

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



Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time * August 2, 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, August 2 Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Matthew 14:13-21

Matthew gives us a straightforward and convincing account of the miracle of the loaves and fishes. Because the crowds following Jesus were hungry, he took five loaves and two fish, blessed them, and gave them to the crowds. Although the people numbered about five thousand, there was still food remaining.

Mass Intentions

Saturday, August 1

8:30am Michael F. Flood, Jr. r/b his loving family
5:00pm Richard A. Nardella r/b Fanelle Family
George Currie r/b Margaret Shuff
Tom Nugent r/b Knights of Columbus #6364
Dolores Akers r/b Family
Gatti Family r/b Taylor and Gatti Families
David Hubert r/b Kate Cornelius and Norberto Bastia

Sunday, August 2

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

7:30am John and Craig Forsman r/b wife and mother
9:30am Catherine Wright r/b Elizabeth Iannelli
Donald J. Prettyman r/b Holly Redmond
William Beecher r/b Sandy Tursi
Nancy Parcells r/b Joanne Halscheid
Schultz Family r/b Family
Jacqueline Reilly r/b Bill Killian
11:30am Michael McNasby, Sr. r/b daughter, Christina

Monday, August 3

8:30am Barbara Tomarchio
r/b her husband and children

Tuesday, August 4 – St. John Vianney

8:30am Living and Deceased Members of the Parish

Wednesday, August 5

8:30am Kathleen Magnotta r/b husband, Anthony

Thursday, August 6 – Feast of the Transfiguration

8:30am Angelina Napolitano r/b Paul and Lucille Jones

Friday, August 7

8:30am Carmen Capistrano r/b Capistrano Family

Saturday, August 8 – St. Dominic

8:30am Fred Cristaudo r/b Lucy
5:00pm George Currie r/b Mary Mowatt

Sunday, August 9

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

7:30am Joseph Schiavo r/b Dora Ann Smith
All Living and Deceased Members of the Parish
Harry Coveley r/b Marcy and Kitty
Carol Flick r/b McCrane Family
Patricia Ann Clymer r/b Nancy Bredbenner
Patricia M. Schmus Sandy Tursi
9:30am Antoinette Conte
r/b Joseph and Patricia Lanzilotta
11:30am Chris Noakes r/b Mom and Dad

Readings for the Week

Monday, August 3	Jer 28:1-17; Mt 14:22-36
Tuesday, August 4	Jer 30:1-2, 12-15, 18-22; Mt 14:22-36
Wednesday, August 5	Jer 31:1-7; Mt 15:21-28
Thursday, August 6	Dn 7:9-10, 13-14; 2 Pt 1:16-19; Mt 17:1-9
Friday, August 7	Na 2:1, 3, 3:1-3, 6-7; Mt 16:24-28
Saturday, August 8	Hb 1:12—2:4; Mt 17:14-20

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 – Isaiah 55:1-3

Thus says the LORD:

All you who are thirsty, come to the water! You who have no money, come, receive grain and eat; Come, without paying and without cost, drink wine and milk! Why spend your money for what is not bread; your wages for what fails to satisfy? Heed me, and you shall eat well, you shall delight in rich fare. Come to me heedfully, listen, that you may have life. I will renew with you the everlasting covenant, the benefits assured to David.

Responsorial Psalm – Psalm 145:8-9, 15-16, 17-18

The hand of the Lord feeds us; he answers all our needs.

Second Reading – Romans 8:35, 37-39

Brothers and sisters:

What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Gospel – Matthew 14:13-21

When Jesus heard of the death of John the Baptist, he withdrew in a boat to a deserted place by himself. The crowds heard of this and followed him on foot from their towns. When he disembarked and saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, and he cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples approached him and said, “This is a deserted place and it is already late; dismiss the crowds so that they can go to the villages and buy food for themselves.” Jesus said to them, “There is no need for them to go away; give them some food yourselves.”

But they said to him, “Five loaves and two fish are all we have here.” Then he said, “Bring them here to me,” and he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing, broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds. They all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up the fragments left over — twelve wicker baskets full. Those who ate were about five thousand men, not counting women and children.

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...”

Jameson Matthew Boyle, Lucy Leigh Boyle,
Alessandra Ellen Pagano

“...a time to welcome...”

Murphy Family, Roane Family

“...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, Judy Doyle, Donna Dluoik, Bill Dunbar, Ellie & Les Edwards, Thomas Fenerty, Rachel Feudale, Francis Ferry, Agnes Flood, Marylou and Terry Furfari, Linda Gerwatoski, John Gilmore, Margaret Giordano, Patricia Griggs, Michael Groody, Donovan & John Gura, John & Joseph Hart, Kathy Heisinger, 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, all others in need of our prayers.

“...a time to die...”

Bernard Kimsal (Father of Anthony Kimsal)
Janice Smith (Mother of Jennifer Drees)

STEWARDS SUPPORTED

“Jesus said to them, ‘There is no need for them to go away; give them some food yourselves’.”

-Matthew 14:16

This is what Jesus said right before he fed the five thousand men. How often do we really place our trust in Jesus when the situation looks grim? With Jesus, no gift is too small or insignificant when offered with love. But, we have to do our part. We should trust that Jesus will support our stewardship by providing all that we need. We need to believe that Jesus has a better plan in store for us.

Stewardship Report

July 21 through July 27: \$19,477.60

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

Danger vs. Opportunity

Did you know that the average crisis lasts for about six weeks? By the end of a month and a half, people usually come to some solution. Sometimes the solutions are good, but sometimes they just cause more painful problems. Stephen Ministry can support people during a crisis and beyond. To talk to a Stephen Leader, please 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.

Hallow

INTRODUCING THE HALLOW APP

Ready to grow closer to God and find greater peace at home? Incarnation is now an official partner of Hallow, the #1 Catholic prayer app! But Hallow is so much more than “just” prayer – there’s music, books, Bible studies, sleep tools, stuff for kids, and more.

There’s also a Parish Page in the app, where we can connect with one another and pray together. There’s plenty of free content, with the option to subscribe for additional features.

Already have Hallow? Visit the Church tab in the app to create your profile and find our parish (search by parish zip code 08051).

Not yet on Hallow? Use the QR code below or visit hallow.com/parish, search by zip code 08051, and follow the prompts.

You’ll be offered a special trial which gives access to all the app’s premium content. If you prefer to remain on the free version, simply hit “Skip” and you’ll still have access to our parish page.



Questions about how to use the Hallow app? Contact parishsupport@hallow.app. And keep an eye out for info about our first Prayer Challenge soon!

FORGIVENESS IS FOR EVERYONE

Join us Wednesday, Aug. 5 at 7 p.m. in the Fr. Salerno Room for the next installment of our Incarnation Insights series. Father Shaji will explore the healing power of forgiveness — what it means to truly forgive, why it matters for our spiritual lives, and how we can open our hearts to God’s mercy and extend that same mercy to others. All are welcome, bring your thoughts and questions!

NEW ADORATION OPPORTUNITY

Beginning this month, we will begin a trial of monthly Eucharistic Adoration on the third Friday of each month, from 7:00 to 8:00 PM in the church. This is a pilot program — if we see good participation, we hope to make it a lasting monthly tradition here at the parish. Come spend an hour with Our Lord in the quiet of the evening: pray, reflect, sit in silence, or simply rest in His presence. All are welcome, whether you can stay the full hour or just stop by for a few minutes.



TEACH THE FAITH

A new year of PREP is about to begin, and we are in need of people excited to share the faith with our children! Classes begin Sept. 8 for grades 1 through 8. Depending on grade, we meet every other week at one of the following times:

Tuesdays from 4:15 to 5:30 p.m.

Tuesdays from 5:45 to 7:00 p.m.

Wednesdays from 4:15 to 5:30 p.m.

Wednesdays from 5:45 to 7:00 p.m.

No experience is needed! Catechists should have all their sacraments and attend Mass regularly. If interested, contact the PREP office at 856-468-7566 or send email to Abigail McCrane: AMcCrane@incarnation-church.org.

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!



WANT TO BE AN ALTAR SERVER?

If you've ever wanted to serve God, be more involved in what happens at Mass or learn about what happens "behind the scenes," sign up to be an altar server! Children in 3rd grade or above are eligible – we will teach you! Application is at the QR code below.



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.

PADRE PIO FESTIVAL

The annual Saint Padre Pio Festival will be held on Saturday, Sept. 20 beginning with a procession and Mass at 11 a.m. at Our Lady of Pompeii Church, St. Padre Pio Parish, 4680 Dante Ave., Vineland. Religious articles and other items will be available for sale. Festival of fine foods will follow including Italian specialties, seafood, homemade desserts and coffee at "Café Pio," beer and wine. Try your luck at the basket raffle and 50/50 raffle and enjoy live music throughout the day. For information, call (856) 691-7526.

WEDDING CEREMONY MINISTRY

Incarnation Parish is starting a Wedding Ministry to help the celebrant prepare for a wedding ceremony/Mass and the rehearsal. This includes:

- Setting up for the ceremony/Mass as outlined by a checklist
- Greeting the Bride, Groom and wedding party
- Aiding with the procession of the bridesmaids and bride at the rehearsal/wedding
- Returning all wedding related items to their proper place as outlined by a checklist
- Straightening up church after the wedding
- Ensuring that Bride/Groom have everything that they brought for the day

This joyful ministry provides an extra level of care and ensures that the wedding ceremony goes smoothly. If you are interested in participating, please contact Fr. Steve at the parish office.



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. Adults 21+ only. For tickets, contact Sr. Denise Ware at dcwsfcc@gmail.com or call 609-970-4371.

DINNER DANCE FUNDRAISER

The Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Infant Jesus, who serve at Infant Jesus Parish in Woodbury, are hosting a dinner dance fundraiser from 3 to 7 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 20. Tickets are \$50 - reserve a table of 8 if you wish. Basket raffle, 50/50, cash bar and lots of fun included. Contact Sr. Vilma for tickets at (703) 498-9570.

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.

LIVING AS MISSIONARY DISCIPLES

Our Scripture passage for this Sunday comes from the Gospel of Matthew 14:13-21. This is the famous scene of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. This passage has much to say about the life of discipleship and how we cooperate with the Lord's grace so as to meet the overwhelming needs we face each day.

Notice how Jesus and the disciples respond differently to the needs of the crowds. When the crowds approach Jesus with the burden of their suffering, Jesus responds by helping (healing) them and so they remain close to him. When Jesus meets people in need, He establishes communion with them. The disciples, on the other hand wanted to send the crowd away and let them care for themselves. Our Lord corrects the disciples' errant desire and by caring for the crowds Himself is offering us a lesson in discipleship. This is one of the first lessons of this passage, and it invites us to reflect on how we respond to those in need around us. Jesus saw people in need as opportunities for ministry; the disciples saw people in need as burdens to be avoided and dismissed. The Acts of the Apostles teaches us that charitable outreach for those in need was a distinguishing quality of the early Church. The first lesson of this passage, then, is that disciples should welcome those who come to them regardless of their need and not turn them away. For the Church to reflect the hospitality of Jesus, we must learn to see the needs of others as opportunities for our ministry rather than burdens to be avoided or dismissed. Saint Paul teaches that we are all one in Christ and that the sufferings of one become the sufferings of all, just as the blessings and joys of one become the blessings and joys of all.

Think about it: What is the common response I experience when I see others in need?

SEVEN SISTERS APOSTOLATE



**Join us for Mass on the Feast of
St. John Vianney**
Tuesday, August 4, 2026
7:00 pm

St. Vincent de Paul Parish
5021 Harding Highway
Mays Landing, NJ 08330

All are welcome to pray for our priests and to learn
more about the Seven Sisters Apostolate.

RSVP: SevenSistersCamden@gmail.com



2026-2027
ENROLLMENT IS OPEN!
A Homeschooling Cooperative at
Mary, Mother of Mercy Parish.

Classes Begin:
September 8th

Session Time:
Tuesday, 8:30 am - 2:30 pm
Elementary-Aged Children

For additional information, contact Megan DeVose,
immaculatehmc@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATES!

Fall Happenings to get on your calendar

- **Friday, September 11 - Food Truck Festival**
Bring the family to enjoy live music, games, food & more!
- **Saturday, September 19 - Motown Memories**
Join us for some "Dancing in the Street". Get some friends together, reserve a table for a night of dinner and dancing.
- **Saturday, October 17 - Night at the Races**
The energy of the racetrack right here at Incarnation
- **Saturday, November 7 - Fall Vendor and Craft Show**
Get a kick start on your Christmas shopping!



Church of the Incarnation

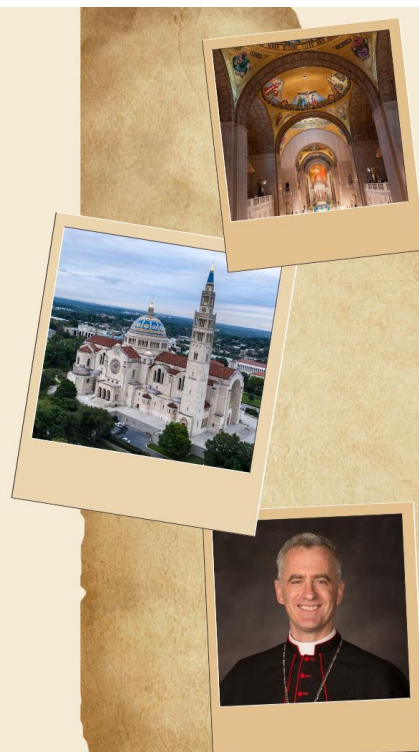
Diocesan Marian Pilgrimage to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, DC and a walking trip to the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land

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.

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

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.

August 2026

Church of the Incarnation, Mantua, NJ

Rev. Stephen J. Rapposelli, Pastor

One Minute Meditations

St. Bernard of Clairvaux

Although born into wealth, St. Bernard desired a life of simplicity, holiness, and austerity. Born in 1090 in Fontaines, France, he entered the monastery at Cîteaux in his twenties, followed by most of his family. Recognizing his holiness and noting the overcrowding of the monastery, the abbot sent St. Bernard to establish a new monastery in Clairvaux. St. Bernard went on to found monasteries for nuns, worked for the Holy See, and preached the Second Crusade.

More than the mission

No matter our age, we all need to hear these words: "I love you without measure." At the Transfiguration, the Father declared of Jesus, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 17:5). He means those words for us as well. Before all else, we are God's beloved children.

Significantly, the Father speaks these words before Jesus goes to the Cross, before His saving mission is complete. We often reverse that order, allowing our identity to depend on our accomplishments or faithfulness. We assume God will love us once we have fulfilled our mission. But the Gospel reveals the opposite. God's love is not earned but freely **given**. Our mission flows from our identity, not the other way around.

"For I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine" (Isaiah 43:1).

Be Like Christ. Love Like Christ.

What does it mean to "be like Christ" in the context of our everyday lives? The key is to love as He loves. Here are five practical ways to love like Jesus.

Learn His pattern. The Gospels show us how Jesus responded to the sick, the brokenhearted, the marginalized, and even His enemies. Scripture provides the pattern, while prayer and the Sacraments provide the grace to live it. The more we immerse ourselves in Christ's life, the more naturally His way of loving becomes our own.

Cultivate His heart. Jesus describes Himself as "gentle and humble of heart" (Matthew 11:29). His humility comes from His complete obedience to the Father's will. His gentleness is strength under perfect self-control, expressed in His patience, mercy, and compassion, even toward those who rejected Him. As we imitate His way of love, our own hearts are slowly transformed as His.

Show genuine interest. Jesus often asked open-ended questions, not because He lacked the answers, but to draw people out. "What do you seek?" (John 1:38). "What are you discussing

with each other?" (Luke 24:17) Genuine love begins with genuine interest. Asking thoughtful questions communicates that people are seen, heard, and valued.

Choose the charitable interpretation. St. Theresa Margaret of the Sacred Heart wrote, "If the actions of our neighbors have a hundred sides, we ought always to look at them on the best side." Love resists rushing to judgment and gives others the benefit of the doubt, creating space for understanding rather than

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matthew 11:29).

suspicion.

Always act out of love. St. Paul exhorts us, "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31). Jesus lived every moment in perfect love for His Father and for us. Love was not merely one aspect of His life; it was the motive behind everything He did. Following Christ means allowing love to shape not only our greatest sacrifices but also our smallest daily actions.

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Formula prayers are not a substitute for personal prayer but a time-tested way of entering into it and deepening it. When the disciples asked Jesus how to pray, He gave them the Our Father (Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4), a prayer to be prayed repeatedly. Scripture also contains many communal prayers, especially the Psalms, which

Why do Catholics pray formula prayers?

served as Israel's prayer book and remain the Church's today. By praying these inspired words, Catholics join generations of believers in worship. Whether at Mass or beside a hospital bed, formula prayers unite the faithful, expressing not only personal devotion but also the shared faith of the whole Church.

What to do when you don't feel like praying

Not feeling like praying is something even faithful Christians experience. In fact, seasons of dryness can be a normal part of spiritual growth. While they may have different causes, they do not necessarily mean something is wrong. Here are three ways to respond:

Pray about not wanting to pray. Bring your reluctance to God. You don't have to overcome your feelings before coming to Him. Honest prayer is still prayer, and God meets you with love exactly where you are.

Keep it simple. We value brief messages from those we love: "I love you," "Good luck today," or "Thinking of you."

Prayer can be that simple. The goal is relationship, not length. A heartfelt "God, help me," "Jesus, I trust in You," or "Come, Holy Spirit" is enough.

Choose presence over performance. Approach prayer the way you would spending time with a close friend. We don't cancel plans with someone we love simply because we're tired.

In the same way, keep showing up. God delights in your company (Proverbs 8:31). He is not looking for a perfect performance but for a heart that continues to seek Him, even when prayer feels dry or difficult.

from Scripture

Matthew 16:21-27, God's ways are not our ways

At first glance, this passage seems like bad news. Jesus predicts His own death, a revelation that must have stunned the disciples. They had just come to recognize Him as the long-awaited Messiah. Instead of leading a triumphant victory over Rome, Jesus spoke of suffering, rejection, and execution. To them, it looked like failure, not triumph.

Peter responded as many of us do when faced with suffering: he resisted the Cross. He wanted Jesus to avoid it and was sharply rebuked. Yet had Jesus turned aside, we would have remained

in our sins, separated from God. Instead, He freely embraced the Cross. He chose us. From the perspective of the Resurrection, what appeared to be defeat was in fact Christ's decisive victory over sin and death.

God desires our happiness, not merely our temporary comfort. He desires our eternal joy. The Christian life is not about avoiding the crosses God permits but embracing them with trust, as Jesus did. And we never carry them alone. Christ walks beside us, bearing the heavier end of every cross.

Q & A Can the Pope make mistakes if he's infallible?

Yes. The pope is human and, like anyone else, can make mistakes in his personal opinions, decisions, or everyday statements. Papal infallibility does not mean the pope is incapable of error. Rather, it means that, under specific conditions, the Holy Spirit preserves him from definitively teaching error in matters of faith and morals (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 891).

Papal infallibility applies only when the pope is:

Defining a doctrine of faith or morals. The teaching must concern divine revelation or truths closely connected to it. It does not apply to scientific claims, political views, interviews, homilies, or personal opinions. For example, in 1950, Pope Pius XII infallibly defined the dogma of Mary's Assumption into heaven.

Speaking ex cathedra ("from the chair"). The pope must speak in his official capacity as the successor of St. Peter and clearly intend to proclaim a doctrine that is binding on the entire Church. In *Munificentissimus Deus*, Pope Pius XII explicitly invoked his apostolic authority to "pronounce, declare, and define" the Assumption as a divinely revealed dogma.

Feasts & Celebrations

August 7—St. Cajetan (1547). St. Cajetan was born in Italy to a noble family. He went on to study civil and canon (Church) law at the University of Padua. He worked to reform the Church by founding the Theatines, a religious order modeled on the teachings of the Apostles.

August 9—St. Edith Stein (1942). Formerly Jewish, she was an atheist intellectual in Germany. After studying St. Teresa of Ávila, she converted to Catholicism, and became a Carmelite nun. Although her order tried to shelter her from the Nazis, she was taken to and executed at Auschwitz.

August 15—The Assumption of Mary. Declared a dogma of faith in 1950 by Pope Pius XII, the Assumption celebrates Mary's being taken up into Heaven body and soul at the end of her life. This feast highlights the Church's respect for the dignity of the body in view of our future resurrection. Note: This year, it is not a holy day of obligation.

August 24—St. Bartholomew (First Century). One of the Twelve Apostles and the son of Tolomai, Bartholomew is thought by some scholars to be the apostle, Nathanael, who went with Philip to see Jesus. After Jesus's Ascension, Nathanael spread Christianity to India and in Armenia, where he was martyred. He is the patron saint of Armenia and Belgium.

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