

ST. MARY

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
STAR CITY

3346 University Ave. Morgantown, WV 26505 • 304-599-3747

August 22, 2021 • 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Mass Times: Saturday, 6:00pm, Sunday, 8:30am, 11:00am, en español a la 1:00pm

Daily Mass*: Mon. 6:30pm, Tue.-Thur. 9:00am *please see schedule inside for any changes or cancellations.

Radio broadcast at 8:30am on 1300AM WCLG & 92.1FM, and TuneIn channel Morgan 92.1



21ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Jesus then said to the Twelve, "Do you also want to leave?"
Simon Peter answered him, "Master, to whom shall we go? You
have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are
convinced that you are the Holy One of God." - Jn 6:67-69



www.stmarystarcity.com



Saint Mary Roman Catholic Church, Star City—JOIN us

St. Mary Parish

Pastor

John P. McDonough
papajohnwv@msn.com

Rectory

304-225-0506

Parish Office

Address:

3346 University Ave
Morgantown, WV 26505

Office Hours:

Monday-Friday 9:30am-4:30pm
Closed Holy Days
& some Public Holidays

Office Staff

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St. Francis de Sales Central School

304-291-5070

Prayer Requests

Barbara Fedikovich 304-599-3910
Rena Cyphert 304-599-6642



Are you registered in the Parish?

Registering in a parish is a declaration of your desire to be part of a Catholic community and to make a commitment to the life of the parish family.

Clearly stating your Catholic commitment in all its dimensions brings many advantages, recognition, and responsibility.

At St. Mary Roman Catholic Church, our policy, is that you must be registered and participating in Sunday Mass regularly before a baptism can take place, or for the initial meeting with the pastor in the case

of marriage.

Regular attendance is also required for adults who are asked to be a godparent or sponsor at another parish, in order that a letter can be sent stating that they are a practicing Catholic and a registered member of a parish faith community.

Even though you may have attended Mass here for months, or even years, we would like for you to be registered.

Please pick up a registration form at the church or parish office, or register online at stmarystarcity.com
For more information, call the parish office at 304-599-3747.

Sacraments

Baptism: (Birth – Age 7) Parents are required to participate in a preparation program before the celebration of Baptism. Parents must be registered and attending Sunday Mass regularly. Please contact the parish office for information.

Reconciliation: 30 minutes prior to each daily Mass

Order of Christian Initiation: Children 7-14 years of age, and Children 15 years of age and older & Adults— *The Order of Christian Initiation*, RCIA, please contact Cynthia Friesen at 304-225-1163 or stmarystarcityfaithformation@gmail.com

Marriage: Engaged couples planning to marry at St. Mary Church should be practicing Catholics, participating in Sunday Eucharist regularly. Also, they must participate in a Marriage Preparation Program. Call the Parish Office for information. At least **six months notice** is required. *No date for a wedding will be set over the phone.*

Holy Communion to the Sick and Homebound: When a parishioner is confined to home or hospital because of illness or advanced age, call the Parish Office. We will be happy to make arrangements to bring Holy Communion.

Anointing of the Sick: Upon request and communally as scheduled

Bulletin Deadline:

Tuesday@Noon, email or written copy please,
no bulletin announcements will be taken over the phone

Email: stmaryschurch@comcast.net

Subject line: attn: Bulletin, and include topic of announcement

Spirituality of the Readings – A Sad Scene?



For the last several weeks Jesus has been using his words to distress the disciples. Yes.

Last week he said that if they want eternal life they have to eat his flesh and drink his blood! His followers could not possibly have understood this.* They muttered. "This saying is hard; who can accept it?"

And they left.

This Sunday he makes it even harder.

Since Jesus knew that his disciples were murmuring about this, he said to them,

"Does this shock you?
What if you were to see the Son of Man ascending
to where he was before?
It is the Spirit that gives life,
while the flesh is of no avail. ...

As a result of this,
many of his disciples returned to their
former way of life and no longer accompanied him. (Gospel)

A sad scene, and puzzling too. Why is Jesus saying such things to his followers, and how is anyone supposed to understand it?

The following unwritten guideline might help in reading the Gospel of John, from which our Sunday reading is taken.

There, whenever an event or saying does not seem to make complete sense, we can understand that it is masking deeper meanings. In other words, often a delicious significance is hidden behind events that are described in a bewildering way.

Let us try to apply this axiom to a saying from this week's Gospel:

... ascending to where he was before. ...

Where was he "before"?

He was in the bosom of the Holy Trinity. God's love leaned out to us in Jesus' life, death and resurrection. He "descended" to us.

But he will have to "go back to the next life," because he was a human being, even though he was God. He is telling them this: if body and blood shock you, wait till you see me ascend into heaven!

And what about the words,

It is the Spirit that gives life, the flesh is to no avail.

In the readings from the past few weeks we have seen that Jesus' ascension would never be a desertion of us but would be his presence on earth in a new form. The third person of the Trinity was going to dwell within any people who believe.

The third person will dwell in us?

Where will our Jesus be? Well, since the members of the Trinity are at one in everything, they are completely present within each other. So Christ is within the Holy Spirit. That Spirit offers to live deep within each believer, within each person who says yes to its presence. The same thing can be said for the Father.

Ok, but how do we acquire this Holy Spirit? Definitely through Baptism. And, of course, as in Jesus' command from last week, through eating and drinking his body and blood. Communion makes us "become what we have eaten," the body of Christ. We are to let Christ have flesh again, in our hearts and in our actions. The Spirit is to be the soul of the Body of Christ, and we are to be the body.

When we are part of the "Body of Christ," we therefore have eternal life, as he told his followers. Peter sums it up. "We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God."

Mass this Sunday will be meant to give us the power to live the Body of Christ into the world.

John Foley, SJ

* What is the difference between "disciples" and "apostles"? Like me, you probably do not know. For a simple explanation, see here, a very helpful differentiation made by my friend Felix Just, SJ.

Giving Summary

Sunday Offering—August 1

\$7,823.00

Online Giving

\$1,746.35

Attendance: 386

Sunday Offering—August 8

\$5,595.50

Online Giving

\$2,096.35

Attendance: 360

Sunday Offering—August 15

\$7,211.00

Online Giving

\$2,191.35

Attendance: 394

For ease of accounting,
separate checks are preferred for all donations to different collections and purposes, including special collections, Mass intentions, memorials, and donations to different funds e.g. Trust Fund for the Poor, Debt Reduction, etc. Thank you for your help!



 **DONATE TODAY**

GIVE ONLINE!

by clicking on the
image on our website

www.stmarystarcity.com.

THIS WEEK'S CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

August 22, 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saturday, 6:00pm Glynn Higgins
 Sunday, 8:30am For the People
 Sunday, 11:00am Kathryn A. Folio
 Domingo, 1pm Por la comunidad de la Parroquia

Monday 8/23 St. Rose of Lima
 6:30pm The Boyle Family
 Tuesday 8/24 St. Bartholomew, Apostle
NO DAILY MASS

Wednesday 8/25 St. Louis
 9:00am Mary Regina Boyle
 Thursday 8/26 Weekday in Ordinary Time
 9:00am Kathy Koloff

In the event of Closing of school due to inclement weather, there will be no Daily Mass or Prayer Service.

In the event of a funeral, morning Mass will be cancelled

August 29, 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saturday, 6:00pm Renee Cyphert Morgan
 Sunday, 8:30am For the People
 Sunday, 11:00am Kathy Koloff
 Domingo, 1pm Por la comunidad de la Parroquia



Eternal rest for Steven Miller, and condolences to his family and friends.



Volunteers are needed to clean and wipe down pews after the 8:30am Mass each weekend. Please stay after Mass if you are able to help sanitize or clean!



Mass intentions are still being accepted for 2021. We have weekday and weekend Masses still to

fill. The suggested donation is \$20 for a weekend, \$10 for a weekday. Please call the Parish Office if interested, 304-599-3747. Please note that any Masses cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances such as a global pandemic, inclement weather, or a funeral, will be moved to the next available 'like' date and time e.g., Daily Mass on Tuesday moved to another Tuesday, 8:30 Sunday Mass moved to another 8:30, as available.



Memorial Donations for Bread and the Tabernacle candle are being accepted for the year 2021. The requested donation is \$40. Please call the Parish Office if you are interested, 304-599-3747.

THIS WEEK AT ST. MARY

Sunday, August 22

1:00pm NA Meeting

Monday, August 23

7:00pm Building and Grounds Committee Meeting—L/L

7:00-9:00pm Boy Scouts—Pavilion

Tuesday, August 24

NO DAILY MASS OR RECONCILIATION

11:00am Funeral Mass for Steven Miller

6:30pm Adult Faith Formation—L/L

6:30pm NA Meeting—Peace Hall

Wednesday, August 25

6:30pm Bible Study-Jonah, Session 1—L/L

7:00pm Catholic Homeschoolers Bible Study

Thursday, August 26

12:00pm Al-Anon

5:30pm Spanish Mass Music Rehearsal—L/L

6:30pm Adult Faith Formation

Saturday, August 28

5:00-5:40pm Reconciliation

Sunday, August 29

9:45am Catechist Training—Library Lounge

1:00pm NA Meeting



We welcome Elias Allen Hlopick, who was baptized on August 8.



Restroom Use

Due to some recent incidents that caused extra work for our custodial staff, and unsanitary conditions for all users, we ask that **all children age 7 and under should be accompanied to the restroom by an adult.** In addition we remind everyone using the restrooms to be respectful of the facilities and economical with supplies so we can keep them clean and well maintained for your comfort and convenience.



Ministry Meetings!

If you have signed up for a ministry, or you are just interested, please attend the appropriate meeting. All are welcome!

Building & Grounds Committee

Monday, August 23, 7:00pm—L/L

Retreat & Spirituality Committee

Monday, September 13, 7:00pm—L/L

Updated COVID-19 Guidelines

With the rising number of Covid-19 cases in our state, Bishop Brennan has issued a letter to churches to help them develop new guidelines for Mass attendance.

At St. Mary Church, we are implementing the following protocols:

-Those who are eucharistic ministers must wear a mask. If you are

scheduled to be a minister, or think you may volunteer, please have one handy.

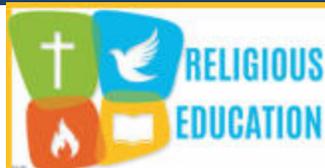
- Wearing a mask is strongly encouraged, regardless of vaccination status. To help protect yourself and others, please wear a mask when you come up to receive Holy Communion, and also when you are entering and exiting the church and will be in close quarters with a larger number of people, but **it is highly recommended that you keep your mask on at all times.**

We are not implementing any additional physical distancing measures at this time.

We will have disposable masks for those who have forgotten to bring one, and hand sanitizer will be widely available. Thank you for doing your part for everyone's safety!

Important Message for All Parishioners

Bishop Brennan is inviting your input on an upcoming diocesan-wide survey regarding a broad range of topics relating to the way we live and experience our faith across the entire diocese. As our shepherd, the Bishop desires to listen to God's people. This will assist him in developing a deeper understanding of the hearts, minds, and needs of the faithful. **ALL are highly encouraged to participate!** Parishioners will have the option of completing the survey via emailed link, digital platforms (social media and websites), or manually via a paper survey. Completing the survey should take 7-10 minutes. Survey distribution will begin the first weekend in September and will run for two full weeks until September 19. Look for more details soon, and don't miss this unique opportunity to help shape the future of the Catholic Church here in West Virginia!



Faith Formation Classes

will begin on

Sunday, 19 September at 9:30am.

You will receive a letter and your registration form in the mail very soon.

Please return your form by 13 September.

If you have any questions about religious education classes, please contact Cynthia Friesen at 304-225-1163.

R.C.I.A./R.C.I.C.

Are you someone, or do you know someone who...

- *Has expressed an interest in becoming Catholic?
- *Has a child over the age of seven who has not been baptized?
- *Was baptized Catholic as a child, but has not celebrated the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist?

We offer an opportunity to come together in a small group to learn more about our faith and prepare to celebrate the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist during the Easter season.

You are welcome to participate in the process with your questions, your insights and your faith story in a warm accepting setting.

For information please contact:

Cynthia Friesen: 304-225-1163

StMaryStarCityFaithFormation@gmail.com

Or sign up on the sheet in the Narthex

Classes will be held on Sundays at 9:45am beginning on September 26 and every 2nd and 4th Monday at 7pm after daily Mass

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession)

30 minutes prior to each Daily Mass

Saturdays from 5-5:40pm as scheduled

(Mon: 6:00pm, Tue.-Thur: 8:30am)

*times may change based on any changes to the weekly Mass schedule



We have Hearing Assistance Devices available for use during Mass. If you would like one, please ask an Usher.

Attention all former TECites in St. Mary Parish!

The Diocese is re-starting the TEC program for the entire state under one big umbrella. The first event that the leadership team is planning is a **TEC Re-Union at St. John XXIII Pastoral Center in Charleston on August 28th from 10am to 4pm.**

We are encouraging everyone whose schedule allows and whose faith grew because of their TEC experience to join us for a day of prayer, singing, learning and seeing some of the people you may have met through TEC.

If this interests you, please visit <https://dwc.org/tec-reunion> and register for the event so we know how many people to plan for.



St. Ursula Food Pantry needs:

- *Toilet Paper
- *Liquid Laundry Detergent (please no pods or powder)

Baby & Toddler Program needs:

- *Baby Wash & Shampoo

Donations for St. Ursula Food Pantry and Outreach may be **placed in** the labeled bins in **the church**, or **dropped off in the baskets in the CFC entry.**



Catholic Charities West Virginia

Catholic Charities

WV is looking for dual Spanish/English speakers who could volunteer to help with

occasional translation for our Spanish-only speaking clients. We expect that most of the volunteer work would be remote – via conference call and would only rarely involve coming to our office. If you are interested, please contact Renee Corbett (Refugee Outreach Worker), email rcorbett@ccwva.org, cell 304-650-7320.

Job Opening at St. Francis de Sales Central Catholic School

We are currently seeking qualified applicants for the Janitor position at SFdSCCS. This is a full-time position. If you are interested in learning more about the position, please visit our school website

at stfrancismorgantown.com, click on the "About" tab, then select "Employment" for details. Interested applicants should send a cover letter, resume, and 3 letters of reference to Principal Moore at amoore@sfccs.org or mail/deliver to his attention at St. Francis de Sales Central Catholic School, 41 Guthrie Lane, Morgantown, WV 26508.

Al-Anon (for those affected by someone else's drinking) meets every Thursday at noon at St. Mary Church. Information: call 1-888-425-2666 or WSO@al-anon.org

NA Meetings St. Mary Church, Star City Tuesdays-6:30pm, Sundays-1pm
To find other meetings near you, visit <https://www.na.org/meetingsearch/>

"How much do you love me?"

JOIN THE STATE-WIDE
TEENS ENCOUNTER CHRIST
FAMILY FOR

RE-TEC

A Re-Boot and Renewal of TEC in the
Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 28, 2021

10:00am - 5:00pm

Saint John XXIII Pastoral Center, Charleston, WV



The "Fourth Day" of TEC Never Ends!



Please **TTJ** (text-to-join) our Flocknote network. **Text the**

word "starcity" to 84576

or connect with us online at:

StMaryStarCity.flocknote.com





Christian Help is looking for volunteers interested in supporting our programs and helping at the downtown facility.

Various available positions are:

- Front Desk
- Career Closet
- Children's Closet
- Food Pantry
- Free Store
- Mentorship
- Job Training
- Business Relations

For more information please contact:

Amanda Ejimofor at **304-296-0221** or

volunteercoordinator@motownchristianhelp.com



Volunteer Hours:
Monday: 9am - 4pm
Tuesday: 9am - 4pm
Wednesday: 9am - 4pm
Thursday: 9am - 4pm
Friday: 9am - 2pm

219 Walnut St. Morgantown



Sunday, Aug 22, 2021

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Who do you serve?

Songwriter Bob Dylan had a come-to-Jesus moment in 1978 in a hotel room in Tucson, Arizona. More accurately, it seemed like Jesus came to him, as he felt "a presence in the room that couldn't have been anybody but Jesus." For four years, Dylan wrote songs critics panned as "God-awful gospel," and fans mourned the loss of what they'd come to expect from him. By 1981, Dylan had returned to his Jewish and folk-rock roots. Yet he never retracted his vision: "Well, it may be the devil, or it may be the Lord, but you gotta serve somebody." The choice remains ours.

TODAY'S READINGS: Joshua 24:1-2a, 15-17, 18b; Ephesians 5:21-32; John 6:60-69 (122). *"If it does not please you to serve the LORD, decide today whom you will serve."*

Monday, Aug 23, 2021

MEMORIAL OF ROSE OF LIMA, VIRGIN

Family finesse

Parents have expectations of their kids, and kids want to make their own choices—it's part of the painful growing-up process. Rose of Lima was like a lot of teenagers who clashed with her parents about her future, and she was like a lot of saints who rankled family by refusing to marry. They never let her join a convent, but they didn't force her to wed either, finally relenting to her choice of chastity. She lived out her brief life as she had wished, in prayer and penance. She is the patron saint of family problems. Everyone has them, so ask Rose for help.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5, 8b-10; Matthew 23:13-22 (425). *"One who swears by heaven swears by the throne of God."*

Tuesday, Aug 24, 2021

FEAST OF BARTHOLOMEW, APOSTLE

Play a stirring role

Bartholomew, also called Nathanael, was one of the original 12 apostles and later, a traveling missionary. He embodied what it means to become a missionary disciple—one who, upon being led to Jesus, wishes to lead others to him, too. As the U.S. bishops say in *Go and Make Disciples*, Jesus "gave the Church the unending task of evangelizing as a restless power, to stir and to stimulate." Where can you stir interest in Jesus today?

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 21:9b-14; John 1:45-51 (629). *"Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel."*

Wednesday, Aug 25, 2021**The past is present**

Today, we are becoming aware of the deep truth that wrongs committed in the past, even generations ago, can still perpetuate evil. Such is the sin of racism, which the U.S. Catholic Bishops have repeatedly called "an evil which endures in our society and in our Church" (*Brothers and Sisters to Us*). Each of us is called to help dismantle racism, to reject profiting from the oppression of others, and to listen to the voices of those who have been silenced too long—for the sake of our past, present, and future.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13; Matthew 23:27-32 (427). *"You are like whitewashed tombs."*

Thursday, Aug 26, 2021**Be alert!**

Wakefulness is a term often used in spiritual writing. In today's gospel, Jesus tells his disciples, "Stay awake! You do not know on which day your Lord will come." The Catechism of the Catholic Church contains at least 20 references to being awake, usually in regard to "awakening faith." The church wants its members to be vigilant and tells us in the catechism that the "Holy Spirit constantly seeks to awaken us to keep watch!" Ask the Holy Spirit to help you awaken to God's presence today.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Thessalonians 3:7-13; Matthew 24:42-51 (428). *"Jesus said to his disciples: 'Stay awake!'"*

Friday, Aug 27, 2021

MEMORIAL OF MONICA

Hang in there

Sometimes it feels like all of our small choices and actions will never amount to anything. Go big or go home, we're told. Yet the stuff of transformation, healing, and love is knitted together one small thing at a time. Our call is to have faith and persist. Take a look at Saint Monica, a laywoman from North Africa, who day in and day out offered "small" acts of kindness, love, and care for her beloved yet wayward son Augustine. She never tired of believing in him, even storming heaven on his behalf. Persisting in the small things that are good, beautiful, and true can make a big difference. What small things are you called to persist in?

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Matthew 25:1-13 (429). *"Stay awake."*

Saturday, Aug 28, 2021

MEMORIAL OF AUGUSTINE, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Let happiness be your song

Like all larger-than-life historical figures, Saint Augustine and his legacy are subject to debate. Some find in his vast work reason to take a pessimistic view of humanity. But he was quite life-affirming in his conviction that the happiness found in following God is indeed the only worthy and lasting happiness. "Happy is [the one] who has God," he succinctly put it. To "have" God for Augustine meant to love God, citing Psalm 72: "For me it is good to cling to God." Or, as Pharrell Williams put it in his blockbuster song "Happy" a few years back, "Clap along if you feel like happiness is the truth."

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Thessalonians 4:9-11; Matthew 25:14-30 (430). *"You yourselves have been taught by God to love one another."*

Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time



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*Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted his only Son;
in you Mary placed her trust;
with you Christ became man.*

*Blessed Joseph, to us too,
show yourself a father
and guide us in the path of life.
Obtain for us grace, mercy, and courage,
and defend us from every evil. Amen.*

*Salve, Guardián del Redentor
Esposo de la Bendita Virgen María.
A ti Dios te confió su único Hijo;
en ti Maria depositó su confianza;
contigo Cristo se hizo hombre.*

*Bendito José, para nosotros también
muéstrate padre
y guíanos en el camino de la vida.
Obten para nosotros gracia, misericordia y coraje
y defiéndenos de todo mal. Amén.*

Safe Environment Reporting

To report an incidence of suspected child sexual abuse, please contact your local law enforcement agency, or you may confidentially contact WV Child Protective Services at 800.352.6513. In addition to civil authorities, to report suspected cases of sexual abuse by personnel of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to the Diocese, please contact the Diocese at 888-434-6237 or 304-233-0880. Please visit www.dwc.org under "Accountability" for additional information and reporting methods.

Will or Estate Planning

Are you thinking of remembering St. Mary Church in your will or estate plans? A bequest through a Last Will and Testament is the simplest way of creating a lasting legacy of support for St. Mary Church. Bequests should be made out to:

"The Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, or his successors in office," with a specification of the purpose for which the bequest is to be used, e.g. "for the use of St. Mary Parish"

READINGS FOR THE WEEK August 22, 2021

Sunday: Jos 24:1-2a, 15-17, 18b/Ps 34:2-3, 16-17, 18-19, 20-21, 22-23 [9a]/ Eph 5:21-32 or 5:2a, 25-32/Jn 6:60-69

Monday: 1 Thes 1:1-5, 8b-10/Ps 149:1b-2, 3-4, 5-6a and 9b [cf. 4a]/Mt 23:13-22

Tuesday: Rv 21:9b-14/Ps 145:10-11, 12-13, 17-18 [12]/Jn 1:45-51

Wednesday: 1 Thes 2:9-13/Ps 139:7-8, 9-10, 11-12ab [1]/Mt 23:27-32

Thursday: 1 Thes 3:7-13/Ps 90:3-5a, 12-13, 14 and 17 [14]/Mt 24:42-51

Friday: 1 Thes 4:1-8/Ps 97:1 and 2b, 5-6, 10, 11-12 [12a]/Mt 25:1-13

Saturday: 1 Thes 4:9-11/Ps 98:1, 7-8, 9 [9]/Mt 25:14-30

Next Sunday: Dt 4:1-2, 6-8/Ps 15:2-3, 3-4, 4-5 [1a]/Jas 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27/Mk 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

©LPi

Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service **ReportBishopAbuse.org (800) 276-1562**

The Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service has been established to receive reports of sexual abuse and related misconduct by bishops, and to relay those reports to proper Church authorities for investigation. Where a report includes a crime, such as the sexual abuse of a minor, it will also be reported to civil authorities. Otherwise, reports will be kept confidential. If you have any other kind of complaint about a bishop—such as parish assignments, church closings, or homily contents—please address those directly to your diocesan or eparchial bishop instead. Sexual abuse by a priest, deacon or a staff member or volunteer of the Church should be reported to the Office of Safe Environment for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. So, to be sure you get the help you need, phone numbers and addresses may be found at www.dwc.org under the accountability tab. If you are the victim of sexual abuse (or any other crime), please contact local law enforcement.

21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary: 122

Reading I—Jos 24:1-2a, 15-17, 18b

Joshua gathered together all the tribes of Israel at Shechem, summoning their elders, their leaders, their judges, and their officers.

When they stood in ranks before God, Joshua addressed all the people:

"If it does not please you to serve the LORD,
decide today whom you will serve,
the gods your fathers served beyond the River
or the gods of the Amorites in whose
country you are now dwelling.
As for me and my household, we will
serve the LORD."

But the people answered,
"Far be it from us to forsake the LORD
for the service of other gods.
For it was the LORD, our God,
who brought us and our fathers up out of
the land of Egypt,
out of a state of slavery.
He performed those great miracles before
our very eyes
and protected us along our entire journey
and among the peoples through whom we
passed.
Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for
he is our God."

Reading II—Eph 5:2a, 25-32

Brothers and sisters:

Live in love, as Christ loved us.
Husbands, love your wives,
even as Christ loved the church
and handed himself over for her to sanctify her,
cleansing her by the bath of water with
the word,
that he might present to himself the
church in splendor,
without spot or wrinkle or any such thing,
that she might be holy and without blemish.

So also husbands should love their wives
as their own bodies.

He who loves his wife loves himself.
For no one hates his own flesh

but rather nourishes and cherishes it,
even as Christ does the church,
because we are members of his body.

For this reason a man shall leave his
father and his mother

and be joined to his wife,

and the two shall become one flesh.

This is a great mystery,

but I speak in reference to Christ and the
church.

Gospel—Jn 6:60-69

Many of Jesus' disciples who were listening said,

"This saying is hard; who can accept it?"

Since Jesus knew that his disciples were murmuring about this,

he said to them, "Does this shock you?"

What if you were to see the Son of Man ascending

to where he was before?

It is the spirit that gives life,

while the flesh is of no avail.

The words I have spoken to you are Spirit and life.

But there are some of you who do not believe."

Jesus knew from the beginning the ones who would not believe

and the one who would betray him.

And he said,

"For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me

unless it is granted him by my Father."

As a result of this,

many of his disciples returned to their former way of life

and no longer accompanied him.

Jesus then said to the Twelve, "Do you also want to leave?"

Simon Peter answered him, "Master, to whom shall we go?"

You have the words of eternal life.

We have come to believe

and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God."

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