



Our Lady of Lourdes Parish

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WELCOME!

Thank you for celebrating with us today. We invite you to come and worship with us again. If you would like to be a member of our faith community, please take a moment to register. We would love to have you as our spiritual companion.

MASS SCHEDULE

SATURDAY

5:00 pm Vigil Mass (Vietnamese)

TUESDAY - FRIDAY

6:00 pm (Vietnamese)

SUNDAY

8:30 am Mass (English)

10:30 am Mass (Vietnamese)

Livestream (Facebook and Youtube)

12:30 pm (Vietnamese for Youth)

ANOINTING OF THE SICK MASS

1st Friday of the Month - 5:30 pm Adoration
6:00 pm Mass

CONFESSIONS

Saturday 4:30 pm - 4:50 pm
Sunday 8:00 am - 8:20 am
Tuesday - Friday 5:30 pm - 5:50 pm

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish



PARISH STAFF

PASTOR:

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PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Monday: Closed
Tuesday & Friday: Please Call for Appointment
Wednesday: 9:30am - 3:00pm
Thursday: 9:30am - 3:00pm
Please leave a message if no one answers and your call will be returned.



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FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP (JULY 8TH - JULY 9TH)

Donation	\$5,471.00
Donation Online	\$2,405.00
Maintenance Fund	\$35.00
Debt Reduction	\$0
Total Donation	\$7,911.00

Annual Catholic Appeal 2023 GOAL \$36,577

As of 7.06.23, Gifts Received \$12,851

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Annual Catholic Appeal

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Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

It's not uncommon to hear people complain that we Catholics often fail in communicating our faith. Fair enough. We can and should improve there. But it's interesting to notice that Jesus himself was implicitly accused by his disciples of a similar failure. This week in Matthew's gospel they are perplexed that he speaks to the crowds in ambiguous parables. The Lord's riddles leave many people more confused than before. He responds by pointing out that his parables have an intentional dual purpose: to hide (for some) and to reveal (for others) his Gospel: "Because knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven has been granted to you, but to them it has not been granted" (Matthew 13:11). Is Jesus being unnecessarily difficult, obscurantist, or, worse, elitist?

No. We have to remember that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge lie hidden in him (c.f., Col. 2:3). He is the word of God from heaven to be planted in the earth of our humanity to bear great fruit. However, like a lover delicately pursuing his beloved, we're dealing with a relationship, not new data. When we aren't willing to personally accept Jesus into our lives, the "info" of the Gospel will simply not make sense to us. It'll seem bizarre, esoteric, or like incoherent religious-speak. But when we are willing to accept Jesus into our lives, everything else starts to make sense. When others don't understand the Church or the Lord, let's be patient. Love is patient. Sometimes it has to hide before it is revealed.

— Father John Muir

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Homily by Father Joseph Vu

Christ Respects Our Freedom

Christ's words have power.

- Immense crowds press upon him as he teaches.
- The crowd was so big, Jesus actually got into a fishing boat and used the lake as his speaking platform, so that he could address everyone gathered on the shore.
- Crowds like this hung on his every word wherever he went.
- He could easily have turned them into a revolutionary army and manipulated them for any number of purposes.
- But instead, he simply invites them to change their hearts.
- Jesus truly is the Lord, but he refuses to bully us into following him.
- He is the "sower" of the parable, spreading God's Word and announcing God's invitation, but never forcing hearts to welcome it.

This combination of eagerness to win over disciples, but respect for his listeners' freedom is especially evident in Jesus' use of parables.

- A parable is a simple comparison between a hard-to-understand divine truth, a truth about God and his plan of salvation, and a well-known earthly reality.
- Some interpreters say that Jesus used these stories and comparisons to conceal his meaning from his opponents.
- But there is also another way to look at it.
- Sometimes people don't want to accept the plain truth, because it means they have to change.
- In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught the plain truth.
- But many didn't accept it. So now he takes a more roundabout way to convince them.
- The parables offer his listeners a chance to accept certain truths in the abstract, before seeing how they apply to them personally.
- It's a way of sneaking uncomfortable truths through his listener's mental defense mechanisms, penetrating indirectly the minds that have closed themselves to his direct proclamations.

Jesus always respects our freedom, but he never gives up on convincing us to use that freedom well.

Three Helps to Freedom

God knows that using our freedom well is not easy.

He knows better than we do the subtlety of the devil's deceptions, the force of our selfish tendencies, the allure of the world's treasures and pleasures.

And so God, because he loves us with a perfect Father's love, has provided helps for our freedom.

He has given us the sacrament of confession, which is a healing sacrament as well as a sacrament of forgiveness.

- Whenever we give in to our selfish tendencies and sin, we damage our freedom, we put chains around it.
- The sacrament of confession breaks those chains and strengthens us against future temptations.

He has given us the sacrament of the Eucharist.

- Holy Communion is not just a symbol of the Last Supper.
- It is our reception of Christ's own body and blood, of Christ's very own strength.
- It bolsters everything that is good in us, strengthening us against all that is evil.

He has also given us the Church's guaranteed teaching authority, the Magisterium.

- When the pope and the bishops in communion with him teach us that certain actions or behaviors are morally wrong, like abortion, pre-marital sex, and contraception, we have Christ's own guarantee that they will not lead us astray.

- This clarity about right and wrong strengthens our freedom, because the devil operates best in grey areas.

Finally, Jesus has given us the incredible gift of prayer.

- Whenever we feel our freedom under attack, we can pray.
- We have non-stop direct access to the all-powerful God, who will never fail to come to our aid.

The sacraments, Church teaching, and prayer - these are our front-line defenses against the devil, the flesh, and the world.

Today, as Jesus renews his commitment to us in this Mass, let's thank him for these gifts, and promise that we will use them well.

Liturgical Life

(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

Soil Conditions

I am a hopeless gardener. I never met a plant I couldn't swiftly kill with good intentions and poor understanding of soil conditions.

Because really, it's all about the soil conditions — at least, that's what Google tells me when I helplessly search phrases like “Why aren't any of my seeds sprouting? Please, I tried so hard.” I can never seem to match the right type of soil offering the right type of drainage and texture with the right plant. I can't understand why it's not enough to bury the seed in whatever ground is available, sprinkle some water and ask it, very nicely, to grow.

This is also a quality that makes me a poor evangelist to people who do not share my beliefs. How many times have I encountered a friend or loved one who left the faith, and I tried to coax them back by hurling Catechism passages in their direction, offering advice they never asked for and are ill-equipped to understand? I sow these seeds of witness and bang my fists in frustration that they rot where I plant them, never realizing that it's all about the soil.

It is Christ, and Christ alone, who works within the heart. It is Christ who is the sower of the seed, not me. When I leave him out of the equation, when I fail to offer the Person and instead only offer the teaching, I can anticipate that any witness I have to offer will rot where it is planted just as sure as a tulip bulb in a bed of clay.

*“...my word shall not return to me void, but shall do my will, achieving the end for which I sent it.”
— Isaiah 55:11*

Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Why do we do that? Catholic Life Explained

Question:

Why do we use incense at Mass?

Answer:

The use of incense in religious ceremonies and worship is a practice that predates Christianity, and which is also found in many other religious traditions today.

Incense, which is made from resin infused with aromatic spices and oils, is one of those fundamentally human symbols that incorporates more than one of our senses, helping us to reflect on realities that transcend the everyday details of our lives.

The use of incense in the Church's liturgy — in the Mass, as well as in devotions to the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours — is inspired by the use of incense in the Jewish tradition. In the writings of the Old Testament, we hear about incense being used in the worship of the temple, and Psalm 141 asks, “Let my prayer be incense before you; my uplifted hands an evening offering” (vs. 2). The image here is that, as the incense gently rises to heaven, our prayers also rise to God as something sweet and pleasant.

Another ancient use of incense that has also become part of our Catholic tradition is the idea that when we incense something, it's because it is something special or sacred. This is why the Book of the Gospel is incensed during the Liturgy of the Word and the bread, wine, priest celebrant, and congregation are incensed at the presentation of the gifts. To this, we can also add the incensing of the Blessed Sacrament during eucharistic adoration and benediction, and the body of the deceased at the end of the Mass of the Resurrection (the Funeral Mass).