



St. John of the Cross



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**Our Parish
COMMUNITY**

September 13, 2026

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

Sirach 27:30—28:7 / Romans 14:7—9 / Matthew 18:21—35



Good News!

September 13, 2026

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

Sirach 27:30—28:7 / Romans 14:7—9 / Matthew 18:21—35

THOMAS M. SANTA, CSSR

As we hear today's Gospel of the servant whose enormous debt is forgiven, yet who refuses mercy to a fellow servant owing far less, we cannot help but ask: how can this be? This is the first question that comes to mind. How could a person be forgiven so much and then, just a few minutes later, refuse to forgive something inconsequential in comparison? Selfishness doesn't really explain it. Being so full of oneself doesn't explain it. Being completely dense and obtuse is perhaps closer to the truth, but even that explanation comes up short.

The truth is that the exaggeration of the debt is secondary to the story. What is essential to the story is the invitation to reflect on what it means to be a human being. It is to acknowledge that, when all is said and done, everyone owes a huge debt. No one is exempt from gratitude. An honest acceptance of who we are—completely and totally dependent on God who created us—is the core truth. To be so disconnected from this truth as to not recognize one's own dependence and be completely unaware of the need to be grateful—that is the real challenge the story considers. ●

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Mass Schedule

Saturday: 6:00 PM

Sunday:

7:30 AM & 11:00 AM ~ English

6:00 PM ~ Spanish

Daily Mass:

Mon., Tues., & Fri. ~ 8:00 AM

Thurs.(Sp.) ~ 6:00 PM

1st Saturday Mass: 8:00 AM

Adoration

Thurs.~ Spanish—6:30PM

Reconciliation

Thursday: 5:30 PM - 6:00 PM

Saturday: 5:00 PM - 5:30 PM

Sunday: 5:30 PM

Please contact Fr. James by phone or email if you need to make an appointment for **Confession** or **Anointing of the Sick**.

Parish Office Hours

Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs:

8:30 AM - 12:00 PM

1:00 PM - 4:30 PM

CLOSED FOR LUNCH

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

OFFICE IS CLOSED

Fri., Sat., & Sun.

Worship, Prayer, & Ministries

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THIS WEEK

Sat.-12 6:00PM <i>The Most Holy Name of Mary</i>	† Jeffrey & † James Gwosdz by their family Dr. Christine Mugridge by Saturday Morning Prayer Group Liza Ochoa's Family / Vocations by Liza Ochoa
Sun.-13 7:30AM	† Marrian Baldeschwiler by Janet Sikes † Larry Bruns (Heavenly birthday) by His Loving Family † Lisa Stewart by Jana Robinson Living and Deceased Members of the St. John of the Cross Cemetery Association
11:00AM	† Marrian Baldeschwiler by Larry & Marie Adian † Samuel & Delia V. Chapa by Janie Beltran † Brianna Cantu Gonzales by Anita Bazan
6:00PM	Paz Los feligreses de la parroquia
Mon.-14 8:00AM <i>The Exaltation of the Cross</i>	† Martha McCloskey by Scotty & Pam Herschap Unwed mothers
Tues.-15 8:00AM <i>Our Lady of Sorrows</i>	Students and teachers
Thurs.-17 6:00PM 6:30PM	Military servicemen and Veterans Adoración
Fri.- 18 8:00AM	In thanksgiving for blessings and the anniversary of ordination of Fr. Patrick Donohoe by Nell Gwosdz & Family

Masses for September 19th & 20th

Sat.-19 6:00PM	† Senaido DeLeon by Anita Bazan † Oscar Garcia, Sr., by Mr. and Mrs. Francisco Saenz Birthday blessings for Matthew Silva & blessings upon his family by Dad & Mom
Sun.-20 7:30AM	† Damian Ray Garcia by Veronica Garcia † Marvin & † Mae Gwosdz by Their Family † Freddy Serna, Jr., by Murray Family Living & Deceased Members of the Sociedad Guadalupanas
11:00AM	† Mr. & Mrs. Cleofas Hinojosa by Janie Flores † Maria Vasquez (9th anniv.) by Janie Flores David Perez (birthday blessings) by Dora Paiz
6:00PM	† Noe Alaniz por Janie Beltran Los feligreses de la parroquia



The sanctuary light is offered for

Liza Ochoa's Family / Momo Ortiz's family

By Liza Ochoa



Gather — A Family Ministry—encouraging community, growing in God's word, and supporting families, will begin meeting the first Sunday of each month, starting October 4, from 9:15-10:45.

If you are interested in assisting this ministry with childcare, please contact the parish office.

Scan the QR code to register and for more details.



Ministry Schedule for Mass

Ministry Schedule



Sept. 19—6:00PM—Lector: Don Rokohl
EM: San Juanita Gaza, Kim Rokohl, Sharry Stipp
Head Usher: Pablo and Graciela Alaniz

Sept. 20—7:30AM—Lector: Kimberly Tessanne
EM: Maria Miller, Jose Isais, Quinton Smithwick
Head Usher: Gerald Murray

11:00AM—Lector: Jeri Alaniz
EM: Dee DeLeon, Maria Galvan-Gordon,
Karol Kocurek, Volunteer
Head Usher: Lonnie Rodriguez

6:00PM—Lector: Maria Esmeralda Castro
EM: Alvina Resendez, Paulin Becerril
Head Usher: Angel Isais

Please let the parish office know if you can help as we need more lectors, eucharistic ministers, and ushers for all Masses.

PRAYER LIST

We continue to pray for the needs of those in our parish:

Roel Galván, Blanca Gonzalez, Art Forbes,
Tyler Forbes, Antonio Medrano, and
Sissy Thomas



The names of newly added persons will remain for three weeks. Contact the Parish Office if names need to be added to the prayer list.

Praying for expecting mothers and their babies:

Isabela Fuentes and Mary Margaret Skrobarczyk



Praying for our Military

**We remember these service personnel in each
'Mass for the Families of the Parish'**

Air Force: Juan Luis Alonzo, Jr.; Vincent Gordon;
Preston Holliday; Christopher Lauer II;
Alayah Moore; Deborah Thomas;
Audry Winstead

Army: Father Jim Craig, Madeleena Delaney,
Celine De Los Santos, Allen McDonald,
Jacob Madrid, Eduardo Perales, Robert Ponce,
Fernando Ramos III, Anthony Rios, and
Tyree Winstead

Coast Guard: Corey Bunton and Joshua Salinas

Marines: Aurora Alarcon, Hunter Frees, and
Andre Rodriguez

Navy: Cory Elyasevich, Diane Martinez, Aubrey McCown,
Andrew Saenz, Robert Silva, and Noah Vasquez

Please pray for our **ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY!**

Please call the parish office or use the online form to submit names & branch of service.

1. Go to www.st-johnog.org
2. hover mouse on **ABOUT** tab
3. click on **'Active Military Prayer Request'**



A Note From Our Pastor

Greetings to one and all on this Sunday on which we begin festivities for the High School Homecoming. I understand the parade will take place this Sunday afternoon. I hope I can see at least some of it depending on the time. GO BULLDOGS!!!!



The Revelation of God.

#73 Catechism of the Catholic Church

God has revealed himself fully by sending his own Son, in whom he has established his covenant for ever. The Son is his Father's definitive Word; so there will be no further Revelation after him.

So God's Revelation to us is Complete.

#66b. Yet even if Revelation is already complete, it has not been made completely explicit; it remains for Christian faith gradually to grasp its full significance over the course of the centuries.

For example, the Dogmas of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary were always within Sacred Scripture and Apostolic Tradition; however, they did not become Dogmas of the Church until 1854 and 1950 respectively.

Prior to those dates, for example, 1854, a Catholic did not have to accept as Truth the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. After 1854, Catholics are to accept as Truth this Dogma.

#67. Throughout the ages, there have been so-called "private" revelations, some of which have been recognized by the authority of the Church. They do not belong, however, to the deposit of faith. It is not their role to improve or complete Christ's definitive Revelation, but to help live more fully by it in a certain period of history. Guided by the magisterium of the Church, the *sensus fidelium* (*sense of the faithful*), *knows how to discern and welcome in these revelations whatever constitutes an authentic call of Christ or his saints to the Church.*

Christian faith cannot accept "revelations" that claim to surpass or correct the Revelation of which Christ is the fulfillment, as is the case in certain non-Christian religions and also in certain recent sects which base themselves on such "revelations."

God bless us everyone!

Fr. Stembler

Please join us at an official Installation Mass for

The Very Reverend James G. Stembler

on Sunday, September 20, 2026,

at the 11AM Mass

at St. John of the Cross Catholic Church.



Bishop Mario Avilés will formally present Father James G. Stembler to our parish.

All are invited to a potluck luncheon in the St. John parish hall immediately after Mass.

The Knights of Columbus will provide spaghetti. Please bring a side or dessert.

We have been blessed to have Father Stembler assigned as our pastor. Please keep him in your prayers as he continues to transition to his new pastoral leadership and shepherd our community.

Deacon's Corner

Today is the 13th of September 2026, the 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time. Today we want to talk about forgiveness. The readings are from Sirach 27:30—28:7; Psalm 103:1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-12 (102 in Spanish); Romans 14:7-9; and Matthew 18:21-35. The first reading and the Psalm support the Gospel about forgiveness and mercy. “Wrath and anger are hateful things,” says Sirach. Yet those two emotions, if they become sinful, can keep us out of heaven, and we all, that is, every human being, experience hate and anger, two of the Capital Sins. The two virtues that counteract those two capital sins are love and forgiveness. It was Augustine who first identified our human tendency toward evil. He called it Concupiscence, which he associated with carnal desire and sexual pleasure; but, his theology was largely based on spiritual sickness and psychological disorder. You can get glimpses of this in his “Confessions.” Pope Leo the Great, though, in about the year 590 A.D., was the first to make a list of seven Capital Sins: Pride, Anger, Sloth, Greed, Hatred, Lust, and Gluttony. And then St. Thomas Aquinas wrote a sweeping description of each sin and the human tendency and the spiritual solution which attended each one in his *Summa Theologica*. The readings today concentrate and direct our attention to hatred and anger. Unresolved, these two can especially keep us out of heaven. The devil knows this, and his job, which is to keep us from God, is to cause division among the children of God, who are all of us, and in the name of “justice” to hold grudges against those who have offended us. The Lord’s solution? Simple. Love one another and forgive all who have offended you. I think one of the best films I have ever seen is “The Passion of the Christ” by Mel Gibson. He portrays the devil especially during the temptations and the death on the cross. At the crucifixion scene, the devil comes to tempt Jesus one last time. “Get off that Cross. Look what they’ve done to you. They don’t deserve salvation!” Jesus says: “Forgive them, they know not what they do.” Remember that scene and the

scripture that describes it? In the film the devil goes crazy when he hears that from Jesus. He has failed! We can make the devil fail too if we leave hatred behind and begin to love, especially those persons who do not seem lovable—the homeless, the poor, the imprisoned, the uneducated, the powerful, the rich, the accomplished, our own family members, church members, the church, the government.... You add to your list. Today’s readings concentrate on forgiveness. It’s in two places in Matthew, chapter 6:14-15 “(I)f you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions....”, and today’s gospel, in verse 35, “So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives his brother from his heart.” Here is how the devil works. He convinces you (and me) to hold grudges against those who have offended you and won’t ask for forgiveness. It is only just, his arguments goes, that you should withhold your forgiveness because that person who offended you is not even sorry for what he or she did. Justice demands that that person submit to YOU and offer his forgiveness. God’s justice demands that you forgive your transgressors and their transgressions, not that you demand that they submit to you. The Lord cares about you, just as much as he cares about those who transgress against you. He wants the transgressor to submit to him, and he wants us, the victims, to submit to him. Think about how love and forgiveness imitate the Paschal Mystery of our faith. Jesus submitted to death on a cross in order to save us. He submitted to the authority that put him to death, and at the very end he forgave them. That defeats the devil, my dear brothers and sisters. It’s hard to get to there, but we must try. Paul tells us in the second reading today that we must die with Jesus. What does that mean to you? How submissive are you? How demanding are you? How available to others are you? God love you.
Deacon Cavada



Stewardship of Treasure

LAST WEEK	08/30/2026	LAST WEEK	08/30/2026	CURRENT WEEK	9/06/2026
Envelope Collection	\$1,145.00	Our Living Church Online Giving (Aug)	\$7,560.00	Envelope Collection	\$1,931.00
Loose Collection	\$2,133.00	Summer Electric August Online Giving	\$2,452.00	Loose Collection	\$1,023.00
Aug Online Giving	\$1,036.00	Retired Priests August Online Giving	\$20.00	Our Living Church	\$3,159.00

Parish Organizations

PARISH COUNCIL

NEXT MEETING: SEPTEMBER 14 @ 6PM

ALTAR SOCIETY

NEXT MEETING: SEPTEMBER 28 @ 6PM

ALTAR DUTY CLEANING SCHEDULE

September 17-19— Mrs. Bertha Forbes, Mrs. Olga Carranza, Ms. Jessie Hernandez, Mrs. Lupita de los Santos

September 24-26—Ms. Jana Robinson, Mrs. Anna Garza, Ms. LeAnna Rodriguez, Mrs. Clarita Almeida



The Altar Society is planning a fall raffle fundraiser and is asking for donations to be used as prizes. Please contact the parish office if you can donate a gift card or make a cash donation to be used to purchase prizes. Deadline for prizes is September 14.

SOCIEDAD GUADALUPANA

NEXT MEETING: OCTOBER 19 @ 6PM

Hostess grp # 2: Jennifer Alejandro

Corporate Mass—September 20 @ 7:30AM

Rosary at 7:00AM

Leader: Isabel Alanis

Offertory: Dee DeLeon, Angie Facundo, & Gloria Pena

Roses provided to Our Lady of Guadalupe—by Norma Cornejo & Jana Robinson



ANNUAL GUADALUPANA SOCIETY BINGO FUNDRAISER

Sunday, September 27, 2026 Parish Hall

Doors open at 11:45am for Concession Stand. BINGO starts at 12:45pm.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS # 8335



NEXT MEETING: OCTOBER 6



CASA DE LUCY

MEETS TUESDAYS @ 9AM

Altar Servers

Calling all youth of our parish interested in serving the Lord during Mass!

The Altar Server Ministry will hold a second (and final) **New Server Orientation** for the 2026/27 school year on **Sunday, September 13**, at 1:30 PM in the church. This is for any youth of our parish wishing to become an altar server who is at least in the 3rd grade and has received FHC.



Religious Education

Students in the elementary grades should be dropped off at the Religious Education building no earlier than 5:15PM and must be picked up at 6:30PM at the Religious Education Building. Students in jr. high thru high school should be dropped off at the parish hall no earlier than 6:15PM and must be picked up at 8:00PM at either the parish hall or the Religious Ed building.

Students will not be allowed to walk to the front of the church to be picked up.

Thank you, **Cassandra Bunton**, for funding the meal for our jr high—high school religious education students. They enjoyed the spaghetti, garlic bread, salad, and brownies.

Works of Mercy

Looming Ladies meet in the parish hall on Mondays at 9AM to knit hats for patients a Driscoll Children's Hospital Oncology Department.

The next bread and pastries distribution will be at 9AM at **SJoC** on on **Wednesday, September 23**, and at **St. Francis** on **Saturday, October 10**.



Coastal Bend Food Bank distributions at 9AM at **St. John of the Cross** on **Thursday, October 1** and at **St. Francis of Assisi** on **Saturday, September 26**.

Dear Padre,

If Catholics say the Confiteor at Mass, then why do we still need to go to confession?

Recall when Jesus told Simon and his fishing companions to lower their nets after they had caught nothing. (See Luke 5:1–11.) When their boats began to sink with so many fish, Simon fell at Jesus' feet and said, "Leave me, Lord, for I am a sinful man." Likewise, at Mass, we're so filled with awe upon entering the presence of God that we become aware of our own sinfulness.

The penitential act prepares the assembly to enter the celebration in a proper spirit of humility. The priest and the faithful observe a period of silence to acknowledge their sinfulness and confess their awe of Christ's love and mercy. This is expressed in different forms, one of which is the Confiteor, a general confession that invokes the support of the communion of saints and the specific community gathered at Mass. It includes the instruction to strike one's breast, an ancient gesture of humility and penitence. (See Luke 18:13; 23:48.) The rite concludes with the priest's absolution, but it "lacks the efficacy of the sacrament of penance" (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 51). Thus, the penitential act isn't a substitute for absolution from sins confessed in the sacrament of penance, particularly serious, mortal sins. Rather, it prepares the faithful as a unified community to properly listen to God's word and celebrate the Eucharist worthily (*GIRM* 46). ●

Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR / DearPadre.org



ZULFIKAR KABIRNY / UNsplash

A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

In the Church there is...a place for everyone, and... every Christian is called to proclaim the gospel and bear witness in every environment.... Thus,

this people shows its catholicity, welcoming the wealth and resources of different cultures and, at the same time, offering them the newness of the gospel to purify them and to raise them up.

**GENERAL AUDIENCE,
ROME, MARCH 11, 2026**

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FRANCESCO ALBERTI / UNsplash

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

Monday

September 14
The Exaltation of the Holy Cross
Nm 21:4b–9
Phil 2:6–11
Jn 3:13–17

Tuesday

September 15
Our Lady of Sorrows
1 Cor 12:12–14, 27–31a
Jn 19:25–27 or
Lk 2:33–35

Wednesday

September 16
Sts. Cornelius, Pope, and Cyprian, Bishop, Martyrs
1 Cor 12:31–13:13
Lk 7:31–35

Thursday

September 17
Weekday
1 Cor 15:1–11
Lk 7:36–50

Friday

September 18
Weekday
1 Cor 15:12–20
Lk 8:1–3

Saturday

September 19
Weekday
1 Cor 15:35–37, 42–49
Lk 8:4–15

Sunday

September 20
Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Is 55:6–9
Phil 1:20c–24, 27a
Mt 20:1–16a