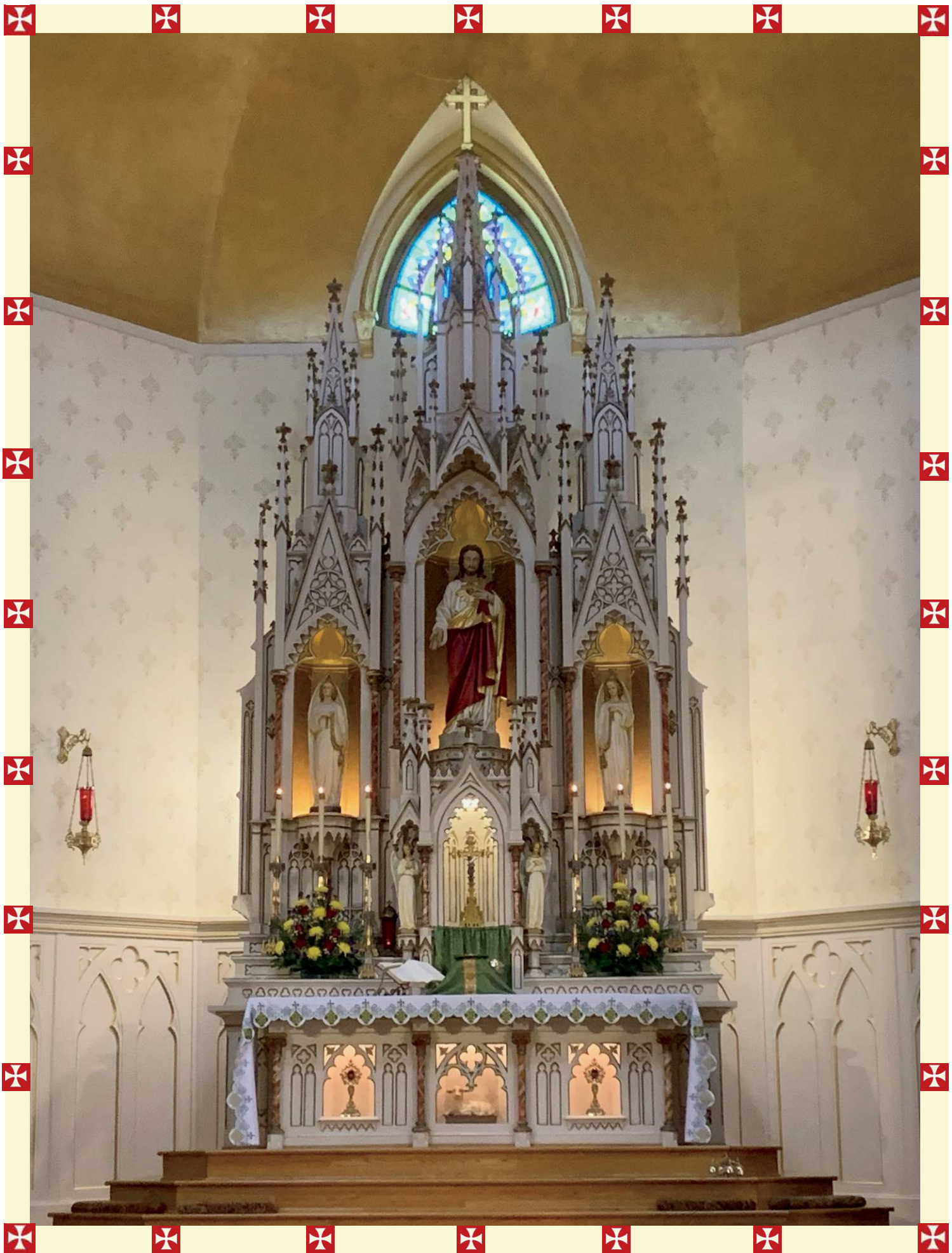




SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

July 19, 2026



WELCOME TO HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC CHURCH

Served by the Mercedarian Friars USA (www.orderofmercy.org)



PARISH OFFICE, 588 W. Gay Street, Columbus, OH 43215

Open Monday—Thursday: 8:00 a.m.—12 noon
1:00 p.m.—3:00 p.m.

Main No.....614-221-4323 Fax No: 614-221-9818
Web:..... www.holyfamilycolumbus.org
Email:..... office@holyfamilycolumbus.org
Facebook.... Holy Family Catholic Church
Flocknote.... holyfamilycolumbus@flocknote.com

PERSONNEL STAFF

Father Michael J. Donovan, O. de M.. Pastor
Father Daniel Bowen, O. de M..... Vocation Director
Brother Kevin Cush, O. de M..... Seminarian
Business Manager Brian Krull
Secretary..... Mary Gamble
Maintenance..... Tim Kearns
Music Director / Organist..... Shawn Kenney
OCIA (RCIA) Coordinator..... Linda Hamilton
Religious Education..... Sr. Bozena Tyborowska LSC

PARISH ORGANIZATIONS

Altar Servers—*Br. Kevin Cush, O. de M., Director*
Confraternity of Christian Mothers—*Rita Martinez, President*
Diocesan Center for the Guard of Honor
of the Sacred Heart of Jesus—*Rebecca Rector, Zelatrix*
Eucharistic Adoration—*Sarah Hill, Coordinator*
Holy Family Young Adults—*Bear Bates, Coordinator*
Hospitality—*Kathy McKinniss & Linda Hamilton, Coordinators*
Knights of Columbus—*Shawn Kenney, Grand Knight*
Liturgical Ministry—*Linda Hamilton, Coordinator*
Mercedarian Lay Third Order—*Fr. Michael J. Donovan, O. de M.*
Spiritual Director
Respect Life—*Jake & Kennedy Oliger, Coordinators*

SOUP KITCHEN—(backyard of Parish Center building)

Donations...Monday—Friday
8:00 a.m. —12 noon preferred, back of building drop off
12 noon—3:00 p.m. optional, please call in advance
Main No..... 614-221-4323, Option 3
Web..... www.hfsk.org
Email..... Dennis Shope, Director
soupkitchen@holyfamilycolumbus.org

BAPTISM—Call the Parish office to schedule a Baptism.
Children over the age of 6 will require some special instruction.

MARRIAGE—Please call the Parish Office at least six months
before the wedding. Diocesan Pre-Cana and Natural Family
Planning classes are required and six meetings with the priest.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE SICK—Call the Parish Office
during general office hours. Otherwise, call Parish Office and
select "Sacramental Emergency" option.

RECEPTION OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST—Those who desire
Holy Communion at home should call the Parish Office.

MASS SCHEDULE

Weekdays: 12:15pm
Saturday: 9:00 a.m.
Sunday: 9:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m. 5:00 p.m. & 8:00 p.m.

Convent of St. Birgitta—40 N. Grubb St., Columbus

Weekly: 7:00 a.m. Mon. Tues. Thurs. Friday
4:00 p.m. Wednesday
(Each day is open to the public)

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Weekdays: 11:30 a.m.—12 Noon
Sunday: 8:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m. 4:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION SCHEDULE

Holy Family Church

Weekly: 1:00 p.m. Thursday—12 Noon Friday

First Friday Adoration in Reparation to the
Sacred Heart—8:00 p.m.—8:45 a.m. First Saturday

Please contact **Sarah Hill at 740-418-0517** or
thehills1936@gmail.com if you have interest in being
scheduled weekly or monthly in either location.

Convent of St. Birgitta (CSB) 40 N. Grubb St., Columbus

Weekly: 9:00 a.m.—9:00 p.m. Tuesday
9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m. Mass Wednesday
4:30 p.m.—9:00 p.m. following 4pm Mass
9:00 a.m.—9:00 p.m. Friday

MOST HOLY ROSARY

Weekdays: 11:30 am (Tuesday is Respect Life Rosary)
Chaplet of Divine Mercy follows Rosary

Saturday: 8:30 a.m. before 9:00 a.m. Marian Mass
8:15 a.m. before 9:00 a.m. First Saturday
Mass

Sunday: 8:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m. & 4:30 p.m. (before Mass)

Please contact the Parish Office if you wish to be
scheduled to lead before 9am Saturday or 9am; 5pm
Sunday Mass.

REGULAR DEVOTIONS



Each Tuesday following the 12:15 p.m. Mass there
are Devotions to **St. Anthony of Padua**.



Each Saturday Novena Prayers to **Our Lady of
Mercy** following 9:00 a.m. Mass.



On First Wednesday of each month a 7:00 p.m. Mass
is offered in honor of **Good Saint Joseph**.



On First Friday of each month following the 12:15 &
7:00 p.m. Mass there is **Act of Consecration of the
Human Race to the Sacred Heart of Jesus**.

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

July 19, 2026

MASS INTENTIONS July 19—July 26, 2026

Sun July 19 SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

9:00 AM * Dennis Fout, by The Fout Family
11:00 AM Repose of the Soul of Mary Karabinos
by Christian Mothers
5:00 PM Dawn Marable, by Dina Giddens
8:00 PM People of the Parish

Mon July 20 Saint Apollinaris, Bishop and Doctor

7:00 AM CSB—Repose of the Soul of Richard Lumpe
by Fr. Michael Lumpe
12:15 PM Repose of the Soul of Shirley Thibaut
by Karen, Kathy and Family

Tues July 21 Saint Lawrence of Brindisi Priest and Doctor

7:00 AM CSB—All Souls, by Tim & Kim Nguyen
12:15 PM Repose of the Soul of Albert "Corky" Flaim
by Harold & Cathy Quenneville

Wed July 22 Saint Mary Magdalene

12:15 PM Repose of the Soul of Debbie Ostrander
by Jennie Gallastegui
4:00 PM CSB—Repose of the Soul of Amy Kelly
by Sean & Jody White

Thurs July 23 Saint Bridget, Religious

7:00 AM CSB—Intentions of The Bridgettine Sisters
by Kathy McKinniss
12:15 PM Doug Gamble, by Mary Gamble

Fri July 24 Saint Sharbel Makhluf, Priest Blessed Margaret Mary Lopez, Virgin Order of Mercy Memorial

7:00 AM CSB—Repose of the Soul of Michael Selreno
by Marie
12:15 PM Kaitlin Litman, by Brandan & Krista Litman

Sat July 25 Saint James, Apostle

9:00 AM Repose of the Souls of James P.
and Livia A. Gallicchio, by Their Family

Sun July 26 SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

9:00 AM * Repose of the Souls of Anna and James Fries
by Tom Fries
11:00 AM Repose of the Soul of John Garcia
by Beth Ann & Dominic Prunte
5:00 PM People of the Parish
8:00 PM Repose of the Soul of Baby Maria Trinh
by Abby

* Incense will be used at this Mass

HOMEBOUND AND/OR ILL IN NEED OF PRAYERS

Andre Bond	Theresa Piatt
Melody Christ	Joe Pinto
Sarah Conway	Eleanor Rabideau
JoAnn Cormack	Maura Renouf
Mary Jo Fetch	Michelle Stewart
Jack Gookin	Josh Stroud
John Keller	Genny Temple
Charles McKinniss	Celeste Trautman
Debbie Newell	Mary Ann Wirsching



The Catholic Cemeteries of Columbus invite you to join us for Stations of the Cross at Resurrection Cemetery, 9571 N. High St., Lewis Center, OH on Friday, July 24 at 3 PM. Meditate on the Stations as we walk along the outdoor path of our beautiful stained glass Stations section. Prayers will be led by Fr. Denis Kigozi, pastor of St. Mary in Delaware.



SERMON ON THE AMOUNT

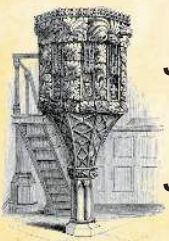
July 5—July 12, 2026

Offertory	
Collection	\$ 3,854
On-Line	2,342
Mail	+ 1,320
Total	\$ 7,516
Less: Assessment (10%)	- 752
Net	\$ 6,764
Soup Kitchen	\$ 3,475
Total Capital Campaign Donations	\$714,452
Mission Appeal Last Sunday	\$ 3,774
The Appeal Pledges	\$ 14,668
The Appeal Goal	\$ 75,987

God Reward your Generosity

LECTOR SCHEDULE

July 19	9:00 am	Susan Lau
	11:00 am	Kendy Troiano
	5:00 pm	Dan Hueckel
July 26	9:00 am	Mary Gamble
	11:00 am	Elaine Browning
	5:00 pm	Brian Bishop



SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

July 19, 2026

A Note from Fr. Michael

Praised be Jesus Christ!

Dear Parish Family,

I pray that your summer days are relaxing and peaceful as much as can be expected. It always seems like once the Fourth of July celebrations are over, the summer weeks begin to accelerate and, before you know it, September is upon us with all its busyness.

With that in mind, I want to give you, in a timely fashion, some important dates so that you can mark your calendars in advance.

Wednesday, August 12th: Mass offered for Persecuted Christians at 7:00pm.

Saturday, August 15th: The Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Since this feast falls on a Saturday this year it is not a day of obligation. However, as always on Saturdays, we will have Mass at 9:00am.

Monday, August 31st: The Feast of St. Raymond Nonnatus. The blessing of water and candles in honor of St. Raymond will take place at the 12:15pm Mass.

Tuesday, September 8th: O.C.I.A. begins at 7:00pm.

Sunday, September 13th: CCD Class begins at 9:30am. Registration deadline is July 30, 2026.

Monday, September 14th: Scripture Class begins. This class will be a prayerful study of the Gospel of St. Matthew with Fr. Michael. An evening class will be offered at 7:00pm, and an afternoon class at the convent will be offered at 1:30pm every Monday.

Thursday, September 17th: The Feast of St. Robert Bellarmine. Mass for down syndrome people and their families at 7:00pm.

Sunday, September 20th: Parish Picnic following the 11:00am Mass.

Thursday, September 24th: Solemnity of Our Lady of Mercy. Mass at 7:00pm.

Saturday, October 17th: Pasta Dinner in the undercroft, sponsored by the Christian Mothers.

Thanks to each and everyone of you for making Holy Family parish the great parish family that it is! May God grant you a prayerful and peaceful Sunday and a safe summer.

In Jesus, Mary, and Joseph,

Fr. Michael



SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

July 19, 2026



HOLY FAMILY KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS #13428

We continue to collect aluminum cans for the Seminarians. All proceeds will go to these young men of Christ. Please drop the cans off at the entrance of the Church and/or Parish Center.

Our **monthly Corporate Mass** for the Unborn Children and All Priests and Religious will be on **Sunday August 2, 2026** at the 11am Mass.

Our **monthly Council meeting** will be after the 11am Mass on **Sunday August 2, 2026** at the Parish Center.

Our next **Pancake Breakfast** is scheduled for **Sunday August 30, 2026** after the 11am Mass.

If you are interested in becoming a Knight of Columbus, please contact **Jose Rivera** at **(614) 256-1425** or **fourtonmantis@icloud.com**.



HOLY FAMILY RESPECT LIFE MINISTRY

Did you know? ... "The youngest premature baby to survive was born at **21 weeks gestation** (133 days premature). As hospitals invest in life-saving technologies to save their smallest, most miraculous patients, the age of viability gets younger and younger, bringing joy and hope to many families." (*Lozier Institute*)

Yet, states like Ohio still remain steadfast in abortion laws that allow babies to be aborted at 22 weeks. Please pray for our state, and learn how you can make a difference by volunteering at your local pregnancy center or Greater Columbus Right to Life.

Helpful reminders:

1. Our **Parish Picnic** is **Sunday, September 20th after the 11 am Mass** in the church parking lot. Please see the flyer on page 6 and the bulletin boards for details and to purchase raffle tickets!
2. Sign up to pray for the unborn and those facing abortion **by taking home our traveling St. Raymond statue for 9 days**. A sign up sheet is in the vestibule near the Holy Family statue.
3. Our next meeting is **Monday, August 3rd from 7-8 pm** in the Parish Center.
4. Our baby donation drive is ongoing. See the flyers on the bulletin boards for details.

Email **holyfamilyrlm@gmail.com** with questions.

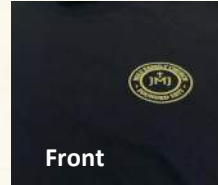


CONFRATERNITY OF CHRISTIAN MOTHERS & LADIES GUILD

Serving the Women of Holy Family since 1887

There will be no meeting in July.

Holy Family T-shirts can now be ordered at our cost of **\$20.00**. Contact **holyfamilyccm@gmail.com** for an order form or use the QR code below.



Front



Back



Join us today for our **Christian Mothers Mass** at 11:00 AM. The St. Gerard Blessing will follow Mass before the Blessed Mother Altar.

Please join us in prayer after Holy Communion.

Prayer Before the Crucifix

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus while before Your face I humbly kneel, and with burning soul, pray and beseech You to fix deep in my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope, and charity; true contrition for my sins, and a firm purpose of amendment. While I contemplate with great love and tender pity, Your five most precious wounds, pondering over them within me and calling to mind the words which David, Your prophet, said to You, my Jesus: "They have pierced My hands and My feet, they have numbered all My bones." Amen

Columbus Diocese Christian Mothers Retreat will be held **September 19** at Holy Family. Both Father Donovan and Father Stash will be speakers.

Pasta Dinner will be held **October 17**. Please consider volunteering for this event. If interested you can contact us at **holyfamilyccm@gmail.com**.

We are always welcoming new members, please contact us at **holyfamilyccm@gmail.com**. Or, join us at a meeting! Our next meeting will be **August 15th** following the 9:00am Mass in the Undercroft.

HIS INCREDIBLE SENIORS EXERCISE PROGRAM

Class is canceled the remaining month of July. We will



keep you posted on when class will begin again. Pray for Mary Sue as she recovers from a shoulder injury.



HFYA (18—35) meets weekly, with a rotation of activities including prayer/spirituality, talk, adoration, and social nights. **Use this QR Code to connect with this group.**



HOLY FAMILY SOUP KITCHEN WILL BE CLOSED JULY 20—24, 2026

NO DONATIONS WILL BE RECEIVED DURING THAT WEEK.

JOIN US FOR OUR 2ND ANNUAL

PARISH PICNIC

A celebration in honor of Our Lady of Mercy

Sunday, September 20

12:00 – 3:00 pm



Holy Family
584 W. Broad St.
Columbus, Ohio

WHAT TO EXPECT:

- Procession after the 11 am Mass in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Music
- 1 dollar Raffle for a Religious Statue
- Games and Activities
- Face Painting
- Food provided: Burgers, Hot Dogs, Sides and Drinks

RSVP USING THE QR CODE

SIGN UP TO BRING A NON
REFRIGERATED DESSERT



Or Contact Nicole Simental at
773-519-1587

Sponsored by the Respect Life Committee

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

July 19, 2026



Feast Day July 24—Blessed Margarita Maturana “Mother Margarita”

(1884—1934)

Blessed Margarita Maria Lopez de Maturana was a Religious Foundress of the Mercedarian Missionaries of Berriz—Born on 5 July 1884 and died of stomach cancer on 23 July 1934. She entered the Carmelites of Charity with a deep love for God which developed throughout her lifetime. At 16 years of age her widowed mother enrolled her in the boarding school of the Order of Our Lady of Mercy (Mercedarians). She entered the novitiate in the Cloistered Mercedarian Monastery of Vera Cruz in Berriz following her 19th birthday in 1903 taking the name **Margarita Maria**. In 1906 she began to work in the Order's boarding school where she had also studied. She remained there for more than 20 years, distinguishing herself by fervent prayer and charity.

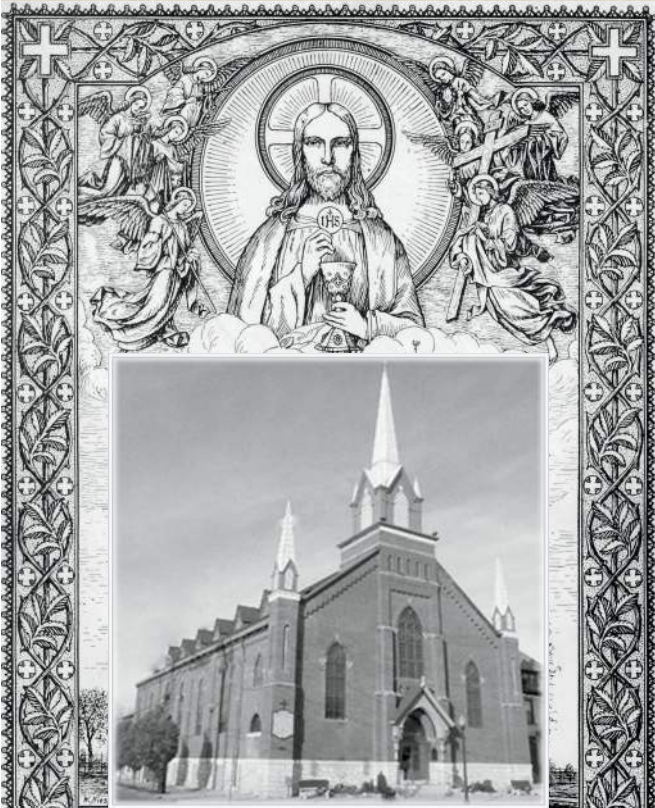
After 17 years of faithful religious life, the Mercedarian spirit inspired St. Margarita, in 1920, to form an association of Mercedarian Missionary Youth, encouraging them to be co-missionaries through prayer and various activities. In 1930 the final approval and blessing came from Rome for the official transformation of the Mercedarian Monastery of Berriz into a Missionary Institute. On 30 July 1931, Mother Margarita Maria was elected as the first Superior General. Before her death in 1934, she had travelled the world twice on Missionary work.

Mother Margarita's Missionary zeal, sprang from her intense union with Christ, who offered Himself in ransom for all. Her desire to live the fourth vow and save souls, inspired her Missionary spirit. Her writing defines the stimulus for the missionary spirit as a **“desire to love Jesus Christ in a new and total way—to love Him above all, in those who do not love Him.”** She was Beatified on 22 October 2006 by Pope Benedict XVI.

- Saint of the Day



THANKSGIVING



After MASS

Lord, Father all-powerful and ever-living God,
I thank You, for even though I am a sinner,
Your unprofitable servant, not because of my worth
but in the kindness of Your mercy, You have fed me
with the Precious Body & Blood of Your Son,
Our Lord Jesus Christ.

I pray that this Holy Communion may not bring me
condemnation and punishment
but forgiveness and salvation.

May it be a helmet of faith and a shield of good will.

May it purify me from evil ways
and put an end to my evil passions.

May it bring me charity and patience,
Humility and obedience, and growth
in the power to do good.

May it be my strong defense against all my enemies,
visible and invisible, and the perfect calming
of all my evil impulses, bodily and spiritual.

May it unite me more closely to you, the One true God,
and lead me safely through death to

everlasting happiness with You. And I pray that

You will lead me, a sinner, to the banquet
where You, with Your Son and Holy Spirit, are
true and perfect light, total fulfillment, everlasting joy,
gladness without end, and perfect happiness
to Your saints, grant this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

- Saint Thomas Aquinas



HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC CHURCH



Lectio Divina

SCRIPTURE READING + MEDITATION + PRAYER + CONTEMPLATION

*"What page, what passage of the inspired books of the Old and New Testaments is not the truest of guides for human life?" +Saint Benedict, from the *Rule of Saint Benedict* (73:3)*

The month of July is dedicated to the Most Precious Blood of Jesus

"Safeguard the warmth of the family, because all the warmth of the world will not make up for it." +SAINT SHARBEL (CHARBEL) MAKHLŪF

Monday, July 20 ~ Sixteenth Week in the Season of Ordinary Time
Optional Memorial: Saint Apollinaris, Bishop and Martyr

Holy Gospel: Matthew 12:38-42 Some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Jesus, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you." He said to them in reply, "An evil and unfaithful generation seeks a sign, but no sign will be given it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. Just as Jonah was in the belly of the whale three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. At the judgment, the men of Nineveh will arise with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and there is something greater than Jonah here. At the judgment the queen of the south will arise with this generation and condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and there is something greater than Solomon here."

Meditation: It was characteristic of the Jewish people to demand "signs" from God's messengers to authenticate their claims. Jesus faulted them for one thing: spiritual adultery. The image of adultery was often used in the scriptures for describing apostasy or infidelity towards God. When the religious leaders pressed Jesus to give proof for his claims, he says in so many words that he is God's sign and that they need no further evidence from heaven than his own person. The Ninevites recognized God's warning when Jonah spoke to them, and they repented (Jonah 3:5). And the Queen of Sheba recognized God's wisdom in Solomon (1 Kings 10:1-9). Jonah was God's sign and his message was the message of God for the people of Nineveh. Unfortunately the religious leaders were not content to accept the signs right before their very eyes. They had rejected the message of John the Baptist and now they reject Jesus as God's Anointed One (Messiah) and they fail to heed his message. Simeon had prophesied at Jesus' birth that he was "destined for the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that inner thoughts of many will be revealed" (Luke 2:34-35). Jesus confirmed his message with many miracles in preparation for the greatest sign of all – his resurrection on the third day.

Prayer: Direct your faithful, Lord, in the way of eternal salvation, which the Bishop Saint Apollinaris showed by his teaching and martyrdom, and grant through his intercession, that we may so persevere in keeping your commandments as to merit being crowned with him. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: The Lord Jesus through the gift of his Holy Spirit offers us freedom from sin and ignorance and he gives us wisdom and understanding so that we may grow in knowledge of God and his ways. Do you thirst for God and for the wisdom which comes from above? James the Apostle says that the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty or insincerity (James 3:17). A double-minded person cannot receive this kind of wisdom. If we wish to be wise in God's ways, then we must humble ourselves before him, like attentive students who wish to learn, and submit our heart and mind to his will for our lives. The single of heart and mind desire one thing alone – God who is the source of all wisdom, goodness, truth, and knowledge. Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you with the wisdom which comes from above and to free your heart from all that would hinder God's loving action in your life.

Tuesday, July 21 ~ Sixteenth Week in the Season of Ordinary Time
Optional Memorial: Saint Lawrence of Brindisi, Priest and Doctor of the Church

Holy Gospel: Matthew 12:46-50 While Jesus was speaking to the crowds, his mother and his brothers appeared outside, wishing to speak with him. Someone told him, "Your mother and your brothers are



standing outside, asking to speak with you.” But he said in reply to the one who told him, “Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?” And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my heavenly Father is my brother, and sister, and mother.”

Meditation: God offers us the greatest of relationships – union of heart, mind, and spirit with himself, the very author and source of love (1 John 4:8,16). God's love never fails, never forgets, never compromises, never lies, never lets us down nor disappoints us. His love is consistent, unwavering, unconditional, and unstoppable. Nothing can deter him from ever leaving us, ignoring us, or treating us unkindly. He will love us no matter what. It is his nature to love. That is why he created us – to be united with him and to share in his love and unity of persons (1 John 3:1). God is a trinity of persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – and a community of love. That is why Jesus challenged his followers and even his own earthly relatives to recognize that God is the true source of all relationships. God wants all of our relationships to be rooted in his love.

Prayer: O God, who for the glory of your name and the salvation of souls bestowed on the Priest Saint Lawrence of Brindisi a spirit of counsel and fortitude, grant, we pray, that in the same spirit, we may know what must be done and, through his intercession, bring it to completion. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: Jesus is God's love incarnate – God's love made visible in human flesh (1 John 4:9-10). That is why Jesus describes himself as the good shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep and the shepherd who seeks out the sheep who have strayed and lost their way. God is like the father who yearns for his prodigal son to return home and then throws a great party for his son when he has a change of heart and comes back (Luke 15:11-32). Jesus offered up his life on the cross for our sake, so that we could be forgiven and restored to unity and friendship with God. It is through Jesus that we become the adopted children of God – his own sons and daughters. That is why Jesus told his disciples that they would have many new friends and family relationships in his kingdom. Whoever does the will of God is a friend of God and a member of his family – his sons and daughters who have been ransomed by the precious blood of Christ.

Wednesday, July 22 ~ Sixteenth Week in the Season of Ordinary Time Feast of Saint Mary Magdalene

Holy Gospel: John 20:1-2, 11-18 On the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, “They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don’t know where they put him.”

Mary stayed outside the tomb weeping. And as she wept, she bent over into the tomb and saw two angels in white sitting there, one at the head and one at the feet where the Body of Jesus had been. And they said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken my Lord, and I don’t know where they laid him.” When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus there, but did not know it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” She thought it was the gardener and said to him, “Sir, if you carried him away, tell me where you laid him, and I will take him.” Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni,” which means Teacher. Jesus said to her, “Stop holding on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am going to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord,” and then reported what he told her.

Meditation: How easy it is to miss the Lord when our focus is on ourselves! Mary Magdalene did not at first recognize the Lord because her focus was on the empty tomb and on her own grief. It took only one word from the Master, when he called her by name, for Mary to recognize him. Mary's message to the disciples, I have seen the Lord, is the very essence of Christianity. It is not enough that a Christian know about the Lord, but that we know him personally. It is not enough to argue about him, but to meet him. In the resurrection we encounter the living Lord who loves us personally and shares his glory with us. The Lord gives us “eyes of faith” to see the truth of his resurrection and victory over sin and death (Ephesians 1:18). The resurrection of Jesus is the foundation of our hope -- the hope that we will see God face to face and share in his everlasting glory and joy. Without having seen him you love him; though you do not now see him you believe in him and rejoice with unutterable and exalted joy. As the outcome of your faith you obtain the salvation of your souls (1 Peter 1:8-9). Do you recognize the Lord's presence with you, in his word, in the “breaking of the bread” and in his church, the body of Christ?

Prayer: O God, whose Only Begotten Son entrusted Mary Magdalene before all others with announcing the great joy of the Resurrection, grant, we pray, that through her intercession and example we may proclaim the living Christ and come to see him reigning in your glory. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: Saint Mary Magdalene has always been the example of great love and great forgiveness, one of those close to Jesus who grasped the truth of God's love for human beings and spent her life bearing witness to that love. So we might ask ourselves: How do I embrace the truth of God's love for me and for others? Through my actions and interactions with others, do I always bear witness to that same level of love?

About Saint Mary Magdalene: The feast of St. Mary Magdalene is considered one of the most mystical of feasts, and it is said that of all the songs of the saints, that of Mary Magdalene is the sweetest and strongest because her love was so great. That love was praised by Jesus Himself who said that because much was forgiven her, she loved much. She was from Magadala, a small fishing town on the Sea of Galilee. She was known to be a "great sinner" – a woman of the streets who heard Jesus speak of the mercy and forgiveness of God and changed her life completely. Her matter-of-fact witness to the Resurrection moved Peter and John to go and see for themselves: "I have seen the Lord and these things he said to me." Jesus had chosen her to bring the news to them and she simply told them what had happened. She has always been the example of great love and great forgiveness, one of those close to Jesus who grasped the truth of God's love for human beings and spent her life bearing witness to that love.

Thursday, July 23 ~ Sixteenth Week in the Season of Ordinary Time **Optional Memorial: Saint Bridget of Sweden, Religious**

Holy Gospel: Matthew 13:10-17 The disciples approached Jesus and said, "Why do you speak to the crowd in parables?" He said to them in reply, "Because knowledge of the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven has been granted to you, but to them it has not been granted. To anyone who has, more will be given and he will grow rich; from anyone who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because *they look but do not see and hear but do not listen or understand*. Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled in them, which says:

You shall indeed hear but not understand, you shall indeed look but never see. Gross is the heart of this people, they will hardly hear with their ears, they have closed their eyes, lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts and be converted and I heal them.

"But blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears, because they hear. Amen, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it."

Meditation: Saint Augustine of Hippo once said: "I believe, in order to understand; and I understand, the better to believe." Both faith and understanding are gifts of the Holy Spirit that enable us to hear God's word with clarity so we can know God better and grow in the knowledge of his love and truth. Jesus, however, had to warn his disciples that not everyone would understand his teaching. The prophet Isaiah had warned that some would hear God's word, but not believe, some would see God's actions and miracles, and remained unconvinced. Ironically some of the greatest skeptics of Jesus' teaching and miracles were the learned scribes and Pharisees who prided themselves on their knowledge of scripture and the law of Moses. They heard Jesus' parables and saw the great signs and miracles which he performed, but they refused to accept both Jesus and his message. How could they "hear and never understand" and "see but never perceive"? They were spiritually blind and deaf because their hearts were closed and their minds were blocked by pride and prejudice.

Prayer: O God, who guided Saint Bridget of Sweden along different paths of life and wondrously taught her the wisdom of the Cross as she contemplated the Passion of your Son, grant us, we pray, that, walking worthily in our vocation, we may seek you in all things. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: There is only one thing that can open a closed, confused, and divided mind – a broken heart and humble spirit! The word disciple means one who is willing to learn and ready to submit to the wisdom and truth which comes from God. Psalm 119 expresses the joy and delight of a disciple who loves God's word and who embraces it with trust and obedience. "Oh, how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day. Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation" (Psalm 119:97-99). God can only reveal the secrets of his kingdom to the humble and trusting person who acknowledges their need for



God and for his truth. The parables of Jesus will enlighten us if we approach them with an open mind and heart, ready to let them challenge us. If we approach God's word with indifference, skepticism, and disbelief, then we, too, may "hear but not understand" and "see but not perceive." God's word can only take root in a humble and receptive heart that is ready to believe. If we want to hear and to understand God's word, we must listen with openness, humility, reverence and faith – nothing else will suffice. Do you believe God's word and do you submit to it with trust and reverence?

Friday, July 24 ~ Sixteenth Week in the Season of Ordinary Time
Optional Memorial: Saint Sharbel (Charbel) Makhlūf, Priest

Holy Gospel: Matthew 13:18-23 Jesus said to his disciples: "Hear the parable of the sower. The seed sown on the path is the one who hears the word of the Kingdom without understanding it, and the Evil One comes and steals away what was sown in his heart. The seed sown on rocky ground is the one who hears the word and receives it at once with joy. But he has no root and lasts only for a time. When some tribulation or persecution comes because of the word, he immediately falls away. The seed sown among thorns is the one who hears the word, but then worldly anxiety and the lure of riches choke the word and it bears no fruit. But the seed sown on rich soil is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold."

Meditation: This parable of Jesus is a warning to those who hear and who preach the word of God. What makes us ineffective and unresponsive to God's word? Preoccupation with other things can distract us from what is truly important and worthwhile; letting our hearts and minds be consumed with material things can easily weigh us down and draw us away from the treasure that lasts for eternity. God's word can only take root in a receptive heart which is ready to hear what God has to say. One lesson is clear: the harvest is sure. While some seed will fall by the wayside and some fall on shallow ground and never come to maturity, and some be choked to death by the thorns; nonetheless a harvest will come. The seed that falls on good soil, on the heart that is receptive, will reap abundant fruit. Are you teachable and eager to learn God's truth?

Prayer: O God, who called the Priest Saint Sharbel Makhlūf to the solitary combat of the desert and imbued him with all manner of devotion, grant us, we pray, that, being made imitators of the Lord's Passion, we may merit to be co-heirs of his Kingdom. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: The word "harden" means "to become hard, obstinate, and stubborn." When scripture speaks of hardening our hearts, it is referring to our becoming insensitive to the Word of God. When our heart becomes hard, then we set up a resistance to His Word. Many times without knowing it God's people become defiant to God's Word, and they resist any conviction God brings in their life. When they refuse to hear, they refuse to change, then they resist conviction. They have hardened their hearts to God's will and His way. These have closed their minds to anything God would speak to them. They want to follow their own will, and go their own way. In doing this, they allow God no access to their lives. The heart of a disciple is malleable, not hard, and is open to always receiving the Word. Is your heart malleable?

About Saint Sharbel (Charbel) Makhlūf: Joseph Makhlūf was born in 1828 at Beqa-Kafra, Lebanon. His family lived a strong faith, were attentive to the Divine Liturgy, and had a great devotion to the Mother of God. At the age of 23, Charbel (the name he chose when entering Novitiate) left his closely knit family to enter the Lebanese-Maronite Monastery called Notre-Dame de Mayfouk. Following studies and profession at St. Cyprian de Kfifane Monastery, he was ordained in 1859. For the next seven years, Charbel lived in the mountainous community of Anaya. After that he spent the next twenty-three years in complete solitude at Sts. Peter and Paul Hermitage near Anaya. He died there on Christmas Eve, 1898. Charbel had a reputation for his austerity, penances, obedience, and chastity. At times, Charbel was gifted with levitations during prayer, and he had great devotion to the Most Blessed Sacrament. In all things, Charbel maintained perfect serenity.

Make a Pilgrimage: Visit the Basilica and National Shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon located in North Jackson, Ohio, just west of Youngstown. For information visit www.ourladyoflebanonshrine.com, or call (330) 538-3351.

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