



St. John of the Cross



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**Our Parish
COMMUNITY**

September 20, 2026

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

Isaiah 55:6-9 / Philippians 1:20c-24, 27a / Matthew 20:1-16a



Good News!

September 20, 2026

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Isaiah 55:6-9 / Philippians 1:20c-24, 27a / Matthew 20:1-16a

MIGUEL DULICK

I keep hearing preachers say this is their least favorite gospel, because it makes people so mad! All the workers in a vineyard get a full day's pay—which folks interpret as heaven—even the ones who came at the last hour of the afternoon. "You mean, I work hard my whole life, and some nobody from nowhere just waltzes into heaven ahead of me?" But wait a minute! You think you *deserve* your "pay"? None of us is anywhere or anything, even breathing, without God's grace. It's not a competition; it's our only hope! We should be dancing in the street to celebrate God's generosity. Matthew himself must have chuckled at this parable, since he was also a latecomer, having spent his life grinding his own brothers and sisters into poverty to feed the tax maw of the Roman Empire. Then, Jesus called him! I love the twist in the parable: the owner not only pays the last ones equally, but he pays them *first*!

If you don't like standing in line, you could be like Paul, who wants to just skip to the end: "I long to depart this life and be with Christ" (Philippians 1:23). As he says, "To me life is Christ, and death is gain" (Philippians 1:21). We should all be so eager. Just concentrate on the "fruitful labor" of service to others. Put everyone else ahead of you, and don't be afraid of some hard work. Any vineyard is a challenge, even when that vineyard is the Church. ●

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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.-19	6:00PM	† Senaido DeLeon by Anita Bazan † Oscar Garcia, Sr., by Mr. and Mrs. Francisco Saenz † Magdalena Romanos by Luis & Nora Romanos 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
Mon.-21 <i>St. Matthew</i>	8:00AM	† Martha McCloskey by Scotty & Pam Herschap Unwed mothers
Tues.-22	8:00AM	† David Gaza by Nephews: Ivan, Marcus, & Christian Perez † Maximina Rivera (birthday) by Bazan, Leal, and Hinojosa families Liza Ochoa's Family / Souls in purgatory by Liza Ochoa Wyatt Wanoreck—birthday blessings
Thurs.-24	6:00PM	bebés no nacidos
	6:30PM	Adoración
Fri.- 25	8:00AM	† Rafael Garza by Anita Baza Sanctity of family life

Masses for September 26th & 27th

Sat.-26	6:00PM	† Noe Alaniz by Anita Bazan † Oscar Garcia, Sr., Family † Luis Romanos, Sr., by Luis & Nora Romanos † Jim VanBlarcum by Estella Cortinas
Sun.-27	7:30AM	† Marrian Baldeschwiler by Patricia Kelso † Irma G. Ortiz (5th anniv.) by Luis, Adrian, and Jaime Ortiz
	11:00AM	† Jason Benavides by Janie Beltran † Senaido DeLeon by Anita Bazan
	6:00PM	Los feligreses de la parroquia



The sanctuary light is offered in memory of

Enriqueta Puente

by Her Loving Family

Are you looking for a way to enhance your family's Catholic faith. Well, let's GATHER together!

Starting October 4, from 9:15-10:45AM, in the parish hall, all are invited to join **Gather** — A Family Ministry—encouraging community, growing in God's word, and supporting families.



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. 26—6:00PM—Lector: San Juanita Gaza
EM: Anita Bazan, Don and Kim Rokohl
Head Usher: Carlos Alanis

Sept. 27—7:30AM—Lector: Quinton Smithwick
EM: Laura Gwosdz, Luz Paiz, Margie Svetlik
Head Usher: Bart and Maria Miller

11:00AM—Lector: Youth Mass- 10th, 11th, 12th
EM: Jeri Alaniz, Janie Flores, Diana DeAnda, Karol Kocurek
Head Usher: Tinker Villarreal

6:00PM—Lector: Joachin Ordonez Maldonado
EM: Jesus Perez, Esmeralda Castro
Head Usher: Jose 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!

The transmission of Divine Revelation: how is it given to us?

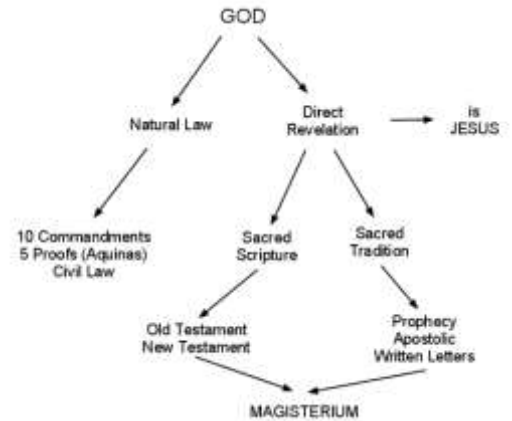
96. What Christ entrusted to the apostles, they in turn handed on by their preaching and writing, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to all generations, until Christ returns in glory.

97. “Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture make up a single sacred deposit of the Word of God” (Dei Verbum, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, Second Vatican Council), in which, as in a mirror, the pilgrim Church contemplates God, the source of all riches.

98. “The Church, in her doctrine, life, and worship, perpetuates and transmits to every generation all that she herself is, all that she believes” (Dei Verbum, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, Second Vatican Council).

99. Thanks to its supernatural sense of faith, the People of God as a whole never ceases to welcome, to penetrate more deeply, and to live more fully from the gift of divine Revelation.

100. The task of interpreting the Word of God authentically has been entrusted solely to the Magisterium of the Church, that is, to the Pope and to the bishops in communion with him.



I am being installed as Pastor of St. John of the Cross Church and its mission of St. Francis of Assisi on Sunday by our bishop this weekend. It has been a privilege getting to know you, to work with you, and to serve you so far, and this ceremony will confirm that. We are still in the process of getting to know one another and that will continue to take its time. Be assured of my prayers and support for you. God has caused our paths to cross! May our time together prove beneficial for all of us as we continue to grow as the people whom God has created us to be.

It is an honor to serve you!

God bless us everyone!

Fr. James G. 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.

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's readings are for the Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time. The readings are from Isaiah 55:6-9; Psalm 145:2-3, 8-9, 17-18 (144 in Spanish); Philippians 1:20c-24, 27a; Matthew 20:1-16a. Today we meditate about God's "justice". I don't think we quite understand it from the Lord's perspective. Justice to us generally means balance, due regard for the rights of parties in interest, whether two or more, restoring an aggrieved party to his or her former position (sometimes called restorative justice), and rewarding one party and punishing the other in a dispute or confrontation. The Evangelists in general and Matthew in particular see God's justice as helping the least able to help themselves. I used to hear when I was younger: "God helps those who help themselves." I think that was wrong. I think God's justice is preferential treatment, and it would be more proper to put it this way: "God helps those who can't help themselves." I remember many years ago, we had in the City of Corpus Christi a "labor station" where workers with various skills would congregate in the mornings, and sub-contractors would come by and select day laborers for various tasks. This type of work was temporary—sometimes for a day or two—and the worker was paid daily and the relationship was over. The bosses would come early and pick the strongest and best laborers. The workers who had tools were the first to be picked. Later in the morning other sub-contractors would swing by and pick up more workers, and as the day wore on the least able workers were left until only the "winos", who were nobody's first picks, were left. That's the story of the Gospel today, only the Lord's justice makes them all equal, and everybody gets paid the same, no matter what time the contractor selected them for his "vineyard." When I was studying for the diaconate, the instructor who

was teaching us set the class up among us this way and picked some of us early and some of us late. Then it came time for her to "pay" us. The instructor was a woman. And she started paying the last chosen first, and then she paid them all the same. Then she asked: "How do you feel about this Gospel reading?" Almost everyone was indignant. This was unjust, we said. God can't favor the last as well as the first, who were abler workers, and who had borne the brunt of the day. How can that be just, we asked? And she said, "God takes care of those who can't help themselves. If you want to get into heaven, latch onto a poor person, and he or she will pull you in because he or she is going to be ahead of you in the eyes of God." She said: "God has a predilection for the poor. That's God's justice." It did not sit well with us the whole week. When we came back the next week, we were still reeling with trying to understand the exercise, and a few feeble attempts were made by us to try to get her to see our way, but she wouldn't budge. The Church, after Vatican II, took an option for the poor. Have you ever heard that before? Missionary activity in the Church, even in the church in Corpus Christi, developed even more world-wide. My wife and I belonged to such a group for 25 years. Bishop Gracida called it "The Desert Apostolate." We learned so much from the poor people of Northern Mexico during that time, and we understood today's Gospel by ministering to the people of northern Mexico. And you know what? They ministered to us even more. I could tell you stories that would melt your heart, but we'll leave that for another time. We learned about resignation, patience, kindness, long-suffering, and how to praise God in all that poverty. I experience all that in the prison ministry now. God love you.



Stewardship of Treasure

LAST WEEK	09/06/2026	CURRENT WEEK	9/06/2026
Envelope Collection	\$1,931.00	Envelope Collection	\$3,102.00
Loose Collection	\$1,023.00	Loose Collection	\$1,083.00
Our Living Church	\$3,159.00	Our Living Church	\$645.00
		Catholic University	\$504.00

2026 Bishop's Stewardship Appeal ~ The SJoC BSA goal is \$22,629 of which \$12,720 has been pledged. With a projected \$1,635 recurring gift, SJoC has a total of \$14,355 expected pledge & recurring gifts. That is 63% of the diocesan goal with 12% of the parish participating in the 2026 BSA. Your continued support of the Bishop's Stewardship Appeal is truly appreciated!

Parish Organizations

PARISH COUNCIL

NEXT MEETING: OCTOBER 6 @ 6PM

ALTAR SOCIETY

NEXT MEETING: SEPTEMBER 28 @ 6PM

ALTAR DUTY CLEANING SCHEDULE

September 24-26—Ms. Jana Robinson, Mrs. Anna Garza, Ms. LeAnna Rodriguez, Mrs. Clarita Almeida
October 1-3— Paid professional



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

Rosary: 6:40 PM at the KOC Building Men 18 yrs. & older are welcome



CASA DE LUCY

MEETS TUESDAYS @ 9AM

Casa de Lucy Helping Hand Quilting Ministry sews Prayer Quilts for the terminally / critically ill persons needing prayers.
Please contact the office if you know anyone in need of a quilt.

Religious Education

Parents, because not all volunteers are able to arrive for religious education classes early, please do not drop your children off for religious education more than fifteen minutes before class.

Parents, your help is needed in monitoring the church grounds on Wednesdays. There are about 200 students on our property on Wednesday evenings, and the volunteers need your help in monitoring all students at dropoff and pick up.
Please contact the office to find out how you can help.

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

Thank you, **Randall Lopez**, for providing the meal for our jr high—high school religious education students.
The hamburgers were GREAT!

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 30**, 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, October 24**.

Dear Padre,

Adam and Eve had two sons and maybe others not mentioned in the Bible. How were others born without having committed incest?

This is a perfectly valid question, and one that I think many people have probably asked themselves at one time or another. Unfortunately, it is the wrong question, because it does not reflect the true meaning of the story.

The story about Adam and Eve is not a literal story or, in other words, a story that would be reported by CNN or FOX News. It is a teaching story, intended to encourage belief in the creative power of God at work in his creation. It is not, nor has it ever been, a literal step-by-step tutorial of the early days of the human race.

The bible includes different literary forms: narrative or history, poetry and songs, parables, letters, genealogies, and more. Knowing what form is being used, the purpose of the passage, who is writing or talking, and the intended audience is the work of Scripture scholars. The story of creation is not intended to be literal; it is inspirational. ●



OSCAR WAIN ESQUIRE / UNPLASH

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSSR / DearPadre.org

Do you have a question for the Padre?

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



FACHIL ABHIMANTIA / UNPLASH

A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

It is a great sign of hope—especially in our times, traversed by so many conflicts and wars—to know that the Church is a people in which women and men of different nationalities, languages, and cultures live together in faith: it is...a reminder and prophecy of that unity and peace to which God the Father calls all his children.

GENERAL AUDIENCE, ROME, MARCH 11, 2026

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Monday

September 21
St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist
Eph 4:1–7, 11–13
Mt 9:9–13

Tuesday

September 22
Weekday
Prv 21:1–6, 10–13
Lk 8:19–21

Wednesday

September 23
St. Pius of Pietrelcina, Priest
Prv 30:5–9
Lk 9:1–6

Thursday

September 24
Weekday
Eccl 1:2–11
Lk 9:7–9

Friday

September 25
Weekday
Eccl 3:1–11
Lk 9:18–22

Saturday

September 26
Weekday
Eccl 11:9–12:8
Lk 9:43b–45

Sunday

September 27
Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Ez 18:25–28
Phil 2:1–11 or 2:1–5
Mt 21:28–32