

Week 32



THE ROSARY IN A YEAR

WITH FR. MARK-MARY AMES, CFR

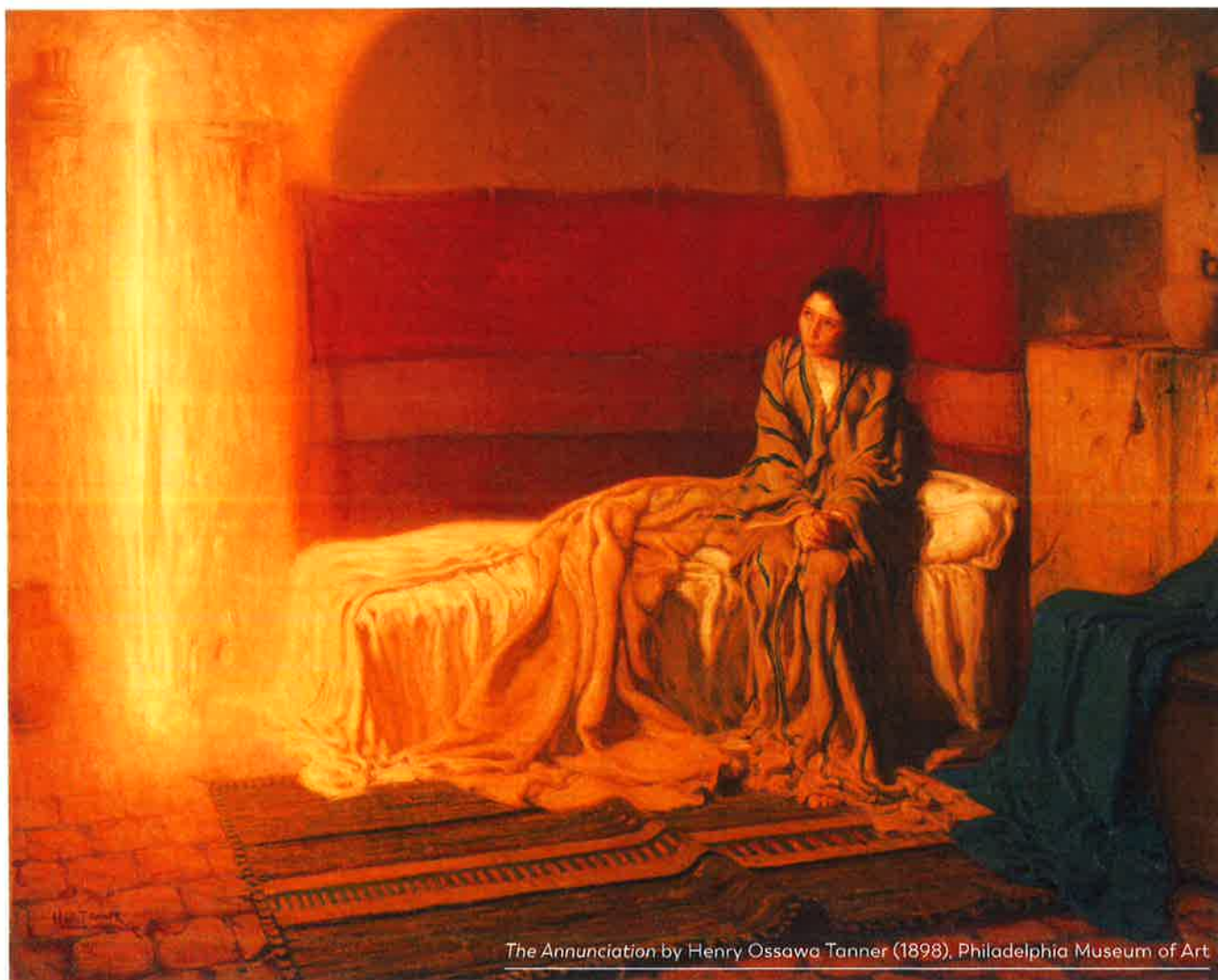
PHASE 3: MEDITATING ON THE MYSTERIES

The Joyful Mysteries in Art

THE ANNUNCIATION

This week, we will meditate on a piece of sacred art depicting the Annunciation: Henry Ossawa Tanner's *The Annunciation*, painted in 1898 and located in the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

After taking a moment to collect your thoughts and lift your mind to God, prayerfully gaze upon the image, noticing what catches your eye and what intrigues you. Below are points of reflection to assist in your meditation.



The Annunciation by Henry Ossawa Tanner (1898). Philadelphia Museum of Art

Reflection and Contemplation

- This painting differs from the many depictions of the Annunciation (Luke 1:26–38), where Our Lady looks regal, in the manner of a queen. Here, she appears ordinary. Why do you think the artist painted her this way?
- Gabriel is shown simply as a ray of light. Tanner seems to emphasize that angels are pure spirits. How do you think you would react upon seeing an angel?
- Some have noted that the ray of light and the shelf behind it intersect to form the shape of a cross. The red tapestry in Mary's room might make us think of Christ's Passion since red is used in the Liturgy on Good Friday. How is the Cross present in the Incarnation?
- Notice that the linens and the rug are messy. The artist does this on purpose. As we know from Scripture, the Holy Family's life was not without difficulty. Is God's will for our lives always neat and tidy?
- Look at Mary's face. What does it say? How does she conduct herself?
- When we look at the painting as a whole, it is amazing to think the Incarnation took place at this poor, simple home. But isn't this often how God works?

Make It Your Own

What stood out to you about your Rosary experience this week?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on the right side, suggesting it's part of a bound notebook. There is no handwriting or other markings on the page.

Scan the QR code to view *The Rosary in a Year* videos on the Ascension app. Download the prayer plan at <https://tinyurl.com/2p8s69yd>.

The Rosary in a Year is a daily podcast, produced by Ascension and hosted by Fr. Mark-Mary Ames, CFR. It takes Catholics on a journey to form a lasting habit of prayer and gain tools to enter more deeply into meditation on the lives of Jesus and Mary through the Rosary. This bulletin was adapted from the podcast and materials that complement the podcast.

Encountering the Word

with Jeff Cavins

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Wisdom 18:6–9 • Hebrews 11:1–2, 8–19 or 11:1–2, 8–12
• Luke 12:32–48 or 12:35–40



A Living Faith Requires Us to Act

The theme of faith takes center stage during the Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time. Hebrews 11, often called the “Hall of Faith,” highlights the lives of people like Abraham and Sarah, whose faith was not just intellectual belief but action. Their stories remind us that true faith involves both believing God’s promises and entrusting ourselves to him through action.

Abraham’s life is a prime example: He believed God’s call to leave his homeland, but he didn’t stop there—he acted on that belief, journeying to an unknown land. Sarah also believed God’s promise, and her faith resulted in action, even though it seemed impossible for her to conceive. Their faith went beyond mental agreement; they entrusted their lives to God’s promises, demonstrating the second essential component of faith—living out what they believed.

Faith, as the Church teaches, is not a checklist of doctrines we agree with. Rather, it is our response to God’s revelation through word and deed. Just as God reveals himself in actions, we must respond with actions. This is echoed in the words of James: Faith without works is dead (see James 2:17). True faith calls us to respond not just with belief but also with deeds that align with God’s will.



The Gospel reading reinforces this truth, showing faithful servants who live with the expectation of their master’s return. Like Abraham, their faithfulness flows from their trust in God’s faithfulness. May your life reflect that faith as you entrust yourself fully to God’s promises.

Live the Gospel

Jeff Cavins says, “Faith is belief—and it requires action. Think of an area where God may be calling you to trust him more deeply. Like Abraham, step out in faith, even if the outcome is unclear. Consider praying daily for guidance and look for opportunities to align your actions with God’s promises. Ask yourself: ‘By faith, what will I do this week?’ Let your behavior reflect a trust in God’s faithfulness, knowing that his Word calls us to respond with deeds.”

Dive Deeper

Scan this code to watch:



Or go to

<https://media.ascensionpress.com/video/nineteenth-sunday-in-ordinary-time-c/>

Ponder and Pray

» Are there promises from God that you find hard to trust? What steps can you take to grow in trust this week?

» How can your actions reflect your belief in God's faithfulness and align with his will?

» How can you cultivate a spirit of faithfulness in your daily life?

Make It Your Own

You and others in your household may use this space to write anything about today's Mass. It might be your view of Jeff Cavins' reflection, your priest's homily, your answers to the questions on this page—anything to help you and your household get the most out of today's Mass.

“

“Do not be afraid any longer, little flock, for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom.”

—Luke 12:32

”



BE READY FOR OUR LORD



Wisdom 18:6–9 • Hebrews 11:1–2, 8–19 or 11:1–2, 8–12 • Luke 12:32–48 or 12:35–40

Family Car Talk

In today's Gospel, Jesus says: *"Do not be afraid any longer, little flock, for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom."* Sometimes we think heaven is far away or too difficult to reach, but Jesus tells us God longs to give us this gift! Talk with your family on the way home from Mass today about heaven.



B What do you imagine heaven will be like?



I Does thinking about heaven make you excited or nervous?



A How can we ask God for the gift of heaven with our words and actions?



YOUR HEAVENLY SHIELD

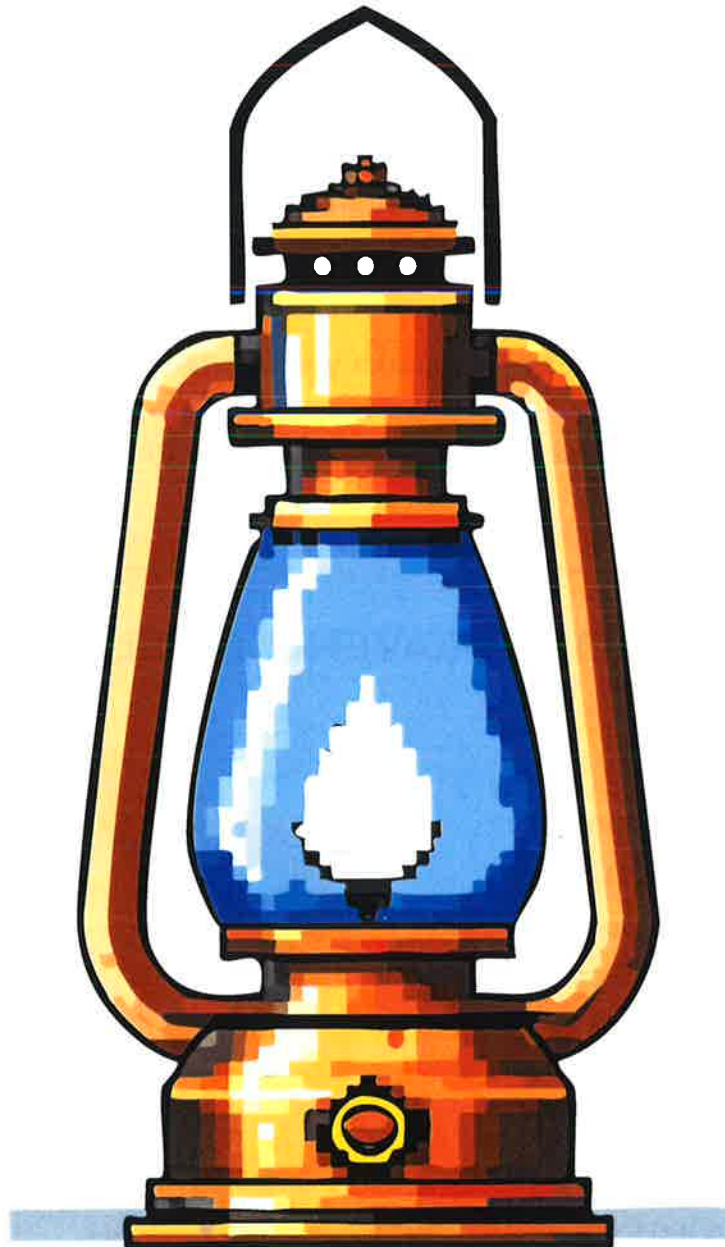
Instructions: In today's Psalm (Psalm 33), we hear, *"Our soul waits for the LORD, who is our help and our shield."* Decorate the shield below with things that help you get to heaven: your gifts/talents, things you love, names of people who help you love Jesus, and anything else you can think of!





A LAMP FOR JESUS

Instructions: In today's Gospel, Jesus tells us to "*light our lamps*" and be ready for him to come again. Draw or color in the flame to light the lamp to remember to be ready for Jesus!



Sunday Q&A

Your Faith in Focus

GIVE IT TIME

How do I build healthy relationships?

Fr. Mike Schmitz spends lots of time on college campuses engaging with young adults in a very formative stage of their lives. He has walked with many young couples from dating through engagement and beyond. Fr. Mike offers three tips for building healthy relationships that can help you, whether you are dating, married, or looking to cultivate better friendships.

1. There are some things that only time can reveal.

"Time is absolutely essential for a relationship," Fr. Mike says.

He explains that even if you talk frequently and have wonderful communication with your significant other, the things you discuss within the first six months of dating are very different from those things you talk about at sixteen months.

Fr. Mike believes you can only reach a certain depth in a relationship with the gift of time. He holds that his first tip is to slow down. Take your time and enjoy getting to know one another.

2. Allow your relationship to be the age that it actually is.

For his second tip, Fr. Mike shares how he meets couples who "know" they will get married after only two months of dating. He warns us not to skip ahead in relationships.

"If you have been in a relationship for six months, let your relationship be six months old," Fr. Mike advises. This is important because if you allow the relationship to progress at the right pace, you deal with potential issues and difficulties as they arise naturally. "There's something good about letting it be the fourth date," Fr. Mike says.

Don't dismiss potential problems just because you think you'll get married. The issues will only return, and you won't be equipped to address them. Fr. Mike advises couples to treat their relationships as the age they truly are rather than the age they wish they were.

3. Learn how to make decisions together.

For his final tip, Fr. Mike says, “One of the greatest skills that couples can work on with each other is learning how to solve problems.” He says this advice differs from the previous two tips because it involves developing a skill.

Every relationship is bound to meet obstacles and roadblocks. Regardless of the type of relationship, problem-solving will always help it grow and move forward smoothly. Because everyone makes decisions differently, Fr. Mike says learning how to solve problems together is fundamental to a healthy relationship.

Ponder and Pray

- How am I doing according to these three standards? Where do I have work to do?
- How can I walk with others and help them build healthy relationships?
- What tip would I add?

Make It Your Own

Use the chart to help you assess how your relationship is going.

Tip	How we are doing:	How we can grow:
There are some things only time can reveal. (Be patient.)		
Allow your relationship to be the age it actually is.		
Learn how to make decisions together.		

Tip of the Week

Select a couple whose relationship has withstood the test of time. Ask them if they unknowingly followed (and still follow) the advice found in this article. Talk with them about how they made their relationship work.

Dive Deeper

To watch Fr. Mike’s video on this topic, scan the code

or visit the URL: <https://media.ascensionpress.com/2023/08/02/3-tips-for-building-healthy-relationships-from-fr-mike-schmitz/>.



Days 218–224



WITH FR. MIKE SCHMITZ

Exile Narrative: Isaiah 57–66; Jeremiah 1 | Supplemental: Ezekiel 17–27; Proverbs 13:5–14:8

WORSHIP CAN KNOCK DOWN THE BARRIER OF SIN



Babylonian Soldiers Loot the Temple of Jerusalem

The great suffering experienced in the Exile challenges us to consider how our sins and the sins of others affect us. It is important for us to think about what we prioritize and why. Ezekiel and Isaiah both emphasize that everyone should mourn the destruction of the Temple. This is true whether one was alive before or after its destruction, as well as whether any individual's sinfulness is seen as represented by the punishment of the Temple's loss.

- Isaiah and Ezekiel help us appreciate the perverse ways we might convince ourselves that idolatry can be OK.
- In Isaiah 57, for example, the image of adultery is used to condemn idolatry, even to the point of worshipping a god said to require child sacrifices. We are all familiar with the kinds of ways people justify adultery.
- Similarly, in Isaiah 58, the people fast and worship falsely and then ask why the Lord does not hear them. God responds that they are seeking their own pleasure with this type of fasting, which will prevent their prayers from being heard.
- At the beginning of chapter 59, Isaiah makes it clear that our sins separate us from God and that judgment and punishment will follow.
- The book of Ezekiel addresses these themes, too. The Lord says in Ezekiel 22 that he does not find people willing to stand up and intercede for the people of Jerusalem.
- As Old Testament books say repeatedly, the infidelity of the people revolves around their false worship and embrace of sin.
- Sabbath, or *Shabbat* in Hebrew, is the seventh day of the week, Saturday. The Lord says, “I gave them my sabbaths, as a sign between me and them” (Ezekiel 20:12). A covenant establishes a relationship, and the sign of God’s covenant relationship is this dedicated time to worship him.
- Sabbath days are meant to comprise worship and rest. Worshiping means living as someone who belongs to the Lord, and resting shows one is free, not in bondage. Throughout the Bible, much is said about the importance of keeping the Sabbath faithfully.

Dive Deeper

Do you regularly go before the Lord and intercede for others, especially those who have asked you to pray for them? Praying to the Lord on behalf of others shows mercy, can change your heart, and will bring you into a deeper relationship with the Lord.

Bible Answers

Do you have suggestions for how to read the prophets?

Tips to help you read the prophets include: (1) Learn to whom the prophet is proclaiming his message, like the united kingdom of the Israelites, the divided kingdom, or humanity as a whole. (2) Find out how the particular group the prophet is addressing has been unfaithful to the Lord. (3) Note the prophet's message about the present and future consequences of their disobedience to God. (4) Learn how God, through this prophet, seeks to draw the people back to himself. (5) Though the prophets spoke to ancient peoples, see how each prophet's message applies to us as Christians. (6) Prayerfully discern how Jesus fulfills the prophet's message. Remember, the entire Bible is directed to the coming of the Messiah.



A VINEYARD IN THE HOLY LAND

This image shows part of a vineyard owned by the Trappist monastery in Latrun, Israel.

Ezekiel 19 compares Israel to a vine, once flourishing and fruitful, now plucked and burned.



Scan the QR code to listen to the *Bible in a Year* podcast on the Ascension app, to get exclusive content, and to access transcripts for every episode. Download the reading plan at <https://media.ascensionpress.com/category/ascension-podcasts/bibleinayear/>

The Bible in a Year is a daily podcast, produced by Ascension and hosted by Fr. Mike Schmitz, where we read the whole Bible following *The Great Adventure* Bible-study program created by Jeff Cavins. This bulletin was adapted from *The Bible in a Year Companion* books that complement the podcast.

Week 32

Paragraphs 1590-1666



THE CATECHISM IN A YEAR

WITH FR. MIKE SCHMITZ

How We Worship PART TWO: THE CELEBRATION OF THE CHRISTIAN MYSTERY

MATRIMONY'S PURPOSE IS SAINTLY

We are called to our vocations to serve. Husbands and wives pour their lives out to each other in love for God for the salvation of the world. Marriage is the fundamental building block of society. Healthy families perpetuate healthy cultures, but the breakdown of the family leads to cultural breakdown. Holy Matrimony is a Sacrament of Service, vocation, and discipleship. The whole purpose is for spouses to help each other and their children become saints.

Keep in Mind

- Marriage is a faithful, lifelong “partnership” between a man and woman “ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1601).
- “God himself is the author of marriage” (CCC 1603).
- Sacramental marriage normally occurs during Holy Mass because the Eucharist is the source and summit of Christian life.
- The bride and groom “mutually confer upon each other the sacrament of Matrimony by expressing their consent before the Church” (CCC 1623).
- Marriage is made real at the altar, in a public way, in the presence of the Church’s minister and at least two witnesses. It is consummated and completed when the two become one flesh physically.
- Without consent to marry, “there is no marriage” (CCC 1626). There has to be a free act of the will; both members of the couple must be free to say “yes.”
- Couples who are infertile can enter marriage because they can engage in the marital act.
- Marriage is impossible between people of the same sex.
- A valid sacramental marriage is indissoluble until death, even if a couple no longer lives together or civilly divorces.



Wedding at Cana stained glass
in St. Germain-l'Auxerrois Church, Paris

Dive Deeper

At the wedding feast at Cana, Jesus miraculously changed water to wine. His act shows the importance of marriage, which Jesus made a sacrament (see CCC 1613).

Spend time praying for all married couples who struggle. Ask God to grant clarity to those seeking marriage and discerning their vocations.

Marriage is a covenant that mirrors the love of Christ and the soul. Watch the *Ascension Presents* video “Why Marriage Is NOT a Contract (It’s a Covenant).”



- Those who are divorced and civilly remarried without annulment cannot receive Holy Communion or receive absolution in confession unless they repent and resolve to live as brother and sister.
- An annulment or declaration of nullity can be sought from the Church if some impediment to marriage existed at the time of the vows, meaning that no indissoluble bond has occurred.
- The sexual union must be open to life.
- Sacramental marriage gives spouses the grace to love, serve, and forgive each other.
- The husband and wife have complementary roles, equal in dignity, that reflect the union of Jesus with the Church.
- The home is the “domestic church” where children first learn the Faith and how to work, love, worship, and pray (CCC 1666).
- The purpose of getting married is to help spouses become saints and to help the children become saints, too (see CCC 1666).

Take It to Prayer

The image shows a worksheet template. On the left side, there is a vertical red bar. At the top of this bar, the words "Take It to Prayer" are written in white, bold, sans-serif font. Below the title, the following text is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font: "God our Father, help us to see your plan for marriage in the Bible, in Christ, and in our lives and in our world. We pray this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen." The rest of the page is white and contains several horizontal grey lines for writing. There are five lines between the red bar and the bottom of the page, and another set of five lines further down.



The Catechism in a Year is a daily podcast produced by Ascension and hosted by Fr. Mike Schmitz. It helps us understand what it means to be Catholic by reading the entire *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and allowing those truths to shape our lives. This bulletin was adapted from the books that complement the podcast: *The Catechism in a Year Companions* by Petroc Willey, Fr. Mike Schmitz, and Matthew Doeing.