

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



Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time * October 4, 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

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 at the 11:30a.m Mass. 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, October 4 ~ Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

Matthew 21:33-43

In another rebuke to the chief priests and the elders, Jesus recounts a parable in which the owner of a vineyard leases his vineyard to tenant farmers. When the owner sends his servants and even his son to claim his rightful share of the crops, the tenants kill all of them. With some bitterness, Jesus warns the chief priests that “the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to people that will yield a rich harvest.”

Mass Intentions

Saturday, October 3

8:30am Raymond Copeland r/b Ott Family
5:00pm Louis Cionci and Dawn Worrell
r/b Lisa Letterman
Robert & Joan Wnek r/b Taylor and Gatti Families
Joan Greenwald r/b Diane and Ted Bamford
John “Jack” Persichetti r/b the MacDermott Family
Kathleen Lynch McDevitt r/b husband, James

Sunday, October 4

Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

7:30am Deborah Romano r/b sisters, Brenda and Betty
9:30am Wolfgang Licht r/b wife and family
The Intentions of Fr. Shaji
r/b Parish Staff and Volunteers
Roxanne Day r/b Incarnation Bereavement Group
Carol Flick r/b Geri-Ann Deputy
Henrietta Comegno r/b Kathy Higgins and Family
Gloria Kneller r/b Carl and Irene Minniti
11:30am Patricia Quigley-Ayscue (7th Anniversary)
r/b her Mother

Monday, October 5 – St. Faustina

7:00am Ginny Worthington r/b her children
8:30am Teresa Zaverel
r/b Anthony and Catherine Silenzio

Tuesday, October 6

7:00am Francis Wesolowski
r/b daughter, Annette Zambrano
8:30am Living and Deceased Members of the Parish

Wednesday, October 7– Our Lady of the Rosary

7:00am Doris Ehrmann r/b John and Emily Hogan
8:30am Tammy Mozer r/b her Husband

Thursday, October 8

7:00am Joan Greenwald
r/b Knights of Columbus #6364
8:30am Lucille Ann Teter
r/b Timothy and Suzanne Cleary

Friday, October 9

7:00am Florence Wesolowski
r/b daughter, Annette Zambrano
8:30am Arthur and Gertrude Toner
r/b daughter, Anne Kollar

Saturday, October 10

8:30am Tammy Mozer r/b her Husband
5:00pm Aurora Elizabeth Marks r/b Anne Kollar

Sunday, October 11

Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

7:30am Joseph Schiavo r/b Rose Hartmann
Dorothy Kalbach r/b Rosie’s Farm Market Family
Harry Covely r/b Marcy and Kitty
Tom and Lisa Hengel r/b Ochipinti Family
Patricia A. Clymer r/b Wilgus Family
Paul Hagenberg r/b Ott Family
9:30am Thomas and Elizabeth Maloney
r/b Parcels Family
11:30am Robert Rogers r/b Virginia Rogers

Readings for the Week

Monday, October 5	Gal 1:6-12; Lk 10:25-37
Tuesday, October 6	Gal 1:13-24; Lk 10:38-42
Wednesday, October 7	Gal 2:1-2, 7-14; Lk 11:1-4
Thursday, October 8	Gal 3:1-5; Lk 11:5-13
Friday, October 9	Gal 3:7-14; Lk 11:15-26
Saturday, October 10	Gal 3:22-29; Lk 11:27-28

Prayer for Religious 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. 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 – Isaiah 5:1-7

Let me now sing of my friend, my friend's song concerning his vineyard. My friend had a vineyard on a fertile hillside; he spaded it, cleared it of stones, and planted the choicest vines; within it he built a watchtower, and hewed out a wine press. Then he looked for the crop of grapes, but what it yielded was wild grapes. Now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard: What more was there to do for my vineyard that I had not done? Why, when I looked for the crop of grapes, did it bring forth wild grapes? Now, I will let you know what I mean to do with my vineyard: take away its hedge, give it to grazing, break through its wall, let it be trampled! Yes, I will make it a ruin: it shall not be pruned or hoed, but overgrown with thorns and briers; I will command the clouds not to send rain upon it. The vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his cherished plant; he looked for judgment, but see, bloodshed! for justice, but hark, the outcry!

Responsorial Psalm – Psalm 80:9, 12, 13-14, 15-16, 19-20 - The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

Second Reading – Philippians 4:6-9

Brothers and sisters: Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me. Then the God of peace will be with you.

Gospel – Matthew 21:33-43

Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people: "Hear another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a hedge around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went on a journey. When vintage time drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to obtain his produce. But the tenants seized the servants and one they beat, another they killed, and a third they stoned. Again he sent other servants, more numerous than the first ones, but they treated them in the same way. Finally, he sent his son to them, thinking, 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and acquire his inheritance.' They seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What will the owner of the vineyard do to those tenants when he comes?" They answered him, "He will put those wretched men to a wretched death and lease his vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the proper times." Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the Scriptures: The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; by the Lord has this been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes? Therefore, I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that will produce its fruit."

The 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...”

Cameron John Kircher
Thomas John Morgan, Jr.

“...a time to welcome...”

Lynch Family, Nicholas Brotzman, Correa Family,
Pinto Family, Julia Newman, Burnham Family

“...a time to be married...”

...a time to be healed...”

Ann Marie Agar, Sam Amaradio, George Austin, Kevon Baldwin, Verna Bisconte, Rita Bruno, Quincy Cao, Colleen, Bobby Cooper, Jerrolyn Covely, Bob D'Alessio, Robert Deegan, Ang DelGrande, Antoinette Deuber, Michael DiBernardo, Susan DiCicco, Alberta DiFabio, Barbara & Stephen DiTullio, Rich Donofrio, Judy Doyle, Donna Dluoik, Bill Dunbar, Ellie & Les Edwards, Thomas Fenerty, Rachel Feudale, Francis Ferry, Marylou and Terry Furfari, Linda Gerwatoski, Margaret Giordano, Patricia Griggs, Michael Groody, Donovan & John Gura, John & Joseph Hart, Kathy Heisinger, Carol Taylor-Kearney, Caroline Keenan, Marilyn Angelotti-Kelly, Fred Krumm, Steffanie Lerch, Patricia Manning, Richard Marcantonio, Anthony & Biago Marciante, Michelle Marhefka, Barbara Marker, Maryellen McAteer, 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, Kimberly Powell, Rose Quigley, 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, Dot Stronski, Barbara Struzynski, Jason Tallarida, 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, all others in need of our prayers.

“...a time to die...”

Kevin Zarzycki, Lucretia Barr

STEWARDSHIP LIFESTYLE

*The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone...”*

- Matthew 21:42

Jesus was rejected by the religious and political leaders of his day, as well as ordinary citizens, but he was still obedient to God, the Father. Similarly, living a **stewardship** lifestyle may cause you to be “rejected” by others, but we, too are called to be obedient. Saying grace before a meal in a restaurant may attract some strange looks from some. But to others it is a sign that God is alive and well!

Stewardship Report

Sept. 22 through Sept. 28: \$22,841.04

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 by scanning the QR code below. Be sure to select a one-time gift, as recurring is default. Thank you for your generosity!



STEPHEN MINISTRY

Feeling Down?

Our Stephen Ministry can help. Stephen Ministers aren't just there for “big” crises. They're also available for the little ones, because many times the little things can really add up. So, don't wait until you have a really big crisis; consider Stephen Ministry if the little things have you feeling down. To find out more about our Stephen Ministry or 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.



Our next casserole delivery to Joseph House is **Monday, Oct. 5**. The freezer at the Kernan Center will be available for casserole drop-offs from **7 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 4, through 9 a.m. Monday, October 5**.

Please remember to label your casserole with:

- Ingredients
- Cooking instructions
- Date prepared

Every casserole makes a difference and helps provide a warm meal to someone in need. Thank you for your continued generosity and support of the Joseph House ministry!

NEW GROUP FOR MOMS

A new ministry is forming at Incarnation called "Mamas Abiding: Mothers with Young Children." It can be hard to make time for your relationship with God when you're a mom with young children. We will meet from 9 to 10 a.m. in the Youth Room on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month for a time of fellowship and prayer. **The first session will be on Tuesday, Oct. 6**. Bring your children. For more information, contact Diane Blenke at dmblenkel@gmail.com.

THE BROWN SCAPULAR DEVOTION

You may have seen our First Communion children receiving the brown scapular at the end of Mass. The scapular is a gift given from the Blessed Virgin Mary to St. Simon Stock in 1251 as a sign of her protection. Those who wear it and pray the rosary daily receive special graces at their death. Have you ever thought about being instituted into the Order of the Brown Scapular yourself? We are having Mass with Institution and reception of the scapular on Weds., Oct. 7 at 7 p.m. If you are interested, please contact the Office.

SENIOR CITIZEN CLUB

Senior citizens ages 55 and older are invited to join the Incarnation Senior Citizen Club. We meet on the second Thursday of each month, with our next meeting Oct. 8. Lunch is served at noon for \$2 per person. The meeting begins at 12:45 p.m. with Bingo to follow. Yearly membership dues are \$8. For questions, call Bonnie at 609-517-4894 and leave your name and number.

Like us on Facebook – Incarnation, Mantua

COLUMBUS DAY SCHEDULE

The Parish Office and PREP Office will be closed Monday, Oct. 12 in observance of Columbus Day.

In addition, **there will be no 7 a.m. Mass on Monday, Oct. 12**. Normal schedule will resume Tuesday, Oct. 13.

COR MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Men, are you looking for an opportunity to grow your faith while connecting with other men of the parish? Join us every 2nd Tuesday of the month for Cor (Latin for "Heart"), a video and discussion-based fellowship. Our next meeting is this Tuesday, Oct. 13 at 7:30 p.m. in the Kernan Center. For info, call/text Brian at (424) 274-2648 or Bob at (856) 994-3476.

HOLY HOURS

We will have additional opportunities for Adoration this month on Third Friday, Oct. 16 and Tuesday, Oct. 20, both at 7 p.m. These times are in addition to our usual Wednesday Adoration from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Come and spend some time with the Lord.

PREP FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Children in grades K through 8 with disabilities are welcome to join a PREP program tailored to their individual needs. Class sizes are small and we use the Loyola Press Adaptive Program called "Finding God: Response to God's Gifts." Classes are the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month during the 9:30 Mass from September to April. Meet us at the Kernan Center!

For information and to register, visit our website: www.incarnation-church.org/prep-for-children-with-disabilities. For assistance, contact Heather Wilkie at hwilkie@incarnation-church.org.

NJ STATE MARCH FOR LIFE

October is Respect Life Month, and we continue to pray that all life will be honored at sacred, from conception to natural death. Our local March for Life will be held this year on Thursday, Oct. 8 in Trenton. Infant Jesus Parish in Woodbury Heights is sponsoring a bus trip leaving at 6:45 a.m. from St. Margaret's Church parking lot.

The trip will begin with Mass at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, and then the march will proceed to the state capital. Anyone interested in going should contact either Bob LaPalomanto at 846-994-3476 or Tony Skalski at 856-537-7325 for availability in transportation.

Visit us at www.incarnation-church.org

SAVE YOUR CHANGE FOR FIRST WAY!

The Knights of Columbus will hold their annual Baby Bottle Boomerang fundraiser beginning the weekend of Oct. 17 and 18. Grab a bottle, fill it with change and bring it back. Proceeds benefit the First Way Pregnancy Resource Center.

PREGNANT AND NEED HELP?

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.

DONATION DRIVE IN PITMAN

Mary MOM Parish is hosting a Clothing and Household Goods Drive the weekend of Oct. 17 and 18 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Queen of Peace Church, 161 Pitman Ave., Pitman. Place all donations in bags or closed boxes that are light enough to carry. Accepted items: Clothing, accessories, housewares, linens, jewelry, toys and games, music, small furniture 50lbs max, appliances and electronics are welcome. Items should be clean, dry and free of smoke or mildew. Not accepted: Large furniture, mattresses, playpens, strollers, cribs and high chairs, magazines and books.

CATHOLIC SINGLES MEET UP

Are you a single Catholic between the ages of 20 and 30? Looking to find the right person or maybe some new friends? A singles mixer will be held at Johnson's Barn Farm Café in Medford at 2 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 7. For more details or questions, send email to catholic.singles.sj@gmail.com or call 856-834-0096.

A WEEKEND AWAY FOR MARRIED COUPLES

When was the last time you and your spouse got away, just the two of you? Now, a tougher question: When was the last time you asked yourselves, "How are we doing?" Worldwide Marriage Encounter is an international ministry to encourage deeper love and connection for married couples. Whether you've been married for one year or 70, consider giving yourselves the gift of time away to talk, pray, and reconnect.

A Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend is led by one married couple and one priest. While there are talks throughout the weekend, there are no group discussions or sharing. It's just about the two of you learning to be the best, most loving and thriving couple you can be. Nine in ten couples who attend a Marriage Encounter recognize a long-lasting positive effect on their lives.

Upcoming weekends in our area include:

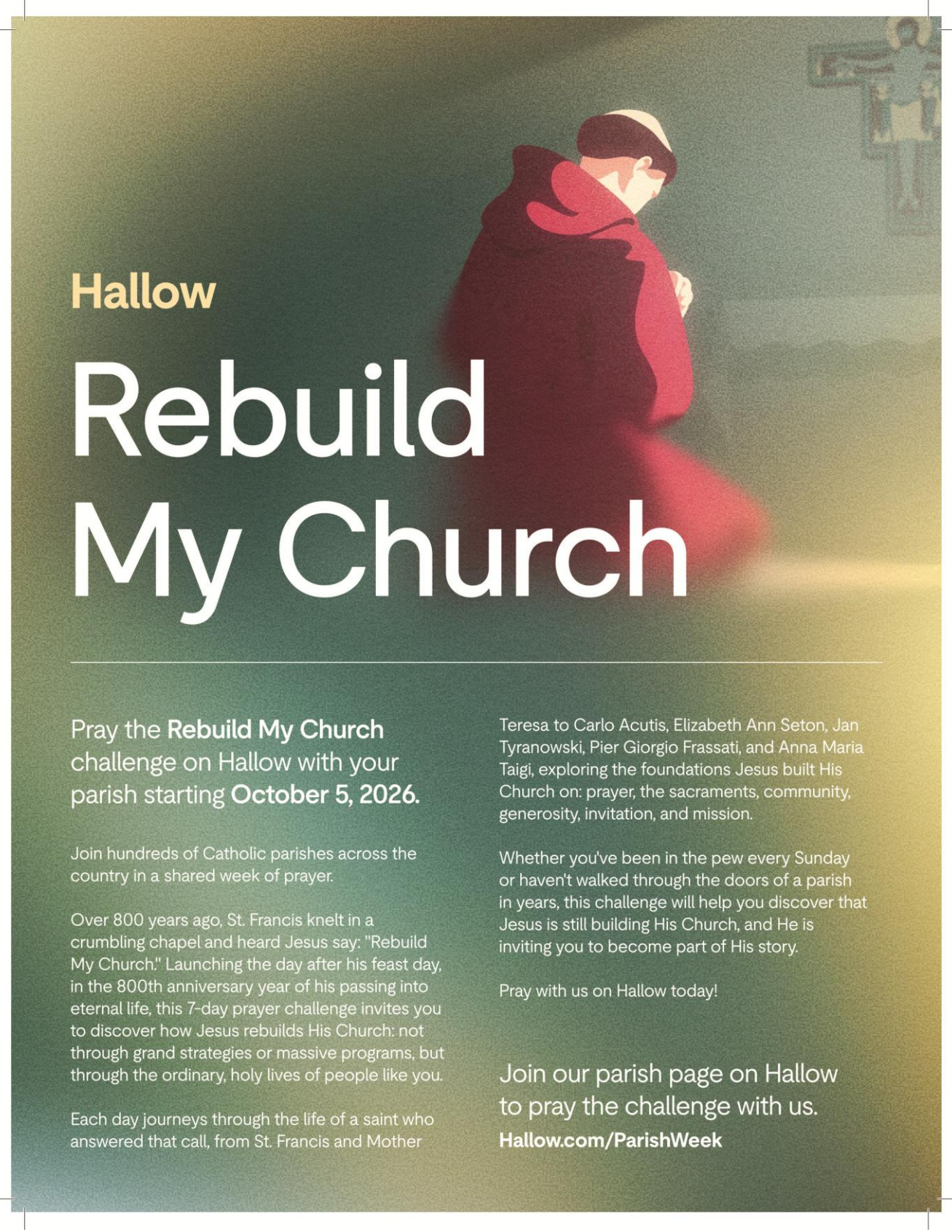
- Oct. 9-11: Doylestown, PA
- Nov. 6-8: Rehoboth Beach, DE
- Dec. 4-6: Ocean City, NJ

For questions or for more information, visit www.wmme.org or speak to Fr. Steve

LIVING AS MISSIONARY DISCIPLES

Our Scripture passage for this Sunday comes from the Gospel of Matthew 21:33-43. In this parable, Jesus continues to challenge the religious leadership of Jerusalem in an effort to motivate their positive response of faith to the message of the Gospel. While there are many good reasons that should motivate a person to accept the Gospel message, in this parable Jesus begins to also present the reality of negative judgment on those who reject His message. This teaching offers several challenging insights for us as disciples as well. One thing to note is how persistent and relentless is the master's desire to interact with the tenants of the vineyard. We are told that he sent two sets of messengers and then his own son. We are also told that the tenants became more and more hostile in their rejection of the master's interaction with them through the messengers. Scripture scholars interpret the two sets of messengers as possibly referring to the former and latter prophets (two prophetic groups in the Old Testament). The sending of the son is an obvious reference to Jesus. Thus, we see how persistent God is in His desire to engage us as His people. Even when we first reject the Lord's message or are resistant to His will, God tries to communicate His Word to us through other means. Eventually God's self-communication reaches its greatest clarity in the sending of the Son. The reality is that this parable speaks to us because we can be as resistant to God's message as were the tenants in the parable. There are many ways in which God persistently tries to motivate us to respond to His will. Perhaps it is in the comment of a friend, a homily at Mass, a reading from Scripture, a ministry invitation listed in the bulletin, something we read in the newspaper or hear on television, and so forth. When we recognize that there is a persistent and consistent message we are receiving from multiple venues, then we should probably consider it as a possible communication from the Lord.

Subscribe to our YouTube Channel – Church of the Incarnation, Mantua



Hallow

Rebuild My Church

Pray the **Rebuild My Church** challenge on Hallow with your parish starting **October 5, 2026**.

Join hundreds of Catholic parishes across the country in a shared week of prayer.

Over 800 years ago, St. Francis knelt in a crumbling chapel and heard Jesus say: "Rebuild My Church." Launching the day after his feast day, in the 800th anniversary year of his passing into eternal life, this 7-day prayer challenge invites you to discover how Jesus rebuilds His Church: not through grand strategies or massive programs, but through the ordinary, holy lives of people like you.

Each day journeys through the life of a saint who answered that call, from St. Francis and Mother

Teresa to Carlo Acutis, Elizabeth Ann Seton, Jan Tyranowski, Pier Giorgio Frassati, and Anna Maria Taigi, exploring the foundations Jesus built His Church on: prayer, the sacraments, community, generosity, invitation, and mission.

Whether you've been in the pew every Sunday or haven't walked through the doors of a parish in years, this challenge will help you discover that Jesus is still building His Church, and He is inviting you to become part of His story.

Pray with us on Hallow today!

Join our parish page on Hallow to pray the challenge with us.

Hallow.com/ParishWeek



Church of the Incarnation

Diocesan Marian Pilgrimage to the Basilica of the
National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception,
Washington, DC and a walking trip to the
Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7

Bishop Williams will celebrate Mass in the Great Upper Church. Day will also include a concert of Sacred Music, Procession of Parishes, Recitation of the Rosary, Confessions and time for private prayer. Lunch in Basilica cafeteria or pack your own.

Reserve your spot on the motor-coach
\$20.00 per person to help cover cost.

Bus will leave Incarnation Parking lot at **6:00 AM**.

To register please stop by the parish office
during normal business hours or use QR code below.





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

October 2026

Church of the Incarnation, Mantua, NJ

Rev. Stephen J. Rapposelli, Pastor

One Minute Meditations

St. John Henry Newman

St. John's path to Roman Catholicism began when he read the Church Fathers while tutoring at Oxford University. After much prayer, study, and the guidance of a Passionist priest, he converted in 1845. He was ordained a priest in 1847 and founded an Oratory of St. Philip Neri in Birmingham. In 1879, he was nominated cardinal. His famous works include *A Grammar of Assent* and his *Apologia*. He spent his office writing and offering spiritual advice.

God is closer than you think

It's easy to take God's presence for granted because we already know He is everywhere. Yet His presence is personal and relational. He is with us because He wants to be with us. We see this throughout salvation history: in the Incarnation, His earthly ministry, the Cross, the Resurrection, and the sending of the Holy Spirit.

God seeks us, draws near to us, and remains with us. So whether your "today" feels like Good Friday, Easter Sunday, or an ordinary Tuesday, God is with you. And in the Eucharist, He invites you to draw near and be with Him.

"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

5 Ways St. Francis can help deepen your love for God

People often associate St. Francis with nature, peace, and simplicity. Yet his entire life was centered on God, His mysteries, and His love. His example offers five ways to encounter God's love more deeply:

Christ-centered life: St. Francis was a man deeply in love with God. He put honoring God first. He embraced radical poverty yet gladly accepted the finest vestments, altar linens, and vessels for the Mass. In imitation, we can ask ourselves often: "Does this honor God? Is it aligned with the Gospel?"

Seeing the person: Captivated by the Incarnation, St. Francis sought to treat each person as "another Christ," regardless of health, wealth, or status. We follow his example when we learn to see every person as a beloved child of God.

Delight in God's creation: St. Francis famously delighted in and cared for creation, praising it as God's handiwork. Even a sunset, flower, or beautiful landscape can become an invitation to

praise God and grow closer to Him.

Simplicity of life: Most of us aren't called to literally "leave everything" to follow Jesus. But we can declutter our homes, make room for silence, or limit digital distractions, freeing more of our attention for God and neighbor.

Humility of heart: St. Francis' humility flowed from his desire to love

"At all times and seasons, in every country and place, every day and all day, we must have a true and humble faith." —St. Francis of Assisi

the person before him. He wanted people to walk away knowing, "God loves me!" When we're with others, do we make the conversation about elevating ourselves, or about loving them?

St. Francis experienced God's love deeply and wanted everyone else to experience that same Love. His radical life points us back to the extravagant love of God and the life we're called to live in response.

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics have items blessed?

Sacramentals are sacred signs instituted by the Church to praise God for His works and gifts and dedicate them to His service. While sacramentals take different forms, they involve the Church's prayer and often a blessing of a person, place, event, or object according to an approved rite. For example, wedding

rings are sacramentals; marriage is the Sacrament. The rings don't make the marriage sacramental but remind and encourage spouses to live their vocation faithfully. Sacramentals deepen our devotion, support us on the path to salvation, and prepare our hearts to receive God's grace.

Climb the mountain. Bring Jesus along.

Time in prayer is not a luxury or secondary to service, mission, or productivity. Nothing we do all day is more important than spending time with Jesus. Prayer gives life to our mission, and mission draws us back to prayer. We need both.

Climb the mountain: People may rightly say, "My work is my prayer." Yet spouses would struggle to stay close if they only met to divide the chores. In the same way, we need time with God apart from our work. Following Christ requires knowing Him. We sit at His feet and let Him teach us. In His presence, we learn to see as He sees, value what He values,

and love as He loves.

Return to the plains: We aren't meant to stay on the mountain. Jesus sends us back into ordinary life carrying what we received in prayer: a peaceful presence, a new insight, a kind word at the right moment. Some even begin the day by asking God to place in their path the people He wants them to encounter.

The Christian life moves between the mountain and the plain: drawing close to Jesus in prayer, then carrying His presence into the world. And in both places, He remains at our side.

from Scripture

Matthew 22:34-40, The Two Greatest Commandments

The Pharisees sought to test Jesus with a difficult and much-debated question. Jewish tradition identified 613 commandments in the Torah, and a lawyer asked Jesus to name the greatest. Of all the commandments governing Jewish life, which mattered most?

Jesus answered by going to the heart of them all: love God with your whole being, and love your neighbor as yourself. Everything begins and ends with love. And loving God means learning to love what, and whom, He loves. Jesus taught that these two

commandments are the foundation of the entire Law.

Loving God may seem easier than loving our neighbor. Loving others means welcoming people we might naturally exclude, dismiss, or avoid. Jesus drew near to sinners, outcasts, the sick, and even those who opposed Him. Our love of neighbor is tested especially in how we treat the poor, the vulnerable, the difficult, and even our enemies. This is how God loves, and He calls us to love the same way.

Q & A

What is the Franciscan Crown?

The Franciscan Crown is a devotion that meditates on seven joys in Mary's life: the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Birth of Jesus, the Adoration of the Magi, the Finding of Jesus in the Temple, the Resurrection, and Mary's Assumption and Coronation as Queen of Heaven and Earth. The devotion is prayed using seven decades of Hail Marys and is also known as the Franciscan or Seraphic Rosary.

According to Franciscan tradition, the devotion began with a young man named James, who regularly wove crowns of roses to honor the Blessed Mother. After joining the Franciscans, he could no longer continue the practice and became so discouraged that he considered leaving the Order. Tradition holds that Mary appeared to James and gave him a new way to honor her: the Franciscan Crown.

Like the traditional Rosary, the Franciscan Crown is addressed to Mary but centered entirely on Jesus. By meditating on Mary's seven joys, we contemplate the joyful and miraculous events of Christ's life through the eyes of His mother. Rooted in the Gospel and marked by Franciscan simplicity, the Crown offers a distinctly Franciscan way to draw closer to Christ through Mary.

Feasts & Celebrations

October 2 – Feast of the Guardian Angels. All of us have a guardian angel in charge of protecting us and watching over us: *"For I tell you that in heaven their angels always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven"* (Matthew 18:10). Remember to thank the Guardian Angels for the work they have done in helping us.

October 7 – Our Lady of the Rosary. Pope Gregory XIII named this feast because it was believed that Christians won a critical victory at the Battle of Lepanto after praying the Rosary.

October 15 – St. Teresa of Ávila (1582). Teresa joined the Carmelites, against her father's wishes. In 1563, she was inspired to reform her order. Despite serious opposition, she founded more than 17 convents of Discalced Carmelites

and helped reform the Carmelite friars.

October 16 – St. Margaret Mary Alacoque (1690). Margaret joined the Sisters of the Visitation at Paray-le-Monial when she was twenty-four. In 1674, she began having visions of Jesus Christ, in which He asked for a feast dedicated to His Sacred Heart to acknowledge His love for us and to encourage reparation for sins.

October 18 – St. Luke the Evangelist (First century). St. Luke was a Christian physician from Antioch. His Gospel and Acts of the Apostles were probably written between 70 and 85 A.D.

October 19 – Saints John de Brebeuf, Isaac Jogues, and Companions (1649). Six Jesuits and two laymen became missionaries to Native American tribes in North America. After spending more than 20 years in a difficult ministry, St. John de Brebeuf won the Iroquois' respect by his valor in death. St. Isaac Jogues escaped only to return to his ministry but was also murdered.

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