



CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF GOD'S GREAT LOVE

EVIDENT IN THE PALLOTTINE MISSIONARY SISTERS



God's will be done! Their story is one of fate, determination, courage, adventure, grit, and compassion.

These were the words used to describe Pallottine Missionary Sisters of the Catholic Apostolate (SAC) at a celebratory gathering on Nov. 6th in Huntington – the 100th Anniversary of St. Mary's Hospital. The hospital exists thanks the sisters whose motto is the bible verse their namesake - St. Vincent Pallotti – lived by - 2 Corinthians 5:14, "The love of Christ impels us."

More than 200 people gave a standing ovation for the sisters at the St. Mary's Medical Center Centennial Celebration, when they were honored with an induction to the hospital's Wall of Fame.

As Greg Creasy, vice president of mission integration for the medical center said, the sisters of the past faced unbelievable odds, but let God guide them, while thanks to their legacy the same holds true today for all connected with St. Mary's.

"Here we have a love that embraces the lost and broken knowing we can help them become whole once again," he said. "When I think about and see glimpses of what we do every day (I realize) this is a model of love – a model that has worked for 100 years."

In the Spring of 1912 four Pallottine Missionary Sisters from Germany were assigned to serve in West Virginia.

Ranging from 24-34 years of age the young nuns were doubly excited for the adventure, because they were about to be on the maiden voyage of the highly acclaimed

Titanic. Thanks be to God, one of the young sisters' papers were not in order, so they were denied access and had to take a later ship.

After nearly two weeks at sea, they arrived in America, but the traveling companion they were to meet there was delayed, once again changing the fate of the sisters. That inconvenience of the eager sisters was a God wink. The train they were originally to board derailed killing many on board. For four months the sisters studied English in Stella Niagara, NY with the Sisters of Penance and Charity congregation. That is where German born Father Nicholas Hengers a pastor of a school and parish in Nicholas County was introduced to the nuns in August of that year. Days later the group traveled to Richwood, WV. It was there their mission as educators began. They served the families of immigrant lumber workers and coal miners. Despite prejudices both ethnic and anti-Catholic the young sisters donning their black dress and habits mustered grit and determination to focus on their mission. A year later they opened a hospital for the community.

In 1921, they were called to Buckhannon to open St. Joseph's Hospital.

In 1923, Bishop John Swint of the Diocese of Wheeling asked the sisters to expand to Huntington and open St. Mary's Hospital in the abandoned St. Edward's School. They opened the medical center on Nov. 6, 1924. The sisters did not shy away from daunting labor, and because of their genuine intentions to care for others in need, respected physicians and health care workers chose to

bring their patients there for care – care that has been exceptional for many generations.

“What started out as a small number of pioneer sisters grew to 121 sisters here to work and serve the Huntington area,” St. Mary’s Chief Operating Officer Angie Swearingen said. “They have passed on the power of prayer and the amazing grace of God. No words can describe how it feels for one of the sisters come up to you and say, ‘I’m praying for you.’”

“If you stop and think for a moment all of the prayers that the sisters led and prayed every day for 100 years – it is truly awesome,” she said. “We are so grateful for their grit, unwavering spirit, and courage in their tough decisions. Their spirit will live on in the hearts and minds of every physician and every staff member that walks through the doors.”

Prior to the induction, a celebratory Mass was held in the sister’s chapel in the convent wing of the hospital.

“We look back in thanksgiving, and look forward with confidence,” said Bishop Mark Brennan during his homily. “The sisters opened this hospital, providing healthcare to treat the whole person – flesh and spirit. Their compassion and love were healing not merely the body, but the soul as well.

“God gave our skillful health care professionals a great intelligence and a heart to love people. As St. Mary’s moves forward do so with the love, gentleness, and patience the Pallottine sisters embody. May you be his agents and trust He will give you what you need to do it.”

He noted that the largest non-governmental provider of education and medical services in the world is the Catholic Church, explaining that one-fourth of health care in the world is provided by the Catholic Church, yet we are not one-fourth of the population or even close

to that, but because of our faith we are motivated to care and love others like Christ taught us. The power of God gives us the instinct to serve trusting that “Jesus is the Divine Physician.” “The hospital we see today was built with many hands and many hearts,” said Sister Danuta Przybyłek, SAC, provincial for the missionary sisters. “Love can create beautiful things with one tiny seed despite prejudices and lack of finances.

“We came to serve God and his people,” she said and added in closing to all the staff of the hospital present. “May the spirit of Christ be carried on.... Make time for relationships. Acknowledge each human being. We entrust the next 100 years to your good hands and assure you of our prayers.”

PRAYER FOR GOD’S GUIDANCE

by Sister Joanne Obrochta, SAC

God of Gentleness, be with us all to shine through the warm hearts that are hurting.

God of Strength, be with us all to be supportive of one another and to be good stewards to all in our care.

God of Peace, be with us all to be a mantle for those who are troubled and anxious.

God of Joy, be with us all, filling hearts to fullness.

God of Love, be with us all to reach beyond our walls with hope and love to help those in need, to remind us, and those who come after us, to always remember that “what we do for the least of these, we do for God,

May Your love be with us.

Amen.





Revival Is about to Break Through Be Instruments of His Work

By Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston Seminarian Joe Derico

This past summer, I was blessed to attend the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis, an event that marked a high point in the USCCB's four-year National Eucharistic Revival. Reflecting on the congress, one central theme stands out: revival. This period has witnessed remarkable growth in faith within the Church in the U.S., especially in our diocese. Here are key areas where this revival is taking hold and ways we can foster its continued growth.

1) REVIVAL OF BELIEF IN THE EUCHARIST

The revival's primary focus has been rekindling belief in the Eucharist, and by all measures, it has been profoundly successful. Across our diocese, Eucharistic Adoration is on the rise, daily Mass attendance is growing, and there is a renewed enthusiasm to share the faith. This revival is most deeply rooted in individual hearts, drawn closer to the Eucharist through prayer, Mass, and Adoration.

For laypeople, the invitation is clear: prioritize time with the Eucharist. Daily, the King of the universe comes down to us in the form of bread and wine—what could be more important than sharing in this mystery? For priests, this revival is a call to celebrate the Eucharist with dedication. The Eucharist is Christ's daily gift to us, and priests are uniquely privileged to bring it to life. Laypeople can encourage this commitment by showing up whenever Mass is offered, reinforcing the importance of the Eucharistic mystery.

2) REVIVAL OF THE SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION

A greater devotion to the Eucharist naturally leads to a renewed call to the Sacrament of Confession. St. Paul reminds us of the necessity of preparing our souls to receive Christ worthily. Confession is the primary means for this preparation, through which we seek God's mercy and forgiveness.

For most, a good habit is regular confession, ideally every one to two weeks. Families can encourage each other in this practice, holding one another to a higher standard of living. Parishioners can also ask their priests to extend confession hours and should never hesitate to request confession, even outside designated times. Most priests will be willing to make time, as the sacrament's importance is immense.

3) REVIVAL OF THE PRIESTHOOD

It is evident that the priesthood in the U.S. has been challenged over the past decades. Many priests have faced intense scrutiny, and some have faltered, losing sight of their calling as spiritual fathers. But this revival is an invitation for priests to reclaim that role, dedicating themselves anew to leading souls to heaven.

Priests carry significant responsibility, traditionally and in the face of societal pressures and cultural confusion. Their strength is vital to the Church's mission. As laypeople, we are called to support them through prayer and friendship. Show your care for priests—invite them to dinner, let them know they are not alone. Just as they come ready to serve us in our times of need, our prayers and companionship help sustain them.



In these three key areas, revival is happening, and it's up to each of us to nurture this growth. By drawing closer to the Eucharist, recommitting to regular confession, and supporting our priests, we can foster the seeds of renewal sown during the National Eucharistic Revival. Let us be instruments in this work, allowing God to move through us as we share His love and mercy with the world. Revival is indeed breaking through—let's continue to walk with the Lord, opening our hearts to all that He wishes to accomplish through us.

DON'T WASTE YOUR BREATH ON "STUPID QUARRELLING"

Fourth Pontiff's Letter to Corinthians Was Blunt yet Loving

He penned his own letter to the Corinthians, but it is not included in the New Testament.

Pope Saint Clement I was the fourth pope of the Church, serving the last decade of the first century. He was born in Rome and served as pontiff from the year 92-99.

His epistle to the Corinthians inspired many in the early Church, and reading it today you will find it holds much wisdom and down to earth loving guidance - a wakeup call so to speak.

His letter addressed the division in the Church - laity from clergy and young versus elders all in the Corinth community.

He implores them to change their ways back to the people they once were - a people of humility following Christ's teachings, "more willing to give than to receive."

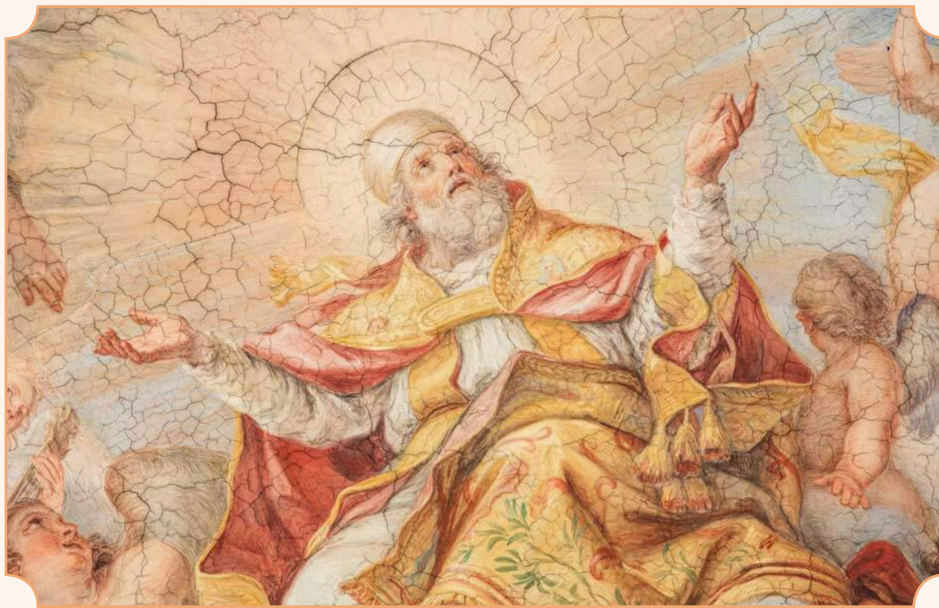
He cautioned them that the Church is a gift of God - sacramental - all made orderly "according to the will of God."

He warned not to let the Church be the "foolish against the wise."

He pleads with those in Corinth to repent and stop the worthless struggle among them, calling for order, respect, and humility. He notes that we should never lose sight that it is God the created the world. We should never tire of praying for rulers - just and unjust as Christ taught us on the Cross. Change and repent.

"Let us attend to what is good, pleasing, and acceptable in the sight of him who formed us," adding that all people should pay attention and follow "those who cultivate peace with godliness" instead of the hypocrites who profess it with words but not actions.

He wrote, "Let us bow, then, to that sovereign and glorious will. Let us



entreat his mercy and goodness, casting ourselves upon his compassion and wasting no more energy in quarrels and a rivalry which only ends in death.

"My brothers, do let us have a little humility; let us forget our self-assertion and braggadocio and stupid quarrelling, and do what the Bible tells us instead. The Holy Spirit says, the wise man is not to brag of his wisdom, nor the strong man of his strength, nor the rich man of his wealth; if a man must boast, he should boast of the Lord, seeking him out and acting with justice and uprightness. More particularly, let us remember what the Lord Jesus Christ said in one of his lessons on mildness and forbearance.

Be merciful, he told us, that you may obtain mercy; forgive; that you may be forgiven. What you do yourself, will be done to you; what you give, will be given to you; as, you judge, so you will be judged; as you show kindness; so, it will be shown to you. Your portion will be weighed out for you in your own scales. May this precept, and these commands, strengthen our resolve to live in obedience to his sacred words, and in humility of mind; for the holy word says, Whom shall I look upon, but him that is gentle and peaceable, and trembles at my sayings?

"Thus, there exists a vast heritage of glorious achievements for us to share in. Let us then make haste and get back to the state of tranquility which was set before us in the beginning as the

mark for us to aim at. Let us turn our eyes to the Father and Creator of the universe, and when we consider how precious and peerless are his gifts of peace, let us embrace them eagerly for ourselves."

Pope St. Clement is martyr and considered one of the Apostolic Fathers of the Church, meaning he knew and was influenced by one or more of the Apostles. His feast day is Nov. 23rd.

Read more from his letter on the Holy See (Vatican.va) website or EWTN online.

Editor's note: the image with this story of St. Clement is from the Basilica of San Clemente (St. Clement Parish in Rome)

FOUR MIGHTY SAINTS, BLESSED TO CALL UPON THIS WEEK



Others annoying you lately? Time to heed the advice of **St. Rose Philippine Duchesne**. We celebrate her feast day Nov. 18.

She was born in 1769 into a prominent family in France. At 18, she joined a group of nuns in Grenoble without telling her parents, but when the French Revolution broke out the religious house was closed, forcing her to return home.

She lived the vows of a religious by her actions – helping those who suffered due to the war and never losing her focus on Christ and the hopes of becoming a nun. With her monastery unable to recover from the war and with her parent’s approval she was able to join the Society of the Sacred Heart in 1804. Passionate about bringing the Church into the Americas, she had to wait 14 years before she could

finally leave Europe for the US, where she would do charitable work throughout the Louisiana Territory, create schools for girls throughout the Missouri region, and also minister to Native Americans. When she retired from her administrative duties at the age of 71, she opened a school for Native Americans of the Potawatomi tribe, whose name for her meant “Woman Who Prays Always.”

She had the ability to gracefully humble those in her presence, counseling, “Let us try not to be exacting with other people, but rather to pass over in silence those thousand little annoyances that tend to irritate us. For we know that no one is perfect in this life, and we must put up with the defects of others as they put up with ours.”

She was no nonsense, which was likely an unwritten prerequisite for her ministry. As you ask her to intercede for you on her feast day, keep in mind her attitude, “Let us bear our cross and leave it to God to determine the length and the weight.”

Editor’s note: the mosaic of St. Rose Duchesne is in the Cathedral Basilica in St. Louis.

Let’s hear it for our music ministry folks in our parishes! Make time to pray with **St. Cecilia** this week, asking her to intercede for all those who provide inspirational melodies and song for the Church. Her feast day is Nov. 22.

She is the patron saint for musicians, who according to history and legend said, “Let our actions and words be like a song to God that says, ‘I love you!’”

Saint Cecilia lived in Rome in the second and third centuries. She is one of seven women, excluding Mary, commemorated by name in the Canon of the Mass.

As a young woman she vowed to remain a virgin. When she was to marry, she dreaded the thought. The tale passed down over the centuries tell us that as the music played at her wedding she sang in her heart to the Lord, professing her vow to be undefiled. She convinced her husband to honor her wishes, which he did, after witnessing her talking to an angel.

It is believed she converted more than 400 people including her husband and brother-in-law.

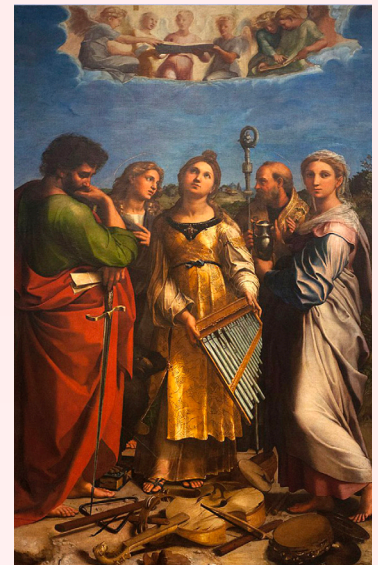
She was later arrested for preaching Christianity. She was tortured and martyred.

A guided prayer for musicians and all those working in parish music ministry (by the National Association of Pastoral Musicians):

Close your eyes and breathe ten full breaths, gently in and out. Feel the spirit that fills your lungs and your heart as you begin. Slowly re-open your eyes and pray:

God who calls us into being, you also call us into service. Help us as we minister to your Church. Make the notes we sing and play an instrument to preach your holy Gospel to the people we serve. Center our music and indeed our very lives in the message of love in your name and in the name of your Son and the Holy Spirit. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Editor’s note: the painting of St. Cecilia is “The Ecstasy of St. Cecilia” by Renaissance painter Raphael in the 1500s.





Nov. 23rd Saint Columban

The Holy Irish Abbot, St. Columban, was born in sometime between 543-559 in Ireland. From a young age he wanted to live a life serving God.

Columban, also known as Columbanus, knew that he would have to give up on the idea of being married and having children. To take temptation to stray away and in order to ignore the beautiful girls that would catch his eye, he immersed himself in his studies. When old enough he declared his desire to leave home for religious life of some sort that would enable him to live for Christ – evangelizing by his words and actions.

His mother didn't support her handsome son's dream to leave home and become a monk. In fact, she even threw herself across the doorway of their home the day he was to leave, but legend has it he stepped over her and didn't turn back.

He was 20 when he entered the monastery. Eventually Columban became a priest

and by the age of 50 his dream of being a missionary evangelist became reality.

Thanks to St. Columban monasteries in France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy were established.

Also, on Nov. 23rd call to mind Blessed Miguel Agustín Pro, who died on this day in 1927 in Mexico City, Mexico.

Born José Ramón Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez, this blessed was a Jesuit priest.

As a seminarian in 1914, he had to flee for his life as the Mexican government allowed anti-Catholic brutality. The Mexican military and bandits ransacked the seminary and burned down the library as a warning. The superior pleaded for all the seminarians to make their way to California, where a Jesuit community would take them in. Blessed Miguel did as he was advised and made it to Los Gatos, California, after the two-months' journey on foot.

He wasn't the brightest student in seminary. He had to spend long hours studying when others breezed through. It was his determination, sincere prayer to become a Jesuit priest, and his servant attitude that carried him through his studies and ministries in Spain, Nicaragua, and Belgium before being ordained in 1925.

Tensions in Mexico didn't subside, but heightened. The government closed all churches and prohibited any public services. Despite having a target on him, Blessed Miguel – known as Father Pro – returned to his homeland in June 1926. In secret he celebrated the sacraments with faithful Catholics and established hidden Stations of the Cross throughout Mexico City.

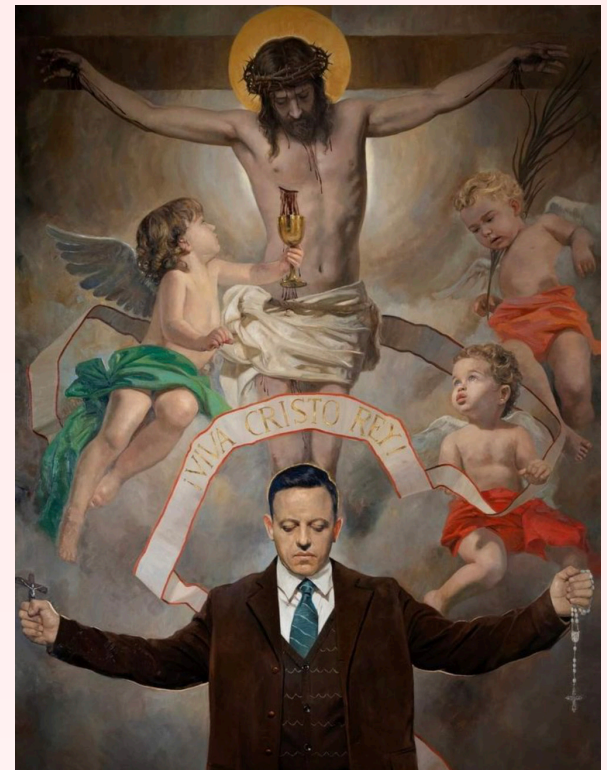
He was unjustly accused and arrested for the attempted assassination of a high ranking general. When word got out that Father Pro was captured, the actual hitman turned himself into authorities.

The Mexican government however, wanted to make an example out of Blessed Miguel as a warning to all who continued to worship and practice their religion even in secret. The priest was led in front of a great crowd to be executed. He refused a blindfold he was offered, boldly stood before the firing squad with his arms outstretched like on a cross, and with his Rosary in one hand and a crucifix in his other he yelled, “Vivo Cristo Rey (Long live Christ the King)!”

Photos exist of this moment that were taken by the Mexican government, who would publicize the images to scare Catholics and Christians. Blessed be God, the horrific tactic actually increased the fortitude and resolve of the faithful.

More than 40,000 lined the streets for Father Pro's funeral procession with thousands more at the cemetery.

Editor's note: the painting of Blessed Miguel is by Juan Raul Berzosa Fernandez circa 1979.





HOPE GROWS HERE

Mary's Refuge Gala Celebrates Life

By MEG H. PARTINGTON
Administrative assistant, Saint Joseph School

MARTINSBURG, W.Va. - About 200 people gathered Nov. 7 at the Hilton Garden Inn Martinsburg to celebrate and support a place where hope grows.



The third annual gala for Mary's Refuge brought together representatives from the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, area church members, clergy and the general public who back its mission to provide a safe and stable environment for young mothers and mothers-to-be. Seated among them in the ballroom were all 10 of the maternity home's residents and some of their children.

"It's a place where women can get their life together for themselves and their children," said Michael Gormley, president of the Mary's Refuge board.

Keynote speaker Aisha Taylor is living proof of the power of support networks. Now a single mother of 9-year-old twins, she faced pressure from their father to terminate her pregnancy. Guidance from a pregnancy resource center and several experiences led her to continue letting the babies grow inside her, including making eye contact with one of them on a screen during an ultrasound and placing a call to an abortion clinic that went unanswered.

"Thank God the provider never answered the phone," Taylor said.

Taylor wrote a book about her experiences titled "Navigating the Impossible: A Survival Guide for Single Moms from Pregnancy Through the First Year of Motherhood." She also teaches personal finance workshops, has a blog and a YouTube channel.

The day before the gala, Taylor spent time with the women living at Mary's Refuge, after which she believed their current environment will serve as a catalyst for them to help others once they get out on their own.

"This organization is beautifully equipped to save lives," Taylor said.

As proof of that statement, Jessica Petrlik spoke about how



Kathy Barton, Joyce Bibey, April Shwe, Sr. Martha Gomez, Diana Shwe, and Kate Grimsland

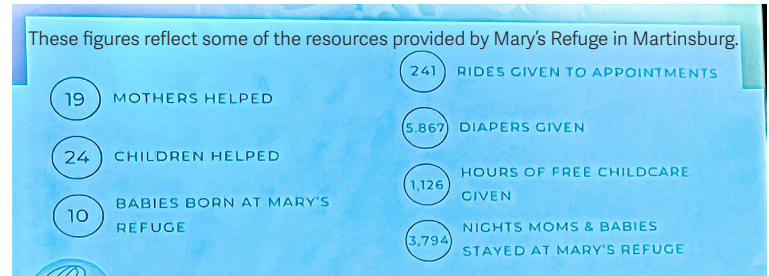
Mary's Refuge has been a godsend to Mariah, the single mother for whom she serves as a mentor. The two were connected through YoungLives, a ministry through which mentors link teen moms with community resources and share the Gospel.

Mariah talked to her mentor about growing up with a physically and mentally abusive mother, and about neglect and fear she endured.

While pregnant, Mariah and the father of her child were repeatedly kicked out of residences because of his behavior, so she often was homeless and lacking basic necessities. It wasn't until Mariah and her boyfriend parted company that things started moving in a positive direction.

Petrlik - the mother of three teens - and another YoungLives mentor helped secure housing for Mariah at Mary's Refuge in March 2023, just a few weeks after her son, Jariah, was born.

Since August of 2023, Mariah has been working the night shift at Procter & Gamble, got her driving permit and is living rent- and utility-free in a safe space, all unfathomable to her a year ago.



"Mariah is my daughter and I am like the mother she never had. I can't imagine my future without them," Petrlik said through tears about the 20-year-old woman and her son.

Gormley said the future is bright for the maternity home.

At the 2023 fall gala, three women and their children were living in the facility that opened Jan. 9, 2023, just outside downtown Martinsburg. Now, there are 10 mothers and 16 children living there. Other women are on a waiting list.

"We've hit our stride," Gormley said.

To maintain that positive momentum, Deacon Dave Galvin from St. James the Greater Catholic Church encouraged those in attendance to join the refuge's Cradle Club by donating \$1,000, which can provide two years of housing and structured support for the mothers.

"Mary's Refuge is not a homeless shelter. Mary's Refuge is a home," Galvin said.

For more information about Mary's Refuge or to make a donation, call 304-350-1632; email life@marysrefuge.com; or go to marysrefuge.com.

Photos by Hallie Brown, Hallie Michelle Photography

33RD SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

First Reading: Daniel 12:1-3

Daniel proclaims the urgency and seriousness of being prepared for the end of the world. Declaring, “the wise shall shine brightly... and those who lead the many to justice... stars forever.”

Responsorial: Psalm 16

“You are my inheritance, O Lord!”

Second Reading: Hebrews 10:11-14, 18

St. Paul tells us Christ’s offering of Himself for our sins, “He has made perfect those who are being consecrated.”

Gospel: Mark 13:24-32

The end of the world is coming, heed the Word of God for the Son of Man will gather His elect from the four winds.

[CLICK HERE FOR FULL SCRIPTURE TEXT](#)

PRAYER INTENTIONS

For the Church, that we may proclaim Christ in what we say, in what we do, and in how we treat others, from now until the end of time, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For those who are poor, here in this nation and across the planet, may the lessons Christ gave us move us to support and care for them, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For women who most generously share their faith and talents in the Church, here and around the world, let us pray to the Lord. . .

That the souls of our loved ones and all the faithful departed may be joined with our Lord on the last day, let us pray to the Lord. . .

Lord hear our prayer



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MASS ONLINE

Saturday 6pm Masses will continue to be livestreamed from the Cathedral of St. Joseph, and will be available on our website each Sunday at DWC.ORG.