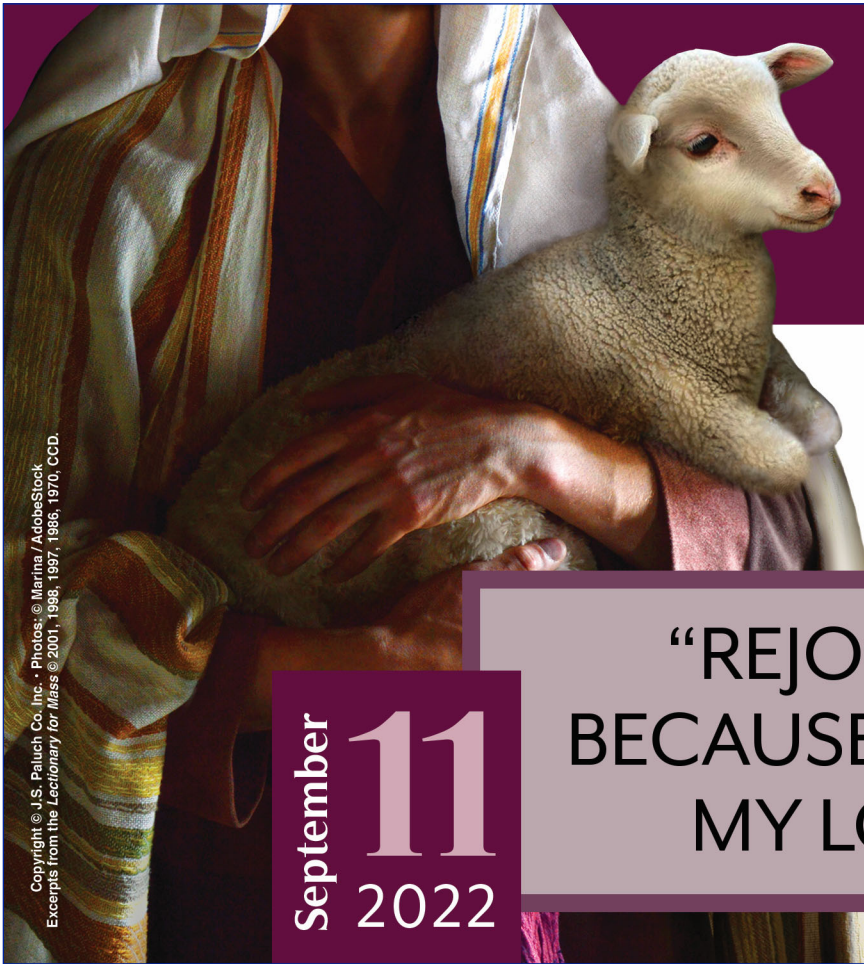


# Our Lady Queen of Peace

## Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time



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September  
**11**  
2022

“REJOICE WITH ME  
BECAUSE I HAVE FOUND  
MY LOST SHEEP.”

LUKE 15:6

### Served by

Rev. Antonio L. Ricarte, Pastor

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

Rev. Msgr. Peter J. Zaccardo, Pastor Emeritus

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

Justine Garcia, Pastoral Associate for Religious Ed.

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

Giovanni Longo, Director of Music

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

Christopher Innis, Principal, St. Peter Academy

Dorothy Feula and Harriet Sottile, Lay Trustees

### Emergency Contact

(Funerals, Anointings, etc.)

(201) 845-9566 ext. 3

### 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. A Catholic is  
obliged to confess **mortal**  
**sins** in kind and number to  
a priest **before** receiving the  
Holy Eucharist.

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 Anointing 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

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## ✝ Mass Intentions

September 11, 2022 to September 18, 2022

### Sunday – TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

9/11	8:00 am	Carmine and Luisa Migliaccio
	10:00 am	George McGowan
	12 noon	People of the Parish

### Monday - Weekday [The Most Holy Name of Mary]

9/12 8:30 am Steven Faustini

### Tuesday - Saint John Chrysostom, Bishop and Doctor of the Church *Memorial*

9/13 8:30 am The Napoleone and Graziano Families

### Wednesday - The Exaltation of the Holy Cross *Feast*

9/14 8:30 am Maria and Noel Torres

### Thursday – Our Lady of Sorrows *Memorial*

9/15 8:30 am Katherine Yokaitis

### Friday - Saints Cornelius, Pope, and Cyprian, Bishop, Martyrs *Memorial*

9/16 8:30 am Uche Dorothy Obelle

### Saturday - Weekday [Saint Robert Bellarmine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church; Saint Hildegard of Bingen, Virgin and Doctor of the Church; *BVM*]

9/17 8:30 am Karen Diwa (Living)  
5:00 pm People of the Parish

### Sunday - TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

9/18	8:00 am	John Feula
	10:00 am	Carmine and Louisa Migliaccio
	12 noon	Peggy and Dan O'Neill



Please keep in your prayers all of our active military personnel here and overseas. We especially pray for Joshua Ashley, Ryan O'Connell, and John Velazquez.

May the Lord protect them in their service.

## September 11, 2022 - Today's Readings

**First Reading** — Because Moses interceded, the LORD relented and did not punish the people (Exodus 32:7-11, 13-14).

**Psalm** — I will rise and go to my father (Psalm 51).

**Second Reading** — Paul expresses his gratitude for being appointed to the ministry (1 Timothy 1:12-17).

**Gospel** — There is great rejoicing in heaven when a sinner repents (Luke 15:1-32 [1-10]).

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## Please Remember in Your Prayers

### Rest in Peace

Sister Annemarie Crowley; Rose Martin

### Sick Relatives and Friends

Mary Adamo	Baby Christopher	Mary Pontillo
Cristina Aguilar	Sean Hill	Francis Quinn
Pauline Albarano	Gardenia Hounbo	Robert Raimo
Augie Aversa	Andrew Hunkele	Susan Rheim
Josefina Baldoza	Dominic Jengo	Anthony Ruffino
Mary Ellen Barberia	Nancy Jengo	Melissa Finck-
Matilde Beninca	Pamela Jengo	Ruisch
Claire Borrello	Lauren Kaczynski	Elsy Ruiz
Cardinal Burke	Rosemarie Kaminski	Fran Sampson
Ginny Cattaneo	Joan Keenan	Wilbert Santos
Carmen Cepeda	Rev. Michael Kreder	Cindy Sommers
Carmen Maria Colon	Alice Liso	Pat Sommers
Brian Connors	Maxine Locascio	Joseph Steiner
The Cortese Family	Diane Lohrer	Carolyn Sobering
Javier Cruz	Deacon Joseph	Jacqueline Sullivan
Richard DeSpagna	Mantineo	Nick Taylor
Sally DeSpagna	Gerry Marcincavage	Theresa Taylor
Emily DeStefano	Sonia Medrano	<b>Theresa Tempio</b>
Phil Dimitri	Andrew J. Mendez	Liam Justin Torres
Eileen Diverio	Frankie Monnecka	Maria Trovini
Mark Diverio	Deanna Mooney	Joseph Turchyn
Stephen Diverio	Jim Moran	Mary Walker
Nancy Focarino	Barbara Nelson	Andrew Wey
Emily Ferreira	Gemma Olliges	Julia Whitney
Yancey Garcia	Sharon Osnowitz	Joyce Wilson
Fr. Mickey German	Nicholas Pappas	David Zerby
Megan Harwood	Harriet Pellicione	<b>*Names in bold</b>
<b>Michael Hazuka</b>	Vallie Pompilio	<b>are new to the list</b>

## The Memorare



Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly to thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother; to thee do I come; before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

## Readings for the Week

**Monday:** 1 Cor 11:17-26, 33; Ps 40:7-10, 17; Lk 7:1-10

**Tuesday:** 1 Cor 12:12-14, 27-31a; Ps 100:1-5; Lk 7:11-17

**Wednesday:** Nm 21:4b-9; Ps 78:1bc-2, 34-38; Phil 2:6-11; Jn 3:13-17

**Thursday:** 1 Cor 15:1-11; Ps 118:1b-2, 16ab-17, 28; Jn 19:25-27 or Lk 2:33-35

**Friday:** 1 Cor 15:12-20; Ps 17:1bcd, 6-8b, 15; Lk 8:1-3

**Saturday:** 1 Cor 15:35-37, 42-49; Ps 56:10c-14; Lk 8:4-15

**Sunday:** Am 8:4-7; Ps 113:1-2, 4-8; 1 Tm 2:1-8; Lk 16:1-13 [10-13]

## Relying on God's Love



Imagine being among those who heard Jesus address the Pharisees and scribes in the encounter we hear in today's Gospel: "What man among you having a hundred sheep and losing one of them would not leave the ninety-nine in the desert and go after the lost one until he finds it?" Would you leave ninety-nine in the desert in order to find one lost sheep? In the parable, Jesus is showing us the depths of God's love, the illogical, incredible love God has for each of us. Moses counted on this loving mercy as he spoke for the wandering people; Saint Paul acknowledges his reliance on it in his letter to Timothy. God desires to draw you close, seeking you when you are lost. Are you ready to be drawn into God's loving embrace? Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

## Please Visit our New Instagram Page!

<https://www.instagram.com/olqpchurch/>



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

## Prayers for 9/11



For the Church, that she may continue to provide care and healing for all, especially those affected by the attacks on September 11, 2001, we pray to the Lord...

For all victims of violence and terrorism around the world, and for their families, that they may find comfort and peace, we pray to the

Lord...

For the safety of our service men and women abroad, for civil servants who protect us and keep us safe, and for all who live with war and violence, we pray to the Lord...

For our leaders and for the leaders of nations, that they may work together to address the problems that provide fertile ground for the growth of terrorism, we pray to the Lord...

For the ability to forgive and for an end to all hatred, beginning in our own hearts, we pray to the Lord... (source USCCB.org)

All are Invited!

## Communion Breakfast

Sponsored by the OLQP Rosary Society

Sunday October 2, 2022 9:30 am  
Twin Doors Tavern  
122 W. Pleasant Ave. Maywood, NJ  
\$40 per person

### Guest speaker:

Jennifer Behnke, Associate Director of Evangelization, Archdiocese of Newark

*Menu* - scrambled eggs, eggs benedict, bacon, breakfast sausage, unlimited juices  
fruit salad, breakfast potatoes  
bagels, danishes and pastries,  
coffee, tea, and cake

Tickets are available at the Rosary Society meeting on September 12th or at the Parish Center. No tickets will be sold at the door. For further information, please email [rosarysociety@olqp.org](mailto:rosarysociety@olqp.org) or call the Parish Center at 201-845-9566. We encourage everyone to attend. Please bring a friend. Hope to see you there!

## Rosary Society Meeting September 12



The first meeting of the Rosary Society will take place **Monday September 12th**. All parishioners, both male and female are welcome to join this Ministry.

Recitation of the Rosary starts at **7 pm**, either in the **Rosary Garden** or in the **Church**, weather permitting. After the recitation, coffee and cake will be served in the auditorium. The General Meeting will start at **7:45 pm** followed by the program. Meetings are usually held the first Monday of the month. For more information, please email [rosarysociety@olqp.org](mailto:rosarysociety@olqp.org) or call the Parish Center at 201-845-9566.

## Upcoming Bible Study!

Advance notice on the next **Bible Study** starting in the Fall. The **study** of James went well in the Spring. Please send a note to [OLOPBibleStudy@gmail.com](mailto:OLOPBibleStudy@gmail.com) for more information.



## The Sermons of St. Alphonsus Liguori

**"SERMON XXXIX.... -**

**On the efficacy and necessity of prayer.**

**"God, be merciful to me a sinner." LUKE xviii. 13**

IN this day's gospel we read, that two men, one a Pharisee and the other a Publican, went to the temple. Instead of bowing down to beg of God to assist him by his graces, the Pharisee said: ***I thank thee, O Lord, that I am not as the rest of men, who are sinners. "Deus gratias ago tibi, quia non sum sicut cæteri homines."*** But the Publican, tilled with sentiments of humility, cried out: ***"O God, be merciful to me, a sinner."*** St. Luke tells us, that this Publican returned to his house justified; and that the Pharisee went home as guilty and as proud as when he entered the temple. From this, most beloved brethren, you may infer how pleasing to God, and how necessary for us, are our humble petitions to obtain from the Lord all the graces which are indispensable for salvation. In this sermon I will show, in the first point, the efficacy of prayer: and in the second, the necessity of prayer.

**First Point. On the efficacy of prayer.**

1. To understand the efficacy and value of our prayers, we need only consider the great promises which God has made to every one who prays. ***"Call upon me, and I will deliver thee."*** (Ps. xlix. 15.) ***Call upon me, and I will save you from every danger. "He shall cry to me, I will hear him."*** (Ps. xc. 15.) ***"Cry to me, and I will hear thee."*** (Jer. xxxiii. 3.) ***"You shall ask whatever you will, and it shall be done unto you."*** (John xv. 7.) Ask whatsoever you wish and it shall be given to you. There are a thousand similar passages in the Old and New Testaments. ***By his nature God is, as St. Leo says, goodness itself. "Deus cujus natura bonitas."*** Hence he desires, with a great desire, to make us partakers of his own good. St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi used to say, ***that when a soul prays to God for any grace, he feels in a certain manner under an obligation to her, and thanks her; because by prayer the soul opens to him a way of satisfying his desire to dispense his graces to us.*** Hence, in the holy Scriptures, the Lord appears to recommend and inculcate to us nothing more forcibly than to ask and pray. To show this, the words which we read in the seventh chapter of St. Matthew are sufficient. ***"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you"*** (vii. 7). St. Augustine teaches, that ***by these promises God has bound himself to grant all that we ask in prayer. "By his promises he has made himself a debtor."*** (De Verb. Dom. Sermon. ii.) And, in the fifth sermon, the saint says, ***that if the Lord did not wish to bestow his graces upon us, he would not exhort us so strenuously to ask them. "He would not exhort us to ask, unless he wished to give."*** Hence we see that the Psalms of David and the Books of Solomon and of the Prophets are full of prayers.

2. Theodoret has written, that prayer is so efficacious before God, that, ***"though it be one, it can do all***

***all things. "Oratio cum sit una, omnia potest."*** St. Bernard teaches, ***that when we pray, the Lord, if he does not give the grace we ask, will grant a more useful gift. "He will give either what we ask, or what he knows to be more profitable to us."*** (Serm. v. in Fer. 4. cm.) And whom has God, when asked for aid, ever despised by not listening to his petition? ***"Who hath called upon him, and he despised him?"*** (Eccl. ii. 12.) The Scripture says, that among the nations there is none that has gods so willing to hear our prayers, as our true God. ***"Neither is there any other nation so great, that hath gods so nigh to them, as our God is present to all our petitions."*** (Deut. iv. 7.) ***The princes of the earth, says St. Chrysostom, give audience only to a few; but God grants it to every one that wishes for it. "Aures principis paucis patent, Die vero omnibus volentibus."*** (Lib. 2, de Orat.) David tells us that this goodness of God in hearing us at whatever time we pray to him, shows us that he is our true God, whose love for us surpasses the love of all others. ***"In what day soever I shall call upon thee, behold I know thou art my God."*** (Ps. lv. 10.) He wishes and ardently desires to confer favours upon us; but he requires us to pray for them. Jesus Christ said one day to his disciples: ***"Hitherto you have not asked anything in my name; ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full."*** (John xvi. 24.) As if he said: You complain of me for not making you perfectly content; but you ought to complain of yourselves for not having asked of me all the gifts you stood in need of; ask, henceforth, whatsoever you want, and your prayer shall be heard. Many, says St. Bernard complain that the Lord is wanting to them. But he complains with more justice ***that they are wanting to him, by neglecting to ask him for his graces. "Omnes nobis causamur deesse gratiam, sed justius forsitan ista sibi queritur deesse nonnullos."*** (S. Bern, de Tripl. Cust.)

3. The ancient fathers, after having consulted together about the exercise most conducive to salvation, came to the conclusion, that the best means of securing eternal life is, to pray continually, saying: Lord, assist me; Lord, hasten to my assistance. ***"Incline unto my aid, God; Lord, make haste to help me."*** Hence the holy Church commands these two petitions to be often repeated in the canonical hours by all the clergy and by all religious, who pray not only for themselves, but also for the whole Christian world. St. John Climacus says, ***that our prayers as it were compel God by a holy violence to hear us. "Prayer piously does violence to God."*** Hence, when we pray to the Lord, He instantly answers by bestowing upon us the grace we ask. ***"At the voice of thy cry, as soon as he shall hear, he will answer thee."*** (Isa. xxx. 19.) Hence St. Ambrose says, that ***"he who asks of God, receives while he asks."*** (Ep. lxxxiv., ad Demetr.) And he not only grants his grace instantly, but also abundantly, giving us more than we pray for. St. Paul tells us that God is rich that is, liberal of his graces to every one that prays to him. ***"Rich unto all that call upon him."*** (Rom. x. 12.) And St. James says: ***"If any of you want wisdom let him ask of God, who giveth to all men abundantly and..."*** (Excerpts from the "Sermons of St. Alphonsus Liguori")

**Maywood Knights of Columbus**

**26th Annual  
Comedy Night Fundraiser**

**BYOF/BYOB  
Bring Your Own Food & Drink**


**STAND UP  
Comedy Show**

**Saturday, October 1, 2022  
Doors Open at 7:00 p.m.  
Tickets: \$30**

**Our Lady Queen of Peace Gym  
400 Maywood Avenue  
Maywood, NJ**

**Buy Tix Today: [rconte1213@aol.com](mailto:rconte1213@aol.com)**


**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. Amen.

**Christmas Pageant Volunteers Needed**

Plans are already underway for this year's Christmas Pageant. This year's event will take place in the Church on Sunday December 18th at 4 pm. This is a large undertaking and **we need volunteers**, both children, teens and adults to make it successful. **Any child from kindergarten thru 8th grade** can choose to dress up as a character in the Nativity Story and participate in the event. They do not have to speak nor sing a musical solo.



**CHRISTMAS PAGEANT**

The story will be told through music and the entire audience will participate by singing along to old, familiar Christmas songs. For further information, please email [christmaspageant@olqp.org](mailto:christmaspageant@olqp.org) or call the Parish Center at 201-845-9566. Please do not wait until December to sign up as the roles for the favorite characters will be filled quickly.

**Soup Kitchen Ministry Update**



On **9/24**, we are donating hot dogs and baked beans to St. John's Kitchen in Newark. If interested, please contact Mary Flanigan at [parish@olqp.org](mailto:parish@olqp.org)

**Cursillo Weekend - October 6-9**

**Candidate Sponsorship Opportunity!**



The Newark Archdiocese Women's 182th Cursillo Weekend will take place **October 6-9, 2022**. The atmosphere of a Cursillo differs from the individual solitude of many retreats. Christ's teachings are discussed in a climate of joy. Talks and discussions are interspersed with prayer, Eucharist, songs, laughter and times of reflection. There is no better opportunity to deepen your relationship with Jesus Christ and gain a better understanding of the power of the Holy Spirit.

**The Cursillo begins on Thursday, October 6th at 7 pm and concludes Sunday afternoon, October 9th.** The weekend takes place at the Archdiocesan Retreat Center in Kearny and the cost is \$175

Space is limited, all applications need to be in by **September 15, 2022** so if you are interested, please email or call Joanne Godlewski at [jojowey@gmail.com](mailto:jojowey@gmail.com) or 201-870-3100, Rudy or Irene Schwarz at [silverrs@optonline.net](mailto:silverrs@optonline.net) or 201-742-5695, Connie Szymanski at [szyma843@optonline.net](mailto:szyma843@optonline.net) 201-843-1836.

## Stewardship Corner

### *Stewardship of Time and Talent:*

*(Continued from last week)* But suppose the father begins to daydream while behind the wheel of his car. Soon the car begins to swerve, then leaves the road in an irreversible course towards a tree. His daydream shatters upon impact, as does the windshield when struck by Billy's head. "Father, is it O.K. for a person to daydream? For the average Christian the question is not whether a recreation or pastime is right or wrong, but what will be left undone while God's time is used inappropriately.

*Rudy Schwarz*

## Stewardship Results

	9/4/22	Weekly Goal
Sunday Offertory	6,667	5,000
Repairs	126	1,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,793</b>	<b>\$6,500</b>



**Thank you for your contributions last Sunday which allowed us to meet our Offertory goal. May God reward you for your generosity!**

## Treasures from Our Tradition



Although New Year's Day has been fixed firmly on January 1 for several hundred years, Labor Day has the feel of a great dividing line between leisure and routine. The pace of life has since picked up, and new schedules and commitments crowd us. In

the background is God's call to consider the third commandment, still lifegiving and binding, to make holy the Lord's Day by worship and rest. Jews see the Sabbath, Saturday, not so much as a day of worship, but as a day of rest, a day of renewing friendship with God by delighting in the beauty of creation and the joy of family and friends. It is a day for contemplating the wonder of God's creation, but not disturbing it.

For Christians in the first three centuries, the Lord's Day, Sunday, was not for rest, but worship. It was a regular work day. People met before dawn, and after Eucharist hurried off to daily routines. Today we come to Mass, but many hurry off to essential work, not a day of rest. The Lord's Day is not the Sabbath, but we can enhance Sunday's ability to transform us if we consider embracing some Sabbath values: having a family meal, going for a walk in a beautiful place, making room in our lives to open ourselves more fully to holiness of life in Christ.

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

## Saints and Special Observances

**Sunday:** Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time; Patriot Day; Grandparents' Day  
**Monday:** The Most Holy Name of Mary  
**Tuesday:** St. John Chrysostom  
**Wednesday:** The Exaltation of the Holy Cross  
**Thursday:** Our Lady of Sorrows  
**Friday:** Ss. Cornelius and Cyprian  
**Saturday:** St. Robert Bellarmine; St. Hildegard of Bingen; Blessed Virgin Mary

### PRAYER OF THE WEEK

#### Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Look upon us, O God,  
 Creator and ruler of all things,  
 and, that we may feel the working of your mercy,  
 grant that we may serve you with all our heart.  
 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.

### Reflection question:

In what ways do I serve God?

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### SAFETY

No one is safe by their own strength, but they are safe by the grace and mercy of God.

—St. Cyprian

### DANGEROUS APATHY

The tyranny of a prince in an oligarchy is not so dangerous to the public welfare as the apathy of a citizen in a democracy.

—Baron Montesquieu

## 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.

## Parish Calendar

**Key: AU - Auditorium, CH - Church, PC - Parish Center**

9/12 7:00 pm - The Holy Rosary (Rosary Garden)  
 7:45 pm - Rosary Society Meeting (AU)  
 9/14 7:00 pm - Our Mother of Perpetual Help Novena  
 9/15 7:00 pm - Luz Y Vida (AU)  
 9/17 1:00 pm - Confessions (CH)



September  
**11**  
2022

**“REJOICE WITH ME  
BECAUSE I HAVE  
FOUND MY LOST SHEEP.”**

**LUKE 15:6**

**Twenty-Fourth Sunday  
in Ordinary Time**

### **GOD OF SECOND CHANCES**

If we were reflecting on all of today's scriptures and wanted to come up with one intimate name for God, perhaps it would be "God of Second Chances." Over and over we see examples of God offering just that. In Exodus, the Lord is frustrated by the behavior of the people, and Moses, speaking very boldly, has to talk God into calming down and recalling the covenant with Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Israel. Psalm 51, "The Miserere," is the great psalm of repentance and cleansing. Take the time to read and pray with the whole psalm at your leisure. Paul confesses his own blasphemy and arrogance, and how Christ is using it now. In the extensive Gospel from Luke we experience Jesus using parables to tell about the widow and the lost coin, the shepherd and the lost sheep, and the lost son and a loving father's welcome.

### **TAKE ALL THE LOST HOME**

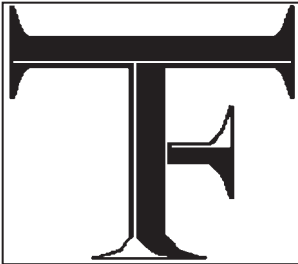
In the seventies there was a popular Folk Mass song by Joe Wise, "Take All the Lost Home." It is like our Gospel reading today. For truly, we've all had moments when we have lost our way and needed others to get us back on track. Perhaps this means reconnecting with someone we once knew and making amends, or seeing a therapist to make things right. Maybe it means finally seeking help to stick with the diet and exercise plan, or joining a 12-step program to deal with an addiction. Could it be time to meet with a financial expert to manage credit card debt, or go to confession or meet with a spiritual director to find your way home spiritually? It is hard to ask for help or admit we are lost. We dread the reactions of others, thinking they will be angry, hurt, or defensive. We feel shame. Sometimes people hold grudges for years because neither they nor another will break down and make the first move. We feel fear. This sets us up for the classic story of the prodigal father, where we see two possible outcomes.

### **WELCOME HOME**

The son returns home and, expecting the worst, confesses his sinfulness. His brother has an angry, self-righteous response, but the Father is full of joy and mercy. Such is the case in all the Gospel parables today. We hear God say, "You are the one who is important." There is another poignant song by Brian Flynn entitled "The Prodigal Father" that presents the perspective of the parent waiting and worrying about their lost child, watching the road and praying for the child's return. And if for some reason your own family will not accept you, you will find that there are many intentional families, friends, and parishes waiting with open arms to welcome you. Or perhaps you can offer the same welcome to another returning soul.

### **TODAY'S READINGS**

Exodus 32:7-11, 13-14  
Psalm 51:3-4, 12-13, 17, 19  
1 Timothy 1:12-17  
Luke 15:1-32 [1-10]



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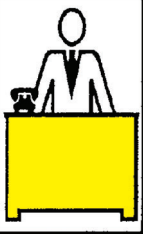
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