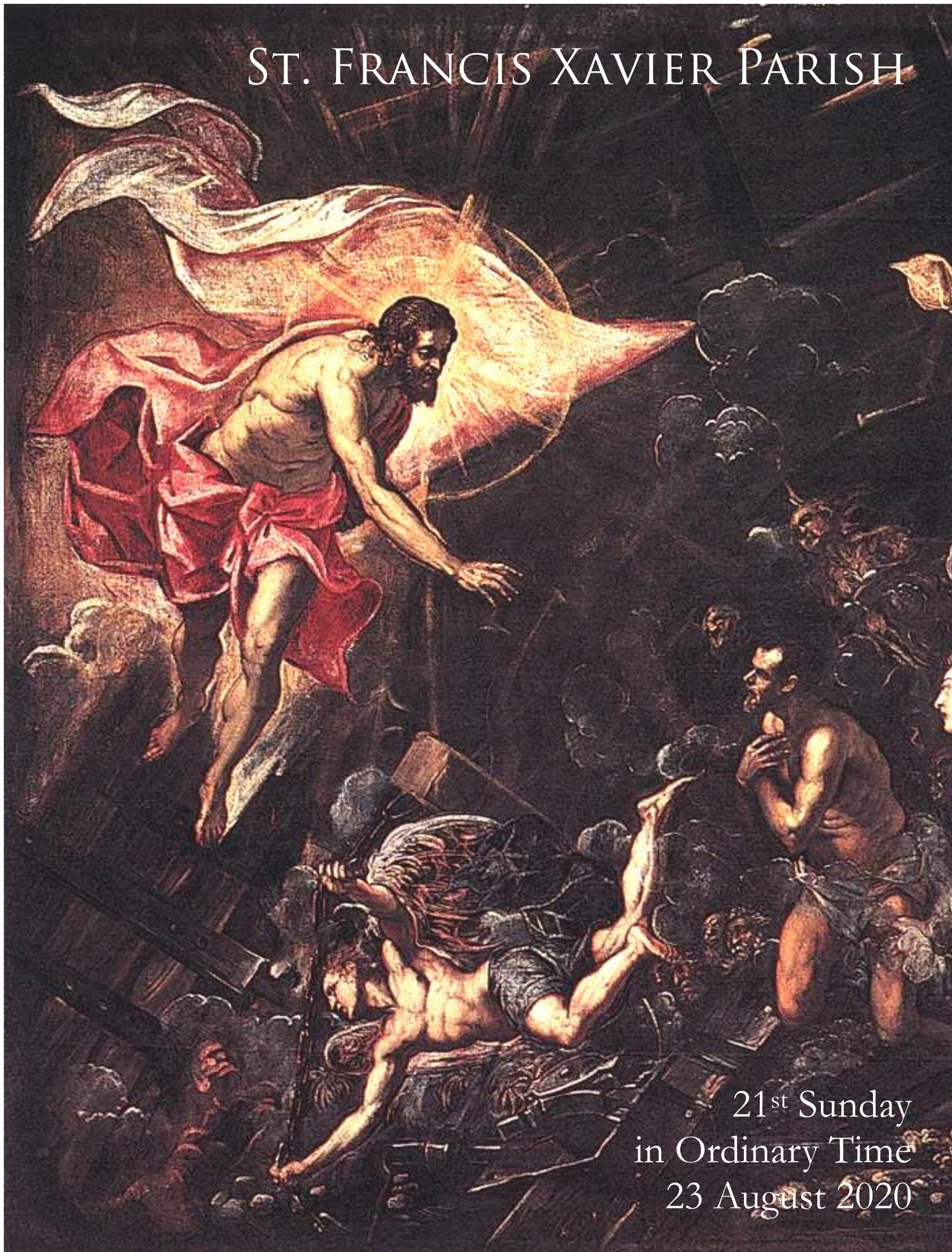


# ST. FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH



21<sup>st</sup> Sunday  
in Ordinary Time  
23 August 2020

*St. Francis Xavier, Acushnet – Diocese of Fall River*

## Mass Schedule

**(August 22<sup>nd</sup> - August 30<sup>th</sup>)**

<b>Sat.</b>	<b>Aug 22</b> 4:00 pm	<b>21<sup>st</sup> Sunday (Vigil) (Gr)</b> Lillian Stamo
<b>Sun.</b>	<b>Aug 23</b> 8:00am 10:30am	<b>21<sup>st</sup> Sunday In Ordinary Time (Gr)</b> Jeffrey & Joseph Newett <i>Pro Populo</i>
<b>Mon.</b>	<b>Aug 24</b> 9:00am	<b>St. Bartholomew; Apostle (Rd)</b> Harold Seguin
<b>Tues.</b>	<b>Aug 25</b> 9:00am	<b>St. Louis; King</b> Leonard Melanson
<b>Wed.</b>	<b>Aug 26</b> 9:00am	<b>Feria (Gr)</b> Aline Boisclair
<b>Thurs.</b>	<b>Aug 27</b> 9:00am	<b>St. Monica (Wh)</b> Intentions of Doris & Ariel
<b>Fri.</b>	<b>Aug 28</b> 9:00am	<b>St. Augustine; Bishop (Rd)</b> James Souza
<b>Sat.</b>	<b>Aug 29</b> 9:00am	<b>Passion of St. John the Baptist (Rd)</b> James Souza
<b>Sat.</b>	<b>Aug 29</b> 4:00 pm	<b>22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday (Vigil) (Gr)</b> Mr. & Mrs. Jose DeSousa & Ceasar Fernandes
<b>Sun.</b>	<b>Aug 30</b> 8:00am 10:30am	<b>22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday In Ordinary Time (Gr)</b> <i>Pro Populo</i> Joao & Edite Gomes

### Financial Report

**Income:**

20 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time .....	\$4,135.28
Assumption .....	\$1,487.39

### Prayers Please

... for all the sick of our parish: those homebound, in the hospital, and nursing facilities; and for all the souls in purgatory.

### Sanctuary Lamp

*During this time of our absence away from Eucharistic Adoration please pray at home for the following person/s for whose intention the Sanctuary Candle at the main altar still burns this week: **Jeffrey & Joseph Newett***

## CONFESSION

**Monday: 5:30 to 6:30 pm**  
**Saturday: 9:30 to 10:00am**  
**Saturday: 3:00 to 3:45pm**

### FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

#### A CATHOLIC RESPONSE TO TRANSGENDERISM

Earlier this year, Pope Francis told Archbishop Robert Carlson of St. Louis that, while abortion is the most important moral issue that the Church must address today, another important moral problem is the transgender movement and gender theory, which promotes the notion that gender is fluid – in other words, that being man or woman has no connection to our biological makeup but can rather be chosen by one’s own decision.

It is vital to remember that our response to a moral issue is different from how we respond to a person involved in it. That is to say, to condemn the propositions put forward by promoters of transgenderism does not in any way take away from the human rights and dignity of someone who identifies as transgender, nor does it mean that God loves them any less or that we should too. In response to Pope Francis’ comments, Archbishop Carlson has recently published some reflections on the issue.

He clearly states is that a Catholic responding to someone who identifies as transgender, “The first thing we need to do is not to draw away in suspicion, fear, or condemnation, but to lean in with compassion. And we need to make it clear that violence against any of our brothers or sisters is unacceptable.” Addressing those who identify in this way, he continues, “If you’re uncomfortable with your biological sex, or if you consider yourself as having a gender identity at odds with your biological sex, here’s the first thing I want you to know: God loves you. He loves you right where you are. He has a plan for you.”

At the same time, in addition to our response to persons, we need to remember the truth about humans: “Being male or female is written into every cell of our body, and is part of the body-soul unity that we are. The Catholic understanding of the human person holds that sex and gender cannot be separated, and that there are limits to how we should manipulate our bodies.”

Archbishop Carlson says that a Catholic response to the transgender movement is guided by three truths: that feelings are a part of us but they do not define us; that human integrity requires us to sift our desires, not simply follow them; and that disagreement [on our part] is not hatred. Simply put, he is showing that our desires cannot be opposed to the reality of who we are, and that we need to work to integrate our desires into reality rather than overwrite our biological identity. Psychological issues related to these desires need to be addressed directly, rather than taken as guides for action. We need to live the truth about our person, composed of both a body and a soul.

# PARISH INFORMATION

## PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Mon-Fri: 9:30am – 4:00pm

Please make an appointment to meet with

## HELPFUL CONTACTS

Religious Education: 508-998-7445

School: 508-995-4313

School Fax: 508-995-0456

## ACCESSIBILITY

- Open for Prayer Every Day
- Wheelchair Lift
- Cry-room

## **St. Francis Xavier Parish** **125 Main Street** **Acushnet, MA 02743**

tel: (508)-995-7600 fax: (508) -995-1794

email: info@sfxparish.com

**Fr. Riley J. Williams, Pastor**

[rjw@sfxparish.com]

**Deacon David Pepin**

[dbp@sfxparish.com]

**Mrs. Janine Hammarquist, Rel. Ed. Coordinator**

[jlh@sfxparish.com]

[ministry@sfxacushnet.com]

**Mr. Steven Guillotte, Director of Pastoral Services**

[sng@sfxparish.com]

**Mrs. Michelle Russo, Parish School Principal**

[mrusso@sfxacushnet.com]

**Mrs. Anabela Shaughnessy, Asst. Principal**

[ashaughnessy@sfxacushnet.com]

## HOLY MASS

Sunday 8:00am & 10:30am

Saturday Vigil 4:00pm

Monday-Saturday 9:00am

*First Friday* 9:00am & 6:00pm

Latin/Extraordinary Form: As Announced

## CONFESSIONS

Monday 5:30-6:30pm

Saturday 9:30-10:00am

Saturday 3:00-3:45pm

*First Fridays* 6:45-7:15pm

Any Time by Appointment

## ADORATION

Monday 9:30am-8:30pm

Wednesday 6:00pm-7:00pm

Friday 9:30am-8:30pm

Saturday 9:30 am-2:45 pm

## VESPERS & BENEDICTION

Monday & Wednesday: 6:30 pm

## ON THE COVER

*And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. (Mt 16:18)*

Gates generally don't prevail; at least they don't in any kind of military offensive. Armies don't move about in great mobile enclosures with gates that open and close gobbling up their enemies like a giant Pac Man. It is true that a strong and protected gate can add to a sturdy defense and hence may "prevail" against those trying to enter. However, it is difficult to see how "the gates of the netherworld" could think of prevailing against the Church of Christ in this way, since the Church is never eager to enter into hell.

If this be the case, then why does Jesus tell Peter that the gates of hell will not prevail against the Church? A gate's primary duty is to maintain the coming-and-going in and out of the enclosure of which it is a part. Gates are generally kept closed to discourage entrance, yet opened as a sign of welcome. Gates are only as large as they need to be to let in only those things, the sizes of which are not too large for keeping out. Otherwise they are stationary devices that don't make it their business to go about prevailing over other things.

However, considering our quote above from Sacred Scripture it is what stands *behind* the gate that most wants to prevail over the Church. The netherworld, the spiritual domain of the devil and his minions, ever desires to widen its enclosure with fallen souls. It expands through temptation and sin and broadens its reach and territory attempting to park its gate as close as it can to the Church. Yet, while evil may enter the Church through sinful priests, religious, and laity, the netherworld itself can never prevail against the Church because it cannot prevail against Jesus who has already vanquished its greatest weapon – eternal death.

On this **21<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time** we place on our bulletin cover a detail of a Mannerist painting by the great Venetian master **Tintoretto** entitled, *The Descent into Hell* (1568). Tintoretto "broke through the gates" of the High Renaissance freeing Italian art from its classical restraint allowing for a more active and dramatic representation of the actions of Jesus Christ.

Here we see Christ on Easter Saturday descending into Hades to free souls from an enduring death. Below the hovering Christ is the gate of the dark netherworld broken asunder so as to release all those who died since Adam. Each will receive divine judgement and hopefully the freedom of God. An angel below Jesus carries a chain he has taken off of one of the dead, perhaps even from Adam who had been desperately awaiting this day. Unseen in our painting fragment are many more people in shadowy form and one nude female of bright appearance who must certainly be Eve, now redeemed by Christ the new Adam (1 Cor 15:22).

Natural death still reigns today over man on earth as a healthy reminder of his mortality and need for God. Everlasting death in the netherworld is also still a likelihood for those who deliberately disregard God's truth and his command of mercy. But the risen Jesus, the Easter Christ, is the great sign (Mt 16:4) that each and every human person may skirt the gates of hell if only he repents and believes in the Gospel (Mk 1:15) thence proceeding through the gates of heaven.

## 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time - August 23, 2020

### Religious Education



#### 2020/2021 Religious Education Classes:

Plans are underway for the start of the coming year. We will be returning with in-person classes, social distancing and wearing masks.

We will be providing each child with their own lap desk and writing instruments for those registered in the Religious Education Program. There will also be some remote learning this year depending on class sizes. If you are registering your child this coming year but are still apprehensive about returning to a classroom setting please contact Mrs. Hammarquist and special arrangements will be made.

Registration forms will be going out at the end of August for those previously registered in the program. If you are parishioners and you have a child that is in public school Grades 1-8 (9th Public or Catholic School) and would like him/her to attend our program for the 2020/2021 year please call the office to set up an appt. with Mrs. Hammarquist. Classes begin on Sunday September 27th.

**EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION:** The church is open for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on Mon. & Fri. 9:30am - 8:30pm so please stop in, even if only for a few minutes, to be with the Lord throughout the summer. He doesn't forget about us we should also not forget that He is there for us if we only open our hearts to let Him in. *Don't forget your mask.*

Stay Safe and Healthy  
God Bless, Mrs. Hammarquist

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER  
PRESCHOOL - GRADE 8



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
ACUSHNET, MASSACHUSETTS

Thank you to our parishioners who may have "stretched" themselves to attend our virtual auction, *Embrace Grace*. While quite different, the event was still fun and rather successful! We now return our attention to our rapidly approaching reopening. We have much to look forward to as we will finally be reunited after the abrupt closing of our school doors on March 13<sup>th</sup>. It is our plan to fully reopen our school doors to students on **Tuesday, September 1<sup>st</sup>**. We are offering Remote Learning as an option for students who are immuno-compromised (or who live with those who are) and those concerned about on-site learning. Our school families can choose their preferred method of instruction (in-person or remote) for their children for the first 30 days of school. Staff is excited and enthusiastic about the return, and have made their classrooms safe to welcome back our students. Thank you for your continued prayers for a successful opening.

God Bless, Michelle Russo/Principal

#### UPCOMING SECOND & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

August 30<sup>th</sup> - Diocesan Assessment  
September 6<sup>th</sup> - SFX School Collection



*Jesus Returning the Keys to St. Peter*  
Jean Auguste Ingres (1820)

*He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter said in reply, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus said to him in reply, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father." (Mt 16:15-17)*



**THANK YOU:** to all who made donations of dollars or gift cards to our recent "Pop-Up" fundraiser in the parish center parking lot on Saturday, 22 August. Once we get a chance to tally the donations we will report back to you what we were able to raise for assisting the poor in our area.

Thank you also for your continuing assistance of our parish and community work through your support of the holy day collections such as the most recent one on the Feast of the Assumption. We do God's work through your support!

Mike Bachstein/SVDP Society

29 Aug - Holy Mass  
9:00 am



PASSION OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

## SFX WOMEN OF GRACE

From the desk of Johnette Benkovic Williams: "We at *Women of Grace* are here again to help you fortify your children and build a strong perimeter of protection around them (and you) by offering you our **Back to School Novena of Masses**.

If you are a teacher, catechist, or school administrator, know that we will be praying for you as well. We will be asking Our Lord to give you supernatural vision and fortitude to bring the presence of Christ to your classroom in every way you can.

It is fitting that this special Novena of Masses will begin on **August 27<sup>th</sup>, the Feast of St. Monica**.

Go to the link <https://shop.womenofgrace.com/novena-back-to-school> to submit your special intention for this Novena of Masses and to enroll

## SUNDAY MASS TIME CHANGE

As you all know we have had to make some adjustments to our Holy Mass procedure in order to adhere to public health requirements of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Once Mass opened up again to the public we began by cordoning off two pews to one open pew. Next, we added an extra Mass (5:00 pm on Sunday) which we eventually discontinued due to our decision to open up more space in the church by blocking off only every other pew, which is our present church set up.

The situation of Mass attendance has been very fluid. There have been some Masses where we have had many open pews because of people not coming to Mass to fill their "reservation" and other Masses that have been full, to even overfull. Because of this and the need to ensure more pew space during the Sunday liturgy we have decided to add another Mass on Sunday, again bringing the total number of Masses to three on Sunday.

While we have not yet settled on the exact times, we are certain we will have a temporary shift in the Sunday Mass times only. These will all remain morning Masses. It is important to the parish staff to accommodate the parishioners, but just as important that the parishioners be reasonably flexible in adjusting their Mass times, otherwise as more people return to Mass we will not be able to seat everyone. **Please note: these will be minor time adjustments of 1/2 hour to 1 hour at the most.**

Lastly, we must consider that during trying times such as this, people who have been away return to Mass for spiritual solace. We must have a space for them to return to. Therefore, in being flexible during such a time as this we are all contributing to the kingdom of God.

## READINGS FOR WEEK OF AUGUST 23, 2020

Sunday: Is 22:19-23/Ps 138:1-2, 2-3, 6, 8 [8bc]/Rom 11:33-36/Mt 16:13-20  
Monday: Rv 21:9b-14/Ps 145:10-11, 12-13, 17-18 [12]/Jn 1:45-51  
Tuesday: 2 Thes 2:1-3a, 14-17/Ps 96:10, 11-12, 13 [13b]/Mt 23:23-26  
Wednesday: 2 Thes 3:6-10, 16-18/Ps 128:1-2, 4-5 [1]/Mt 23:27-32  
Thursday: 1 Cor 1:1-9/Ps 145:2-3, 4-5, 6-7 [1]/Mt 24:42-51  
Friday: 1 Cor 1:17-25/Ps 33:1-2, 4-5, 10-11 [5]/Mt 25:1-13  
Saturday: 1 Cor 1:26-31/Ps 71:1-2, 3-4a, 5-6ab, 15ab and 17 [cf. 15ab]/Mk 6:17-29

**ROSARY PARTY - THIS SUNDAY:** Our parish Rosary Party event will be held again outdoors at the grotto on the parish school grounds at **6:00 pm this Sunday 23 August**. Please join Father Riley Williams and parishioners and parishioner families in praying the Most Holy Rosary in a "safely distanced" setting. There will be Eucharistic Adoration from the grotto during the praying of the Rosary, concluding with Benediction. You are encouraged to bring your own lawn chairs (or ground pads if you choose to kneel). August is not the actual month dedicated to Mary (May is that month), but by the time we hold this Rosary Party we will have celebrated the *Assumption of the Blessed Mother* (15 August) and the *Queenship of Mary* (22 August). Please come and bring some friends. Everyone is welcome to attend.

## DAILY MASS WATCH

St. Monica  
Thursday  
27 August

St. Augustine  
Friday  
28 August

9:00 am

\*Image from National Gallery of London

*21<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time - August 23, 2020*

THE SACRED LITURGY FOR 21<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, 23 AUGUST

**ProceSSIONAL Hymn: All People That On Earth Do Dwell**

*All people that on earth do dwell,  
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;  
Him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell,  
Come ye before him and rejoice...*

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Is 22: 19-23**

Thus says the LORD to Shebna, master of the palace:  
"I will thrust you from your office  
and pull you down from your station.  
On that day I will summon my servant  
Eliakim, son of Hilkiah;  
I will clothe him with your robe,  
and gird him with your sash,  
and give over to him your authority.  
He shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah.  
I will place the key of the House of David on Eliakim's shoulder; when he opens, no one shall shut when he shuts, no one shall open.  
I will fix him like a peg in a sure spot,  
to be a place of honor for his family."

**Responsorial Psalm:** *Lord, your love is eternal; do not forsake the work of your hands*

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Rom 11:33-36**

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!  
How inscrutable are his judgments and how unsearchable his ways!  
*For who has known the mind of the Lord  
or who has been his counselor?  
Or who has given the Lord anything  
that he may be repaid?*  
For from him and through him and for him are all things.  
To him be glory forever. Amen.

**Gospel Reading: Mt 16:13-20**

Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi and he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"  
They replied, "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."  
He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"  
Simon Peter said in reply, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."  
Jesus said to him in reply, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."  
Then he strictly ordered his disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

**Offertory Hymn: Love Divine, All Loves Excelling**

**Communion Hymn: Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence**

**Recessional Hymn: Holy God We Praise Thy Name**

*Holy God We Praise Thy Name, Lord of all we bow before thee!  
All on earth, thy scepter claim, All in heav'n above adore thee;  
Infinite thy vast domain, Everlasting is thy reign,  
Infinite thy vast domain, Everlasting is thy reign.*