Family

**SUNDAY, August 23, Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time**

8am Bobby & Hanelli Del Rosario (Wedding Anniversary)

10am Peter Burke r/b Ging & Boy Adao

12pm For the People of the Parish

**MONDAY, August 24**

7am Maria Victoria B. Basa r/b Athanasius Chua & Family

8:30am In Memory of Pedrito Flores r/b Ely Gonzalez

**TUESDAY, August 25**

7am Delfin Tolentino r/b June Tolentino

8:30am Pedrito Flores r/b Chit dela Rama

**WEDNESDAY, August 26**

7am Consolacion Inocencio r/b Patricia Meluso

8:30am Pedrito Flores r/b Rose Duque

**THURSDAY, August 27**

7am John Balingit (Birthday Blessing)

8:30am Ava C. Boulden (Birthday Blessing) r/b Susan Cailles

**FRIDAY, August 28**

7am Nonilo Nicholas, Jr. (Birthday in Heaven)

r/b Angie Liao

8:30am Rolando O. Afable r/b Baby Espeleta

**SATURDAY, August 29**

8:30am Purgatorial Society

5pm For the People of the Parish

**SUNDAY, August 30, Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time**

8am Ethan Musni (Birthday Blessing)

r/b Lito & Annie Musni

10am Blanche Johnson r/b Mary Sirotiak & Family

12pm Eugene L. Manlongat (Birthday Blessing)

**OFFERING FOR THE BREAD & WINE**

The offering for the Bread and Wine to be used this week at our Masses is given **In Loving Memory of the Deceased**

**Parishioners and Priests of Our Parish.**

**SANCTUARY LAMP**

The Lamp burning over our tabernacle in church is offered **For Brandon Gabriel.**

**OLM PARISH INFORMATION**

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**MASS SCHEDULE**

**Monday – Friday: 7 am & 8:30 am**

**Saturday: 8:30 am, 5 pm**

**Sunday: 8 am, 10 am, 12 noon**

**RECONCILIATION/ CONFESSIONS**

Monday through Friday 9 am to 9:30 am

Saturday 4 pm to 4:30 pm

**OFFICE HOURS**

Monday to Friday 8 am to 3 pm

Saturday 9 to 1 pm Sunday 9 am to 1 pm

**STAFF**

*Pastor*

Reverend Marty B. Jacinto

*Sunday Associates*

Reverend Jack Cryan

Reverend Renato J. Bautista

*Permanent Deacons*

Deacon Meynardo Espeleta

Deacon Edwin Dava

*Pastoral Associate For Faith Formation*

Regina 'Jeng' Matias-Villa

[reginavilla@olmnj.org](mailto:reginavilla@olmnj.org)

*Director of Music Ministries*

Liam Barredo

[musicministryolmj@gmail.com](mailto:musicministryolmj@gmail.com)

*Parish Trustees*

Henry Racelis & Guillermo "Guiz" Macalintal

**MINISTRY TO THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND**

If you or a relative is hospitalized or homebound and wish a visit from a parish priest, contact the Office.

**EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT**

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is held every First Friday of the month from 9 am until 10 am.



**PRAY FOR THE SICK**

The names of the sick are published for four consecutive Sundays.

Contact the parish office to add or remove a name from this list.

**WEEK ONE**

Bernadette Lim

**WEEK TWO**

Gasper Andres, Jr.

**WEEK THREE**

Hermie Macalino Romeo Vibar

Medardo Alonzo



**OLM PARISH PICNIC**  
**SEPTEMBER 19,**  
**SATURDAY**  
**10AM-3PM**  
**LIBERTY STATE PARK**  
**PICNIC PAVILION A**

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**August 23, Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Isaiah 22:19-23 Romans 11:33-36 Matthew 16:13-20

**August 30, Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Jeremiah 20:7-9 Romans 12:1-2 Matthew 16:21-27



**WORLD YOUTH DAY 2027**

will take place in  
Seoul, South Korea.

Our Pilgrimage to the event  
will be from July 30  
to August 9, 2027.

More information in future bulletins.

**STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE**

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**REGISTER FOR OUR FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM**

Our Faith Formation program is from Kinder to Eighth Grade. New students must submit a copy of their baptismal certificate. Returning students must register at the beginning of each school year. Registration for the 2026-2027 school year may be completed conveniently online through our parish website [www.olmnj.org](http://www.olmnj.org). The \$200 fee per family may be paid in cash or check payable to Our Lady of Mercy. You may also pay online via the parish website. Click Online Giving, then scroll down to Faith Formation Fee. This fee must be paid upon registration or by December 2026. Classes are Sundays from 9 am til 9:50 am at the 3rd floor of the school building. First day of class is on September 13. For more information, please contact Jeng Matias-Villa at 201-434-7500 ext. 102 or email [reginavilla@olmnj.org](mailto:reginavilla@olmnj.org)

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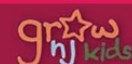


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