

Sunday Q&A

Your Faith in Focus



BACK HOME FROM SATANISM

What are some inspirational stories about the Rosary?

Writer Melissa Keating shares stories on the Ascension blog, including this abridged piece about the conversion of a Satanist priest. You read that right. Bartolo Longo came a long way back from a dark and desolate life through the power of the Rosary.

The Power of the Rosary

Blessed Bartolo Longo was born to a devout Catholic family in 1841. His formative years were a tumultuous time for Italy, and he was swept up in nationalistic fervor. Many of his college professors were former priests who took a dim view of the Catholic Church.



Bartolo started to dabble in the occult and eventually embraced Satanism. He was consecrated a satanic priest and promised his soul to a demon. To his family's dismay, he preached against the Catholic Faith and presided over blasphemous rituals.

His mental and physical state deteriorated until he couldn't deny that he needed help. He began to talk to a Catholic professor from his university, who referred him to a Dominican priest. The priest met with Bartolo for three weeks before he was able to offer absolution.

Bartolo became a third-order Dominican, but he was still plagued with guilt about his past life. He was especially traumatized by the experience of promising his soul to a demon and doubted that God would accept him after having done something so heinous. These thoughts nearly drove him to suicide. But then he remembered a homily he had heard on the power of the Rosary:

*Falling to my knees, I exclaimed: "If your words are true that he who propagates your Rosary will be saved, I shall reach salvation because I shall not leave this earth without propagating your Rosary."**

Bartolo spent the rest of his life promoting the Rosary and surrendering his problems through it. He even helped build the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary in Pompeii. His extensive writings on the Rosary influenced St. John Paul II's decision to add the luminous mysteries during his papacy.

* "A Former Satanist Priest Who Became a Saint," Dominican Friars Foundation, Dominicanfriars.org.



Ponder and Pray

- How has the Rosary affected you?
- Is there someone you feel called to pray for this week?

Make It Your Own

Pray the luminous mysteries this week. Use the chart to meditate on each mystery.

Mystery	How does this mystery speak to you in your own life?
The Baptism of Jesus	
The Wedding Feast at Cana	
The Proclamation of the Kingdom	
The Transfiguration	
The Institution of the Eucharist	

Tip of the Week

Pray the Rosary for the conversion of sinners.

Dive Deeper

To read Melissa Keating’s full article on this topic, scan the QR code or visit: <https://media.ascensionpress.com/2019/10/28/6-inspirational-stories-about-the-rosary/>.



Week 41



THE ROSARY IN A YEAR

WITH FR. MARK-MARY AMES, CFR

PHASE 3: MEDITATING ON THE MYSTERIES

The Luminous Mysteries in Art

THE EUCHARIST

“Truly, truly, I say to you,
one of you will betray me”
(John 13:21).

This week, we will meditate on a work of sacred art depicting the Institution of the Eucharist: a mosaic by Giacomo Raffaelli based on Leonardo da Vinci’s *The Last Supper*. 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. Points of reflection have been provided to assist in your meditation.



The Last Supper by Giacomo Raffaelli (1816), Minoritenkirche, Vienna

Reflection and Contemplation

- This image, based on Leonardo da Vinci's painting of the Last Supper, depicts the moment when Jesus says to his apostles, "Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me" (John 13:21). Why do you think the artist chose to depict this scene?
- Notice the different reactions of the apostles to these words of Jesus. How would you react if you were one of the apostles?
- Look at Jesus' face. John's Gospel says Jesus "was troubled in spirit" (John 13:21). What does Jesus' face say? Is he accusatory?
- St. John the Apostle is shown sitting at Jesus' right hand. John is referred to in the Gospel as the one "whom Jesus loved" (John 13:23). How can we be more like John, fully embracing Jesus' love for us in the Eucharist?
- St. Peter is shown talking to St. John. The Gospel tells us that he asked him, "Tell us who it is of whom he speaks" (John 13:24). Why do you think Peter asked John this question? Why did Peter not ask Jesus himself?
- Notice that Jesus is reaching for a dish with his right hand. Judas is also reaching for the dish. Sometimes, the ones closest to Jesus can betray him and cause him great sorrow. How should we respond when we hear of scandals in the Church? How can we be quick to turn to Jesus, knowing he is ultimately in control?

Make It Your Own

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

Blank lined paper with horizontal ruling lines.



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, C.F.R. 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.



DISPLAY AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

2 Kings 5:14-17 • 2 Timothy 2:8-13 • Luke 17:11-19



Family Car Talk

In today's Gospel, Jesus heals ten lepers, but only one comes back to thank him. Talk with your family on the way home from Mass today about the importance of gratitude.



Why is it important to be grateful for the gifts we've been given?



Ask the people in the car to name five things they are grateful for today.

Here's the twist: no repeating anyone else's answers!



How can our lives be improved by practicing gratitude?



REIGN WITH JESUS

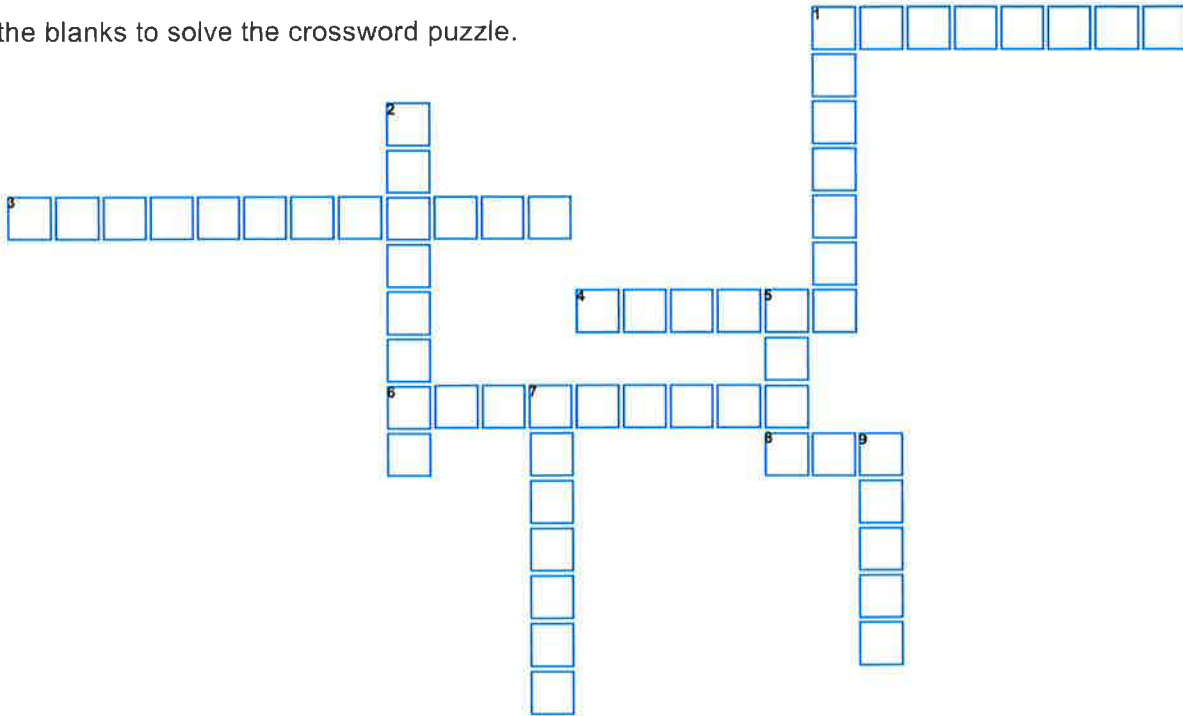
Instructions: Today's Second Reading says, *"If we have died with him we shall also live with him; if we persevere we shall also reign with him."* Persevere means to work hard and refuse to give up. Color and personalize the words below to thank Jesus for saving you and for helping you persevere when things are hard.

Thank you,
Jesus!



A PSALM PUZZLE

Instructions: Find the words from today's psalm, Psalm 98! Using your church missal and the clues below, fill in the blanks to solve the crossword puzzle.

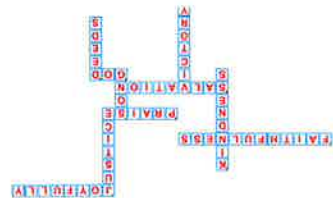


ACROSS

1. Sing _____ to the LORD, all you lands
3. He has remembered his kindness and his _____ toward the house of Israel.
4. break into song; sing _____.
6. The LORD has made his _____ known:
8. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation by our _____

DOWN

1. in the sight of the nations he has revealed his _____
2. He has remembered his _____ and faithfulness toward the house of Israel.
5. Sing to the LORD a new _____
7. his right hand has won _____ for him, his holy arm.
9. for he has done wondrous _____



Days 281-287



Maccabean Revolt Narrative: 1 Maccabees 1–6 | Supplemental: Sirach 1–18; Proverbs 21:29–22:21

BEFORE WE SEE GOD, DO WE NEED TO IMPROVE?



Mattathias and the Apostate
by Gustave Doré

In the period of the Return, the Jews are given another chance to be faithful witnesses to the covenant. They have been given back the land and have rebuilt the Temple. This does not mean that all will be easy. The books of Maccabees record the revolt of the Jews against oppressive foreigners. Just as in the past, the people will need to live out their call to be faithful. All too often, sin prevails, and God must call the people back to repentance and conversion.

- In Malachi 3 and 4, we see prophecies of John the Baptist and the coming of the Messiah, Jesus. Malachi 3:1 says, “Behold, I send my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple,” referring to John the Baptist.
- We also read, “For behold, the day comes, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble ... But for you who fear my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings” (Malachi 4:1–2).
- The day of the Lord has come, fulfilling Malachi’s prophecy. Jesus, who became incarnate more than four hundred years after Malachi wrote these words, will come again.
- In chapter 1 of the first book of Maccabees, we hear about how the dying Alexander the Great divides his kingdom among his generals. One of their descendants is Antiochus Epiphanes, who enacts a severe persecution against the Jews.
- In 1 Maccabees 2, we see that Mattathias is told by the Greek oppressors to offer sacrifice to lead others in this practice. He is promised that they will then be friends of the king, and he and his sons will be honored with gifts.
- Mattathias refuses. When a fellow Jew comes forward to offer sacrifice, Mattathias is roused by righteous anger and kills him. He then kills the king’s ambassador. The Maccabees begin to wage war on the Greeks.

Dive Deeper

Today, ask the Lord to help you see the areas of your life that you need to improve before you see him face to face. Would you like to have a more intense relationship of prayer with him? Pray and act so that you may be ready.

Bible Answers

Why do some passages in Sirach seem to be negative toward women?

In some places, the Bible's words about women are surprising and even a little off-putting to modern readers. When reading the Scriptures, we need to be careful not to take verses out of context but instead to be receptive to the truth they teach us.

The human author of Sirach wrote to give instructions to his son, as he says in Sirach 2:1. Ultimately, the father is instructing his son on the importance of finding a good wife who can help lead her husband to a good and happy life. A wicked spouse can lead her husband to sin and cause him to have a miserable life. Sirach personifies wisdom as a woman, saying that the Lord "poured her out upon all his works" (Sirach 1:9). The writer of Sirach wants his son to have a wife who, in a way, resembles wisdom and is wise herself: "Do not deprive yourself of a wise and good wife, for her charm is worth more than gold" (Sirach 7:19).



THE EMPIRE OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT

The book of 1 Maccabees opens by introducing Alexander the Great. The image above shows his extensive empire in 323 BC.



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 41

Paragraphs 2168–2220



THE CATECHISM IN A YEAR

WITH FR. MIKE SCHMITZ

How We Live PART THREE: LIFE IN CHRIST

HOW DO THE THIRD AND FOURTH COMMANDMENTS RELATE TO JUSTICE?

Loving God entails observing his commandments, including the commands to keep the Sabbath holy and honor our parents. We are created for relationships, beginning in our families, that form us in relationship with God. Many give all their time to the false idols of work and productivity instead of to worship and family. Keeping Sundays and holy days holy and preserving family time challenges our culture of nonstop work and busyness. The Church and right relationship with God grow primarily through the family.

Keep in Mind

- The Third Commandment requires us to give God what is his rightful due.
- We are obligated to worship at Mass every Sunday and holy day of obligation, regardless of convenience or circumstances.
- Willfully missing Mass constitutes a grave sin.
- Personal prayer cannot replace what happens at Mass: union with Jesus' Church, the priest's intercession, and the transubstantiation of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.
- With a valid reason, one's pastor has the authority to grant a dispensation from Mass.
- "On Sundays and other holy days of obligation," we also are called upon to refrain from servile labor and join the work of God with charitable activity (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2185).
- The Fourth Commandment requires us to give others their rightful due, specifically within the family.
- "A man and a woman united in marriage, together with their children, form a family" (CCC 2202).



Dive Deeper

The Christian family is a "domestic church," a community focused on prayer and animated by faith, hope, and charity (CCC 2204).

God created the family as the fundamental unit of human society. Pray that all people will recognize God's plan for the family and uphold its value, creating laws that protect its members and promote their flourishing.

- Use the space below to reflect on this week's content.

God our Father, please bring every person into your family. Let no person live in fatherlessness but as your beloved sons and daughters, We pray this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



The best place to listen along is the Ascension app. **Scan the QR** code to get exclusive bonus content and transcripts for every episode.

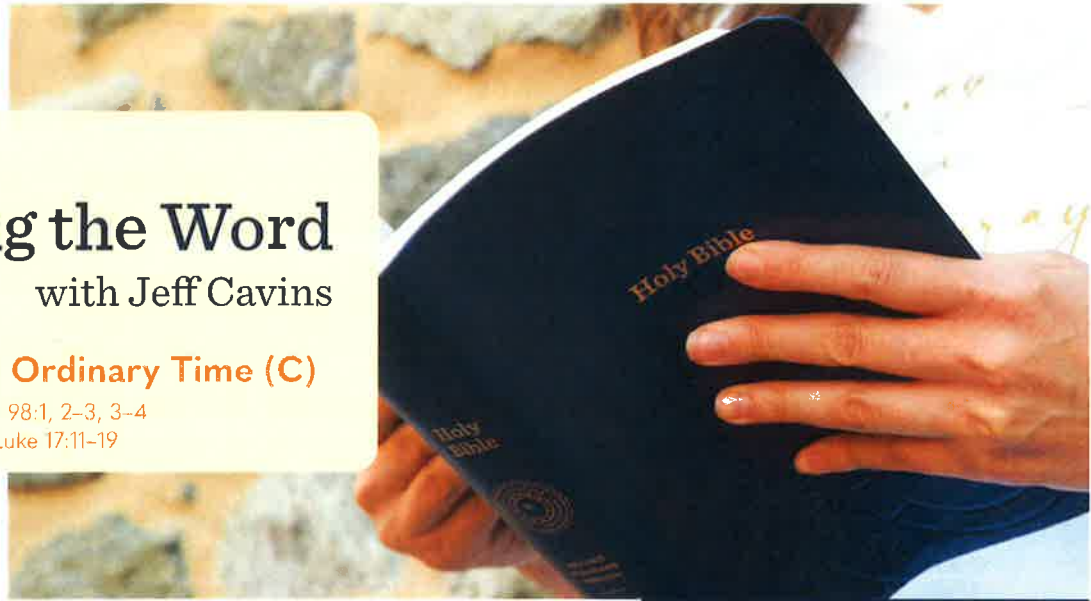
The *Catechism in a Year*[®] is a daily podcast produced by Ascension and hosted by Fr. Mike Schmitz. By reading the entire *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Fr. Mike helps us understand what it means to be Catholic and allow those truths to shape our lives. This bulletin was adapted from the books that complement the podcast: *The Catechism in a Year Companion*, volumes 1–3, by Petroc Willey, Fr. Mike Schmitz, and Matthew Doeing.

Encountering the Word

with Jeff Cavins

Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

2 Kings 5:14-17 • Psalm 98:1, 2-3, 3-4
2 Timothy 2:8-13 • Luke 17:11-19



Dear Lord, Thanks for Everything!

In his parable of the ten lepers in Luke 17, Jesus recounts the healing of ten lepers, men who had lost everything—community, relationships, and dignity—because of their disease. Jesus restores their health and returns their lives to them, yet only one leper comes back to thank him. Jesus asks, “Ten were cleansed, were they not? Where are the other nine?” (Luke 17:17). This story shows us the importance of gratitude in our relationship with God.



Gratitude transforms the heart. As sociologists observe, happiness isn't determined by how much we have but by how grateful we are. A person with little but a thankful heart can live joyfully, while someone with much but no gratitude may feel bitter and unsatisfied. The healed leper who returned to Jesus recognized the magnitude of the gift he had received and responded with thankfulness, demonstrating a heart open to grace.

This Gospel reading invites us to ask, “Which leper am I?” Are we like the one who returned to give thanks, or are we like the nine who accepted the gift but forgot the Giver? Reflecting on our daily lives can reveal the state of our gratitude. Do we pause to acknowledge God's blessings, or do we let life's busyness overshadow his goodness?

Gratitude requires intention. As we are reminded throughout Scripture, thanksgiving is the appropriate response to God's mercy, generosity, and grace. A grateful heart is a beautiful heart—one that enriches our relationship with God and opens us to recognize and receive his continued work in our lives.

Live the Gospel

Say “thank you” a lot this week! Visit your local parish, spend time in a holy hour, and reflect on God's blessings. Gratitude transforms you, aligning you with God's grace. Whether you're grateful for blessings that seem small or life's major joys, make your thanksgiving intentional. A grateful heart sharpens your connection to God and fills your life with peace. Thank you, God!

Dive Deeper

Scan this code to watch:



Or go to:

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

Ponder and Pray

» Consider the question, “Which leper am I?” Are there areas where you’ve received God’s goodness but have forgotten to give thanks?

» Gratitude is a response to God’s grace and mercy. How can you express your thankfulness to God this week, both in prayer and in action?

» What does a “grateful heart” look like in your life? How can gratitude transform your relationship with God and those around you?

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, or your answers to the questions on this page—anything to help you and your household get the most out of today’s Mass.

“ Then he said to him,
‘Stand up and go; your faith
has saved you.’
—Luke 17:19 ”

Jeff Cavins is the author of *The Bible Timeline: The Story of Salvation* and the creator of the video series *Sundays with Ascension*, from which this reflection was adapted.

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