

A Summer Greeting from Father Jim



As we enter the summer months, I pray that this season brings you renewed strength, joy, and opportunities to experience God's abundant blessings. Summer invites us to slow down, spend time with family and friends, enjoy His beautiful creation, and reflect upon the many gifts that surround us each day.

This year holds special significance as our nation marks the 250th anniversary of the United States. As Christians and citizens, we give thanks for the freedoms that have shaped our country, especially the precious gift of religious liberty. The freedom to worship, to gather as a community of faith, and to proclaim the Gospel remains one of our nation's greatest blessings. Democracy flourishes when people of faith live with integrity, respect one another, and work together for the common good.

Here at All Saints, summer will also be a season of growth and renewal. Several important parish improvement projects will be underway as we continue our commitment to strengthening our facilities for future generations. Thank you for your patience, generosity, and support as these enhancements take shape.

Whether you are traveling across the country, enjoying a weekend getaway, or simply relaxing at home, may God keep you safe in all your journeys. Take time to notice His presence in the simple miracles of everyday life, a beautiful sunrise, a kind word from a friend, the laughter of a child, the comfort of prayer, and the gift of another day.

May the Lord bless you and your loved ones throughout this summer season. Know that you remain in my prayers, and I look forward to sharing many wonderful moments together in the months ahead.

In His service,

Father Jim

Greetings and Updates from the Youth

Hello All Saints Parish,

This is everything that happened in the last couple of months with the Youth Group. In May, we had a youth night where we watched two episodes of the tv show The Chosen. Also, some of the youth volunteer for the Triva Night. In June, we attended the Chesterfield Veterans Home 5k Walk and I had a amazing time supporting our Veterans. With that we ended our Veteran's project, and we raised \$64 from the gift bags fundraiser. Thank you to anyone who donated and thanks for the support. In other news, thank you to all the teachers and Friends of Sunday School. We had an amazing year, and we enjoyed learning about the mass.

Thank you,

Michael Pharris (President of the Youth Group)

Exciting Improvements Are Coming to All Saints!



Thanks to the unanimous support of our Parish Meeting, several exciting improvement projects will be taking place over the coming months as we continue to invest in the future of All Saints Parish.



Among the planned enhancements are the renovation of our kitchen into a commercial-grade facility, allowing us to expand our hospitality and community outreach efforts. We will also be improving the appearance and functionality of the parish hall by replacing the accordion divider with a permanent wall and doors, creating a more attractive and versatile gathering space. Additional projects include new parking lot light poles and lighting for improved safety and visibility, as well as replacing the siding on the rectory.

We thank you for your patience, understanding, and support during construction as we work together to make All Saints an even better place to worship, gather, and serve.

Clergy Circle of the Western Diocese 2026 Conference and Retreat

The Clergy Circle of the Western Diocese of the Polish National Catholic Church gathered May 18–20, 2026, at the Lindenwood Retreat and Conference Center in Donaldson for its annual Conference and Retreat, combining spiritual renewal, fellowship, continuing formation, and diocesan collaboration.



The gathering opened with a retreat led by the Reverend Jim Konicki of the Central Diocese, who guided the clergy in thoughtful reflection on pastoral ministry, spiritual wellness, and the importance of caring not only for those entrusted to the Church's ministry, but also for the clergy themselves. Through prayer, discussion, and reflection, the retreat emphasized compassion, pastoral awareness, and the continuing need for emotional and spiritual support.

Throughout the conference, updates were presented regarding the many ministries, commissions, and initiatives currently active within the Western Diocese. Reports highlighted the continued growth and positive movement occurring throughout diocesan life, especially in the areas of outreach, liturgy, youth ministry, sacred vocations, and ministerial formation.

Attention was given to the ongoing work of the Liturgical Commission, which offers 28 weeks of Word of God Study materials for parish use throughout the Diocese. In addition, progress continues on the development of the Electronic *Ordo* project, an innovative effort designed to create a comprehensive digital *Ordo* for the three-year liturgical cycle of the Church.

The Sacred Vocations Commission also reported encouraging growth within the Diocese. Two members of the Western Diocese are presently engaged in priestly formation through seminary studies, while additional candidates continue in various stages of discernment and preparation for ordained ministry. The recent elevation of new Subdeacons within the Diocese was recognized as another sign of growth for the future of the Church.

A portion of the conference focused upon the continued development and alignment of the National Diaconate Formation Program and the work of the Savonarola Theological Seminary and Institute. The formation process now incorporates a dynamic educational structure utilizing in-person instruction, synchronous learning through the Zoom platform, and asynchronous coursework to provide flexibility and accessibility.

In addition to formal academic study, the program places substantial emphasis upon experiential and hands-on learning. More than 1,800 hours of practical ministerial formation are

incorporated into the overall educational process, allowing candidates to develop pastoral, liturgical, administrative, and sacramental competencies through direct parish experience and supervised ministry. Clergy present expressed appreciation for the innovative and creative educational approaches now being implemented within the Church's formation programs for both the diaconate and priesthood.

The conference also included updates regarding ecumenical dialogue, youth ministry initiatives, outreach development, and ongoing national and diocesan projects. The atmosphere throughout the gathering reflected optimism, collaboration, and gratitude for the many blessings presently being experienced throughout the Diocese. The clergy gathered for fellowship, prayer, and mutual encouragement, reaffirming their shared commitment to serve Christ and His Church faithfully during both challenging and hopeful times.



Pictured are Deacon Scott, Father Senior Nowak, Father Senior Charles Zawistowski (Diocesan Administrator), Father Senior Kowalczyk (chairman), Father Senior Czaja, Father Cramer (vice Chairman), Father Medelewski, Father Rojas (financial officer), Father Salas, Father Pawelec, Father Zochowski, Father Ploskonka (secretary), Retreat Master Father Konicki, Father Kutek and Father Talaga.

*Present but not photographed:
Father Galas and Father Rowinsky.*

The 2026 Conference and Retreat served as a powerful reminder that the Western Diocese continues to move forward with faith, innovation, collaboration, and confidence in the work that Almighty God is accomplishing through His clergy and faithful people.



GREETINGS FROM A.N.S.

By Sharon

It's been a busy time for the altar society since the last newsletter; especially, in the past two weeks as the members of the A.N.S. prepared a delicious brunch for the celebration of all our fathers, grandfathers and godfathers on Father's Day. We are very blessed for all these wonderful, supportive and loving men in our lives. It was also our pleasure to provide a wonderful lunch after the celebration of the sacrament of confirmation for Liliia and Keven. We are so happy for them and for being members of our parish family. They were both presented with new bibles from the altar society in honor of this memorable day in their spiritual lives. Congratulations Liliia and Kevin. May you both be blessed by God with long, loving and faith filled lives. Lastly, my sincere "Thanks" to the members of the A.N.C. altar society and ladies of the parish for their generous donations of food for the brunches, dinners and weekly fellowship snacks after mass each week. I am happy to report that the tops of all the altars which were in very worn and aged condition have been sanded down, painted and new brackets attached that make changing the altar cloths less time-consuming and effortless. Thank you to our sister, Carol Szydlowski, for leading that project. Carol also cleaned out and reorganized the storage areas of the sacristy and they look great now. Thank you, Carol.

With the continuing rise of costs for live flowers, we have decided to begin transitioning to the use of silk floral arrangements for the altars and other decorations around the church and parish hall throughout the year. We hope you will enjoy some of the new floral arrangements.



I would like to acknowledge the most generous monetary donation from **Mr. Mike Wisniewski** on

behalf of his Polish Legion of American Veterans Post 124 in Ohio toward the purchase of the flowers and materials to make a new patriotic Memorial Day wreath and new red/white/blue flameless candles which is on display by the Joseph altar and will also be used throughout the year during various national and veteran holidays and ceremonies. Our wholehearted "Thanks & Appreciation" to the men of our parish for your continued support of lifting, fixing, carrying, items for us ladies whenever asked. We love you guys. Last, but not least, "Thank You" Fr. Jim for your continued guidance and support in all our endeavors.

Celebrating Our Graduates!



There is something special about watching young people grow in faith, character, and knowledge. This year, the All Saints family proudly celebrates two outstanding graduates whose accomplishments inspire us all.



Congratulations to Shane, who recently earned his degree in Computer Science from Michigan State University. Housed within the College of Engineering, the Department of Computer Science and Engineering is nationally recognized for preparing graduates to lead in software

development, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and emerging technologies through innovative teaching and research. We are especially pleased that Shane has already begun his professional career in his chosen field. Although work has taken him to Chicago, we always look forward to welcoming him



home whenever he visits his All Saints family.



We also extend heartfelt congratulations to Dima, who graduated from high school with numerous academic honors. Even more exciting, she has earned a scholarship to attend the Stephen M. Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan, where she will study Business and Marketing. Named in honor of alumnus and philanthropist Stephen M. Ross, whose transformational gifts have helped make the school one of the nation's premier business programs, Michigan is renowned for its action-based learning, innovation, and leadership development.

Father Jim is already looking forward to future road trips—one to Oakland to visit Olivia and another to Ann Arbor to check in on Dima. What a blessing it is to watch our young people pursue their dreams while

carrying the values of faith, hard work, and service with them.

To Shane and Dima, your All Saints Parish family is incredibly proud of you. May God continue to guide your steps and bless every new opportunity that lies ahead.

**Sto Lat! Mabrouk!
Congratulations!**



Friends of Sunday School (FOSS) News July 2026

by Gloria Bawol

All Saints Sunday School concluded its program on Sunday, June 7, 2026. Congratulations to all our students. Davida D for also being a Youth Reader. Dima D.: Graduated from The Gene L. Klida Utica Academy for International Studies in Utica Community School. She has received a scholarship to attend the University of Michigan. She is a Lecturer for our Church. She was also a Sunday School teacher this year. It was a blessing as Father Jim conducted a laying of hands upon Dima by our congregation during Mass. “Though the people had accepted the Word and were baptized, the apostles Peter and John came to pray over them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit. Through the laying on of hands, they are strengthened and filled. This moment reflects the fullness of Christian life: not only believing but being transformed by the Spirit.” Jacob K.: Altar server and Youth Reader. Nardin K.: Altar server, Youth Reader, School Forensics Team and Band member. Yuliia K.: Received the highest score in one of the sections at a science competition in her school: The National Fluid Power Association’s Fluid Power Action Challenge. On a math test, she got the highest score in the entire 6th grade. Michael P. Altar Server, Youth Reader and continues preparation for Confirmation. Hank R.: Youth Reader and continues preparation for Confirmation. Jack R.: Youth Reader and continues preparation for Confirmation.

Each week during Sunday School this year, students learned about the parts of the Holy Mass and the 4 Solemnities of the PNCC. Examples of lessons were: The Sacred Vessels, Vestments, The Word of God as a Sacrament in the PNCC, The Nicene Creed, Holy Communion and The Lord’s Prayer. Each week students say what they are thankful for and what prayer intention they have. They are becoming more able to find the Books, Chapters and Verses of the Bible as we read Bible verses pertaining to the lesson.

We were also thankful for all the help our youth gave. They assisted in Trivia Night, the Halloween Party and the Easter Egg hunt. At our monthly youth gatherings, we did movies, games, ice skated, helped with pierogi making, and made cards for people on our Church’s prayer list. We concluded our year with the Baseball Game at UWM on June 6th. FOSS pays for our youth to attend these functions.

A big thank you goes to Father Jim this year. He oversaw the religious aspects of our program and did Sacramental preparation. Sunday School could not happen without the volunteering of the teachers. Special thanks to: Linda A., Gloria B., Mary C., Father Jim and our first-year teacher, Dima D. On the last day every child received a certificate of completion, and we all had cake and ice cream to celebrate Dima’s graduation. We also acknowledged Shane C. as he graduated from Michigan State University in December. He accepted a job in Chicago and has since relocated. We also were proud of Olivia K, as she completed her first year of college in

the School of Nursing at Oakland University and was on the Dean's list both semesters. The members of FOSS would like to thank all the members of All Saints Church that were able to give a donation to our group in the Church envelope during the month of June. We greatly appreciate your financial support for the youth of our parish. I personally want to acknowledge the officers of FOSS: Gloria B. – President, Andrea P. – Vice Chair, Jill C. – Treasurer and Jennifer K./ Mary C.– Secretary. It takes a village to accomplish what we do in Sunday School and with FOSS. Thank you all for being a part of our village. "What is your duty as a member of the Church?" "As a member of the Church it is my duty: 1) to accept and obey Christ's teachings through the church; 2) to give glory to God by my good life; 3) to support the work of the Church; and 4) to help bring others into the Church." How have we helped the helpless, served the lonely, or rescued the despair? Here are some ideas for this summer:

- ☐ Read a story to a blind person.
- ☐ Write a letter for someone crippled with arthritis.
- ☐ Pray the Rosary with nursing home residents.
- ☐ Rake yards, mow grass, or shovel snow for a neighbor who needs help.
- ☐ Plant flowers at home, church, or for a neighbor.
- ☐ Clean up the pews after Mass.
- ☐ Babysit or animal sit for someone in need.
- ☐ Volunteer at a soup kitchen, clothing or food pantry, or a local shelter.
- ☐ Check on a friend who's going through a difficult time.
- ☐ Send a card or letter to someone who is ill or on our church prayer list.
- ☐ Keep alert for ways to help others. These small gestures say, "I care about you."

Our God is an awesome God, He reigns from heaven above, With wisdom, power and love!

The next FOSS meeting will be on Sunday, August 12, 2026. You do not have to have children in the Sunday School program to participate in our group. We have our meetings on Zoom in the evening at 7:30 PM. The first day of Sunday School for the 2026/27 school year will be September 13, 2026. There is no charge for children to attend Sunday School. Please encourage your children to attend. If you know any families that are looking to join a Sunday School program, please share what a gem we have at All Saints Church in Sterling Heights. We accommodate children from age 5-18 in our program.

"The Word was in the world, and though God made the world through him, yet the world did not recognize him. He came to his own country, but his own people did not receive him. Some, however, did receive him and believed in him; so, he gave them the right to become God's children. They did not become God's children by natural means, that is, by being born as the children of a human father; God himself was their Father." John 1:10-14.

Remembering Those Who Gave Their All



Memorial Day at All Saints Parish was marked with reverence, gratitude, and prayer as we honored the brave men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our nation.

Our remembrance began during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, where the intentions and the Prayer of the Faithful included those who gave their lives defending the freedoms we enjoy today. As Catholics, we know there is no greater gift we can offer than the Holy Mass, and it was fitting that we entrusted these heroes to God's eternal care.



Following Mass, the congregation processed from the nave of the church to our flagpole for a moving outdoor ceremony. In keeping with Memorial Day protocol, our veterans first raised the American flag briskly to the top of the staff before solemnly lowering it to half-staff, where it remained until noon in remembrance of the fallen. As Taps echoed across the church grounds, all gathered stood in respectful silence. It was a powerful and sobering reminder that the freedoms we cherish were secured through the courage

and sacrifice of countless men and women who answered their nation's call.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to our veterans for leading this meaningful ceremony and reminding us that the cost of liberty is never to be forgotten.

A special thank you also goes to Sharon, whose creativity and thoughtful planning beautifully coordinated the placement of commemorative flags honoring those who are remembered. The display served as a moving visual tribute, inviting all who entered our church grounds to pause, reflect, and give thanks.

May we never forget those who gave everything, and may God grant them eternal rest.

Take Me Out to the Ball Game!

On Saturday, June 6, a wonderful contingent from All Saints Parish traded lawn mowers, garden gloves, and weekend chores for hot dogs, sunshine, and America's favorite pastime as we gathered for a fun-filled day at the ballpark.

The evening featured a doubleheader as the Westside Woolly Mammoths took on the Eastside Diamond Hoppers, but the excitement extended well beyond the action on the field. It was also Polish Heritage Night, complete with delicious Polish food, lively entertainment, and a celebration of the rich traditions that have shaped so many of our families and communities.



The smiles, laughter, and fellowship shared throughout the day reminded us that spending time together outside the walls of the church is another wonderful way to strengthen our parish family. Whether cheering on a great play, singing "Take Me Out to the Ball Game," or simply enjoying conversations in the stands, everyone left with great memories and a renewed appreciation for our parish community.

A special thank you goes to **Jill** for coordinating this outstanding outing and making all the arrangements. Her efforts provided a perfect opportunity for parishioners to relax, enjoy one another's company, and take a well-deserved break from the never-ending yard work waiting at home!



9th Annual Bishop Stanley Memorial Men's Spiritual Retreat

Jason Soltysiak

The 9th Annual Bishop Stanley Memorial Men's Spiritual Retreat was held June 17–20 at the Bishop Hodur Retreat and Recreation Center on the historic Spojnia Farm campus. Centered on the theme "Broken Chains," inspired by Psalm 107:14—*"God brought them out of darkness, the utter darkness, and broke away their chains"*—the retreat offered four days of prayer, worship, spiritual formation, fellowship, history, and patriotic reflection.



Thirty men, including clergy, seminarians, candidates for ministry, laymen, and clergy seeking incardination into the Polish National Catholic Church, gathered from across the Church. The diversity of participants fostered meaningful conversations, mutual encouragement, and lasting friendships.

The retreat opened Wednesday evening with fellowship, dinner, and an engaging presentation by Andrew Humphreys exploring whether it was more difficult to follow Christ during His earthly ministry or in today's world. The evening concluded with Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, celebrated by Rev. Jim Ploskonka, with Eucharistic Adoration remaining available throughout the retreat.



Thursday featured a Requiem Holy Mass for departed members of the United YMSofR, celebrated by Rev. Jim Konicki, with Bishop John Mack serving as homilist. During the Prayers of the Faithful, more than 150 deceased members were remembered by name. The afternoon included a tour of a local coal mine, fellowship at McDade Park, and participation in the rededication of Savonarola

Theological Seminary, led by Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky and attended by Mayor Paige Gebhardt Cognetti of Scranton.

Friday celebrated both America's 250th anniversary and Juneteenth with a patriotic Holy Mass, followed by fellowship, recreation, and an inspiring presentation by Rev. Jason Soltysiak, who reflected on how the Church helps believers break the chains of sin through God's grace. The symbolic unlocking of a treasure chest bound in chains reinforced the retreat's central theme.



Saturday concluded with Prime Bishop Mikovsky's presentation on *Patriotism in the PNCC* and a closing Holy Mass, after which perpetual Eucharistic Adoration was reverently concluded.

The retreat was coordinated by Rev. Jason Soltysiak with the assistance of Rev. Jim Ploskonka, Rev. Jim Konicki, Andrew Humphreys, Nick Kazinetz, and Kevin McConlogue, along with many dedicated volunteers. With a record attendance of 31 participants, the retreat demonstrated the continued vitality of this annual tradition and laid a strong foundation for celebrating its milestone 10th Anniversary Retreat in 2027.

Young Men's Society of the Resurrection – New Ministry Opportunity!



Calling all men of the parish! The Young Men's Society of the Resurrection (**YMSofR**) is launching an exciting new ministry custom transfer printing shop that will create on-demand T-shirts, sweatshirts,

hoodies, hats, aprons, mugs, tumblers, key chains, tote bags, and much more!

Whether you have experience with graphic design, printing, marketing, sales, or simply enjoy working with your hands, there is a place for you on the team. This ministry will provide fellowship, develop new skills, support parish events, and create unique items for our parish family and community.

Interested in being part of something new and exciting? **See Dwight** to learn more, share your ideas, and join us as we build this ministry together. No experience is necessary—just bring your enthusiasm and willingness to serve!

Come be part of the work... and the fun!

Calling All Gamers... and Future Gamers!

Could All Saints Parish become home to one of the first teams in the PNCC Digital Disciples E-Sports League?

Do you enjoy video games? Have you ever wanted to be part of a team? Maybe you've never played competitively but would like to learn.

We're exploring the creation of an All Saints Parish E-Sports Team to compete online with teams from other parishes throughout the Polish National Catholic Church. This exciting new ministry would use gaming to build friendships, encourage teamwork, develop leadership, and strengthen our faith in a safe, Christian environment.

Potential games may include:

- Rocket League
- Mario Kart
- Minecraft
- Nintendo Switch Sports
- EA Sports FC
- MLB The Show
- Fall Guys
- Other family-friendly games

No experience is necessary—only a willingness to learn, have fun, and represent our parish with Christian sportsmanship. Open to all.

Happy Father's Day!



We celebrated the wonderful fathers, grandfathers, godfathers, and father figures who bless our families with their love, guidance, patience, and, of course, their legendary "dad jokes!" Looking around our parish, it's easy to see just how deeply these men are loved—not only by their families at home but also by their All Saints family.

grill amazing meals, and remind us of God's faithful love through your everyday example. May God continue to bless each of you with good health, abundant joy, and the love you so generously share with others.

Happy Father's Day from your All Saints Parish family!

Confirmation



Our parish was truly blessed to celebrate a joyful and Spirit-filled Confirmation Sunday. During the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the Sacrament of Confirmation was conferred upon Liliia and Kevin by the Very Reverend Charles Zawistowski, Chancellor and Administrator of the Western Diocese. Surrounded by family, friends, and our parish community, they were strengthened by the gifts of the Holy Spirit and renewed in their commitment to faithfully follow Christ and serve His Church.



We ask God's continued blessings upon Liliia and Kevin as they grow in faith, wisdom, and love, allowing the Holy Spirit to guide them throughout their lives.

Following the Mass, the celebration continued with a wonderful reception filled with fellowship and joy. Our sincere thanks are extended to the members of the Altar

Society for their generous hospitality and thoughtful preparation. Their dedication and service helped make this special day even more memorable for our newly confirmed parishioners, their families, and everyone in attendance. Congratulations to Liliia and Kevin, and may God continue to richly bless them in the years ahead.



Savonarola Seminary Rededicated for a New Era of Formation and Mission

On Thursday, June 18, 2026, clergy, seminarians, church leaders, benefactors, and guests gathered at the Savonarola Theological Seminary and Institute in Scranton, Pennsylvania, for a joyful and historic Blessing and Rededication Ceremony celebrating the Seminary's renewed mission and expanding vision for theological education in the Polish National Catholic Church.



Pictured: Rev. Ploskonka, Mayor Cagnetti, Prime Bishop Mikovsky, Rev. Dodd, Rev. Konicki

The celebration began at 4:00 p.m. with a formal blessing of the Seminary facilities led by Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky. Prayers were offered for the faculty, students, benefactors, and all who will be formed within its walls, asking God's continued guidance upon this sacred place of learning, ministry, and service. The ceremony emphasized the Seminary's commitment to

preparing future clergy and lay leaders grounded in Sacred Scripture, Apostolic Tradition, scholarship, and faithful service to Christ and His Church.



A special highlight of the afternoon was the presentation of an official proclamation from the City of Scranton by Mayor Paige G. Cagnetti in recognition of Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky and the continuing contributions of the Polish National Catholic Church to the religious, educational, cultural, and civic life of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

Following the liturgical celebration, guests participated in a program highlighting both the accomplishments and future direction of the Seminary. Reverend Jim Konicki welcomed those assembled and provided an overview of the many improvements completed over the past several years. Attendees learned of extensive renovations that have transformed the facility, including painting projects throughout the building, upgrades to the heating system, new flooring, updated furnishings, renovated bathrooms, the addition of a piano, the establishment of a community garden, and numerous other enhancements made possible through the generosity of benefactors and volunteers.



During the program, Reverend Dr. Jim Ploskonka presented a special recognition honoring Reverend Theodore L. Zawistowski, theologian, scholar, educator, church historian, and longtime servant of the Polish National Catholic Church. The recognition celebrated his decades of scholarship, leadership, and dedication to preserving the history, theology, and identity of the PNCC for future generations.



Guests also enjoyed guided tours of the Seminary, providing an opportunity to view the renovated facilities and witness firsthand the remarkable progress that has been achieved.

Perhaps most inspiring was the presentation of the Seminary's vision for the future. Father Ploskonka outlined plans to expand

educational opportunities through the Institute of Savonarola, including the development of asynchronous learning programs that will make PNCC theological education available to students throughout North America and throughout the world. This initiative will provide greater access to clergy formation, continuing education, lay leadership development, and personal faith enrichment regardless of geographic location.

The afternoon concluded with gratitude, enthusiasm, and confidence in the future. Standing firmly upon its foundation of Truth, Labor, and Faith, the Savonarola Theological Seminary and Institute is positioned to serve the Church for generations to come, forming faithful leaders who will proclaim the Gospel, strengthen parishes, and advance the mission of Christ throughout the world.

Opportunities to Serve, Welcome, and Inspire

Ambassadors & Greeters Ministry – Volunteers Needed

"Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." (Romans 15:7)



Beginning this September, All Saints Parish will launch our new **Ambassadors & Greeters Ministry**, an important part of our parish growth and hospitality initiative. As we continue to welcome new visitors and families, we seek parishioners who are willing to share the love of Christ through a ministry of presence, hospitality, and fellowship.

Volunteers are needed to serve as Ambassadors, Greeters, Fellowship Hosts, and Follow-Up Team members. Responsibilities include welcoming guests, assisting visitors, encouraging participation in fellowship activities, introducing newcomers to parish life, and maintaining contact with first-time guests.

Orientation and formation sessions will be held prior to the ministry's launch. If you feel called to serve in this important outreach, please speak with Father Jim.

Please Share Your Story of Faith

Every parish has a story, and that story is told through the lives of its people.

At All Saints Parish, we are blessed with individuals and families whose faith journeys reflect God's grace, love, guidance, and presence in everyday life. Whether you found a spiritual home here, returned to the Church after time away, experienced comfort during a difficult season, discovered meaningful friendships, or grew closer to Christ through prayer and the Sacraments, your story may inspire and encourage others.

As part of our ongoing effort to celebrate the life of our parish and welcome others into our community, we are inviting parishioners to share brief personal testimonials about their experiences at All Saints.

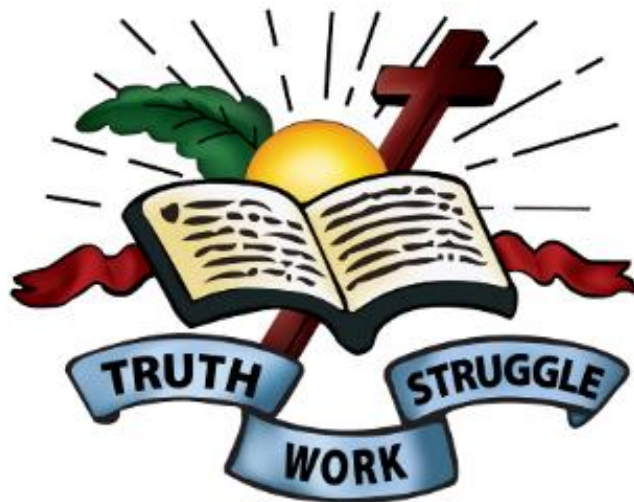
Testimonial
personal recommendation
written or spoken statement
in support of a particular truth

These stories may be featured in parish publications, social media, our website, special events, or other parish communications. Testimonials can be submitted in writing, audio, or video format, and assistance is available for anyone who would like help organizing their thoughts. Anonymous submissions are also welcome.

Often the most powerful stories are the simplest ones of hope, faith, healing, friendship, gratitude, and belonging.

Scripture reminds us: *“Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope.”* (1 Peter 3:15)

If you would be willing to share your story, please contact Father Jim. Your experience may be exactly the encouragement someone else needs to hear.



Summer 2026 Word Find

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- ☐ JESUS
- ☐ BLESSING
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- ☐ USA
- ☐ FOURTH
- ☐ FREEDOM
- ☐ PRAYER
- ☐ CHURCH
- ☐ FAMILY
- ☐ VACATION
- ☐ SUNSHINE
- ☐ ORDINARY
- ☐ GRACE
- ☐ FAITH
- ☐ PATRIOTISM
- ☐ FRIENDSHIP
- ☐ WORSHIP
- ☐ SCRIPTURE
- ☐ FELLOWSHIP
- ☐ CELEBRATION
- ☐ THANKSGIVING
- ☐ MIRACLES

Unscramble each word.

Scrambled Word	
HNNOSESI	OOOOOOO
SUSEJ	OOOOO
ORIVSA	OOOOOO
YRPARE	OOOOOO
SNBILSEG	OOOOOOOO
HTAFI	OOOOO
ECGAR	OOOOO
HWORPSI	OOOOOOO
LACIMER	OOOOOOO
LCIPIDES	OOOOOOOO

EVOL	OOOO
EPHO	OOOO
YJO	OOO
TSER	OOOO
NUGS	OOOO
SGON	OOOO
ERCA	OOOO
KNID	OOOO
TSRU	OOOO
LTIGH	OOOOO

Answers are found on page 22.

Kentucky Creamy Summer Corn Salad

A crisp, refreshing side dish featuring sweet corn, colorful vegetables, and a light, creamy dressing. Perfect for cookouts, picnics, potlucks, or alongside grilled meats. Perfect for UK basketball!!

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 pounds frozen corn, thawed under cool running water and well drained
- 1 cup red bell pepper, diced
- ¼ cup purple (red) onion, finely diced
- 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and diced
- ½ cup plain Greek yogurt (or sour cream)
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder (or two cloves of fresh garlic)
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped

Directions

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine the thawed corn, diced red bell pepper, purple onion, and jalapeño. Toss gently until the vegetables are evenly distributed.
2. In a separate bowl, whisk together the Greek yogurt, mayonnaise, salt, black pepper, and garlic powder until smooth and creamy.
3. Pour the dressing over the corn mixture and stir gently until everything is evenly coated.
4. Fold in the chopped cilantro and mix just until incorporated.
5. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve. For the best flavor, chill for at least 30 minutes before serving, allowing the ingredients to meld together.

Serving Suggestion: Garnish with a sprinkle of fresh cilantro or a few slices of jalapeño for a colorful finishing touch.

Answers to Word Scramble (page 21): *Sonshine, Jesus, Savior, Prayer, Blessing, Faith, Grace, Worship, Miracle, Disciple, Love, Hope, Joy, Rest, Sung, Song, Care, Kind, Trust, Light.*

CALLING ALL GAMERS... AND FUTURE GAMERS!



COULD ALL SAINTS PARISH BECOME HOME TO ONE OF THE FIRST TEAMS IN THE PNCC DIGITAL DISCIPLES E-SPORTS LEAGUE?

Do you enjoy video games? Have you ever wanted to be part of a team? Maybe you've never played competitively but would like to learn.

We're exploring the creation of an All Saints Parish E-Sports Team to compete online with teams from other parishes throughout the Polish National Catholic Church.

This exciting new ministry would use gaming as a way to build friendships, encourage teamwork, develop leadership, and strengthen our faith in a safe, Christian environment.

FAITH.
FELLOWSHIP.
TEAMWORK.
VICTORY.
THROUGH CHRIST.

POTENTIAL GAMES MAY INCLUDE:



ROCKET
LEAGUE



MARIO
KART



MINECRAFT



NINTENDO
SWITCH
SPORTS



EA SPORTS
FC



MLB
THE SHOW



FALL
GUYS



& OTHER
FAMILY-FRIENDLY
GAMES

No experience is necessary—only a willingness to learn, have fun, and represent our parish with Christian sportsmanship.

THIS ISN'T JUST FOR YOUTH!

Parents, young adults, college students, adults, and experienced gamers are all invited to help shape this new ministry.

Whether you're interested in playing, coaching, organizing, streaming matches, or simply learning more, we'd love to hear from you.

WE'RE LOOKING FOR:

- PLAYERS
- TEAM CAPTAINS
- COACHES & MENTORS
- STREAMING & TECHNOLOGY VOLUNTEERS
- PARENTS AND PARISH SUPPORTERS

This is currently an exploration and planning phase. If there is enough interest, All Saints could become one of the founding parishes in a diocesan league beginning with a pilot season in 2027.



IF THIS SOUNDS EXCITING—OR IF YOU'RE SIMPLY CURIOUS—PLEASE SPEAK WITH **FATHER JIM** AFTER HOLY MASS OR CONTACT THE PARISH OFFICE.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!



LET'S DISCOVER HOW FAITH,
FELLOWSHIP, AND FRIENDLY COMPETITION
CAN BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER
IN A WHOLE NEW WAY!



JULY 2026						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3 Independence Day Holiday	4 Holy Mass 10:00 am Independence Day
5 Ordinary 14 10:00 am	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 Ordinary 15 10:00 am	13	14 Pray for All Saints Parish	15	16	17	18
19 Ordinary 16 10:00 am Parish Committee	20	21 Pray for Holy Cross Parish	22	23	24	25 Feast—James the Greater, Apostle
26 Ordinary 17 10:00 am	27	28 Pray for Our Saviour Parish	29	30	31 Concert at the <u>Gazebo</u> 7:00PM	1

Let us continue to remember in our prayers our sister parishes in the Detroit area: **Holy Cross Parish** and **Our Saviour Parish**. We especially pray for their faithful pastors, **Father Senior Nowak** and **Father Galaś**, for their parish committees, and for all their parishioners.

May Almighty God strengthen them in their ministry, bless their worship, and deepen their witness to the Gospel. May the Holy Spirit continue to guide their leaders with wisdom, fill their congregations with faith, hope, and love, and unite all our parishes ever more closely in the mission of Christ.

As members of one Polish National Catholic Church family, we rejoice in one another's blessings, support one another through life's challenges, and pray that our Lord will continue to bear abundant fruit through the faithful work of every parish. May God grant them health, peace, perseverance, and many opportunities to welcome new souls into His Church.

Lord Jesus, bless Holy Cross Parish and Our Saviour Parish, their clergy and faithful people, and keep them steadfast in Your love, now and always. Amen.

AUGUST 2026						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2 Ordinary 18 10:00 am	3 C	4 O	5 N	6 V	7 O	8
9 Ordinary 19 10:00 am	10	11 Pray for St. Jane's Chantal Parish	12	13	14	15 Solemnity Dormition/Assu mption of BVM
16 Ordinary 20 10:00 am Parish Committee	17	18 Pray for St. Matthias Parish	19	20	21 <u>YMSofR</u>	22 Golf Tournament in Scranton
23 Ordinary 21 10:00 am	24 Feast— Bartholomew, Apostle	25	26 Solemnity— Our Lady of Czestochowa	27	28	29 Solemnity— Beheading of John the Baptist
30 Ordinary 22 10:00 am	31	1	2	3	4	5

Please keep our neighbors at **St. Jane's Chapel** and **St. Matthias Parish** in the greater Detroit area in your daily prayers. We especially remember their clergy, parish leaders, and faithful parishioners as they face the challenges of church authority, concerns over their parish homes, and the uncertainty that comes with change.

As we pray for these sister parishes, we also give thanks for the blessings God has bestowed upon All Saints Parish. We are grateful for our Catholic and Apostolic faith and for the collaborative spirit that has long characterized our parish, where pastor and parish committee serve together in faithful partnership. This shared commitment reminds us that every member of the Church has a role in building up the Body of Christ. May we never take that gift for granted, but use it to support and encourage our brothers and sisters throughout the Church.

As one family of faith, let us lift these parishes before the Lord. May He fill their hearts with courage, grant wisdom to their leaders, bring peace where there is uncertainty, and remind them that He never abandons His people. May the Holy Spirit guide them every step of the way, and may brighter days lie ahead as they continue to place their trust in Christ. Amen.

SERMON: Easter Sunday 5A



“I am the way, the truth and the life.”

The Gospel this Sunday offered words that speak directly to the heart: “Do not let your hearts be troubled.” These are not simply comforting words from long ago. They are words spoken by Christ to His disciples in a moment of uncertainty, fear, and confusion—and they remain just as powerful for us today.

Recently, our parish had the great joy of celebrating First Holy Communion for Roland and Brady. It was a beautiful and sacred moment not only for them and their families, but for our entire parish family. To witness young people, approach the altar for the first time reminds all of us of the beauty, wonder, and privilege of the Holy Eucharist.

In the Gospel, Jesus tells His disciples, “I am the way and the truth and the life.” Notice that Jesus does not simply point toward a path or provide a set of instructions. He offers Himself. Christianity is not merely a philosophy or moral system—it is a relationship with the living Christ.

That is what made this celebration so meaningful. Roland and Brady did not simply participate in a religious ceremony or receive a symbol. They received Jesus Christ Himself in the Holy Eucharist—His Body and Blood, His real presence among us. The same Lord who healed the sick, forgave sins, calmed storms, and conquered death now comes to dwell within His people.

What an incredible mystery.

For those of us who have received Holy Communion for many years, moments like these invite us to pause and remember what we receive each time we approach the altar. It can be easy for routine to replace wonder, or familiarity to lessen appreciation. Yet every Mass is an encounter with Christ Himself.

Jesus also tells His disciples that whoever believes in Him “will do the works that I do.” At first, those words seem almost impossible to understand. Yet Christ reminds us that when we allow Him to live within us, His grace begins to shine through our own lives. Small acts of kindness, forgiveness, patience, generosity, compassion, and courage become visible signs of Christ still at work in the world today.

That is part of the mission now entrusted to Roland and Brady. As they continue to grow in faith, they are called not only to receive Christ, but also to reflect Him—in their homes, among friends, at school, in sports, and in daily life. The Eucharist strengthens us to become living witnesses of God’s love.

The truth is that every one of us continues to ask questions like those asked by Thomas in the Gospel: “Lord, we do not know... how can we know the way?” We live in a world filled with uncertainty, anxiety, division, and distraction. Hearts are often troubled. Families face struggles. Communities carry burdens. Many people quietly search for meaning, direction, and hope.

Into that uncertainty, Jesus continues to say: “I am the way.”

Not “find your own way.” Not “figure it out yourself.” But “come to Me.”

That invitation remains at the center of the Eucharist. Every time we gather at the altar, Christ invites us to trust Him more deeply, to place our burdens into His hands, and to remember that we are never alone. He comes to strengthen weary hearts, calm anxious minds, forgive sins, and renew hope.

The celebration of First Holy Communion is therefore not only a special milestone for children. It becomes a moment of renewal for the whole parish community. It reminds us who we are as Catholic Christians and what stands at the center of our faith: Jesus Christ truly present among His people.

May we continue to pray for Roland and Brady as they grow in faith and discipleship. And may all of us approach the altar with renewed reverence, gratitude, and joy—remembering always:

- Christ is the way.
- Christ is the truth.
- Christ is the life.



SERMON: Easter Sunday 6A



“That They Might Receive The Holy Spirit.”

Acts 8:5-8, 14-17 1 Peter 3:15-18 John 14:15-21

Dear faithful and friends of All Saints Parish,

As we continue our joyful journey through the Easter season, our parish has been reflecting together on a powerful and hope-filled theme drawn from the Acts of the Apostles: **“It Can Happen Today.”** Week after week, we are reminded that the life of the early Church is not simply history, it is a living witness to what God still desires to do among His people right here and right now.

This past Sunday, our focus centered on a profound moment in the Church’s earliest mission: the spread of the Gospel into Samaria. This was not just a geographical movement, but a

spiritual breakthrough. Samaria represented division, distance, and long-standing tension. Yet, when Philip proclaimed Christ there, hearts were opened, lives were changed, and Scripture tells us beautifully, “there was great joy in that city.”

That phrase alone is worth holding onto *great joy*. It reminds us that wherever Christ is welcomed, joy follows. Not a superficial happiness, but a deep, abiding joy rooted in God’s presence. It is a joy that can take root even in the most unlikely places—our struggles, our uncertainties, and even those areas of life we may feel are distant from God.

But the reading does not stop there. While the people had received the Word and were baptized, something more was still needed. The apostles Peter and John were sent, and through prayer and the laying on of hands, the people received the Holy Spirit. This moment brings us to the heart of the message: the fullness of the Christian life is found not only in believing, but in being filled with the Holy Spirit.

This theme, “**that they might receive the Holy Spirit,**” guided our reflection and continues to shape our journey. In the Gospel of John, Jesus gives us a promise filled with comfort and power: “I will not leave you orphans.” He assures His disciples—and us—that the Advocate, the Spirit of truth, will come to dwell within us. This is not symbolic or distant. The Holy Spirit is God present within us, guiding, strengthening, and renewing our lives.

As a parish family, we are invited to ask ourselves a very real and personal question: Are we living as people who have truly received the Holy Spirit? The grace has been given to us through the sacraments, but God continually invites us to open our hearts more fully—to allow that gift to come alive in our daily lives.

When the Holy Spirit is active within us, something begins to change. Fear gives way to courage. Routine faith becomes vibrant and alive. Love grows deeper. And like the early Church, we begin to experience a joy that cannot be contained.

This is the beauty of our ongoing reflection. The events we read about in Acts were never meant to remain in the past. They are meant to continue in us. Our homes, our parish, and our community become places where God is still working, still healing, still drawing people to Himself.

As we look ahead, may we continue to pray with simplicity and trust: *Come, Holy Spirit*. May we be open to His presence in every aspect of our lives. And may we, like the early Christians, become witnesses to the living power of God at work among us.

Because what happened then... can still happen now. **IT CAN HAPPEN TODAY!**





SERMON: Easter Sunday 7A

“All Devoted Themselves with One Accord to Prayer.”

Throughout this Easter season, our parish has journeyed together through the Acts of the Apostles in the sermon series, *It Can Happen Today* or *Let It Happen Today*. Week after week, we have reflected upon the remarkable truth that the same Holy Spirit who moved powerfully in the early Church continues to move among God’s people today. Christianity is not merely the memory of what God once accomplished centuries ago. The Church is alive. Christ is alive. The Holy Spirit remains active, guiding, strengthening, and renewing His people even now.

This past Sunday, we reflected upon a beautiful moment following the Ascension of Jesus into heaven. The disciples returned to Jerusalem uncertain about what would come next. They did not fully understand how God’s promises would unfold. The world around them was unstable, and opposition was growing. Yet amid uncertainty, Scripture gives us a powerful description of the early believers:

“They all devoted themselves with one accord to prayer.”

Those words reveal something essential about the foundation of the Church. Before the preaching of Peter, before miracles occurred, before Pentecost itself, the disciples gathered together in prayer. The Apostles, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the women disciples, and the followers of Christ united themselves before God with one heart and one spirit.

That phrase “with one accord” is deeply important. It reminds us that the strength of the early Church did not come from status, power, or influence. It came from unity centered upon Jesus Christ. Different people with different personalities, histories, and fears came together in faith and trust before God.

What a needed lesson for our own time.

We live in a world often marked by division and anxiety. Families struggle. Communities become fractured. Nations experience unrest. Even Christians can become distracted by arguments and personal preferences rather than remaining focused upon Christ. Yet the Acts of the Apostles reminds us that the true power of the Church is not found in noise or self-promotion. The true strength of the Church is found in believers gathered in prayer.

Prayer united the disciples.
Prayer steadied them.
Prayer prepared them.
And prayer changed the world.

That truth remains just as powerful today.

When families pray together, something happens. When a parish prays together, something changes. Hearts soften. Faith deepens. Hope is restored. Walls begin to fall. The Holy Spirit continues to move in extraordinary ways whenever God's people gather with one accord before Him.

The Gospel reading beautifully complements this message. Jesus lifts His eyes to heaven and prays for His disciples. Before the Apostles ever devote themselves to prayer, Christ first prays for them. What a comforting and powerful truth that is for every Christian.

Before we ever pray to Christ, Christ is already praying for us.

He sees our fears, burdens, griefs, uncertainties, and struggles. He continues to intercede for His Church before the Father. This is why prayer has always stood at the heart of Catholic life. We pray at baptisms and funerals, at weddings and gravesides, during moments of celebration and moments of sorrow. We pray through novenas, devotions, Eucharistic adoration, the Liturgy of the Hours, and above all through the Holy Mass.

Prayer is not simply an addition to Christian life. Prayer is the lifeblood of Christian life.

The early Christians understood they could not survive spiritually on activity alone. Before going into the world, they first gathered before the Lord. That lesson remains essential today. Our lives are busy and often overwhelmed with distractions and obligations. We rush from one responsibility to another while neglecting the needs of the soul.

Yet Acts reminds us that true renewal does not begin with programs, strategies, or committees. Renewal begins with prayer.

The Apostles did not yet know exactly how God would act, but they trusted Him enough to pray together while they waited. In that waiting, God strengthened and prepared them for what was to come.

Perhaps the same invitation stands before us today.

What might happen if we truly became people devoted with one accord to prayer? What might happen within our homes, our parish, our community, and our hearts?

Perhaps the same thing that happened in Jerusalem long ago: the Holy Spirit would move once again, faith would deepen, and ordinary disciples would become joyful witnesses to the risen Christ.

That is the enduring message of Easter.

That is the message of Acts.

And that is the heart of our series:

It Can Happen Today. Let It Happen Today!



SERMON: Solemnity of Pentecost

“Receive the Holy Spirit.”

Pentecost stands among the great celebrations of the Church year—a Solemnity marking not simply the end of the Easter season, but the powerful fulfillment of Christ’s promise to His disciples. Over these past weeks, our parish has journeyed together through the Acts of the Apostles in our series *Let It Happen Today*, reflecting on the truth that the same Holy Spirit who transformed the early Church continues to move among God’s people today. On Pentecost, we witness that transformation is fully revealed.

The frightened become fearless. The uncertainty becomes courageous. The Apostles who once hid behind locked doors suddenly proclaim Jesus Christ boldly before the world. What changed? The Holy Spirit.

In the Gospel, Jesus appears to His disciples gathered in fear and uncertainty. Into that anxiety, He speaks words that still echo through the Church today: “Peace be with you.” Then He breathes upon them and says, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

What a remarkable moment. Jesus does not wait for the disciples to become perfect before giving them the Spirit. He comes while they are afraid, confused, and struggling. That should give every one of us tremendous hope.

Pentecost reminds us that God works through ordinary people. Fishermen, laborers, families, and imperfect disciples become instruments of God’s grace. Holiness is not reserved only for those who appear to have everything together. The Holy Spirit strengthens ordinary believers striving to become saints.

One of the most beautiful aspects of our Pentecost celebration was hearing the Word of God proclaimed in multiple languages, including Polish, Ukrainian, Arabic, and English, while the bulletin included the Lord's Prayer in additional languages such as Latin, Spanish, and German. This reflected the true spirit of Pentecost itself. Different cultures, histories, languages, and accents united in one faith and one Church.

The miracle of Pentecost was not that everyone suddenly became identical. Rather, every person heard the Gospel in the language of the heart. Perhaps that is exactly what our divided world still needs today.

We live in a time marked by division and conflict. People are constantly separated into groups and categories. Yet the Holy Spirit does the opposite. The Spirit gathers. The Spirit unites. The Spirit heals. Saint Paul reminds us that while there are different gifts, there is the same Spirit working through all.

Some preach. Some teach. Some sing in the choir or serve at the altar. Some quietly prepare meals, clean the church, support ministries, or pray faithfully for loved ones and for the parish. Every act of faithfulness matters in the Kingdom of God.

The Holy Spirit is not found only in dramatic moments of wind and fire. Sometimes the Spirit moves quietly—in the grandmother praying her rosary, the child learning the Sign of the Cross, the parishioner who remains faithful during hardship, or the soul who returns to church after many years away. Those moments are Pentecost too.

This feast also invites us to ask an important question: what doors have we locked in our own lives? Fear? Anger? Regret? Exhaustion? Worry about the future?

The Apostles locked their doors as well, yet Jesus entered anyway. That is the beauty of the Gospel. Christ is never stopped by locked doors. He enters our fears and uncertainties and speaks peace directly into our hearts.

“Receive the Holy Spirit.”

Receive peace instead of fear. Receive courage instead of hesitation. Receive hope instead of despair. Receive strength instead of exhaustion. Receive faith that God is still working today.

Because He is.

The message of Pentecost is not merely historical; it is deeply personal and wonderfully present. The same Holy Spirit who descended upon the Apostles descends upon the Church today. The same Spirit received at Baptism and strengthened in Confirmation continues to dwell within the faithful.

The Church does not need spectators. The Church needs disciples filled with the Holy Spirit—disciples willing to live with joy, conviction, mercy, and courage.

So, on this great Solemnity of Pentecost, may we open our hearts once again and pray boldly:

Come, Holy Spirit.
Renew Your Church.
Renew our homes and families.
Renew our parish.
Renew our hearts.

And may future generations look upon us and say: “They truly believed. They truly loved. They truly trusted in the power of God.”



SERMON: HOLY TRINITY SUNDAY

“Live In Peace.”

Exodus 4:34-8,19; 2 Corinthians 13:11-13; John 3:16-18

On the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, the Church invites us to reflect upon one of the deepest mysteries of our faith: the revelation that God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—three Divine Persons united in perfect love, communion, and peace. While the mystery of the Trinity can never be fully

understood by the human mind, it can be experienced through our relationship with God and with one another.

The readings for this feast remind us that the God we worship is not distant or indifferent to our lives. Rather, He is a God of mercy, compassion, and faithfulness. In the Second Reading, Saint Paul concludes his letter to the Corinthians with a simple but powerful instruction: “Live in peace.” These words are just as meaningful today as they were nearly two thousand years ago.

Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth, a city known throughout the ancient world for its prosperity, commerce, and cultural diversity. Yet beneath the surface there existed many divisions. The Christian community itself struggled with disagreements, rivalries, pride, and wounded relationships. Into this environment, Saint Paul offered practical guidance for Christian living: “Mend your ways, encourage one another, agree with one another, live in peace.”

For the biblical writers, peace meant much more than the absence of conflict. The Hebrew word *shalom* describes a state of wholeness, harmony, and right relationship with God and neighbor.

It signifies a life ordered according to God's will and reflects the blessings that flow from His presence.

This theme is beautifully illustrated in the First Reading from the Book of Exodus. Moses ascends Mount Sinai carrying the stone tablets after the people of Israel had fallen into the grave sin of worshiping the golden calf. One might expect God to respond in anger and judgment. Instead, the Lord reveals His true nature: “The Lord, the Lord, a merciful and gracious God, slow to anger and rich in kindness and fidelity.”

What a remarkable revelation! In a world where many ancient peoples feared unpredictable and vengeful deities, the God of Israel reveals Himself as merciful, patient, and loving. Moses responds by bowing in worship, recognizing both God's majesty and His compassion.

Throughout Christian history, the saints have reflected upon the meaning of peace. Saint Augustine famously described peace as “the tranquility of order.” He taught that true peace exists when our lives are rightly ordered under God. When God occupies the center of our lives, our priorities, relationships, and decisions begin to find proper balance. Conversely, when humanity attempts to build society without God, disorder and division inevitably follow.

History provides many examples. The twentieth century witnessed devastating wars, persecution, and violence on an unprecedented scale. Even today, our world continues to struggle with conflict, division, and uncertainty. While technology and knowledge have advanced dramatically, the human heart continues to wrestle with pride, anger, greed, and fear.

Into this reality comes the Good News proclaimed in the Gospel of Saint John: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son.” These familiar words remind us that God's response to humanity's brokenness is not condemnation but salvation. Christ entered human history to reveal the Father's love and to restore peace between God and humanity.

After His Resurrection, Jesus greeted His disciples with the words, “Peace be with you.” The Church has preserved these words within the Sacred Liturgy for centuries because Christian peace is more than a feeling. It is the presence of the Risen Christ among His people.

The Sign of Peace during Holy Mass reflects this ancient tradition. Before approaching the altar, Christians exchange a sign of reconciliation and unity. It reminds us that communion with Christ is inseparable from communion with one another.

Saint John Chrysostom once taught that nothing makes us more like God than becoming peacemakers. Every act of forgiveness, every effort to reconcile a broken relationship, every moment we choose patience over anger reflects the very character of God.

This call to peace flows directly from today's celebration of the Holy Trinity. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit exist in perfect communion, perfect unity, and perfect love. Because we are

created in the image of the Triune God, we too are called to live lives marked by unity, charity, and peace.

Each time we make the Sign of the Cross, we invoke the Holy Trinity. Each time we receive the Holy Eucharist, we receive Christ, the Prince of Peace. Each time we forgive, encourage, and serve one another, we participate in the very life of God.

Our world needs peacemakers now more than ever. May we allow the grace of the Holy Trinity to transform our hearts and strengthen our commitment to live as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ. And may Saint Paul's timeless words continue to guide our parish family and our daily lives:

“Live in peace.”



SERMON: Sunday in the Octave of Corpus Christi

“He Fed You With Manna-Whoever Eats This Bread Will Live Forever”

Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14-16; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; John 6:51-58



My Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

“He fed you with manna in the wilderness.”

“Whoever eats this bread will live forever.”

These two statements—one spoken through Moses in the Old Testament and the other by our Lord Jesus

Christ in the Gospel—form a beautiful connection between God's saving work throughout history. Together they remind us that the story of salvation is not a collection of separate events, but one continuous journey leading God's people from the Passover of Moses to the Eucharistic banquet of Christ.

In the Book of Deuteronomy, Moses recalls Israel's forty-year journey through the wilderness. God had delivered His people from slavery in Egypt, led them safely through the Red Sea, and guided them toward the Promised Land. Yet the journey was not easy. There were times of hunger, uncertainty, and fear. In those moments, God provided manna from heaven—a miraculous bread that appeared each morning to sustain His people.

Moses reminds the Israelites that this gift was about more than physical nourishment. God was teaching them to trust Him completely and to recognize that true life comes from the Lord. The manna was real bread, but it was also a sign pointing toward something greater.

Throughout the Old Testament, God provides signs that prepare His people for the coming of Christ. The Passover lamb foreshadows Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. The blood placed upon the doorposts points to Christ's saving Blood shed upon the Cross. The crossing of the Red Sea anticipates the waters of Baptism. And the manna in the wilderness points directly to the gift of the Holy Eucharist.

What God began through Moses, He fulfilled through His Son.

That is why Jesus boldly declares in the Gospel, “I am the living bread that came down from heaven.” Those listening immediately recognized the connection to the manna given in the desert. Yet Jesus reveals that He offers something far greater.

The manna fed the body for a day. Christ feeds the soul for eternity.

The manna sustained earthly life. Christ offers eternal life.

Then Jesus speaks words that startled His listeners: “The bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.” Rather than softening His teaching, He repeats it with even greater clarity. These words form the foundation of our Catholic understanding of the Eucharist.

For nearly two thousand years, Christians have believed that Holy Communion is far more than a symbol or reminder. It is the real and living presence of Jesus Christ. This belief was taught by the Apostles, embraced by the early Church, and handed down through every generation of believers.

Saint Paul affirms this truth when he writes, “The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?” Paul speaks of participation—not merely remembrance. In the Eucharist we encounter the risen Lord Himself. We receive the same Christ who was born in Bethlehem, preached the Gospel, died on Calvary, rose from the tomb, and reigns forever in glory.

The Eucharist also unites us with one another. Because we share in one Bread, we become one Body in Christ. Every celebration of the Holy Mass draws heaven and earth together and strengthens the bonds that unite us as God's family.

Yet these readings also offer a challenge. Over time, the Israelites grew accustomed to the manna. What began as a miracle eventually seemed ordinary. The same danger exists for us today. We hear familiar prayers, attend Mass regularly, and receive Holy Communion. Yet we must never lose our sense of wonder before this sacred gift.

Our world remains hungry—not only for food, but for hope, forgiveness, purpose, and peace. Many search for fulfillment in possessions, achievements, or power, yet the deepest hunger of the human heart can only be satisfied by God.

The Eucharist remains the answer to that hunger. The same God who fed Israel in the desert now feeds His Church. The same Lord who provided manna now gives Himself. The same Savior who died upon the Cross continues to come to us under the humble appearances of bread and wine.

As we approach the altar, may we remember the journey from manna to Eucharist, from Passover to Calvary, and from Moses to Christ. And may we hear once again the promise of our Lord: “Whoever eats this bread will live forever.”



SERMON: Solemnity of the Word of God

“A Sower Went Out To Sow His Seed”



Proverbs 8:35-9:9; Acts 3:1-10; Matthew 7:21-27

S.O.W.E.R. – Living the Word of God

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The Solemnity of the Word of God is a joyful celebration in the life of the Church. It reminds us that God's Word is far more than words printed on a page or stories preserved from ancient times. The Word of God is living, active, and transformative. Through Sacred Scripture, God continues to speak to His people, revealing His truth, extending His grace, and drawing us into a deeper relationship with Him.

The readings appointed for this solemnity present a powerful image: the sower scattering seed. Jesus explains that the seed is the Word of God. The seed itself is perfect. The question is whether our hearts are prepared to receive it and allow it to grow.

To reflect upon this sacred gift, consider the acronym **S.O.W.E.R.**

S – Scripture Sustains Us

In the first reading, Moses reminds the people of Israel that God fed them with manna during their journey through the wilderness. Yet Moses teaches them an even greater lesson: “One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of the Lord.”

Just as food sustains the body, God's Word sustains the soul.

Our lives are filled with countless voices competing for our attention—news reports, social media, advertisements, opinions, and distractions. Yet among all these voices, only one speaks eternal truth. The voice of God offers wisdom, comfort, direction, and hope.

When we open the Scriptures, we encounter the living presence of God who strengthens us during trials, comforts us in sorrow, and encourages us to remain faithful. Scripture is spiritual nourishment for life's journey.

O – Open Hearts Receive the Seed

In the Gospel, Jesus describes seed falling upon different types of soil. Some falls on a path, some among rocks, some among thorns, and some on rich soil.

The harvest depends upon the condition of the soil.

The same is true in our spiritual lives. We may hear the same Gospel reading, participate in the same Mass, and listen to the same homily, yet receive God's message differently depending upon the openness of our hearts.

An open heart is willing to listen. An open heart is willing to learn. An open heart allows God to challenge old habits and create new possibilities.

The purpose of Scripture is not simply to inform us but to transform us. Each time God's Word is proclaimed, He invites us to grow closer to Him.

W – Wisdom Comes Through the Word

Saint Paul writes that “all Scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, correction, and training in righteousness.”

God's Word is not reserved only for scholars, clergy, or theologians. It is a gift for every believer.

The Scriptures teach us how to pray, how to forgive, how to love our neighbors, and how to remain faithful amid life's challenges. Throughout Christian history, saints, missionaries, martyrs, and faithful believers have drawn strength and guidance from the Word of God.

The same Scriptures that guided the Apostles continue to guide the Church today. They offer wisdom for everyday decisions and direction for our journey toward eternal life.

E – Evangelization Begins with Encounter

Before we can share God's Word with others, we must first encounter it ourselves.

The most effective witnesses of the Gospel are those whose lives have been transformed by Christ. When we encounter the Lord through Scripture, our hearts begin to change. We become more patient, compassionate, forgiving, and hopeful.

People are often drawn to faith not merely by what Christians say, but by how Christians live.

Every act of kindness, every gesture of mercy, every word of encouragement becomes an opportunity to reflect Christ's love to the world around us.

R – Reap an Abundant Harvest

Jesus concludes His parable by describing seed that falls on rich soil and produces an abundant harvest.

God does not ask us to create the harvest. He simply asks us to be faithful soil.

When we hear the Word, believe the Word, and live the Word, God produces fruit beyond anything we can imagine. That harvest may be stronger families, renewed faith, greater unity within the parish, new vocations, or hearts returning to God after years away.

God's Word never returns empty. It always accomplishes His purpose.

As we celebrate the Solemnity of the Word of God, let us recommit ourselves to being true S.O.W.E.R.S. Let Scripture sustain us. Let us keep open hearts. Let us seek wisdom through God's Word. Let us share the Gospel through our encounters with Christ. And let us trust God to bring forth an abundant harvest.

May the Word proclaimed in our churches take deep root within our hearts, guide our daily lives, strengthen our faith, and draw us ever closer to Jesus Christ, the Eternal Word made flesh.



The Word of God as Sacrament: Grounded in Form, Matter, and Intention

By Reverend Dr. Jim Ploskonka

Abstract: This article argues that the Word of God, particularly as proclaimed within the liturgical context, constitutes a true sacrament within the theological framework of the Church. Drawing upon classical sacramental theology—especially the criteria of form, matter, and intention—and enriched by the insights of speech-act theory, this work situates the Word proclaimed within the broader sacramental economy. Using traditional Catholic sacramental structures such as baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, and others as parallels, and incorporating

reflections from St. Augustine, contemporary theological writings, and doctrinal insights from the Polish National Catholic Church (PNCC), the study articulates how the proclamation of Scripture, when executed with ecclesial authority, fidelity to Scripture, and receptive faith, becomes a grace-bearing, transformative act. The article concludes by affirming that the Word of God is not merely instructional or symbolic but sacramental in its fullest sense—a visible sign that confers the invisible grace of communion with Christ.

1.Introduction: Reclaiming the Word as Sacrament

From the earliest days of the Church, the Word of God has been central to the life of the Christian community. Yet, it is often relegated to a didactic or symbolic role, viewed merely as text for teaching or exhortation. In contrast, this article seeks to advance the thesis that the Word of God—particularly as proclaimed in the liturgy—is indeed a sacrament. This is no small claim. It is grounded in the robust theological tradition of the Church, developed through the criteria of matter, form, and intention, and articulated in dialogue with modern philosophical tools such as speech-act theory.

The proposal that the Word of God is sacramental is not without precedent. St. Augustine, the great Doctor of Grace, affirmed the performative and transformative power of the Word, especially when united to the Spirit within the liturgy. Likewise, the Polish National Catholic Church (PNCC) recognizes the "Hearing and Preaching of the Word" as a sacrament, distinct from the Roman enumeration of seven. The implications of such a claim are vast—for liturgical theology, catechesis, pastoral ministry, and ecumenical dialogue.

This article proceeds by exploring the sacramental structure of language through the lens of speech-act theory, then demonstrating how each classical sacrament of the Church relies upon a tripartite schema: matter, form, and intention. These criteria are then applied to the proclamation of the Word of God, supported by theological sources, conciliar teachings, and contemporary reflection. By the conclusion, we aim to affirm with theological clarity and pastoral conviction that the Word of God is sacrament: a visible, audible sign instituted by Christ, entrusted to the Church, and bearing real grace.

II. Speech-Act Theory and the Language of Sacrament

Language is not a passive vehicle for conveying ideas; it is an active, performative force. This insight, first formalized in the mid-twentieth century by British philosophers J.L. Austin and John Searle, gave rise to what is known as speech-act theory. According to this theory, when someone speaks, they are not merely stating something (a locutionary act) but also performing an act with intention (illocutionary act), which may have an effect on the hearer (perlocutionary act). For example, when a minister says, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," they are not merely describing a baptism—they are enacting it.

In the Catholic understanding of sacraments, this insight finds fertile theological ground. Each sacrament includes a performative moment in which an authorized minister speaks specific words, accompanied by a visible sign (such as water, oil, or the laying on of hands), with the intention of conferring grace. These three dimensions—form (the words), matter (the physical signs), and intention (the purpose to do what the Church does)—are essential for sacramental validity.

Speech-act theory therefore provides a conceptual framework for understanding sacramental action. It affirms what theology has long maintained: that in the sacraments, words affect what they signify. When validly performed, they do not merely point to grace—they impart it.

This philosophical structure is especially illuminating when considering the Word of God proclaimed in the liturgy. Is it not also a performative utterance? Does it not bring about what it proclaims in the heart of the believer? And if so, could it not be considered a sacrament in itself—an action by which grace is communicated through divinely instituted signs?

In the next section, we will analyze each of the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church using the matrix of speech-act theory, showing how form, matter, and intention operate within them, and how this structure parallels the proclamation of the Word.

III. Matter, Form, and Intention in the Seven Sacraments

To understand how the Word of God might function as a sacrament, it is necessary to examine how the Church understands sacramentality in general. Traditional sacramental theology holds that a valid sacrament must possess three essential elements: matter, form, and intention.

1. Baptism

- *Matter*: Water poured over the candidate.
- *Form*: The words, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”
- *Intention*: The minister intends to do what the Church does in baptism.
- *Speech-act structure*: The locution (spoken words), the illocution (enactment of baptism), and the perlocution (the candidate becomes a Christian) are fully integrated.

Confirmation

- *Matter*: Laying on of hands and anointing with chrism.
- *Form*: “Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.”
- *Intention*: To confirm and strengthen the baptized in the faith.
- *Speech-act structure*: The bishop’s words and gestures, spoken with ecclesial authority, enact the strengthening grace of the Holy Spirit.

2. Holy Eucharist

- *Matter*: Bread and wine.
- *Form*: “This is my Body... This is the cup of my Blood.”
- *Intention*: To consecrate the elements into the Body and Blood of Christ.
- *Speech-act structure*: The words of institution effect the Real Presence of Christ.

3. **Penance (Reconciliation)**

- *Matter*: The confession of sins.
- *Form*: “I absolve you from your sins...”
- *Intention*: To grant forgiveness through Christ.
- *Speech-act structure*: The priest’s performative words convey forgiveness and reconciliation.

4. **Anointing of the Sick**

- *Matter*: Oil of the sick applied to the forehead and hands.
- *Form*: “Through this holy anointing...”
- *Intention*: Healing and preparation for eternal life.
- *Speech-act structure*: The priest’s prayer communicates Christ’s mercy, grace, and healing.

5. **Holy Orders**

- *Matter*: Laying on of hands.
- *Form*: Consecratory prayer of ordination.
- *Intention*: To ordain a man to the priesthood.
- *Speech-act structure*: The bishop’s actions and prayers enact the sacrament of apostolic succession.

6. **Matrimony**

- *Matter*: The couple themselves, and their vows.
- *Form*: “I take you to be my wife/husband.”
- *Intention*: To enter a lifelong, exclusive, sacramental union.
- *Speech-act structure*: The couple are both ministers and recipients of the sacrament; their mutual consent effects the bond.

Each sacrament thus reflects a theological coherence between what is said (form), what is done (matter), and what is intended by the Church (intention). When validly performed, these elements guarantee the sacrament’s efficacy—not *ex opere operantis* (through the worthiness of the minister), but *ex opere operato* (by the action itself).

IV. **Applying Sacramental Criteria to the Word of God**

If, as shown, all sacraments exhibit the essential triad of form, matter, and intention, can the Word of God—particularly in its liturgical proclamation—also meet these criteria? A close examination reveals that it does.

1. **Form**: The form of the sacrament of the Word is the divinely inspired text of Sacred Scripture, proclaimed aloud in the context of liturgical worship. This is not merely the act

of reading but an ecclesial authorized proclamation, often concluded with the acclamation “The Word of the Lord.” Just as the words “I baptize you...” or “This is my Body...” are essential to their respective sacraments, so too are the scriptural words essential to the liturgical Word. The structure, rhythm, and theological density of these readings—from Old Testament prophecy to Pauline epistles—constitute a sacred form, designed not only to instruct but to sanctify.

2. **Matter:** While the Word appears to lack tangible matter, it is sacramentally embodied through physical and audible elements. These include the lectionary itself, the Book of the Gospels, the voice of the reader or deacon, the posture and gesture of the assembly, and even the ritualized processions and incensation of the Gospel book. These elements constitute the sensory embodiment of the Word, rendering it accessible to the human experience. In the PNCC tradition, the reverent incensing of the Gospel before its proclamation affirms its sacramental gravity.
3. **Intention:** The intention to proclaim the Word as a means of grace and divine encounter is clearly present in liturgy. Whether through the lector at the ambo, the deacon chanting the Gospel, or the homilist breaking open the text, the Church’s consistent intent is to present Christ Himself to the gathered faithful. As Pope Benedict XVI taught in *Verbum Domini*, the Word of God proclaimed is not merely informative—it is transformative. The preacher or lector, if properly disposed, intends not only to relay information but to make present the divine Logos through the power of the Holy Spirit.
4. **Felicitous Conditions:** Drawing from speech-act theory, certain conditions must be met for the proclamation to bear sacramental fruit. These include proper preparation of the text (lectionary cycle), the presence of the gathered faithful, the authorization of the reader, and the inner disposition of faith on the part of the hearers. If these are satisfied, the Word of God does what it says. As the Letter to the Hebrews affirms, “The Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword...” (Heb 4:12).

Hence, the proclamation of Scripture—within its liturgical and ecclesial setting—fulfills the criteria of sacrament: it possesses a divinely instituted form, is accompanied by visible and audible matter, and is delivered with intentionality and under the right conditions. In this, the Word joins the other sacraments as a means through which God acts.

V. The Word as Sacrament in Patristic and Contemporary Theology

The notion that the Word of God functions sacramentally has deep roots in both patristic and modern theological reflection. Among the earliest and most influential voices is that of St. Augustine of Hippo, whose trinitarian and sacramental sensibilities shaped much of Western sacramental theology. Augustine taught that signs and symbols in the Church are not merely instructive but participatory: “If the word be joined to the element, there results a sacrament.” This insight is foundational for understanding how audible and visible elements of divine worship, when joined with the Word, become instruments of grace.

In his *Confessions* and *On Christian Doctrine*, Augustine often referred to Scripture as the voice of God, calling the faithful into communion with Him. For Augustine, the Word is not merely spoken, it is incarnated. It is this incarnational theology that informs the claim of the Word as sacrament. Just as Christ is the Word made flesh, so too is the Scripture—when proclaimed and received in faith—a mode of encountering the risen Christ. In this way, the Word is not simply a message about God; it is a means by which God communicates His very self.

Contemporary theologians have reaffirmed this view. Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) emphasized that the proclamation of Scripture is an event—not just a text. In his apostolic exhortation *Verbum Domini*, he wrote: “Christ, truly present in the Eucharist, is likewise truly present in the word proclaimed in the liturgy.” Here, the Word is not second to the Eucharist in spiritual efficacy; it is co-sacramental, drawing the hearer into the same divine mystery.

Hans Urs von Balthasar took this further by emphasizing the beauty and dramatic character of divine revelation. According to Balthasar, the Word of God proclaimed in the liturgy is a theodramatic event—a moment where the eternal drama of salvation is rendered present. In this, preaching and reading of Scripture become not merely communicative acts but sacramental performances.

Within the Polish National Catholic Church (PNCC), the sacramentality of the Word is not a speculative notion but a doctrinal affirmation. The PNCC's *Eleven Great Principles* and its liturgical rubrics emphasize that the preaching and hearing of the Word are integral to the Church's sacramental life. The Word is treated with reverence equal to the Eucharist. The Gospel book is kissed, incensed, elevated, and processed—sacramental gestures that affirm its role not merely as a text but as a presence.

The PNCC's theology resonates strongly with the views of Rev. Dr. Scott Lill, whose writings emphasize the Word as a real means of grace. He observes that when the Word is proclaimed liturgically, it takes on the structure of a sacrament: the audible expression of God's will (form), made tangible through speech and ritual (matter), and offered with ecclesial intent and spiritual openness (intention). Dr. Lill's framework strengthens the argument that the Word, when faithfully proclaimed and received, operates sacramentally.

Thus, both ancient and modern sources converge in affirming the sacramental character of the proclaimed Word. It is not merely instructional but efficacious, not merely representational but real. In the liturgy, as the Fathers and contemporary theologians attest, the Word of God becomes an event of divine grace.

VI. Pastoral and Liturgical Implications of the Word as Sacrament

Affirming the Word of God as sacrament carries profound implications for the Church's liturgical and pastoral life. Recognizing the Word not merely as instructional content but as a

conduit of divine grace reshapes how clergy, liturgical ministers, and laity approach the proclamation and reception of Scripture in worship.

1. Liturgical Reverence and Ritual Action

One of the most immediate implications is the liturgical reverence given to the proclamation of Scripture. The traditional gestures surrounding the Gospel—such as incensation, procession, and elevation—are not merely ornamental. They reflect the Church’s acknowledgment that something sacred is taking place. If the Word is truly sacramental, then these gestures are not symbolic enhancements; they are appropriate signs of sacramental reality. Lectors and deacons must be formed with the awareness that their role is not simply to read but to mediate divine grace through proclamation. Likewise, the assembly should be catechized to listen not merely for moral exhortation but for a transformative encounter with the Risen Christ.

2. Homiletics and Preaching

A sacramental understanding of the Word elevates the theological weight of the homily. The preacher is not merely explaining Scripture; he or she is breaking open the Bread of the Word, an act that parallels the breaking of the Eucharistic bread. This calls for a homiletic renewal where preaching is seen as an ecclesial event rather than a personal reflection. Seminaries and lay formation programs should train homilists to understand their ministry as sacramental mediation. The preaching moment becomes an opportunity to invite the hearers into a participatory response—confession, conversion, and mission.

3. Catechesis and Sacramental Preparation

Viewing the Word as sacrament also transforms the Church’s catechetical approach. Catechists are not merely teachers of doctrine but facilitators of grace through the Word. Scripture becomes the foundation not just of moral instruction but of sacramental initiation. In RCIA, for example, the Liturgy of the Word should be emphasized as a real moment of grace, forming catechumens in the presence of Christ. Children’s catechesis and youth ministry, too, should instill a reverence for the proclamation of Scripture as something more than educational—a real encounter with God.

4. Ecumenical Dialogue

Ecumenically, the sacramental view of the Word opens common ground with Protestant communities that emphasize sola Scriptura. By showing that Catholics (and the PNCC) not only revere but sacramentalize the Word, bridges of theological dialogue are built. The sacramentality of the Word could serve as a point of unity, highlighting shared convictions about the power of Scripture while distinguishing sacramental theology from mere symbol or subjective interpretation.

5. Personal Devotion and Lectio Divina

On a personal level, affirming the Word as sacrament enriches devotional life. Practices such as lectio divina become not merely exercises in meditation but moments of real spiritual communion. As the Word is read and contemplated, grace is mediated. Parish communities could be encouraged to treat Scripture study not only as intellectual enrichment but as a liturgical act—a place where the same Christ who is encountered in the Eucharist is received through the Word.

6. Clerical Formation and Ministerial Identity

Finally, if the Word is indeed a sacrament, then the minister who proclaims it is functioning within a sacramental role. This understanding enhances the dignity of the lector and deacon and expands the priest's identity as not only presider at the Eucharist but herald of the Word. Formation programs must therefore include a deeper theological grounding in the liturgical theology of the Word, as well as practical training in voice, posture, and spiritual preparation.

In all these areas—liturgy, preaching, catechesis, ecumenism, devotion, and formation, the recognition of the Word as sacrament fosters a richer, more holistic ecclesial life. It deepens the Church's sacramental imagination and calls believers to reverence not only the Eucharistic table but also the ambo, from which the Word of God continues to speak.

Conclusion and Summary of the Argument

The Word of God, when proclaimed with intention, form, and ecclesial authority, bears all the hallmarks of sacramentality. Like the seven traditionally recognized sacraments of the Church, the Word engages the faithful through visible (and audible) signs, bears the potential to confer sanctifying grace, and functions within a divine economy instituted by Christ. When the Scriptures are proclaimed during liturgy, they do not simply offer historical insight or ethical guidance—they deliver Christ Himself.

By analyzing the Word through the lens of speech-act theory, we find a credible philosophical and theological framework that confirms this claim. The locutionary content of the Word (its verbal utterance), the illocutionary force (its intended spiritual effect), and the perlocutionary consequences (the actual transformation in the hearer) mirrors the dynamics of sacramental efficacy. The form is the inspired Word; the matter is the audible and enacted liturgical ritual; and the intention—both Church and the faithful—is to receive divine grace.

This study has drawn from a breadth of sources: patristic voices like Augustine, who emphasized the Incarnational and sacramental nature of Scripture; modern theologians such as Ratzinger and von Balthasar, who argued for the real presence of Christ in the proclaimed Word; and ecclesial traditions such as those found in the PNCC, which affirm the Word of God as one of the Church's sacraments.

Furthermore, we have outlined practical implications for pastoral ministry and liturgical life. The recognition of the Word as sacrament reshapes how we approach preaching, catechesis, ecumenical dialogue, and personal devotion. It enhances our appreciation of the liturgical structure and draws us more fully into the mystery of faith where “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14).

In sum, this article affirms that the Word of God, especially as proclaimed in the sacred liturgy, meets every theological and ecclesiological requirement to be rightly called a sacrament. It is a sacred sign, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, which confers the grace it signifies. It is a means of communion with the Divine Word made flesh and a vital expression of God’s ongoing self-revelation in the life of His people.

Let the Church continue to uphold, proclaim, and reverence the Word—not only as a path to understanding but as a sacramental gateway to transformation, unity, and eternal life.

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SERMON: Ordinary 14 A

“Jesus Exclaimed!”



Zechariah 9:9-10; Romans 8:9-11,13; Matthew 11:25-30

Jesus Exclaimed!

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The Gospels are filled with memorable moments. Sometimes Jesus teaches with quiet wisdom; at other times, He asks searching questions or offers comfort

to those in need. In this Sunday's Gospel, however, St. Matthew tells us something striking:

Jesus exclaimed!

That single word draws our attention. These were not casual remarks, but words flowing from the heart of our Savior. Filled with joy, Jesus proclaimed, “I give praise to You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth.” Even in a world marked by rejection and hardship, His first response was praise.

How often can we say the same? Too often, our day begins with complaints about life's inconveniences: “I'm running late!” “Where did I put my keys?” or “I need another cup of

coffee!” We quickly notice frustrations while overlooking the many blessings God quietly places before us.

Jesus shows us another way. His joy did not depend on perfect circumstances. He praised the Father because He knew God was always at work. That is the difference between happiness and Christian joy: happiness rises and falls with circumstances, but Christian joy is rooted in Christ and endures even through life’s greatest challenges.

The prophet Zechariah illustrates this truth by inviting God’s people to rejoice because their King is coming. Yet this King does not arrive on a magnificent warhorse surrounded by armies. He comes humbly, riding on a donkey.

The world often measures greatness by wealth, influence, power, or prestige. God’s Kingdom measures greatness by humility, service, and love. Jesus shows that true strength is found not in domination, but in self-giving sacrifice. What appeared to be weakness became the greatest victory the world has ever known.

Christ still enters our lives in much the same way. He comes quietly through prayer, heals wounded hearts through forgiveness, nourishes us with His Body and Blood in the Holy Eucharist, and gently invites us to walk with Him.

Again we hear those joyful words: **Jesus exclaimed!**

His praise also teaches an important lesson. Jesus thanks the Father because divine truths have been revealed to “little ones.” He is not speaking about intelligence or education, but about the humble, trusting hearts that recognize God most clearly.

Children naturally trust. They ask questions freely and believe with openness and wonder. As adults, we can become so busy analyzing our faith that we forget to experience God’s presence. The Lord calls us to recover that childlike confidence and recognize His hand at work in everyday life.

St. Paul continues this message in his Letter to the Romans. He reminds us that we do not belong merely to the weakness of the flesh, but live by the power of the Holy Spirit. The same Spirit who raised Christ from the dead now dwells within every believer. If God can conquer death, He can strengthen weary hearts, restore hope, heal relationships, and guide us through uncertainty.

The Psalm echoes this assurance: “The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness.” Our God does not look for reasons to condemn us. His desire is always reconciliation, healing, and new life.

That is why Jesus offers one of the most comforting invitations in Scripture: “Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest.”

Each of us carries burdens others may never see: grief, loneliness, anxiety, family concerns, financial pressure, or old regrets. Jesus does not dismiss those burdens. He simply says, “Bring them to Me.”

When He says His yoke is easy and His burden light, He reminds us that we never carry life’s weight alone. Like two oxen joined by one yoke, Christ walks beside us. He bears the greater load, strengthens us when we grow weary, and leads us forward.

As we reflect on this Sunday’s readings, may we rediscover the joy of praising God in ordinary and extraordinary moments alike. A sunrise, a child’s laughter, a shared meal, an answered prayer, or even a challenge that deepens our faith can all become reasons to give thanks.

May our parish be known as a community whose joy reflects the presence of Christ—not because life is free from difficulty, but because we know the Lord walks with us through it all.

After all, **Jesus exclaimed!** May our lives become joyful exclamations of praise to the Father, through the Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit.