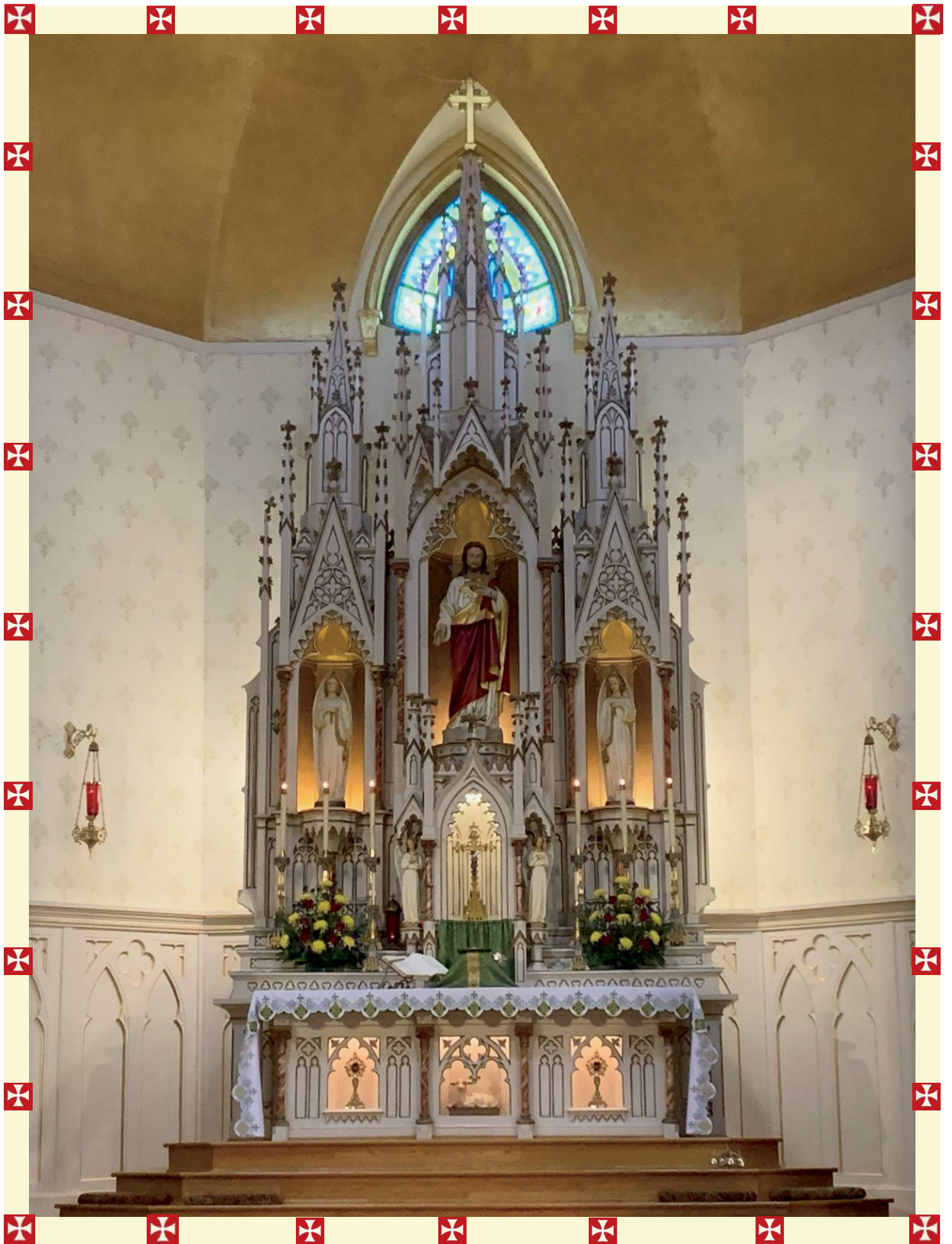




TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

August 23, 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 LSiC

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—*Ricky Obregon, 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**.

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

August 23, 2026

MASS INTENTIONS August 23—August 30, 2026

Sun August 23 TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

- 9:00 AM * The Olachea Family, by The Bucher Family
11:00 AM An Increase in Mercedarian Vocations
5:00 PM Repose of the Soul of Madeline Wiggins
by Nicholas Wiggins
8:00 PM People of the Parish

Mon August 24 Saint Bartholomew, Apostle

- 7:00 AM **CSB**—Repose of the Soul of Everett Shoults
by Mary Gamble
12:15 PM Repose of the Soul of William Ostrander
by Jennie Gallastegui

Tues August 25 Saint Louis & Saint Joseph Calasanz Priests

- 7:00 AM **CSB**—Repose of the Soul of William McCarthy
by Kristen McCarthy
12:15 PM Vocations, by Tim & Kim Nguyen

Wed August 26

- 12:15 PM Susan Morris and All Living Family Members
by Eric & Christy Conklin
4:00 PM **CSB**—Natalie and Family, by Mom

Thurs August 27 Saint Monica

- 7:00 AM **CSB**—All Souls, by Tim & Kim Nguyen
12:15 PM Repose of the Souls of James P. and
Livia A. Gallicchio, by Their Family

Fri August 28 Saint Augustine, Bishop and Doctor

- 7:00 AM **CSB**—The Cordek Family, by The Foley Family
12:15 PM Rose Ann Holocher, by ARD

Sat August 29 The Passion of Saint John the Baptist

- 9:00 AM Andrea Tschirner and ARD, by ARD

Sun August 30 TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

- 9:00 AM * Andre Bond, by Rudolf, Monica & Nicole Bond
11:00 AM People of the Parish
5:00 PM Kristi Ziegler, by Jane & Jean
8:00 PM Father Robert Cadrecha
by Jennie Gallastegui

* Incense will be used at this Mass

PRAYERS FOR THOSE WHO SERVE OUR COUNTRY

Airman 1st Class Kathleen Fruth, US Air Force
Airman William Harding Marable, US Air Force
Airman Lucas JY Tortora, US Air Force
Col. Timothy W. Grady, US Air National Guard
SPC Jeremy Rathbun, US Army
Specialist E4 Logan Christ, US Army Active Duty
1st Lt. John M. Kennedy, US Army Active Duty
1st Lt. Michael V. Dickerson US Army National Guard
2nd Lt. Nicholas C. Kennedy US Army National Guard
SPC Brian A. Marsh, US Army National Guard
SPC Trinity P. Roach, US Army National Guard
SPC Zach Sowers, US Army National Guard
Active Duty Trey Warner, US Army National Guard
Lt. Col. Stephen Hueckel, US Army Reserve
SGT Liam A. Smith, US Army Reserve
BM2 Joseph Flynn, US Coast Guard
Capt. Michael "Mick" Rector, US Marine Corps.
LCpl. Brendan Thomas, US Marine Corps.
Lt. Michael Bellavia, US Navy
Lt. Rockford Bowman, US Navy
SCPO Zachery Cook, US Navy
Lt. Andrea Rae Kaltenbach, US Navy
Active Duty Dan Severance, US Navy
SPC / E4 Trey Warner, Ohio National Guard

We would like to begin posting Wedding Anniversaries (10, 20, 25, etc.) in the first issue of the bulletin each month. Please share the date of your anniversary before its month arrives. Contact the Parish Office if you have any questions.

"Grant that we may grow old together." (Tobit 8:7)

SERMON ON THE AMOUNT

August 10, 2026—August 16, 2026

Offertory

Collection	\$ 3,299
On-Line	3,962
Assumption	300
Mail	+ 752
Total	\$ 8,313
Less: Assessment (10%)	- 831
Net	\$ 7,482
Soup Kitchen	\$ 14,071

Total Capital Campaign Donations \$716,767

The Appeal Pledges	\$ 15,888
The Appeal Goal	\$ 75,987

God Reward your Generosity

LECTOR SCHEDULE

August 23	9:00 am	Brandan Litman
	11:00 am	Aurelio Morales
	5:00 pm	Dan Hueckel
August 30	9:00 am	Vic Kaczowski
	11:00 am	Linda Hamilton
	5:00 pm	Brian Bishop

Lectio Divina for August 31—September 4 will not be included in the August 30, 2026 bulletin issue since it will be sent to printing a week early. Although, you will be able to see it in our website bulletin posted on August 31st. Please contact the Parish Office if you have any questions.

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

August 23, 2026

ART Show & SALE

SUNDAY, AUGUST 23

AFTER THE 9:00 AM AND 11:00 AM MASSES
HOLY FAMILY CHURCH UNDERCROFT

Join us for a special exhibition and sale of
original artwork by parishioner

Mary Jo Fetch.



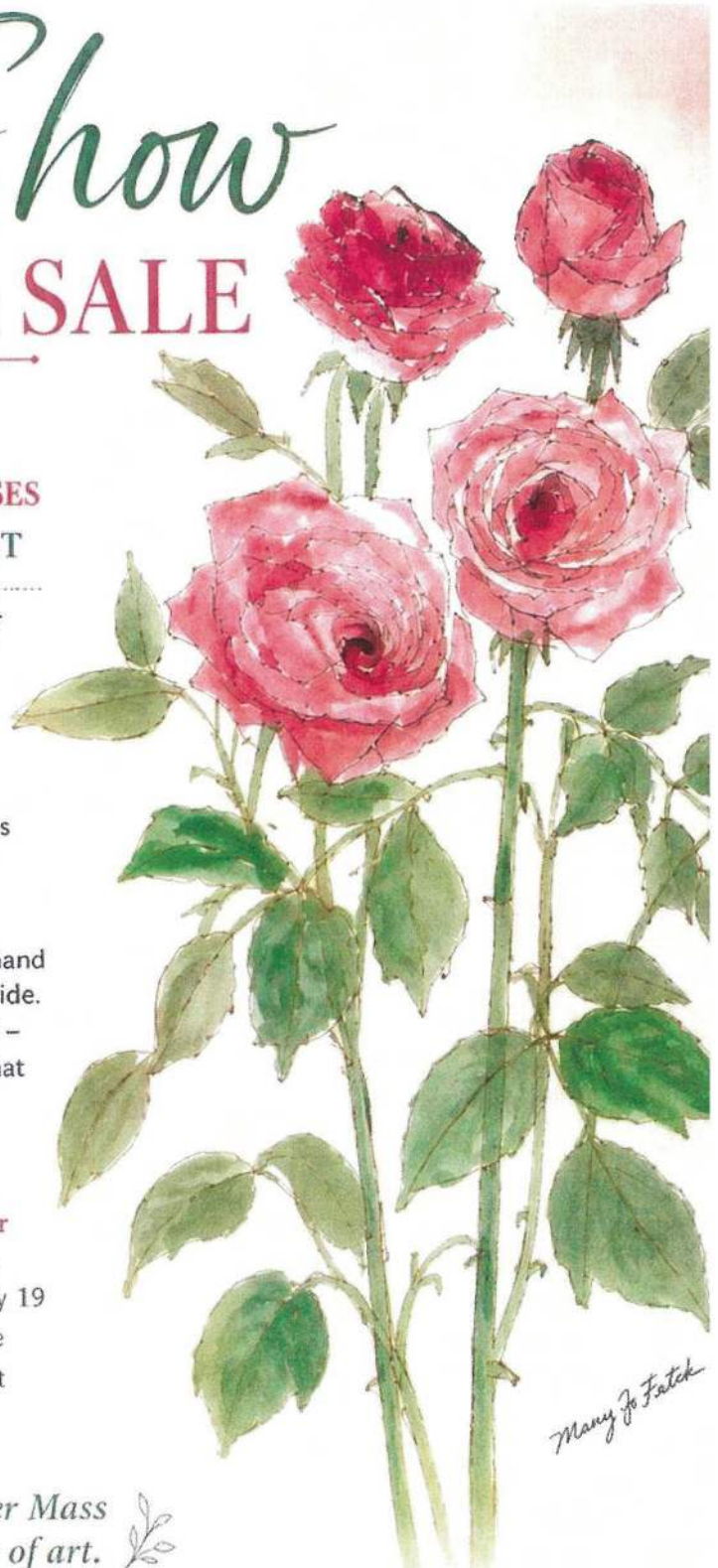
Mary Jo Fetch is a parishioner who paints daily and has dedicated her art to the **Blessed Virgin Mary.**



Mary Jo paints with her non-dominant hand because of a stroke affecting her right side. She began painting in October of 2024 – painting **over 125 Christmas cards** that first year!



Of note is that two of Mary Jo's pieces were selected to be shown in the **Upper Arlington Community Art Exhibit** that were showcased at a reception on July 19 and will reside with other artwork in the UA Municipal Services Center located at 3600 Tremont Rd through September.



*Please consider stopping down after Mass
to see many of her beautiful works of art.*

Cash or Check Please



A portion of the proceeds from the art sale will go toward the *building fund* at Holy Family.

SUPPORT LOCAL ART.
SUPPORT OUR PARISH.
WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE



TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

August 23, 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 next **Pancake Breakfast** is scheduled for **Sunday, August 30, 2026** after the 11am Mass. See flyer on page 6.

Our monthly Corporate Mass for the Unborn Children and All Priests and Religious will be on **Sunday, September 6, 2026** at the 11am Mass.

Our monthly Council meeting will be after the 11am Mass on **September 6, 2026** at the Parish Center.

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

Our **Parish Picnic** is right around the corner on **Sunday, September 20th** after the 11am Mass in the church parking lot. Raffle tickets will be sold after the 9am and 11am Masses next month.

You can purchase raffle tickets in advance for a chance to win a saint statue at the picnic through the below QR code! Contact Nicole Simental at 773-519-1587 if you have questions.



St. Raymond Novena Statue: 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.

Baby Donation Drive: Thank you to all those who have donated to our drive! We've had a great turnout, and are donating the items we received to our local pregnancy centers. Please place any donations in the St. George room in the undercroft.

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



Congratulations to the families of
Benedict Anthony Brobst
&
Charles Francis Hill

who were welcomed into our faith community through the Sacrament of Baptism.



CONFRATERNITY OF CHRISTIAN MOTHERS & LADIES GUILD

Serving the Women of Holy Family since 1887

Everyone is invited to join together for a special live guided Holy Hour on EWTN on the Feast of St. Monica: **10:00 AM Thursday, August 27th**, Live on EWTN.

This guided Holy Hour will be a wonderful opportunity for our confraternities to pray together, even from different locations. We especially encourage our members to watch and follow along with the Holy Hour, allowing it to serve not only as a time of prayer and adoration, but also as a helpful model for how our confraternities can conduct their own Holy Hours.

A guided Holy Hour can be especially helpful in keeping us focused on Our Lord and in giving structure to our time before the Blessed Sacrament.

May St. Monica, whose perseverance in prayer brought her son St. Augustine to the faith, intercede for all of our confraternities and families.

Our Mass is **Sunday, September 20th** at 11:00 AM with the St. Gerard Blessing to follow. Please join us before the Blessed Mother's Altar.

It is time to reserve your attendance for the **September 19 "A Morning of Grace" Retreat**.

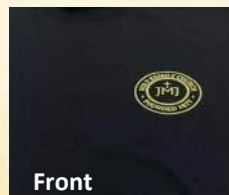
Deadline is September 10th for registration. There is no charge. A free-will offering is always appreciated. Bring your bible, journal, and an open heart. Father Donovan and Father Stash will be speakers followed by food and refreshments.



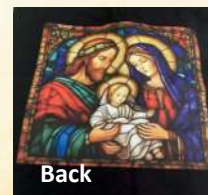
Pasta Dinner will be held **October 17**. The QR Code is for attendance registration. Please consider volunteering for this event. If interested you can contact us at **holyfamilyccm@gmail.com**. Flyers will be posted soon. Deadline for registration is **October 1st**.



Holy Family T-shirts can now be ordered at our cost of \$20. Sweatshirts and Hoodies are also available for \$30. Contact **holyfamilyccm@gmail.com** for an order form or use the QR code.



Front



Back



TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

August 23, 2026



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

HOLY FAMILY COUNCIL #13428

PARISH Breakfast

AUGUST 30TH
AFTER THE 11AM MASS

MENU

- PANCAKES
- SAUSAGE
- EGGS
- FRESH FRUIT
- YOGURT

PRICING

ADULTS	\$10
CHILDREN 12 & UNDER	\$6
FAMILIES OF 5 OR MORE	\$35



All are welcome! | *COME FOR THE FOOD. Stay for the fellowship.*

BRIDGETTINE SISTERS WOMEN'S MINI RETREAT

SATURDAY • SEPTEMBER 5

God's MERCY

Featuring Fr. Paul Check

PONTIFICAL COLLEGE JOSEPHINUM

9:00 AM MASS
AT HOLY FAMILY

LIGHT BREAKFAST & REFLECTION
WITH FR. PAUL AT THE CONVENT

9:00 AM-12:00 PM • COST \$40



SCAN TO RSVP

BRIDGETTINE SISTERS
40 N. Grubb Street
Columbus, OH 43215

BridgettineSisters1@gmail.com
Prayer • Hospitality • Unity



Join Fr. Michael for a Prayerful Study of the

Gospel according to

Matthew



Every Monday
starting September 14th

1:30 pm @ Convent of St. Birgitta

7:00 pm @ Holy Family Parish Center



3RD ANNUAL TOMMY PIOLATA GOLF OUTING



SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Join us in celebrating the life of Tommy and supporting our goal to complete the New Bridgettine Sisters Chapel & Retreat House. Your sponsorship helps make this vision a reality!



PREMIER SPONSOR

- ✓ Golf for 4 golfers
- ✓ Sponsor signage
- ✓ Recognition in event materials

\$1,500



INCLUDES GOLF FOR 4 GOLFERS



REGULAR HOLE SPONSOR

- ✓ Sponsor signage at one hole

\$300





REGISTER TO PLAY

- ✓ Includes 18 holes of golf, cart, lunch, dinner, and on-course contests
- ✓ Join us for a day of fellowship and fun!

\$175 per person
\$700 for a foursome



Thank you for supporting this meaningful cause and helping build a lasting legacy of faith, prayer, and community.



DATE: Sunday, September 20, 2026

LOCATION: Delaware Golf Club

The Bridgettine Charisms of Prayer and Hospitality
For the Unity of the Church

Questions? Please contact Marisa Webb
614-537-1055 | TPmemorial24@gmail.com

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

August 23, 2026

Holy Family Parish is privileged to announce The Banns of Marriage for the following couples:

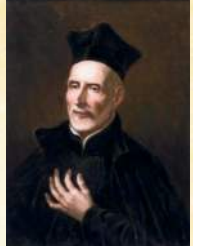
Jacob Scott Inscore
&
Regina Nicolę Sevrance
September 5, 2026

Jacob Matthew Macaluso
&
Hallie Marie Bradley
September 12, 2026

Wedding Banns



Saint Louis & Saint Joseph Calasanz



Two great, Holy Saints are revered and honored on August 25th.

First, Saint Louis, a King of France, known as "The little French Church", in St. Paul, Minnesota. As patron of this Church, St. Louis is a model of virtue to all as well as a Saint of great Holiness who will intercede for those that pray to him. His mother, having experienced four stillbirths, gave birth to this Divine gift, on April 25th, 1214. Regarding him as his birth a miracle. He was crowned King at the age of 12, in Reims France, following the death of his father in 1226 until his death in 1270. He was a strong-willed ruler who reigns as a Patron Saint of France. He is associated with the "Third Order of Saint Francis".

Then, there is Saint Joseph Calasanz. Born in Peralta Spain on September 11, 1556. He was a priest and teacher who is a patron Saint of Roman Catholic schools. Founder of the "order of poor clerks", popularly called "the Piarists". The Piarists are a religious teaching order that in addition to the usual vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, practice of fourth vow. The special care of youth. His family did not support his religious calling, but he went on to be ordained a priest in 1583 and eventually became "vicar" general of Trempe. He relinquished much of his inheritance and resigned this Vicariate and went to Rome in 1592, where he labored for the education of poor children. He opened Europe's first "free school" for poor children. After a crippling accident, Joseph was financially assisted by Pope's Clement VIII and Paul V, who recognized his community as a religious congregation which spread throughout all of Italy. Through much turmoil of the Order of Piarists, he was declared patron of all Christian schools by Pope Pius XII, in 1948. He died August 25th in 1648 and was canonized in 1767.

So many beloved friends in Heaven, to ask for their intercession, whatever need we have. Let us turn today, to these two great Saints, asking their intercession for Courage and the Holiness in the stature of our Catholic schools.

- by Catholic365

St. Brendan the Navigator

St Monica Mass and Reception

Write the name(s) of any loved ones who have been away from the Church on our St. Monica Prayer Boards on **Thursday, August 27, 2026**, as Fr. Dan Moloney leads us in praying for them to return back to the Church during the special 5:30pm Mass. Light refreshments will be served from 6—7pm in the St. Brendan Church Gathering Area (4475 Dublin Road, Hilliard). Our prayer team will also be on hand to pray one-on-one with you. The theme is "Be the Light in the Darkness" and a candle gift will be available to everyone who attends as a reminder of the light of Christ and how your relentless prayers, with St. Monica as our example, can lead those astray back to their Catholic faith and back to Mass.

LEARN



LIVE



LOVE

OCIA: Order of Christian Initiation for Adults

Weekly sessions will meet Tuesdays, beginning **September 8** from 7:00 PM—8:15 PM in the Holy Family Parish Center behind the Church. To register or for information, please contact Linda Hamilton, OCIA Coordinator at linda.hamilton01@sbcglobal.net.

OUR CATHOLIC FAITH

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 August is dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

"A Christian is: a mind through which Christ thinks, a heart through which Christ loves, a voice through which Christ speaks, and a hand through which Christ helps."

+ SAINT AUGUSTINE

Monday, August 24 ~ Twenty-First Week in Ordinary Time
Feast of Saint Bartholomew, Apostle

Holy Gospel: John 1:45-51 Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one about whom Moses wrote in the law, and also the prophets, Jesus son of Joseph, from Nazareth." But Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, "Here is a true child of Israel. There is no duplicity in him." Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, I saw you under the fig tree." Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel." Jesus answered and said to him, "Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than this." And he said to him, "Amen, amen, I say to you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

Meditation: What is the significance of Jesus' revelation of seeing Nathanael (known as Bartholomew in Matthew 10:3 and Luke 6:14) "under the fig tree?" For the people of Israel, the fig tree was a symbol of God's peace and blessing (1 Kings 4:24b-25, Micah 4:4). It provided shade from the midday sun and a cool refreshing place to retreat, pray, meditate and reflect on God's word. Rabbis often gathered their disciples under the shade of the fig to teach them the wisdom and revelation of God from the Scriptures. The rabbis had an expression for comparing the fig tree to being nourished with God's word in Scripture, "He who tends the fig tree will eat its fruit." And thus we see the importance of meditating on Sacred Scripture, but then "living" what we have learned as "doers of the word, not hearers only" (James 1:22) so that these sacred teachings can bear fruit in our daily lives.

Prayer: Strengthen in us, O Lord, the faith, by which the blessed Apostle Bartholomew clung wholeheartedly to your Son, and grant that through the help of his prayers your Church may become for all the nations the sacrament of salvation. 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' death on the cross, where he defeated sin and won new life for us through his resurrection, opens the way for each of us to come into a new relationship with God as his adopted sons and daughters. The Lord Jesus opens the way for each one of us to "ascend to heaven" and to bring "heaven to earth" in the daily circumstances of our lives. God's kingdom is present in those who seek him and who strive to do his will. Through the gift of faith God opens a door for each one of us to the heavenly reality of his kingdom. And so we might contemplate on asking ourselves: Do you see with the "eyes of faith" what the Lord Jesus has done for us?

About Saint Bartholomew: In St. John's Gospel, Bartholomew is known by the name Nathaniel (the liturgy does not always seem aware of this identity). He hailed from Cana in Galilee, was one of the first disciples called by the Lord. On that initial meeting Jesus uttered the glorious compliment: "Behold, an Israelite indeed in whom there is no guile!" After the Resurrection he was favored by becoming one of the few apostles who witnessed the appearance of the risen Savior on the sea of Galilee (John 21:2). Following the Ascension he is said to have preached in Greater Armenia and to have been martyred there. While still alive, his skin was torn from his body. The Armenians honor him as the apostle of their nation. Concerning the fate of his relics, the Martyrology says: "His holy body was first taken to the island of Lipari (north of Sicily), then to Benevento, and finally to Rome on an island in the Tiber where it is honored by the faithful with pious devotion." The Church of Armenia has a national tradition that St. Jude



Thaddeus and St. Bartholomew visited the Armenians early in the first century and introduced Christianity among the worshippers of the god Ahura Mazda. The new faith spread throughout the land, and in 302 A.D., St. Gregory the Illuminator baptized the king of Armenia, Dertad the Great, along with many of his followers. Since Dertad was probably the first ruler to embrace Christianity for his nation, the Armenians proudly claim they were the first Christian State.

Tuesday, August 25 ~ Twenty-First Week in Ordinary Time

Optional Memorials: Saint Louis of France, King; Saint Joseph Calasanz, Priest

Holy Gospel: Matthew 23:23-26 Jesus said: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You pay tithes of mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier things of the law: judgment and mercy and fidelity. But these you should have done, without neglecting the others. Blind guides, who strain out the gnat and swallow the camel! "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You cleanse the outside of cup and dish, but inside they are full of plunder and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup, so that the outside also may be clean."

Meditation: Jesus went to the heart of the matter when he called the religious leaders of his day *blind* Pharisees and *hypocrites*! A hypocrite is an actor or imposter who says one thing but does the opposite or who puts on an outward appearance of doing good while inwardly clinging to wrong attitudes, selfish desires and ambitions, or bad intentions. Many scribes and Pharisees had made it a regular practice to publicly put on a good show of outward zeal and piety with the intention of winning greater honors, privileges, and favors among the people. Jesus had a very good reason for severely rebuking the scribes and Pharisees, the religious teachers and leaders, for misleading people and neglecting the heart and essence of God's law – love God above all things, and love your neighbor as yourself.

Prayer ~ Saint Louis: O God, who brought Saint Louis from the cares of earthly rule to the glory of a heavenly realm, grant, we pray, through his intercession, that, by fulfilling our duties on earth, we may seek out your eternal Kingdom. 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.

Prayer ~ Saint Joseph Calasanz: O God, who adorned the Priest Saint Joseph Calasanz with such charity and patience that he labored tirelessly to educate children and endow them with every virtue, grant, we pray, that we, who venerate him as a teacher of wisdom, may constantly imitate him, for he was a co-worker of your truth. 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 essence of God's commandments is rooted in love – love God above all things, and love your neighbor as yourself – righteousness (justice and goodness), and mercy. God is love and everything he does, including his justice and goodness, flows from his love for us. True love is costly and sacrificial - it both embraces and lifts the burdens of others. And so we might ask ourselves today: Do you allow the love of God to shape and transform the way you live your daily life, especially in the way you think of others, speak of them, and treat them? If not, now is an opportunity to let the transformative grace of God work in and through you so that you may imitate Christ in thought, word and deed.

Wednesday, August 26 ~ Twenty-First Week in Ordinary Time

Holy Gospel: Matthew 23:27-32 Jesus said, "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You are like whitewashed tombs, which appear beautiful on the outside, but inside are full of dead men's bones and every kind of filth. Even so, on the outside you appear righteous, but inside you are filled with hypocrisy and evildoing.

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the memorials of the righteous, and you say, 'If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have joined them in shedding the prophets' blood.' Thus you bear witness against yourselves that you are the children of those who murdered the prophets; now fill up what your ancestors measured out!"

Meditation: Outward appearances can be deceptive. Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would *not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth* (Isaiah 11:3-4). The heart reveals the true intentions and attitudes that form the way we think of others and treat them. Jesus used strong language to warn the religious leaders and teachers about the vanity of outward appearance and pretense - wearing a mask that hides the true intentions and thoughts of the heart. This warning applies to all persons who identify themselves as disciples and followers of Christ, and so we must meditate on what authentic discipleship in Christ really means. It is not mere show, but an authentic way of life, in all aspects of life, day in and day out.

Prayer: O God, who cause the minds of the faithful to unite in a single purpose, grant your people to love what you command and to desire what you promise, that, amid the uncertainties of this world, our hearts may be fixed on that place where true gladness is found. 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 warns that what truly corrupts a person is not external ritual impurity but the impurity of wrong and sinful attitudes that come from within a person's mind and heart – pride, greed, sloth, envy, hatred, gluttony, and lust. These are what produce sinful habits (vices) and ways of speaking, acting, judging, and treating others. That is why every good deed is beautiful in God's sight and every wrong or sinful deed is ugly in his sight. The scribes and Pharisees were intensely religious in their outward observances, but their outward show didn't match the inner reality of the state of their minds and hearts. True beauty, goodness, and piety come from within, an interior motivation from a heart that is set on pleasing God and a mind that is set on hearing and obeying God's word, and thus the importance of having an authentic interior life rooted in Christ. Jesus came to set us free from slavery to sin and harmful habits and addictions that lead us into wrong and sinful ways of thinking, acting, and relating to others. Only the humble of heart can receive from God true wisdom and understanding, pardon and healing. Properly cultivating our interior life is a must in order to achieve what we seek. Trappist monk Fr. Thomas Merton, OCSO, contextualizes this more richly in his book *New Seeds of Contemplation*: "This then is what it means to seek God perfectly: to withdraw from illusion and pleasure, from worldly anxieties and desires, from the works that God does not want, from a glory that is only human display; to keep my mind free from confusion in order that my liberty may be always at the disposal of His will; to entertain silence in my heart and listen for the voice of God; to cultivate an intellectual freedom from the images of created things in order to receive the secret contact of God in obscure love; to love all men as myself." This book is a must read for those who wish to cultivate their interior life so that one may enter into a more fruitful, prayerful dialogue with God.

Thursday, August 27 ~ Twenty-First Week in Ordinary Time

Memorial: Saint Monica, Patroness of Mothers

Holy Gospel: Matthew 24:42-51 Jesus said to his disciples: "Stay awake! For you do not know on which day your Lord will come. Be sure of this: if the master of the house had known the hour of night when the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and not let his house be broken into. So too, you also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come.

"Who, then, is the faithful and prudent servant, whom the master has put in charge of his household to distribute to them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master on his arrival finds doing so. Amen, I say to you, he will put him in charge of all his property. But if that wicked servant says to himself, 'My master is long delayed,' and begins to beat his fellow servants, and eat and drink with drunkards, the servant's master will come on an unexpected day and at an unknown hour and will punish him severely and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth."

Meditation: When God sent his Son, Jesus Christ, into the world it was to rescue us from ourselves, from the tyranny of sin, Satan, and death. Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross and his triumphant victory over the grave won pardon for us and reconciliation with our heavenly Father, and the promise of everlasting life and joy in his kingdom. The Lord Jesus told his disciples on a number of occasions that he would return again at the end of this present age, not simply to rescue us again from our enemies, but as a victor King and Lord who will vindicate all who have believed in him. How? By releasing us from the curse of death and condemnation and restoring for us the plan he had from the beginning of creation – a new heaven and a new earth for a people perfectly united with God in peace, joy, and harmony forever. This is the background to Jesus parable in today's Gospel about the householder and the thief in the night. When the Lord Jesus returns, he doesn't want to find us flirting with the enemy or worse joining forces with enemies who are opposed to God and his kingdom. He wants to see us fully aligned with him, and invites us constantly to do so when Jesus says "follow me."

Prayer: O God, who console the sorrowful and who mercifully accepted the motherly tears of Saint Monica for the conversion of her son Augustine, grant us, through the intercession of them both, that we may bitterly regret our sins and find the grace of your pardon. 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.

Prayer to Saint Monica for Children who have Strayed: Dear Saint Monica, mother of Saint Augustine, we give thanks to our Father in Heaven Who looked with mercy upon your tears over your wayward son. His conversion and heroic sanctification were the fruit of your prayers. Saint Monica we now



ask you to pray with us for all those sons and daughters that have wandered away from God, and to add your prayers to those of all mothers and fathers who are worried over their children. Pray also for us that, following your example, we may, in the company of our children, one day enjoy the eternal vision of God our Father in Heaven. Amen.

Contemplation: And so Jesus invites us to follow him, time and time again. But ask yourself: Do I take up Jesus on his invitation? If I do follow him, I am truly attentive to his teachings by embracing them and living them, so that I am ready to meet him when he calls each of us to himself. The Lord gives us his Holy Spirit so that we may have the wisdom, help, and strength we need to turn away from sin to embrace God's way of love, justice, and holiness. The Lord's warning of judgment causes dismay for those who are unprepared, but it brings joyful hope to those who eagerly wait for his return in glory. God's judgment is good news for those who are ready to meet him. Their reward is God himself, the source of all truth, beauty, goodness, love and everlasting life.

Friday, August 28 ~ Twenty-First Week in Ordinary Time

Memorial: Saint Augustine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Holy Gospel: Matthew 25:1-13 Jesus told his disciples this parable: "The Kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones, when taking their lamps, brought no oil with them, but the wise brought flasks of oil with their lamps. Since the bridegroom was long delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. At midnight, there was a cry, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!' Then all those virgins got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise ones replied, 'No, for there may not be enough for us and you. Go instead to the merchants and buy some for yourselves.' While they went off to buy it, the bridegroom came and those who were ready went into the wedding feast with him. Then the door was locked. Afterwards the other virgins came and said, 'Lord, Lord, open the door for us!' But he said in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, I do not know you.' Therefore, stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

Meditation: Jesus warns us that there are consequences for being unprepared. There are certain things you cannot obtain at the last moment. For example, students cannot prepare for their exams when the day of testing is already upon them. A person cannot get the right kind of character, strength, and skill required for a task at hand unless they already possess it, such as a captain with courage and nautical skills who must steer a ship through a dangerous storm at sea. When the Lord Jesus comes to lead you to his heavenly banquet will you be ready to hear his voice and follow? Our eternal welfare depends on our hearing his voice, the call of the Good Shepherd, above all others. How can we meet the Lord, face to face, when he calls us on the day of judgment, unless we listen to him today. The Lord invites us to feast at his heavenly banquet table. Are you ready?

Prayer: Renew in your Church, we pray, O Lord, that spirit with which you endowed your Bishop Saint Augustine that, filled with the same spirit, we may thirst for you, the sole fount of true wisdom, and seek you, the author of heavenly love. 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.

Prayer to Saint Augustine for Purity: O Saint Augustine, beacon of purity, in this realm of temptation, I implore your heavenly intervention. Strengthen my resolve, guard my heart from the snare of original sin that so easily ensnares us. Through your intercession, may our paths be illuminated in the virtue of purity, enabling us to resist desires that lead away from His divine love. Instill within us a spirit of vigilance, trusting wholly in the providence of God. Hold steadfast our hope for righteous living. Amen.

Contemplation: What is your ultimate goal in life, and what are you doing to attain it? If your ultimate goal is to graduate from Harvard, have a six-figure salary, live in a mansion and drive an expensive car, you've missed the boat. Those might be short-term goals, but our ultimate goal in life is to get to heaven; there is only one way to get there, and that is through Jesus Christ. Knowing this, now, what are you going to change in your life in order to achieve this ultimate goal? There is no time like the present to change from our former ways of life to newness of life in Christ. Start now! Today! Kick it in gear!

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