

# St. John of the Cross Catholic Cluster

## NOTRE DAME du MONT CARMEL

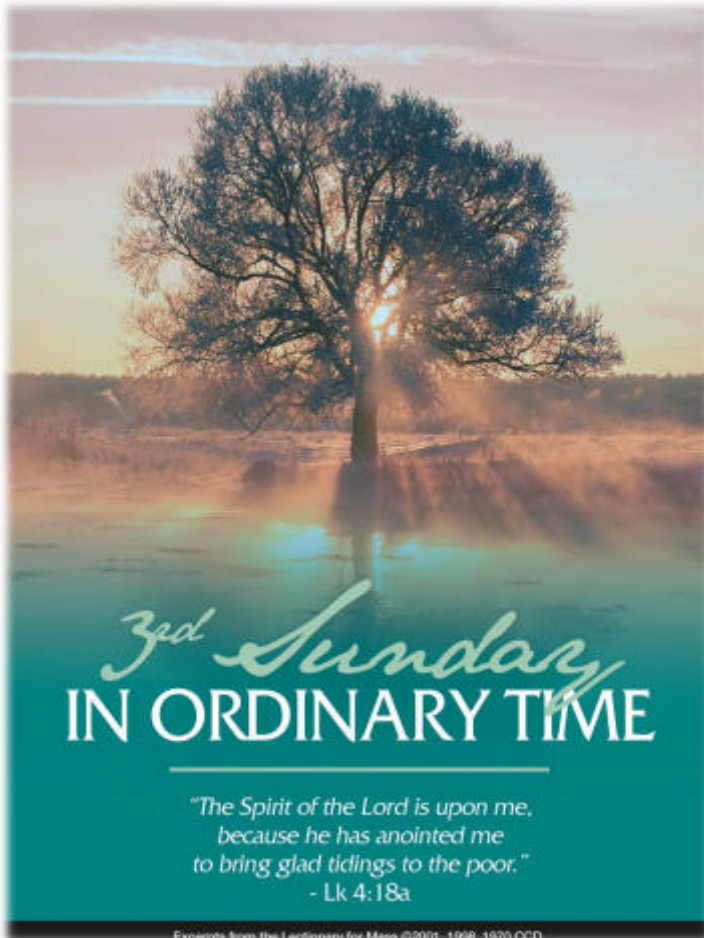
St. David  
St. Gerard-Mt. Carmel  
St. Thomas Aquinas

## OUR LADY OF THE VALLEY

St. Agatha  
St. Luce  
St. Joseph (Sinclair)  
St. Michael (Summer Months)

## ST. PETER CHANEL

St. Bruno - St. Remi  
St. Joseph (Hamlin)



## **SACRAMENTAL & PASTORAL CARE**

### **SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM**

Please call your parish office for appointment.

### **SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**

Saturday before 4pm Mass or by appointment.

### **SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE**

Please call your parish office at least 6 months prior to date.

### **SACRAMENT OF THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK**

Please call your parish office.

### **FUNERALS**

Please contact the Cluster 2 business office.

### **NEW PARISHIONERS**

If you are new to the parish or have an address or phone number change, please contact your parish office.

**JANUARY 23, 2022**

### **PASTOR**

Fr. Kent Ouellette

### **DEACONS**

Rev. Mr. Donald R. Clavette

Rev. Mr. Rodney Deschaine

### **CLUSTER 2 BUSINESS COORDINATOR**

Greg Cyr

### **Cluster 2 Website**

[www.sjvcatholics.org](http://www.sjvcatholics.org)

### **Cluster 2 Facebook Site**

St John Valley Catholics

## **NOTRE DAME DU MONT CARMEL**

309 St. Thomas Street, Suite 103

Madawaska, ME 04756

Parish Office / Cluster 2 Business Office - 728-7531

[notredamedumontcarmel@portlanddiocese.org](mailto:notredamedumontcarmel@portlanddiocese.org)

Faith Formation Office - 728-7135

## **OUR LADY OF THE VALLEY**

379 Main St./PO Box 10, St. Agatha, ME 04772

Parish Office - 543-7447

[ourladyofthevalley@portlanddiocese.org](mailto:ourladyofthevalley@portlanddiocese.org)

Faith Formation Office - 543-6119

## **ST. PETER CHANEL**

174 Main St., Van Buren, ME 04785

Parish Office - 868-2718

[StPeterChanelParish@portlanddiocese.org](mailto:StPeterChanelParish@portlanddiocese.org)

**Notre Dame du Mont Carmel Mass Schedule**

**Saturday, January 22**  
 4:00pm ST: (LS) Rosaire Blanchette (1st Ann) by Family  
 6:00pm SG: Clifford Gendreau by Ray & Judy Marquis

**Sunday, January 23**      **3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
 8:30am ST: Francis McDermott by Fred Michaud  
 11:00am SD: Claude Dube (1st Ann) by Fern Dube

**Monday, January 24**      **St. Francis de Sales**  
 8:30am ST: Deceased Relatives of Eldon & Jenny Bouchard

**Tuesday, January 25**      **Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle**  
 6:00pm ST: (LS) Deceased Relatives of Leola Gagnon

**Wednesday, January 26**      **Sts. Timothy & Titus**  
 8:30am ST: Jeannine Saunders by husband Glenn Saunders

**Thursday, January 27**      **NO MASS / St. Angela Merici**

**Friday, January 28**      **NO MASS / St. Thomas Aquinas**

**Saturday, January 29**  
 4:00pm ST: (LS) Muriel St Onge by Leona  
 6:00pm SG: Reynold Tardif by Claudette, John & Suzella

**Sunday, January 30**      **4th Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
 8:30am ST: Paul Koenig by Rose & Don Michaud  
 11:00am SD: Joel Gendreau (1st Ann) by Sandra & Family  
**\*\* (LS) Livestream**

**Our Lady of the Valley Mass Schedule**

**Saturday, January 22**  
 6:00pm SA: Noella Bouchard by Mike & Doreen Daigle

**Sunday, January 23**      **3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
 10:30am SL: Ronald Landry (1st Ann.) by Diane Landry & Family  
 4:00pm SJ: Gerald Pelletier by SJMC

**Monday, January 24**      **St. Francis de Sales**  
 6:00pm SA: Mark Dumond by Bob & Rita Babin

**Tuesday, January 25**      **Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle**  
 8:30am SJ: Marie Louise Raymond by Zackary & Krystal deMontigny

**Wednesday, January 26**      **NO MASS / Sts. Timothy & Titus**

**Thursday, January 27**      **St. Angela Merici**  
 6:00pm SL: Rita Bouchard by Frenchville Ladies of St. Anne

**Friday, January 28**      **NO MASS / St. Thomas Aquinas**

**Saturday, January 29**  
 6:00pm SA: Roger Bosse by Vic & Family

**Sunday, January 30**      **4th Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
 10:30am SL: Leo Morin by Family  
 4:00pm SJ: Jeanne Chamberland by Pearl Martin & Family

**St. Peter Chanel Mass Schedule**

**Saturday, January 22**  
 4:00pm SB/SR: Gilbert Soucy by Rochelle & Family

**Sunday, January 23**      **3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
 8:00am SJ: Alban Roy by his wife, Noelle & Family  
 9:15am SB/SR: Jackie Derosier by Rudy & Nancy Ouellette

**Monday, January 24**      **St. Francis de Sales**  
 6:00pm SB/SR: Carline Boucher by Don & Bobbie & Chris

**Tuesday, January 25**      **NO MASS / Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle**

**Wednesday, January 26**      **Sts. Timothy & Titus**  
 5:00-6:00pm SB/SR: Adoration/Confession  
 6:00pm SB/SR: Roland Deschaine by the Deschaine Family

**Thursday, January 27**      **NO MASS / St. Angela Merici**

**Friday, January 28**      **NO MASS / St. Thomas Aquinas**

**Saturday, January 29**  
 4:00pm SB/SR: Carlene Bellefleur by John & Mona Rossignol

**Sunday, January 30**      **4th Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
 8:00am SJ: Fred St. Pierre by Rebecca St. Pierre  
 9:15am SB/SR: Jeanine Viel by her Family

**EUCCHARIST ADORATION AND CONFESSIONS SCHEDULE**

	EUCCHARIST ADORATION	CONFESSIONS	MASS
ST. THOMAS AQUINAS	TUESDAY 1:00 TO 5:45	4:30 TO 5:30	6:00PM
ST. AGATHA	MONDAY 5:00 TO 6:00	5:00 TO 5:45	6:00PM
ST. LUCE	THURSDAY 5:00 TO 6:00	5:00 TO 5:45	6:00PM
ST. BRUNO/ST. REMI	WEDNESDAY 5:00 TO 6:00	5:00 TO 5:45	6:00PM



**Jesus is waiting!**



# NOTRE DAME DU MONT CARMEL PARISH CORNER

St. David, St. Gerard-Mt. Carmel/Grand Isle, St. Thomas Aquinas/Madawaska

## Worship & Spirituality

### PRAY FOR OUR SICK

Quinn Soucy, Debbra Levesque and Donna Neill. FMI please call 728-7135. \*\*Please note that after 1 month on the list we will remove the name. You must call back if you want to be put back on. Thank you.

### LAMP FOR THE UNBORN BURNS FOR:

**St. David** - for the Unborn by a Parishioner

**St. Gerard** - for Simone by Lorraine Pelletier

### ST. GERARD SANCTUARY LAMP BURNS IN JANUARY FOR:

Deceased Relatives by Therese Cyr

### ST. DAVID SANCTUARY LAMP BURNS IN JANUARY FOR:

Special Intention by Parishioners

### ST. THOMAS AQUINAS SANCTUARY LAMP BURNS IN

**JANUARY FOR:** George Dugal by Ginette & Family



### EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

**Tuesday, January 25th / 1pm-5:45pm**  
at St. Thomas Aquinas Church

**INTENTION:** For all men & women in the military and for their families at home, and for our area businesses and their workforces.



### Mass Scheduling:

**Anyone coming into the office to schedule a Mass needs to know that the Mass request will be booked immediately but not scheduled unless it is a 1st Anniversary Mass. The dates that Masses are scheduled will be listed in the bulletin weekly. Thanks for your understanding in this. God Bless.**

### MEMORIAL FUND (December 2021)

**St. David:** In Memory of: **Agathe Ouellet** by Roger & Bernice Martin Monica. **Total:** \$50.00

**St. Thomas:** In Memory of: **Ronaldo Morin, Martin Lavoie, & Hermel Sirois** by Madawaska K of C 4th Degree 0366. **Total:** \$30.00

**St. Gerard:** In Memory of: **Charles Gendreau, Herman Fortin, Roger Fortin** by St. Gerard Ladies of St. Anne. **Total:** \$30.00

**2022 Contribution Envelopes:** Please pick up your new contribution envelopes in the entrance of the church. If you know someone who cannot pick up their envelopes, please pick them up for these parishioners. If you have not yet registered, please stop by the parish office. Thank You.

### ††REST IN PEACE

Please pray for those who have died and for their families:

† **Raymond Cote, 78**, who passed away on January 6. He was the husband of Theresa Cote of St. Gerard Parish.

† **Odette Pelletier, 78**, who passed away on January 7. She was the wife of Joseph Pelletier of our parish.

*Masks are strongly recommended for all persons attending Mass!!*

## Finance & Administration

### Notre Dame du Mont Carmel Financial Update

**Offertory:** July 1, 2021 to January 9, 2022

**Budget:** \$184,692 **Actual:** \$190,967 **Over Anticipated:** \$6,275

	Amount given	Weekly goal
St. David	\$2,136	\$1,745
St. Gerard	\$ 697	\$1,032
St. Thomas Aquinas	\$4,362	\$3,819
Weekly Totals	\$7,195	\$6,596

**WeShare Online Giving:** \$590

**Heating:** \$3,446.00

### Second Collection

**January 23rd - Church of Latin America**  
**February 6th - Heating Fund**

## Parish Life

**DAUGHTERS OF ISABELLA MEETING:** Monday, February 14, Rosary at 5pm, meal at 5:15pm followed by meeting. Please bring items for the Pregnancy Care Center. FMI call Rose at 728-6388.

**DAUGHTERS OF ISABELLA PRAYER LINE:** If you are in need of prayers for you or a loved one, the Daughters of Isabella can help through the Prayer Line. This is open to anyone – not only for members. To add a name to the prayer line, call **Lucy Cyr at 436-9673.**

## Community Events

### YOUR ST. THOMAS FOOD PANTRY IS HERE FOR YOU:

If you are struggling and need food in these difficult times, we are here for you. Applications available at Frenchville and Madawaska Town Offices. You can also pick one up when you come pick up a box. Drive by St Thomas Aquinas Church parking lot, wear mask & open trunk of your car. **Senior boxes will be available on January 24th from 8-10am.** FMI call pantry at 728-7531.

**GRAND ISLE SENIOR LUNCHEON:** Thursday, January 27th at the Community Center. Until further notice the meals will be **TAKE OUT ONLY!!** **MENU:** Hot chicken

**GRAND ISLE KC BREAKFAST:** We would like to thank all of you who supported our recent Sunday Breakfast. Your outstanding support is greatly appreciated.

*Greater*

*Grand*

*Isle*

*Historical*

*Society*

*Presents*

*Valentine Dinner & Music*

**When:** Sunday, February 13, 2022

**Time:** 4:00pm Social Hour & Hors D'oeuvres  
4:30pm Dinner

**Where:** Grand Isle Community Center

**Cost:** \$25.00 per person (advanced ticket sales only)

For tickets and more information available from  
Angela 895-6949 or George 227-1177

Reserve your table

Social distancing and face masks to enter building.

**OUR LADY OF THE VALLEY PARISH CORNER**  
 St. Agatha, St. Joseph/Sinclair, St. Luce/Frenchville, St. Michael Chapel

**Worship & Spirituality**

**PRAYER LINE CONTACTS**

St. Joseph: Cecile Ouellette 543-6073

**SANCTUARY LAMP: Burns for:**

**St. Agatha:** Joan Belanger by Family

**St. Luce:** Martine, Denis, Harold, Donald, Gerry  
 & Donald Shields by Family

**St. Joseph:** Jeannette & Adrien Ouellette by Family



**ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT**

Monday's 5:00-6:00pm with Mass at 6:00pm at St. Agatha  
 Thursday's 5:00-6:00pm with Mass at 6:00pm at St. Luce

*Masks are strongly recommended for all persons attending Mass!!*

**St. Angela  
 Merici  
 Pray for us.**



**Mass Scheduling:**

Anyone coming into the office to schedule a Mass needs to know that the Mass request will be booked immediately but not scheduled unless it is a 1st Anniversary Mass. The dates that Masses are scheduled will be listed in the bulletin weekly. Thanks for your understanding in this. God Bless.

**Finance & Administration**

**Our Lady of the Valley Financial Updates**

**Offertory:** July 1, 2021 to January 9, 2022

**Budget:** \$99,615 **Actual:** \$99,106 **Under Anticipated:** -\$509

	Amount Given	Weekly Goal
Weekly Totals	\$2,837	\$4,167
	This Year	Last Year
Average Collections	\$3,539	\$3,352
<b>WeShare Online Giving:</b>	<b>\$365</b>	<b>Heating: \$1,639.00</b>

**Second Collection**

**January 23rd - Church of Latin America**

**2022 Contribution Envelopes:** Please pick up your new contribution envelopes in the entrance of the church. If you know someone who cannot pick up their envelopes, please pick them up for these parishioners. If you have not yet registered, please stop by the parish office. Thank You.



One of the most famous members of the Dominican Order, St. Thomas Aquinas (1225 – 1274) is well-known by many for his theological work, "*The Summa Theologiae*." Born in Italy, his mother wanted him to become a Benedictine and had high hopes that he would eventually become abbot of Monte Cassino, where he spent much of his youth. To change his vocation, she had him kidnapped by his brothers on his way to Paris at the age of 19. He spent two years in their captivity.

Despite this, nothing could shake him from his vocation to become a Dominican priest and he was eventually released. Once free, he went to Paris and then to Cologne, where he finished his studies with Albert the Great. His greatest contribution to the Catholic Church is his writings. The unity, harmony, and continuity of faith and reason, of revealed and natural human knowledge, encompasses his writings. The *Summa Theologiae*, his last and, unfortunately, uncompleted work, deals with the whole of Catholic theology. The patron saint of teachers, theologians and students, St. Thomas Aquinas died in 1274. His life and the impact he had on the whole Church, however, remains alive today.

**THOMAS AQUINAS**

**PRAY FOR US!!**

**ST. JOSEPH FOOD PANTRY IN SINCLAIR**

**Serving St. Agatha, Sinclair and Cross Lake**

If you are in need of food in these difficult times, we are here for you. If you are a senior you may qualify for a senior box and food box every month.

Food is given every **first Tuesday** of every month also senior box and this is a drive thru pick up, just open trunk and we will load the box of food for you. Pick up time is 1-3pm.

Please wear a mask!

FMI call Cecile Ouellette @ 543-6073 or 543-5057  
 Monday thru Friday from 1-4pm

Application will be completed over the phone due to COVID-19

# ST. PETER CHANEL PARISH CORNER

St. Bruno-St. Remi Church/Van Buren, St. Joseph Church/Hamlin & Borderview Nursing Home

**ST. BRUNO-ST. REMI CHURCH SPONSORS**  
**BREAD & WINE SPONSOR / IN LOVING MEMORY OF:**  
 ANDRE & JACQUELINE CASTONGUAY  
 BY NORMAN & JOANNE CASTONGUAY  
**SANCTUARY LAMP SPONSOR / IN LOVING MEMORY OF:**  
 JOEY R. OUELLETTE (1ST ANNIVERSARY 1/20)  
 BY SANDY & DAVE LAPLANTE  
**ST. JOSEPH CHURCH SPONSORS**  
**BREAD & WINE SPONSOR / IN LOVING MEMORY OF:**  
 LORETTE CHASSE  
 BY ARMAND CHASSE & FAMILY

**Masks are strongly recommended for all persons attending Mass!!**

## Come To The Well Woman's Group

**Start Date:** January 24, 2022

**When:** Monday Evenings @ 6:30 immediately following the 6 pm Mass

**Where:** Meeting Room downstairs at St Peter Chanel Parish

A weekly gathering of women to grow in and deepen their faith through sharing of scripture, study, community, and prayer. Please join us .

## SECOND COLLECTIONS/JANUARY 22/23 Latin American Missions

### St. Peter Chanel Outreach Committee News Food Pantry News:

On call for extras and emergencies: Nancy 868-5324, Norm 498-9570, Bob 868-5623, Harvey 868-5679  
 Please do NOT HESITATE to call when you have or see a need.

**Next Curbside Distribution:** January 27th, 1-2:30pm

This is a great time of year to donate to your food pantry. Funds are used best when we purchase foods at reduced rates from Good Shepherd Food Bank and maintain our membership with Catholic Charities of Maine. We are also grateful to local and county wide food drives from United Way, Norstate FCU and ACAP. Our pantry serves Van Buren, Cyr Plantation, Hamlin and surrounding areas.

Matt 25:40 "Amen I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me."

### Finance & Administration

#### St. Peter Chanel Parish Financial Updates

**Offertory:** July 1, 2021 to January 9, 2022

**Budget:** \$75,385 **Actual:** \$80,289 **Over Anticipated:** \$4,904

Amt. Given \$2,814      Weekly Goal \$2,692  
 This year \$2,867      Last year \$2,708

**WeShare: Online Giving: \$100      Heating: \$1,284.00**



### Bulletin Memorials In Loving Memory of:



Marquis & Cyr Families by Ray & Judy Marquis	Love you Aunt Mildred by your Nephew	AVAILABLE
Janet Michaud by Lorraine Chamberland	Claudette Rossignol by Joan & Richard	AVAILABLE
Tardif, Parent & Young Families by Ron & June & Family	Simone Vaillancourt by her Family & Friends	Madore & Rossignol Families by Carlene & Sheila
AVAILABLE	Antoine Levesque by his wife, Irene	Patrick Thibodeau by Yolande & Family
Paula Pelletier by Mom, Cecil & Family	St. Pierre & Marquis Families by Paul & Helen St. Pierre	Deceased Members of the Chamberland Family by Lorraine Chamberland
Gervaise Lapierre by Bob & Family	Joey R. Ouellette by Jamie Parent	Leonhard Adam by Ella & Sharon
Martin & Deveau Families by Ron & Della Martin	Claudette Rossignol by her husband, Percy	Betty Paradis by her Family
Deceased Members of the Madore Family by Glenn Madore	Joseph Sytulek Love, his wife, Eileen & sons Jeffrey & Gary	Gilman Grandmison by Esther, Rachel, Edna, Karen & Boy



A great big **THANK YOU** to the helpers for beautifying our church for the Christmas Season! **UN GROS MERCI!**

### Charlemagne Card Party

There will be a card party held in the St. Peter Chanel Parish Hall on January 23, 2022 from 1 to 4pm.

Entry fee is \$6 per person.

Proceeds to benefit the SPC Outreach Committee. Come enjoy an afternoon of fun!!

**Next Card Party Dates:**  
February 20, 2022



### **PARISH LIFE**

**Knights of Columbus/Chicken Stew To Go**  
 Saturday, January 29, 10:30 until we run out roll and dessert

#### **50/50 KC Weekly Drawing**

(drop off at KC mailbox or mail: 284 Main St, VB)

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Phone #:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Amount Enclosed \$** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \$26=13wks, \$52=26wks, \$104=52wks

## Pastor's Corner



There is a beauty in the name and title "most excellent Theophilus" as it appears in the prologue to the Gospel of Luke. The name, Theophilus, is revealing enough on its own since it means "Lover of God". To whom is this Gospel addressed? If it is addressed to a single person, we could say that person is very respected in the mind of the evangelist. It is not necessary to think that the respect is due to some earthly secular position of this person, such as a person in authority. It is an address, "most excellent", that points to something of the character of the person. This, we could say, is a person whom the evangelist knows to be or is suspected to be living out the command to, "love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind". Beyond this, the prologue also reveals that this person is someone who has already received instruction in the faith but needs to have that faith solidified. This should be our story! In fact, it is certainly our story! Someone once told me, after hearing me say that we always need to turn back to God, said they did not need too. After all they did that once and had no need to do it again. He was not known to have much charity toward people who displeased him. Even if he might have thought himself to be "Theophilus" there was definitely room for improvement. We all can improve. Shouldn't we not all think the title "most excellent" to be necessary? Finding the truth of the Gospel is our answer to this problem. We are all in a sense "Theophilus". Whether we attain the title "most excellent" remains to be uncovered.

With my prayers,

*Fr. Kent*

**Worldwide Marriage Encounter:** To support married couples during this time of social distancing, we are sponsoring virtual marriage experiences. Some are on weekends and are seven sessions on weekdays from 7:00pm to 9:30pm. Couples will explore their individual personality styles, improve listening and communication skills, understand God's plan for their marriage, and learn how to keep their relationship a priority. Registration is limited and a \$100 application fee is required. For more information or to apply, call Joe and Ginny Vatele at 800-710-9963 or visit them at <https://www.mema.org/>. Are you letting Jesus proclaim the good news to you in your marriage? Sign up today to attend one of the next Worldwide Marriage Encounter Experiences.

**Need Marriage Help:** Retrouvaille (retro-vi) has helped tens of thousands of couples struggling in their marriage. For more information on upcoming weekends in 2022 please visit [www.HelpOurMarriage.org](http://www.HelpOurMarriage.org) or call us at 508-271-7155.



*A good life with contentment is itself a great wealth. For we brought nothing with us into this world, and we can take nothing out of it. So if we have enough of what we need, let us be content with that.*

**STs. TIMOTHY & TITUS  
PRAY FOR US!!**

## ST. THOMAS GIFT SHOP

*St. Thomas Aquinas Church Basement*

**HOURS:** Mon. - Thurs. 9am - 3pm & Friday 10am - 3pm  
or by appt., Call 728-4346/316-8062 Lee

**"Have faith in your journey. Everything had to happen exactly as it did to get you where you're going next."**

**BAPTISM CERTIFICATE HOLDER:** Silver-Plated Zinc Alloy 1.5" Dia. x 9.5" L. Roll up the baby's Baptism Certificate and insert and then you won't have to worry about damaging it or losing it. Could hold other certificates also. \$23.95

**BOOKLET: "ALL DAY WITH GOD"** Includes traditional Catholic prayers, Novenas, Litanies, prayers for every day of the week and Scripture readings. Only 4" x 6" Only \$4.95

**HOLY WATER FONT:** We have various models, sizes and prices! Have Holy Water available for your use at different places in your home. Come see our assortment!!

**SWAROVSKI CRYSTAL ROSARIES & BRACELETS:** They come in birthstone colors but you can get the color you prefer! We have them w/beads in one color or color of month alternating with a clear bead. We received a new supply so we do have all of the month available. These make a wonderful gift for a loved one, or for yourself!! Hand crafted with wonderful craftsmanship & quality and will last for MANY years!!

**PENDANTS: MOTHER'S KISS CAMEO PENDANT** Wonderful gift for the "new" Mother!! White Mother kissing Child on blue background "Cameo" Style, resin, 1-1/2" w/18" chain, Pewter Finish. Only \$14.95

**BOOKS: "THE CONFESSIONS OF ST AUGUSTINE of HIPPO"** Paperback, 352 pages. St. Augustine recounts his wayward youth through his conversion to Jesus and the Christian Faith. Only \$9.95

**KIDS: "WHERE IS JESUS?"** A lift-the-flap book for the young Young ones look for Jesus at different times in His ministry. was \$12.95 **On Sale - Now \$8.95**

**THE BEST THING YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR CHILD IS READ ALOUD TO HIM/HER!**

**Also, Gift Certificates are always available!!**

## PUBLIC ROSARY GROUP

*(America Needs Fatima)*

We meet every **Wednesday & Friday at 3:00pm** at the **St. Thomas Church for the winter months.** We begin with Divine Mercy Chaplet followed by the Rosary. Pray for pandemic situation and for the restoration of our country facing evil forces that is prevalent right now.



Respect for the dignity of persons is a Principle of Catholic Social Teaching and one ignored by traffickers who treat persons as commodities. Join us in abolishing this horrific crime. U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking is a 501 c (3) organization, 203 N. Geyer Road, St. Louis, MO 63131. [sistersagainstrafficking.org](http://sistersagainstrafficking.org)

**January 23, 2022 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Human history reveals many periods where people lost a sense of God's transcendence. It may even be argued that human beings have been wandering and lost more than they have been at home and focused. Human nature being what it is, we struggle with who God really is — the God of our salvation history or the "gods" of human constructs. Relying on our own designs and pursuits, we forget that we really are meant to listen to One upon whom the Spirit of the Lord rests, Jesus Christ, and not to ourselves. That same history that reveals our fickleness and infidelity also reveals God's constancy and faithfulness. God always finds us.

As people wander and fumble to find their way, God is there bringing them back to holiness and giving them the assurance of His presence. We have to allow God's Word, God's life, to touch us and change us. It can make us more flexible and attentive to the sacred in all facets of life so that every day is one that is holy. Every day is a time when fulfillment is possible for one's soul. Jesus stood before those gathered in the synagogue as the fulfillment of words of promise that were echoed long ago. God doesn't forget. He always comes for us.

Now it is time to remember to go to God. Sometimes our lives are so confused and tangled that it is difficult to see the Word and hand of God. But when we realize, deep within, the depth of friendship God offers to us it really has the power to turn sadness to joy. The promise is fulfilled. Going frequently to God's Word, allowing ourselves to be enriched and rejuvenated, and pondering the certainty of God's fidelity and promise permanently transforms us. We will be more aware of the sacred and the holy and less invested in things that pull us away.

**Plant Your Works in the Word**

One of the things about Scripture is that even the smallest word and shortest phrase can be critical to the overall message. When you take a quiet moment to rest with the Word, you find how quickly the most mundane sentence can reach out and grab you, pulling you into a deeper contemplation of some truth you hadn't even considered until then.

But we often fail to act as the Israelites in the Book of Nehemiah, standing before the Water Gate "listening attentively." Whether it's at Mass during the Liturgy of the Word or at home poring over the Bible, time after time we find ourselves less mindful than we could be. Our ears accept the sounds of the words and our eyes glance over the shape of the letters.

But are we mindful — truly?

The best answer is hopefully at least sometimes. There are always tasks to be completed, problems weighing on our minds that we can't quite give over to God. We lose ourselves in these things instead of in Scripture. We "clock in" with Bible reading instead of "diving in."

We can never forget that the words of the Lord are spirit and life. They are the soil that quickens the seed of all stewardship. There is no mindfulness, no prayer, no graciousness, no gratitude or accountability or sense of commitment unless there is the Word. So let us pray today for mindfulness, that our every action will be grounded in the law of God — giving it true spirit and life.

**Question:** Is it right to sue someone? Isn't it a way of getting revenge?

**Answer:** Revenge is inflicting harm for harm's sake, the idea of an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and then some. There is often a fine line between justice and mercy, between compensation and forgiveness. Unfortunately, things can happen to us that cause harm, suffering, and damage, regardless of people's intentions. When someone is hurt, especially in such a way that special care or treatment is required, the cost of that care needs to be paid.

In a perfect world, those with special needs, handicaps, or disabilities would find the help and care they need, including those who are injured or hurt. But justice is not always forthcoming, and people are not always fair. So, using the legal system to right a wrong is sometimes the only option.

In some cases, it is the only way that people can get the help they need and deserve. However, frivolous lawsuits, or 'fishing for money' is not only unfair, but immoral as well. The law is there to protect people and making use of it when necessary is a good thing.

**Children's Corner**

 **PUZZLE**  
Circle these words from today's Gospel:

SPIRIT	FREEDOM	LORD
CHOSEN	SIGHT	JESUS
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Look up Isaiah chapter 61 and read it with your family. Then read Luke 4:14-21. Jesus kept all of those promises!

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