

Church of the Incarnation

240 Main Street, Mantua, NJ 08051

Parish Office 856-468-1314 * PREP Office 856-468-7566

Visit us at www.incarnation-church.org



Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time * July 5, 2026

We come together as a Christian community to minister the Gospel of Christ

PARISH STAFF

Reverend Stephen J Rapposelli
Pastor

Reverend Shaji Muttathottil
Parochial Vicar

Thomas F. O'Brien
Deacon

Peter Traum
Deacon

Phil Curran
Deacon

Mr. & Mrs. Casey Corigliano
Directors of Music

Mr. Gerald Voltura
Director of Faith Formation

Mrs. Patricia Houwen
Business Manager

PARISH MEMBERSHIP

Welcome!

Please register at the parish office or online by visiting our website at www.incarnation-church.org.

MASS SCHEDULE

Monday - Friday.....7 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.

(No 7 a.m. Mass from Memorial Day through early September)

Saturday.....8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. (Vigil Mass)

Sunday.....7:30 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m..

Holy Days.....5 p.m. (Vigil Mass)

7 a.m., 8:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. on Holy Day

Eucharistic Adoration.....Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

BAPTISM

Baptisms are held every Sunday and some Saturdays at 1:00 pm. Baptism Preparation Sessions are held on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month via Zoom. Please call the office for an appointment.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Confessions are heard Monday through Saturday following the 8:30 A.M. Mass and on Saturdays from 4:00 P.M. to 4:30 P.M. in church or by appointment.

CARE OF SICK

Arrangements should be made through the parish office for home visits with the Eucharist for the sick and elderly. The office should be contacted for the Sacrament of the Sick.

SACRAMENTAL SPONSORSHIP

Sponsors for Baptism or Confirmation must:

Be a registered member of a Catholic parish

Be at least 16 years of age

Received Sacraments of Initiation:

Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation

If married, according to the laws of the Catholic Church

Sunday, July 5 Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Matthew 11:25-30

Jesus speaks lovingly and gently when he invites all those who are weary and burdened with life to seek relief and respite in him. He says, “Your souls will find rest, for my yoke is easy and my burden light.”

Mass Intentions

Saturday, July 4

8:30am Betty Bird r/b Ed and Pat
5:00pm Ben and Mary Colletti r/b daughter, Rita

Sunday, July 5

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

7:30am John and Craig Forsman r/b wife and mother
9:30am Fred and Alice Sweeney
r/b Richard and Anna Sweeney
11:30am Joseph Schiavo r/b Knights of Columbus #6364
Elliott Kawczynski r/b Susan Mausolf
Kathleen Farina r/b Siano Family
David Paul Contarino r/b Mom, Dad and family
Robert Wnek r/b Taylor and Gatti Families
Oliver Nicholas Shepherd
r/b Desiree and Bernard Shepherd

Monday, July 6 – St. Maria Goretti

8:30am Jorge Perez r/b Carmen Perez

Tuesday, July 7

8:30am Living and Deceased Members of the Parish

Wednesday, July 8

8:30am Martha Rastelli r/b Rastelli Family

Thursday, July 9

8:30am Paul Jones, Sr. r/b Paul and Lucille Jones

Friday, July 10

8:30am James Z. Doherty, Sr. r/b Sheri and Lori Wilgus

Saturday, July 11 – St. Benedict

8:30am Michael McKenna r/b Michele McCaffrey
5:00pm Alex Buchanan r/b Carol and Joseph Muglie
Carol Flick r/b Marchuk Family
Frank Starzi r/b Knights of Columbus #6364
Tom Nugent r/b Knights of Columbus #6364
Joan Wnek r/b Taylor and Gatti Families
Roxanne K. Day r/b Barbara Taylor

Sunday, July 12

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

7:30am Joseph Schiavo r/b Peter and Nora Traum
9:30am John Romeo r/b wife, Grace
Charles Farno r/b Susan Gould
Jason Thompson r/b Peter and Patti Houwen
Nicanor Aquino r/b Janet and family
Francisco Laranjeira r/b John Laranjeira
Margaret Rose Walker r/b Richard and Eileen Barca
11:30am Charles Farno r/b Marion Burns

Readings for the Week

Monday, July 6	Hos 2:16, 17c-18, 21-22; Mt 9:18-26
Tuesday, July 7	Hos 8:4-7, 11-13; Mt 9:32-38
Wednesday, July 8	Hos 10:1-3, 7-8, 12; Mt 10:1-7
Thursday, July 9	Hos 11:1-4, 8e-9; Mt 10:7-15
Friday, July 10	Hos 14:2-10; Mt 10:16-23
Saturday, July 11	Is 6:1-8; Mt 10:24-33

Prayer for Religious Vocations

Priest: Let us pray for vocations.

All: O God, we earnestly beseech you to bless the Church with many priests, deacons, seminarians and religious who will love you with their whole strength, be faithful to their vocation and gladly spend their entire lives to teach your truths, serve your Church and make you known and loved.

Priest: Bless our families, bless our children.

All: Choose from our homes those who are needed for your work.

Priest: O Mary, Queen of the clergy,

All: Pray for us. Pray for our priests, deacons, seminarians and religious. Obtain for us many more.

All: Amen.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise You. We bless You. We adore you. We glorify You. We give You thanks for Your great glory. Lord God, heavenly King, O God almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only-begotten Son. Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father: you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. You take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. You are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, You alone are the Lord, You alone, are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

First Reading – Zechariah 9:9-10

Thus says the LORD:

Rejoice heartily, O daughter Zion, shout for joy, O daughter Jerusalem!

See, your king shall come to you;

a just savior is he, meek, and riding on an ass,

on a colt, the foal of an ass.

He shall banish the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem;

the warrior's bow shall be banished, and he shall proclaim peace to the nations.

His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

Responsorial Psalm – Psalm 145:1-2, 8-9, 10-11, 13-14

I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God.

Second Reading – Romans 8:9, 11-13

Brothers and sisters: You are not in the flesh; on the contrary, you are in the spirit, if only the Spirit of God dwells in you. Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. If the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the one who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also, through his Spirit that dwells in you. Consequently, brothers and sisters, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Gospel – Matthew 11:25-30

At that time Jesus exclaimed:

"I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth,

for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to little ones.

Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father.

No one knows the Son except the Father,

and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him.

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me,

for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden light."

Nicene Creed – I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven: and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

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**To everything there is a season and a time
for every purpose under heaven.**

Ecclesiastes 3:1

“...a time to be born...”

“...a time to welcome...”

“...a time to be married...”

...a time to be healed...”

Ann Marie Agar, Sam Amaradio, George Austin, Kevon Baldwin, Verna Bisconte, Rita Bruno, Colleen, Krista Collings, Bobby Cooper, Jerrolyn Covely, Bob D'Alessio, Robert Deegan, Ang DelGrande, Michael DiBernardo, Susan DiCicco, Alberta DiFabio, Barbara & Stephen DiTullio, Michael Donahue, Rich Donofrio, Rose Dougherty, Donna Dluoik, Bill Dunbar, Ellie & Les Edwards, Thomas Fenerty, Rachel Feudale, Francis Ferry, Agnes Flood, Helen Fowler, Marylou and Terry Furfari, Linda Gerwatoski, John Gilmore, Margaret Giordano, Patricia Griggs, Michael Groody, Donovan & John Gura, John & Joseph Hart, Kathy Heisinger, Karol Hennessey, Jason, Adalynne Johnson, Susan Kane, Karen, Carol Taylor-Kearney, Caroline Keenan, Marilyn Angelotti-Kelly, Fred Krumm, Steffanie Lerch, Patricia Manning, Anthony and Biago Marciante, Michelle Marhefka, Barbara Marker, Elwood Martz III, Maryellen McAteer, Dorothy McKeever, Barbara & Ira McManus, Anne McMenamin, Christina McNasby, Jack & Tim McSorley, Hannah McStay, Timothy Malloy, Jennifer Morgan, Katie Mutek, Peter Myers, Frank Nowak, Nicole P., William Pappernek, Giovanni Poloney, Rose Quigley, Barbara Ragonese, Janet Rainier, Joan Reilly, Mary Reilly, George Rein, Angie & Pete Richman, Patti Roberts, Jim Roche, Karen Rucci, Jason Russell, Denise Sacco, Marguerite Sadler, Caterina & Santi Saya, Loretta Scardino, Charlie Schmidheiser, Mark Serock, Linda Sesko, Nicholas Simeo, Sr., Eda Shannon, Jason Shipman, Chris Stalker, Nick Stansbury, Renee Steele, Dot Stronski, Jason Tallarida, Ernie Tolentino, Tom Tull, Rosemarie Villari, William Walsh, Justin Weaver, John Werner, Nancy Taylor-Williams, Dianne Williamson, Richard Wilson, Theresa Woods, Lois Worthington, Lori Wotypka, Lois Wunsch, Maria Wyzykowski, Francesco Zarzycki, Jacqueline Zellner, their caregivers, all others in need of our prayers.

“...a time to die...”

Tilda Gerst

STEWARDS' GIFTS

“For my yoke is easy, and my burden light.”

-Matthew 11:30

When we think of being good stewards, we may think that God is asking too much of us when He calls us to generously share our time, talent and treasure. However, we must remember that we are not “owners” of anything, we are merely “stewards” of the gifts God has given us. All He is asking is that we give back a small portion, in gratitude, of what He has already given to us.

Stewardship Report

Will resume again next week.

FORGOT YOUR ENVELOPES?

If you forgot your envelopes, are new to the parish or are visiting the parish and would like to make a donation. You can do so here. Be sure to select one-time gift – as recurring is default.



STEPHEN MINISTRY

“Pull Yourself Together”

You’ve heard it a million times. But things just aren’t coming together. You’re still hurting. You need someone to listen and to care, without judging or pushing you to get better. A Stephen Minister can be this person for you. To request a Stephen Minister, call 856-468-5536.

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly hosts, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan, and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls.

***“No nation is ever taller than when on its
knees [in prayer]. I submit that we can best
honor America by rededicating ourselves to
God and the American dream.”***

-Billy Graham

OFFICE CLOSED MONDAY

The Parish Office will be closed this Monday, July 6, in observance of Independence Day. We will reopen Tuesday, July 7. Please note, **the PREP Office will be open** and Summer PREP Session 2 will begin on Monday, July 6.

NO PRIME TIMERS THIS WEEK

The Prime Timers Senior Ministry will continue to meet throughout the summer on their regular schedule, with the exception of the PREP weeks: **July 6**, and **July 20**. See you there!

THINKING ABOUT BECOMING CATHOLIC?

The Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) is for adults who are interested in becoming Catholic, completing the Sacraments of Initiation, or simply exploring the teachings of the Catholic Church in a welcoming and supportive environment. If interested, please scan the QR code below and complete the information on the form. Deacon Tom O'Brien will be in touch with you when he receives it. Come and explore the faith!



BASKETBALL CAMP

Gloucester Catholic Rams are hosting a basketball camp for players going into Grades 4 to 9 this year.

Week 1: Monday 7/13 to Thursday 7/16 (Boys)

Week 2: Monday 7/20 to Thursday 7/23 (Boys & Girls)

Cost is \$150 per week (or \$265 for both). Space is limited, so early registration is highly encouraged. For registration information, contact coach Brandon Dougherty at brandondougherty5@yahoo.com.



Like us on Facebook – Incarnation, Mantua



JOSEPH'S HOUSE: DATE CHANGE

Due to the July 4th holiday, the regularly scheduled delivery of casseroles to Joseph's House in Camden will be moved this month to July 13. June was a good month for us – thank you for your help and keep up the great work!.

RETROUVAILLE: REDISCOVER THE LOVE IN YOUR MARRIAGE

Tens of thousands of couples have healed their marriages through Retrouvaille. If you know anyone who could benefit from this program, please pass this on. Couples learn to build communication skills and to increase intimacy. It provides help for marriage problems, difficulties or crises.

The next program will be held the weekend of July 31 through August 2, 2026 at the Family Life Center in Malvern, PA. An additional program will be the weekend of October 2 - 4. For more information, or to register, call 215-766-3944 or visit www.MarriageHelpDelVal.org. All inquiries are strictly confidential.

HOMESCHOOL CO-OP THIS FALL

Enrollment is open now for the Immaculate Heart of Mary Cooperative, a homeschool cooperative based out of Mary, Mother of Mercy Parish in Glassboro. Sessions for elementary-aged children will be 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Tuesdays beginning Sept. 8.

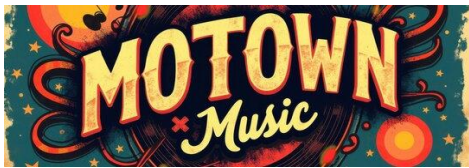
For information, send email to Megan Devose at immaculateHMC@gmail.com.

HELP FOR PREGNANT MOMS

If you are facing a difficult pregnancy or need supplies for your baby, you are not alone. First Way Pregnancy Resource Center located at 686 N. Broad St., Woodbury is here to help. They provide free and confidential counseling, pregnancy tests, ultrasounds, clothing in sizes newborn to 2T and other supplies. Call 856-848-1819 for an appointment. Donations and volunteers are also welcome – call the number above or send email to ads@nationallifecenter.com.

Donations of clothing, diapers, wipes, formula may also be dropped off at the parish office.

Visit us at www.incarnation-church.org



This fall, Incarnation is taking a trip down memory lane! Mark your calendar for Saturday, September 19 and get ready for some “Dancing in the Street!” Our “Motown Memories” night has everything you need for a great party: Dinner, dancing, prizes, and music from some of the greatest artists of our lifetime. Tickets are \$30 per person or \$50 per couple. BYOB. Tables can be reserved with the purchase of 8 or 10 tickets. No tickets sold at the door. For tickets, contact Sr. Denise Ware at dcwsfcc@gmail.com or call 609-970-4371.

WEDDING OF THE SEA

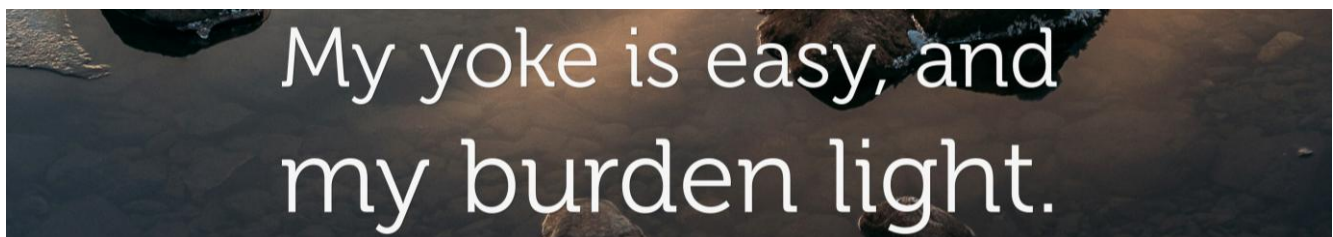
A tradition a thousand years in the making is coming to the heart of Atlantic City. Join the Parish of Saint Monica for the annual Wedding of the Sea on Saturday, August 15. Experience the solemn Mass of the Assumption at the Hard Rock Seminole Ballroom at 10 a.m., followed by the procession onto the beach and ceremonial blessing of the Atlantic Ocean. As we bless the ocean, we renew our trust in God’s providence and celebrate His presence in our lives and in the heart of Atlantic City. Join us as we honor Our Lady on her feast day! For more information, please visit www.weddingofthesea.org to sponsor a program ad, to purchase buffet tickets or to learn more.

LIVING AS MISSIONARY DISCIPLES

Our Scripture passage for this Sunday comes from the Gospel of Matthew 11:25-30. In this passage, we hear Jesus offering a prayer of thanksgiving to the Father in the midst of a difficult ministry experience. Jesus also issues an invitation to the discipleship by appealing to the hungers of the human heart. It is interesting to note that Jesus offered His prayer of thanksgiving and invitation to discipleship immediately after facing rejection from the two towns of Chorazin and Bethsaida. That is an interesting response to an otherwise negative experience. Perhaps our Lord is trying to tell us something by the timing of His Prayer and His invitation. First, let us consider the prayer of thanksgiving. By pausing to reflect on an experience of failure, and seeking God’s will in the midst of it, Jesus is giving us an example to follow. None of us are successful in all of our efforts. Failure happens in ways large and small. It is important that we take time, like Jesus, to bring our experiences to prayer and ask the Father to help us understand how our moments of difficulty fit into His divine plan. Only then can we be accepting of failure in a healthy way such that we learn from our mistakes, strengthen our resolve, and recommit ourselves to fidelity in the future. God always has something to teach us. To those who have ears, let them hear it! Prayer is the way in which we open ourselves to hear and understand the Lord interpreting our experience for us. Saint Paul reminds us that Christians should be able to thank the Lord for everything we experience in our lives. It is easy to thank the Lord for the blessings we receive, but it can be difficult to be thankful when we are given trials and difficulties. By offering His prayer of thanksgiving immediately after an experience of rejection, Jesus was teaching us by example how we are to respond as Christian disciples when we experience difficulties in our efforts to carry out the work of God.

Second, we can now better consider the call to discipleship. Jesus wants us to follow Him wherever He leads us. By issuing the call to discipleship after a moment of rejection and failure, Jesus was reminding any would-be followers that being His disciple will not bring them popularity or success. There are very few leaders who ask people to follow them after a moment of failure. Jesus wants disciples who will not only be faithful when the crowds applaud their message but who will also be faithful when others jeer at their message. Our Lord wants disciples who are so deeply committed to following Him that they are not unduly motivated by the pursuit of success or deterred by the disappointment of failure. Only someone who is profoundly drawn to the Lord Himself would accept the invitation in light of these circumstances. That is a disciple who will remain faithful in good times and in bad and who will truly thank the Lord for all things.

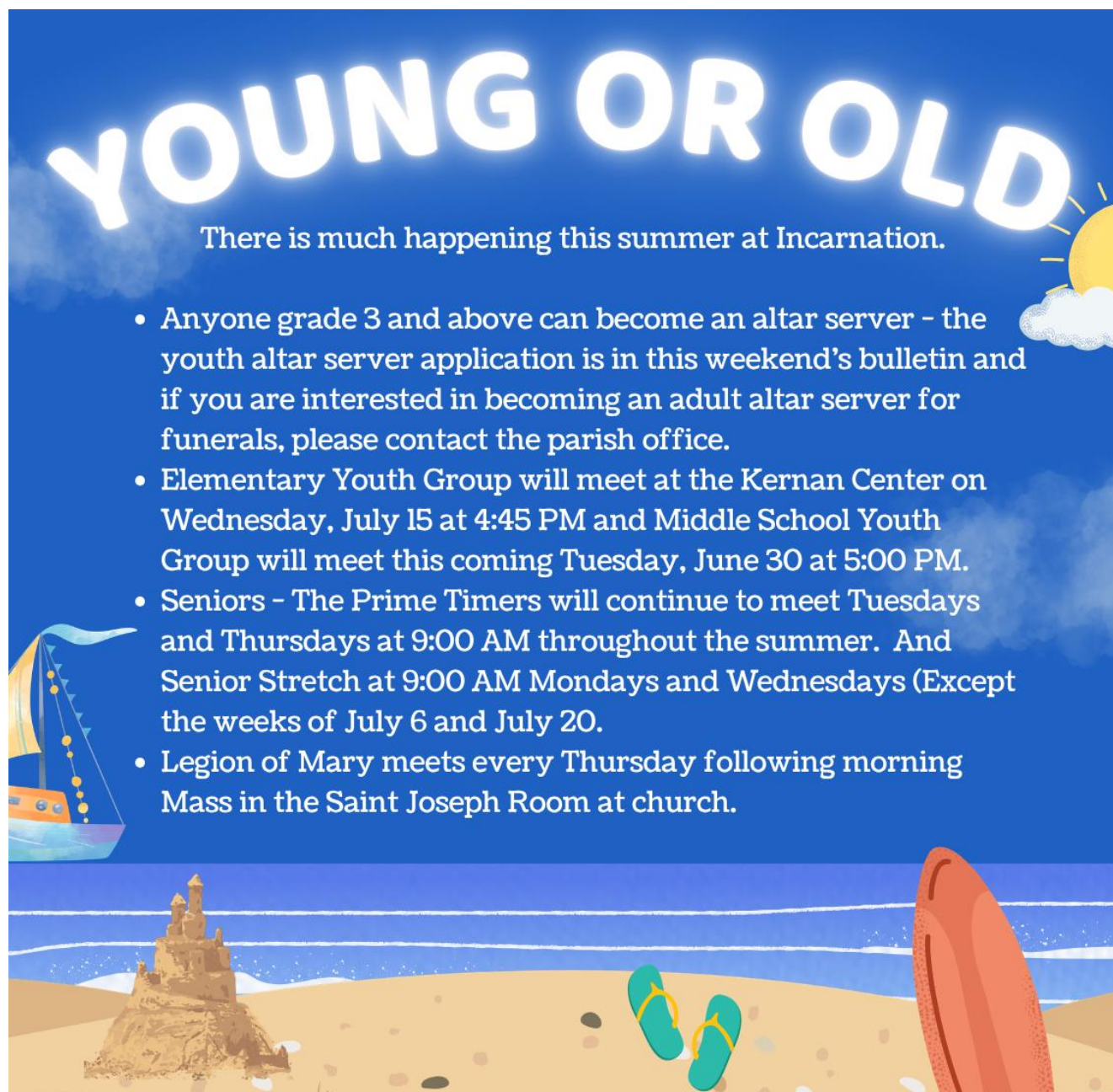
Think about it: When is it difficult for me to thank the Lord for all things and not just some things?



PRAY FOR OUR TROOPS

*Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands.
Protect them as they protect us.
Bless them and their families for the selfless acts
they perform in our time of need.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

We pray for all in our armed forces, especially: Andrew Archer, Greg Giordano, Dane Kozlosky, James Tingle, Johnny McGowan, Vincent McManus, Vincent W. Abruzzese, John Robinson, Sean Owens, Matthew Cottrell, David Nahas, Colin Wexler, Liam Wahl, Ty Thuston, Brian Guzzetti, Leonard Puggi, Daniel Golden, Brett Govern, Ryan Lisle, Devin Kozlosky, Cory Carpenter, Christopher Hansen, Luke Wordelmann, Ryan Gilroy, Tyler L. Novak, Danielle Davis, Jesse Nester, Adam Stetser, Joseph Vaccarella, Matthew Murphy, Sara Huber, Robert Coughlan



YOUNG OR OLD

There is much happening this summer at Incarnation.

- Anyone grade 3 and above can become an altar server - the youth altar server application is in this weekend's bulletin and if you are interested in becoming an adult altar server for funerals, please contact the parish office.
- Elementary Youth Group will meet at the Kernan Center on Wednesday, July 15 at 4:45 PM and Middle School Youth Group will meet this coming Tuesday, June 30 at 5:00 PM.
- Seniors - The Prime Timers will continue to meet Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:00 AM throughout the summer. And Senior Stretch at 9:00 AM Mondays and Wednesdays (Except the weeks of July 6 and July 20).
- Legion of Mary meets every Thursday following morning Mass in the Saint Joseph Room at church.



Church of the Incarnation
Altar Server Application (Please Print Clearly)

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Parent's Name: _____ Your Birth Date: _____

Parent's Email: _____

The Altar Servers form a very important part of the church, and every parish is enriched through their dedication and service. It is a very important responsibility and requires a sincere commitment. Only if you are serious about committing to the following expectations should you apply to be an Altar Server. Your signature indicates your agreement to these expectations.

1. All servers are expected to be at the Church 15 minutes before Mass begins.
2. All servers are to sign in when they serve, then check with the Deacon or Priest to see what needs to be done to prepare for Mass.
3. All servers are expected to fulfill their times to serve.
4. All servers are expected to find their own replacement at Mass if they cannot make it for whatever reason.
5. All servers are expected to wear "Sunday clothes" at the weekend Masses, even when not scheduled to serve (no flip flops, sandals or open toe shoes).
6. All servers are expected to hang up their cassocks and surplices after Mass.
7. All servers are expected to pay attention to the Priest and Deacon during Mass.
8. All servers are expected to know and say the appropriate responses throughout the Mass.

Yes, I _____ agree. (Your signature)

Do your parents agree to support you in this ministry to help you fulfill your commitment as an altar server? (Example: help you to show up on time when you are scheduled to serve or to find a replacement if you are unable to attend.)

Yes, I/we _____ agree.
(Parent's signature)

Today's Date: _____

Please return completed form to the Parish Office.

All applicants must be baptized Catholic students in grades 3 and above who have received their First Holy Communion, are parishioners of Incarnation Church, are willing and able to attend training sessions, and have a desire to serve the Lord and His people.



Discovering **hope** and **joy** in the Catholic faith.

July 2026

Church of the Incarnation, Mantua, NJ

Rev. Stephen J. Rapposelli, Pastor

One Minute Meditations

St. Lawrence of Brindisi

Born in Brindisi, Naples, Cesare de Rossi entered the Capuchin Order when he was sixteen, taking the name Lawrence. In addition to Italian, he was fluent in many languages. His knowledge of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew made him a great Biblical scholar, but his knowledge of German, French, and Spanish made Him a good preacher and diplomat. As minister general of the Capuchins, he spread the influence of the Order, establishing monasteries in Germany, Austria, and Spain.

The indispensability of prayer

St. Martha is often criticized for her busyness while her sister Mary is praised for sitting at Jesus' feet. Yet Martha's fault was not her service itself, but for allowing productivity to take precedence over prayerful attentiveness to the Lord. Scripture does not call us to perpetual activity; God commands us to rest (Exodus 20:10-11) and to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17), while still fulfilling our responsibilities. Prayer enables us to live out our vocations, especially our fundamental vocation to love.

"That [Precious] blood inebriates the soul. It clothes her in the fire of divine charity. It gives her the food of the sacrament that I have set up for you in the hostel of the mystic body of holy Church, the body and the blood of my Son..." – God to St. Catherine of Siena

Your summer soul-care checklist

Summer brings a welcome change of pace. While routines may take a break, our faith doesn't have to. Here are seven simple ways to stay rooted in God's presence and make this summer spiritually fruitful:

- 1. Begin every journey with prayer.** Before heading out, take a moment to entrust your plans to God. Pray the Guardian Angel prayer and ask for protection, wisdom, and peace throughout your travels and activities.
- 2. Wear reminders of your faith.** A crucifix, Miraculous Medal, scapular, or Rosary bracelet can do more than complete an outfit. These sacramentals serve as quiet reminders of who you belong to and what you value.
- 3. Adopt a saint for summer.** Choose a saint to be your spiritual companion for the season. You may discover that the saint you choose has something to teach you exactly when you need it.
- 4. Let creation lead you to the Creator.** A brilliant sunset, a mountain view, or even flowers blooming in a neighbor's garden can become moments of prayer. When beauty captures your attention, let it lift your heart and mind to God, the source of all

beauty and goodness.

- 5. Look for opportunities to serve.** Summer may offer additional flexibility. Use it to love your neighbor in practical ways. Help with yardwork, spend time with someone who appears lonely, offer encouragement to a colleague.

"The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge" (Psalm 19:1-2).

- 6. Keep your soul in training.** Athletes know that strength comes through discipline. Spiritual strength is no different. Choose a sacrifice or habit that challenges you. Limit social media, wake up earlier for prayer, or attend an extra Mass during the week. Even small acts build up the heart for greater things.

- 7. Remember the 1-1-1 Rule.** A simple rhythm can keep you faithful throughout the summer: *Pray (at least) once a day. Attend Mass once a week. Go to Confession once a month.* These three practices provide a steady anchor, even amidst the looser structure of summer.

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Throughout the Gospels, Peter takes up a leadership role among the Apostles – a role Jesus confirmed when, in Matthew 16, He names Peter "the Rock" upon which Jesus would build His Church (Matthew 16:17-18). After the Ascension, St. Peter traveled to Rome with the Gospel and became the bishop

Why do Catholics call Rome "home?"

of the Christian community there. He was martyred and buried in Rome, and his successors became the next popes. Historically, the church in Rome became a source of unity, strength, and faithfulness in adversity. Today, Catholics everywhere call Rome – the resting place of St. Peter – "home."

The secret to balance isn't to do more

Do you struggle to find balance in life? As founder and abbot of an entire Order, St. Benedict of Nursia knew the challenge of balancing prayer, work, community, and service. His wisdom for cultivating balance, order, and peace remains remarkably practical today:

Keep a daily rhythm: Few of us are called to a monk's strict schedule, but we can establish healthy routines, make time for rest and meals, and safeguard time for prayer. Structure creates freedom by helping us focus on what matters most rather than constantly reacting to demands. You, and those around you, will benefit.

Be punctual: "On hearing the signal for an hour of the

divine office, the monk will immediately set aside what he has in hand and go with utmost speed" (Rule of St. Benedict, Ch. 43). A balanced life depends on moving promptly to what is most important at the proper time. Punctuality is not merely efficiency; it is a way of honoring both our commitments and the people around us.

Make peace before sunset: Peace of mind requires letting go of anger and forgiving quickly. When a busy day leads to conflict, St. Benedict urges us to "make peace before the setting of the sun." Resentment drains our energy and disrupts our relationships, while reconciliation restores the peace needed to live and work well.

from Scripture

Matthew 13:44-52, The value of the Kingdom

Jesus used the parables in this Gospel passage to emphasize the life-changing value of the Kingdom. In the first parable, a man discovers – seemingly by accident – a treasure buried in a field. Recognizing its value, he sells everything he has to buy the field. In the second scenario, a merchant finds a valuable pearl after diligent searching. He also sells everything to possess the precious pearl.

By these parables, Jesus taught that being part of God's Kingdom – accepting His love for us and loving others as He loves – is the only thing

that completely fulfills our hearts. God's unconditional love is the only thing that is worthy of everything we have. If we accept His invitation (He forces no one), our lives will change as our hearts change.

Finally, Jesus compared the separation between the evil and righteous to the sifting that happens when a large catch of fish is brought ashore. When we put our whole life in service to God's love, then the individual pieces fall into place around that love, and anything contrary to it falls away.

Q & A

Who are the incorrupt Saints?

"Incorrupt" saints are those whose bodies have been found to resist normal decomposition, either wholly or in part, without deliberate human preservation. Some, such as St. Bernadette Soubirous, appear remarkably well preserved, while in other cases only certain parts of the body, such as St. Vincent de Paul's heart, remain incorrupt.

The Church regards incorruptibility not as proof of sainthood, but as a possible sign of a person's holiness. These extraordinary cases also serve as reminders of the future glory promised to all believers. The human body possesses a unique dignity and is destined to share in God's glory through the resurrection of the dead (CCC 997). Mary's bodily Assumption into heaven offers a glimpse of the destiny to which all the faithful are called.

For this reason, the Church has long venerated the bodies and relics of the saints. Such veneration, including that of incorrupt bodies, is intended to be reverent and prayerful. By encountering these remarkable witnesses of faith, we are inspired to imitate their virtue and draw closer to Christ. When we honor the saints, we ultimately honor the God whose grace transformed their lives.

Feasts & Celebrations

July 6 – St. Maria Goretti (1902). Twelve-year-old Maria was attacked by a neighbor who tried to assault her. When she fought rather than submit, he stabbed her repeatedly. She forgave him before dying shortly after. Her attacker dreamed of Maria while in prison and his first act when released 27 years later was to beg Maria's mother's forgiveness. He wept tears of joy when he attended Maria's canonization.

July 22 – St. Mary Magdalene (1st century). Jesus expelled seven demons from Mary (Luke 8:2) and she financially supported His ministry. She stood by His Cross with His mother and was the one who informed the

Apostles of His Resurrection.

July 26 – Saints Joachim and Ann (1st century). Little is known about Jesus' grandparents, but Mary's unshakeable faith, her devotion to the laws of her religion, and her steadiness in crises indicate the values with which she was raised. Today, pray for your grandparents.

July 30 – St. Peter Chrysologus (c.450). Born in Imola around the year 400, St. Peter converted to Christianity and was ordained deacon. For a while he lived ascetically as a monk. He was ordained Bishop of Ravenna and spent his office defending his see against heresies. His preaching style was so impactful and articulate he was given the title of "golden-tongued." He produced about one hundred seventy-six homilies.

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