

# Our Lady Queen of Peace



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Photo: Peter Paul Rubens, *Saint Ives of Treguier, Patron of Lawyers, Defender of Widows and Orphans, between 1615 and 1616*, Detroit Institute of Arts

RELIGION THAT IS  
PURE AND UNDEFILED  
BEFORE GOD AND THE FATHER  
IS THIS:  
TO CARE  
FOR ORPHANS AND WIDOWS  
IN THEIR AFFLICTION.

JAMES 1:27

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY  
IN ORDINARY TIME

AUGUST 29, 2021

## Served by

Rev. Antonio L. Ricarte, Pastor

[frtony@olqp.org](mailto:frtony@olqp.org)

Rev. Paul C. Houllis, Parochial Vicar

[frpaul@olqp.org](mailto:frpaul@olqp.org)

Rev. Msgr. Peter J. Zaccardo, Pastor Emeritus

Rev. Mr. Joseph L. Mantineo, Permanent Deacon

[dcnjoe@olqp.org](mailto:dcnjoe@olqp.org)

Deacon Anthony A. Balestrieri, Deacon Emeritus

Justine Garcia, Pastoral Associate for Religious Ed.

[ReEd@olqp.org](mailto:ReEd@olqp.org)

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Glenn Clark, Principal, St. Peter Academy

Dorothy Feula and Harriet Sottile, Lay Trustees

## Mass Schedule

Saturday - 5:00 PM

Sunday - 8:00, 10:00 AM\* and

12:00 Noon

Monday-Saturday 8:30 AM

Holy days - See Bulletin

\*Livestreamed on Facebook

## Reconciliation

Saturday - 1:00 PM or by

appointment

## Emergency Contact

(funerals, anointings, etc.)

(973) 567-7424

Baptism - Please call to arrange for your child's baptism soon after birth.

## RCIA

Adults desiring to be baptized, confirmed or become a Catholic, please contact the Parish Office

## Anointing of the Sick

Please call for a priest to schedule this Sacrament of healing and forgiveness for someone who is seriously ill or in danger of death. Do not wait until the sick person is unconscious.

## Matrimony

All Catholics should seek to have their marriage blessed by the Church so as to live in God's good grace and receive the Holy Eucharist. Contact a priest a year prior to the intended date of marriage to ensure proper preparation.

Parish Center Office Hours Monday through Thursday: 9AM - 12N / 1PM - 3PM; Friday: 9AM - 1PM

[www.olqp.org](http://www.olqp.org)

[parish@olqp.org](mailto:parish@olqp.org)

Parish Center

201-845-9566

Fax: 201-845-3742

Religious Education

201-845-9566 ext. 117

[ReEd@olqp.org](mailto:ReEd@olqp.org)

St. Peter Academy

201-261-3468

[www.spare.org](http://www.spare.org)

 **Mass Intentions**

**August 29, 2021 to September 5, 2021**

**Sunday - TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

8/29 8:00 am Rose Dellafave  
 10:00 am Living and Deceased Members of the OLQP Knights of Columbus  
 12:00 noon People of the Parish

**Monday - Weekday**

8/30 8:30 am Jose Nunes

**Tuesday - Weekday**

8/31 8:30 am Silvia Patiño

**Wednesday - Weekday**

9/1 8:30 am Deceased Members of the Lyons and Sheary Families  
 7:00 pm Zenaida Mendoza

**Thursday - Weekday**

9/2 8:30 am Gertrude "Trudy" Grimes

**Friday - Saint Gregory the Great, Pope and Doctor of the Church**

9/3 8:30 am Chansie and Joe Mantineo

**Saturday - Weekday**

9/4 8:30 am Francisca Viola  
 5:00 pm People of the Parish

**Sunday - TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

9/5 8:00 am John Feula  
 10:00 am Steven Faustini  
 12:00 noon MaryAnne and Anthony Bachia

**Our Mother of Perpetual Help Novena**

Wednesdays 7 pm at the Rosary Garden



**August 29, 2021 - Today's Readings**

**First Reading** — Moses directs the people to observe the commandments of the Lord (Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8).

**Psalms** — The one who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord (Psalm 15).

**Second Reading** — Welcome the word that you have received and become doers of the word, not hearers only (James 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27).

**Gospel** — You disregard God's commandment but cling to human tradition (Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23).

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**Please Remember in Your Prayers**

**Rest in Peace**

Lucy Aloia  
 Robert Anthony Conforti

**Sick Relatives and Friends**

|                          |                        |   |
|--------------------------|------------------------|---|
| Mary Adamo               | Yancey Garcia          | Christopher Quinn                         |
| Cristina Aguilar         | Gardenia Hougbo        | Francis Quinn                             |
| Josefina Baldoza         | Richard Ivors          | Robert Raimo                              |
| Mary Ellen Barberia      | Dominic Jengo          | Elsy Ruiz                                 |
| Dcn. Anthony Balestrieri | Rosemarie Kaminski     | Fran Sampson                              |
| Claire Borrello          | Rev. Michael Kreder    | Wilbert Santos                            |
| Dorothy Brush            | Alice Liso             | Cindy Sommers                             |
| Cardinal Burke           | Diane Lohrer           | Pat Sommers                               |
| Ginny Cattaneo           | Deacon Joseph Mantineo | Joanne Sontag                             |
| Carmen Cepeda            | Gerry Marcincavage     | Richard Spagnuolo                         |
| Carmen Maria Colon       | Sonia Medrano          | Joseph Steiner                            |
| Brian Connors            | Andrew J. Mendez       | Carolyn Sobering                          |
| Joseph Cortese           | Frankie Monnecka       | Jacqueline Sullivan                       |
| Richard DeSpagna         | Deanna Mooney          | Liam Justin Torres                        |
| Sally DeSpagna           | Jim Moran              | Marianne Tracey                           |
| Emily DeStefano          | Barbara Nelson         | Mary Walker                               |
| Phil Dimitri             | Gemma Olliges          | Andrew Wey                                |
| Eileen Diverio           | Sharon Osnowitz        | Julia Whitney                             |
| Mark Diverio             | Harriet Pellicione     | Joyce Wilson                              |
| Mario Elia               | Ruth Penque            | <b>*Names in bold are new to the list</b> |
| Emily Ferreira           | Vallie Pompilio        |   |

**Weekly Memorials**

**Blessed Mother Candle**

in Memory of Samuel, Sr. and Frances Monaco  
 by Maryann Monaco.

**Prayer Shawl Ministry**



If you are adding someone to our Parish sick list, please consider the healing power of these beautiful shawls. They are prayed over by the Prayer Shawl Ministry and blessed by our Pastor. If you know of someone you think is in need of a Prayer Shawl, please contact the

Parish Center: 201-845-9566 or email [prayershawl@olqp.org](mailto:prayershawl@olqp.org)

The Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet at the Parish Center at 7 pm on the following dates and we welcome new members:

*Sept 16, Oct 21, March 17, April 21, May 19*

**Readings for the Week**

Monday: 1 Thes 4:13-18; Ps 96:1, 3-5, 11-13; Lk 4:16-30  
 Tuesday: 1 Thes 5:1-6, 9-11; Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14; Lk 4:31-37  
 Wednesday: Col 1:1-8; Ps 52:10-11; Lk 4:38-44  
 Thursday: Col 1:9-14; Ps 98:2-6; Lk 5:1-11  
 Friday: Col 1:15-20; Ps 100:1b-5; Lk 5:33-39  
 Saturday: Col 1:21-23; Ps 54:3-4, 6, 8; Lk 6:1-5  
 Sunday: Is 35:4-7a; Ps 146:7-10; Jas 2:1-5; Mk 7:31-37

## Doers of the Word

The second reading for today begins a five-week series of selections from James, a letter that is classified among the so-called “catholic” (or universal) epistles because they are addressed to a general audience rather than to one particular community. Today’s text offers important advice for Christians of every generation. God is first cited as the author of all gifts, and in particular, reference is made to the gift of baptism by which we have been made the “first fruits” of the new creation.

What follows is advice based on a very Jewish understanding of the “word” as an active force, operative in the world. We are reminded that unless we, too, become “doers” of the word, our claim to faith is empty. Today and in subsequent weeks the author reminds us that it is equally important to do the “works” of love, for example, by caring for the “orphans and widows in their affliction.”  
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## Catholic Epistle of St. James the Apostle

This Epistle is called Catholic or Universal, as formerly were also the two Epistles of St. Peter, the first of St. John and that of St. Jude, because they were not written to any peculiar people or particular person, but to the faithful in general. It was written by the apostle St. James, called the Less, who was also called the brother of our Lord, being his kinsman (for cousins german with the Hebrews were called brothers). He was the first Bishop of Jerusalem. In this Epistle are set forth many precepts appertaining to faith and morals; **particularly, that faith without good works will not save a man and that true wisdom is given only from above. In the fifth chapter he publishes the sacrament of anointing the sick.** It was written a short time before his martyrdom, about twenty-eight years after our Lord's Ascension.

### James Chapter 1

**The benefit of tribulations. Prayer with faith. God is the author of all good, but not of evil. We must be slow to anger and not hearers only, but doers of the word. Of bridling the tongue and of pure religion.**

1:1. James, the servant of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

1:2. My brethren, count it all joy, when you shall fall into divers temptations:

**Into divers temptations... The word temptation, in this epistle, is sometimes taken for trials by afflictions or persecutions, as in this place: at other times, it is to be understood, tempting, enticing, or drawing others into sin.**

1:3. Knowing that the trying of your faith worketh patience

1:4. And patience hath a perfect work: that you may be perfect and entire, failing in nothing.

1:5. But if any of you want wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth to all men abundantly and upbraideth not. And it shall be given him.

1:6. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, which is moved and carried about by the wind.

*(continued in the next column)*

1:7. Therefore let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

1:8. A double minded man is inconstant in all his ways.

1:9. But let the brother of low condition glory in his exaltation:

1:10. And the rich, in his being low: because as the flower of the grass shall he pass away.

1:11. For the sun rose with a burning heat and parched the grass: and the flower thereof fell off, and the beauty of the shape thereof perished. So also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.

1:12. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for, when he hath been proved, he shall receive the crown of life which God hath promised to them that love him.

1:13. Let no man, when he is tempted, say that he is tempted by God. For God is not a tempter of evils: and he tempteth no man.

1:14. But every man is tempted by his own concupiscence, being drawn away and allured.

1:15. Then, when concupiscence hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin. But sin, when it is completed, begetteth death.

1:16. Do not err, therefore, my dearest brethren.

1:17. Every best gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no change nor shadow of alteration.

1:18. For of his own will hath he begotten us by the word of truth, that we might be some beginning of his creature. Some beginning... That is, a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

1:19. You know, my dearest brethren. And let every man be swift to hear, but slow to speak and slow to anger.

1:20. For the anger of man worketh not the justice of God.

1:21. Wherefore, casting away all uncleanness and abundance of naughtiness, with meekness receive the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

1:22. But be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

1:23. For if a man be a hearer of the word and not a doer, he shall be compared to a man beholding his own countenance in a glass.

1:24. For he beheld himself and went his way and presently forgot what manner of man he was.

1:25. But he that hath looked into the perfect law of liberty and hath continued therein, not becoming a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work: this man shall be blessed in his deed.

1:26. And if any man think himself to be religious, not bridling his tongue but deceiving his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

1:27. Religion clean and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their tribulation and to keep one's self unspotted from this world.

### James Chapter 2

**Against respect of persons. The danger of transgressing one point of the law. Faith is dead without works.**

2:1. My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory, with respect of persons.

**With respect of persons... The meaning is, that in matters relating to faith, the administering of the sacraments, and other spiritual functions in God's church, there should be no respect of persons; but that the souls of the poor should be as much regarded as those of the rich. See Deut. 1.17.**

*- The text in this file was taken with permission from Catholic Software's Douay Bible program, a complete multimedia Bible for the PC. Read more <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/catholic-epistle-of-st-james-the-apostle-12348>*

## Daily Prayer for Pope Francis and Our Clergy



Almighty and everlasting God, have mercy upon Thy servant, Francis, our Supreme Pontiff, and direct him, according to Thy loving-kindness, in the ways of eternal salvation; that, of Thy gift, he may ever desire that which is pleasing unto Thee and may accomplish it with all his might. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.  
Jesus, Savior of the world, sanctify Thy priests and sacred ministers.

## The Daughters of Mary



**The Daughters of Mary are inviting all girls in grades 3 through 8 to join our ministry.** This is a group based on love and devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The girls learn about the recitation of the Rosary, its Mysteries, the Feast Days of Mary among other things. They do this while also participating in Parish activities, playing games, making crafts and working on an upcoming fundraiser. They meet only once a month, usually the **3rd Sunday of the month at 11 am** in the Parish Center. For any questions, please email [DaughtersofMary@olqp.org](mailto:DaughtersofMary@olqp.org) for further information.

## Soup Kitchen Ministry



On **August 28th**, we are donating hot dogs and baked beans to St John's Soup Kitchen in Newark. If interested in participating, please contact Mary Flanigan at [parish@olqp.org](mailto:parish@olqp.org)

## Why should I register in the parish?

All members of the parish should be formally registered as members of the parish. You must be formally registered if you wish to arrange a Baptism, a Confirmation, or a Wedding in the parish Church or wish to register in the Parish School or the Religious Education (CCD) Program. You must also be a registered member of the parish for at least three months before you can obtain a Sponsor Certificate or schedule a Baptism or a Wedding.

*Please call the Parish Center at 201-845-9566 to register or visit our home page at [www.olqp.org](http://www.olqp.org), scroll down to the middle of the page and click where it states "Parish Registration" to download the form. Thank you and welcome to Our Lady Queen of Peace!*

## The 2022 Mass Book is Open



The Church teaches us that our prayers are invaluable to the living as well as those who have died. We commend them to God's mercy when we pray for them. The living and the dead are helped not only by our daily prayers, but by the offering of Masses in their name for the benefit of their souls.

There is no restriction on the number of Masses which can be reserved. Please visit the Parish Center to select your preferred dates.

## The Rosary Society Invites You!



The Rosary Society is inviting all parishioners, both male and female, to join their ministry. Through devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the ministry works to benefit the parish through various fundraisers and attempts to inspire spiritual growth among its members.

Meetings are usually the first Monday of the month September through December and April through June. However, the first meeting this year will be held on **Monday September 13th at 7 pm. We will start with the recitation of the Rosary in the Church at 7pm. Immediately following, we will convene to the auditorium where we will have a meet-and-greet with coffee and cake.** A brief general meeting will follow.

A yearly membership fee of \$10 benefits the parish and ensures that you are notified of all upcoming events of the Rosary Society. Attend our meetings as your schedule allows, volunteer only for what you are comfortable doing. Your membership benefits us all.



*You are Invited!*

## Women's 181st Cursillo

**October 7-10, 2021**

(Thursday evening through Sunday Afternoon)

to be held at the  
Archdiocesan Youth Center  
499 Belgrove Ave. Kearny NJ

A Covid-19 compliant facility  
accredited by the State of New Jersey

### What is Cursillo?

[www.mycursillo.com/com.eandsee.html](http://www.mycursillo.com/com.eandsee.html)

Cost of the weekend is \$175

For more information or  
to register please contact:

Elizabeth Saksen  
Rector of the Women's 181st Cursillo  
724-407-3110  
[esaksen4@gmail.com](mailto:esaksen4@gmail.com)

## Act of Contrition



O my God,  
I am heartily sorry for having  
offended Thee,  
and I detest all my sins,  
because I dread the loss of  
heaven,  
and the pains of hell;  
but most of all because they offend Thee, my God,  
Who are all good and deserving of all my love.  
I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace,  
to confess my sins, to do penance,  
and to amend my life. Amen.

## Holy Trinity Carnival



34 Maple Ave, Hackensack

Wednesday, September 1st to Sunday,  
September 5th

Discount ride tickets \$30 for 30 tickets - Available at Holy Trinity  
rectory and following all weekend masses

### Carnival Times of Operation

Wednesday - Sept 1 6-10 pm  
Unlimited rides for \$30 (Wed only)  
Thursday Sept 2 6-10 pm  
Friday Sept 3 6-11 pm  
Saturday Sept 4 4-11 pm  
Sunday Sept 5 4-11 pm

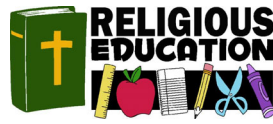
## Thanksgiving after Holy Communion

### Anima Christi (Soul of Christ)



SOUL of Christ, sanctify me.  
Body of Christ, save me.  
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.  
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.  
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.  
O good Jesus, hear me.  
Within Thy Wounds hide me.  
Suffer me not to be separated from Thee.  
From the malignant enemy, defend me.  
In the hour of my death, call me,  
And bid me come to Thee.  
That with Thy saints, I may praise Thee.  
Forever and ever. Amen.  
Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, may the whole world burn with  
love for Thee! (x3)

## Religious Education Registration for 2021-2022



### 2021-2022 Catechetical Year

Registration for our 2021-2022  
Religious Education Program is  
now open. Please visit:  
[www.olqp.org/religious-education.html](http://www.olqp.org/religious-education.html)  
for a copy of the registration form or contact our  
Religious Education office at [ReEd@olqp.org](mailto:ReEd@olqp.org) or  
201-845-9566 x117. Copies are also available in the  
Parish Center office. **Registration Forms are now due.**

*Have you thought about echoing the Word of God to  
our Children? Are you being called to be a  
Catechist?* For more information on this ministry for  
our children, please contact Justine Garcia  
at [ReEd@olqp.org](mailto:ReEd@olqp.org) or (201) 845-9566 x117.

OLQP



RCIA

If you are interested in being baptized or wish to receive  
the sacraments of Eucharist or Confirmation, our RCIA  
(Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) program will  
prepare you for the reception of these sacraments.  
If you've received the sacraments of initiation and wish  
to learn more about your faith, our RCIA program is also  
for you. For more information, please contact the parish  
center at (201) 845-9566

## Thank You for Your Support of Our Parish During These Challenging Times

For those of you who would like to continue to give  
through envelopes or cash, please place it in the  
designated collection boxes in the church, mail your  
donation to the Parish Center (410 Maywood Avenue,  
Maywood, NJ 07607), or drop it off at the white  
mailbox located to the right of the side door of the  
Parish Center. Thank you for your generosity!

## New Email List Sign-Up!

Sign Up ▶

For announcements, bulletin updates,  
and the latest news happening at Our  
Lady Queen of Peace, please sign up for our email  
mailing list by visiting [www.olqp.org](http://www.olqp.org)!

## Parking Reminder



NO PARKING

Please park in designated parking  
spaces only. To ensure everyone's  
safety, please do not park on the  
fire lanes by the driveway.  
Thank you for your cooperation!

## Stewardship Corner

### *Opening the Door to Personal Commitment: (continued from last week)*

The excitement of volunteers rubs off on others who are just in the *“Thinking it over stage”*. In addition, a Ministry Fair is a celebration of the participation, contributions and importance of the work of those in parish ministry. It allows all parishioners to recognize with pride the value provided by the parish volunteers. The festival is a method of focusing attention on the stewardship of Time and Talent and educating parishioners on the importance of involvement in the life of the Church

*(To be continued next week)*

## Stewardship Results

|              | 8/22/21        | Weekly Goal    |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| Offertory    | 4,608          | 5,000          |
| Repairs      | 1,070          | 1500           |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>\$5,678</b> | <b>\$6,500</b> |
| Mary's Meals | \$1,868        |                |
| Haiti        | \$586          |                |

**Thank you for your Mary's Meals and Haiti contributions!**

## Treasures from Our Tradition

Labor Day originated in 1882 in New York City under the aegis of the Knights of Labor. Congress made it a legal holiday in 1894. Observing it next week gives us a good opportunity to reflect on the Catholic Church's social teachings for the last century or so. On May 15, 1891, Pope Leo XIII issued the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* on the condition of the working classes and labor. In doing so, he initiated a century in which Catholic teaching became more and more involved in the social issues of the day.

Unfortunately relegated to the shadows while the bright lights of controversy shine on other issues, Catholic social teaching remains largely unknown to many Catholics. It is the Catholic Church that championed such notions as a fair day's pay for a fair day's work, and continues to uphold the dignity of the human person against attacks from governments and corporations. Nearly every pope since Leo XIII has issued teachings on the subject. Take some time this Labor Day to familiarize yourself with some aspect of the Church's social teachings. In doing so, you will be taking responsibility as a member of the Body of Christ to commit yourself to the care of your neighbor.

—James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

## Saints and Special Observances

Sunday: Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Wednesday: World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation  
Friday: St. Gregory the Great ; First Friday  
Saturday: Blessed Virgin Mary; First Saturday

### FEAST OF FAITH

#### What Jesus Did, What Jesus Said

The oldest account of what happened at the Last Supper comes to us not from the Gospels but from the First Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians: “I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread, and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, ‘This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me’” (11:23–24). In our celebrations of the Eucharist, we are obedient to Christ's command to “do this.” The priest, acting in the person of Christ, does what Jesus did and says what Jesus said. He takes bread, gives thanks, breaks it, and gives it to the Lord's disciples. He takes wine, gives thanks, shares it with us. We believe that the entire Eucharistic Prayer is consecratory, but we continue to hold these words of Jesus in special reverence. They are called the words of consecration, and the elevations of the host and chalice, the genuflections of the priest, and the optional ringing of a bell and use of incense remind us that we are in the presence of the Lord.

—Corinna Laughlin, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

### STOP THE FLYING

A flying rumor never has any trouble making a landing.

- Anonymous

### THE VALUE OF LABOR

Heaven is blessed with perfect rest but the blessing of earth is toil.

- Henry Van Dyke

### CARE OF CREATION

The Church has a responsibility towards creation and she must assert this responsibility in the public sphere.

- Pope Benedict XVI

## On-Line Giving Program

Please consider participating in our on-line giving program.

Registering with Parish Giving takes just a few minutes. Please visit:  
[www.olgp.org/parish-giving.html](http://www.olgp.org/parish-giving.html)  
or call 1-866-307-7140



# Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time



AUGUST  
**29**  
2021

Humbly welcome the word that  
has been planted in you and  
is able to save your souls.

James 1:21b

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## GOD'S LAWS

Today's readings provide some interesting parallels and contrasts. The first reading is an account of Moses who, having delivered the Law to the Israelites, admonishes them to "observe them [its statutes] carefully." The author of the Letter of James likewise instructs fellow Christians to "welcome the word" they have received, that they may become "doers of the words and not hearers only." The psalmist praises "whoever walks blamelessly and does justice" by listing a few examples of what is required for that—descriptions that apply equally to both Jewish and Christian traditions. On the other hand, when the scribes and Pharisees point out that the disciples have not properly washed their hands before eating (which is, as Mark explains, the usual Jewish practice) Jesus scolds them sharply for being too focused on human rules—even ritual ones—instead of God's laws.

### MOSAIC LAW: WHAT GOD WANTS OF THE PEOPLE

Moses gives the Israelites their Law, which provided the structure for daily life. As recorded in the Bible, over half of the Law is about rituals for worship and sacrifice. A related concept is the concept of a person's ritual purity (or cleanliness), which is required for participation in both social and religious activities, since persons become unclean by physical contact with other unclean persons, animals, or objects. Other ways a person becomes unclean include the presence of skin lesions, bleeding, or a bodily discharge. Unclean persons are required to purify themselves to be again considered clean. Despite the Law's complexity, observant Jews considered it a privilege, not a burden, to observe its precepts, and they continue to do so today.

### ON THE OTHER HAND . . .

The scribes and Pharisees are focusing on the disciples' failure to properly wash their hands prior to eating. But nowhere in the biblical texts of the Law are there regulations regarding the washing of hands before or after meals. These regulations, as described by Mark, are merely practices like those that arise in all societies; if they continue long enough, they can seem like sacred duties, sanctified as "the traditions of their elders."

This distinction is the source of the tension in these three readings. Moses and James both tell their people that they are recipients of a divine gift that requires special care, while Jesus is practically livid when the scribes and Pharisees react harshly to the disciples' failure to wash their hands according to Jewish practices.

Such a distinction between divine law and human practices is valuable for our own lives. When we hear of another's misdeeds, we should evaluate the seriousness of the offense before forming our own impression. Is this truly a serious moral matter? Or something less weighty? Carefully discerning the seriousness of such matters might reveal that things are not as grave as they first appear. Such care is an exercise in Christian charity, one way of acting on the word we have received as members of the Body of Christ.

## TODAY'S READINGS

Deuteronomy 4:1–2, 6–8  
Psalm 15:2–3, 3–4, 4–5  
James 1:17–18; 21b–22, 27  
Mark 7:1–8, 14–15, 21–23



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