



## DAY OF PRAYER FOR PEACE IN OUR COMMUNITIES - SEPT. 9TH

In light of recent incidents of violence and racial tension in communities across the United States, the Most Reverend Jose Gomez, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), has invited all dioceses across the country to unite on Sept. 9th in a Day of Prayer for Peace in Our Communities. We present the following based on a blog by Dayrin Perez, coordinator of youth ministry for the archdiocese of Los Angeles. It is based on the principles of the USCCB Ad Hoc Committee Against Racism. Perez defines four steps to we should all take to be a part of the solution: listen, transform, learn, and act.

Let us all promote peace and healing during this time of great strain on civil society.

*"Racism still profoundly affects our culture, and it has no place in the Christian heart. This evil causes great harm to its victims, and it corrupts the souls of those who harbor racist or prejudicial thoughts. The persistence of the evil of racism is why we are writing this letter now. People are still being harmed, so action is still needed"*

The above quote is from "Open Wide Our Hearts: A pastoral letter against racism" pages 6-7. It was written to the faithful by USCCB committee in 2018. Let us look at the letter as prayer "because all humans share a common origin, they are all brothers and sisters, all equally made in the image of God" (Open Wide Our Hearts, p 4).

How is God challenging you? What he is calling us to do? Reflect on the notes Perez presented in his blog after much prayer:

### **LISTEN**

"As Christians, we are called to listen and know the stories of our brothers and sisters" (Open Wide Our Hearts, p 10). Am I allowing and creating opportunities to hear the stories of my African American brothers and sisters? Am I listening with

an open heart so that with empathy I can be moved to advocate for them and promote justice? I am challenging myself to, in a very intentional way, listen to the stories with an open heart and respect and give value to the experiences of those who have been harmed by the evil of racism.

### **Transform Your Heart**

"Racism is a moral problem that requires a moral remedy – a transformation of the human heart – that impels us to act" (Open Wide Our Heart, p. 20) Conversion is a long and oftentimes, a painful road. But I know that in Christ we can find the strength to make the



journey. I'm going to rely on Jesus' example and PRAY! That is my commitment! To listen to others with an open heart and take their life experiences to prayer. Allow for my heart to be humbly transformed through their story so I can "walk humbly with God in rebuilding our relationships, healing our communities, and working to shape our policies and institutions toward the good of all, as missionary disciples" (Open Wide Our Heart, p 20).

### **LEARN**

I have already bought a couple of books and audiobooks to expand my knowledge of racism. I have prayed with the Bishop's document "Open Wide Our Hearts", and I will continue to find material that both enlightens me and grounds me in Catholic Social Teaching. There is power

in informing yourself. I want to learn more so that through prayer and discernment I can identify how I can use my faith to make a change. "A missionary disciple is one who willingly meets every problem and every sinful attitude with the confidence that comes from a deep love of Jesus" (Open Wide Our Hearts, p 22)

### **ACT**

"Our individual efforts to encounter, grow, and witness, to change our hearts about racism, must also find their way into our families" (Open Wide Our Hearts, p 26). I was reflecting on conversations that I had as a kid with my parents about our situation as

an immigrant family. I have not had that type of conversation with my kids. They know that we love and treat people with respect. But I want my kids to know that their voice can be used to advocate for those whose voices are not heard. I want them to know, believe, understand and "make it clear that God dwells in the equal dignity of each person" (Open Wide Our Hearts, p. 26). So, my commitment is to start

at home. To make it my mission to raise kids that truly understand that the injustice and hurt that racism causes are an attack on human life.

St. Paul teaches us that all people are united together through the love and life of Jesus Christ. We are the Body of Christ; when one of us hurts, the whole body does too (1 Corinthians 12:26). We are called to ensure the well-being of each of its parts. Let us use this time to listen, to transform our hearts, to learn and to act for justice! Let us adopt Pope Francis words "let no one think that this invitation is not meant for him or her" (Evangeli Gaudium, no 3).

[CLICK HERE](#) or more resources and to read the Open Wide Our Hearts letter in its entirety.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY, BLESSED MARY QUEEN OF PEACE!

The feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary is celebrated on Sept. 8th.



Let us all take a moment this week to celebrate the birth of Mary to her loving parents, Joachim and Anne. Take out your rosary and pray Mary can draw us closer to Jesus. Be like St. Teresa of Calcutta and imagine that as we hold each bead,

we are gently holding Mary's hand. Show our Blessed Mother we love her and put our trust in her son our Lord and Savior.

On her birthday, as our schools all across West Virginia open their doors and welcome their students, pray she intercedes for us protecting our children and our schools, allowing them to enjoy the new challenges and opportunities the school year will bring.

Happy Birthday,  
Blessed Mother Mary!  
Pray the rosary [HERE](#).



## THE MEMORIAL OF ST. PETER CLAVER - SEPT. 9

As a student and young priest St. Peter Claver was considered very intelligent, but also both shy and introverted. It was his compassion for humanity though that was great and could not be stifled. He was horrified and disgusted at how men and women from Congo and Angola were captured, transported, and paraded to be slaves in the Americas. He spent his religious

life to help them.

St. Peter Claver was born in 1581 in Catalonia, Spain. He followed his call to the priesthood in the early 1600s, entering the Jesuit order. He was sent to Columbia – the New World – to care for its people. He was ordained in 1615. By that time the slave trade had been in place for more than 90 years. Cartagena, where he served in Columbia, was the main port to receive slaves in the Americas.

St. Peter Claver immersed himself in the caring of these people as best he could. After they arrived, they were divided in groups and housed like animals before being sold. Peter rallied others to join him in caring for their health and spiritual needs, while they were there. The needs were overwhelming for these men, women, and even children. On average one-third of them died during the transport. The survivors were weak, ill, and distraught beyond comprehension. St. Peter Claver's group took medicine, food, and supplies to them. He is quoted encouraging his helpers by saying, "We must speak to them with our hands, before we try to speak to them with our lips."



St. Peter Claver referred to himself as a "slave of the slaves forever."

Later he would visit plantations and advocate for better conditions. It is estimated he served more

than 300,000 people put into slavery before he died in 1654.

Let us all love like St. Peter Claver, and treat one another like we want to be treated.





August 31, 2020

Hello Catholic School Friends!

We are very excited that our long-anticipated school year is about to begin. Our staff, with the help of many dedicated school and faith community members, have been working very hard to prepare for our opening September 8th. Thank you for your faithful support and dedication to our Catholic Schools.

While we are enormously proud of these efforts, we are also extremely mindful of the responsibility we all have to maintain strict and the sometimes unwanted and unpopular procedures in order to enjoy the privilege of face to face schooling. Let's continue to be elite and set high standards – in our schools, homes, groups, teams, and routines - when it comes to doing all we can to keep our children together in school and on the athletic fields.

Detailed individual school plans have been sent to you - please make sure you are familiar with your building's procedures and protocols. Also, make sure to review these expectations with your children prior to the first day of school. Our teachers and staff have been innovative in their classroom preparation. Our custodians have gone above the call of duty in preparation for the new school year: without their support and dedication, none of this would be able to happen. I am also immensely proud of our athletes and coaches who have navigated a new obstacle course conducting safe practices during COVID -19. Thank you for sticking to the articulated protocols and procedures. Your commitment to doing what has been developed is the only way to make this happen.

We've demonstrated that we can do great things when we work together. As Bishop Mark Brennan said to the faithful, "we look with cautious optimism toward the opening of the fall semester in our Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston". I thank you for your positive attitude, and gracious ability to work together as a school family. **That commitment to community is the key to keeping our doors open.**

The group is as strong as the weakest member. We must continue to work together follow all articulated norms and protocols both in the school setting and outside of the school for us to continue face to face instruction. Carelessness outside of school will have greater potential for negative impact and ramifications to our school community. We have all seen the headlines about schools having to start quarantining after they have successfully started their school year. In many cases this was because of obvious violations to common sense safety measures, such as gatherings outside of the walls of the school. Please, don't let your guard down. I beg you to consider how your actions impact not just you and your family, but the entire school community. We all want to be together to celebrate who we are, what we believe, what makes us special, and what we have accomplished, and we will... later, when the time is right. Right now, however, we all must follow well established, thoroughly thought out social distancing norms, procedures, and guidelines. There can be no exceptions if we want this to work-it is up to you.

Thank you for being a caring example of respect for life by wearing a mask, keeping socially distanced, not gathering in large groups and washing/sanitizing hands. God bless you for supporting the process, respecting the difficult decisions that needed to be made, and showing your unwavering commitment to our Catholic schools. Make it a great year!

Peace,

Mary Ann Deschaine, Ed.S.

## FAIRMONT PARISH PRIEST EAGER TO SHEPHERD THREE SCHOOLS

By Joyce Bibey

FAIRMONT—He has been assigned as the official pastor of three schools – Fairmont Catholic School, St. Mary Central School, and Notre Dame High School. For some this may seem a bit daunting- working in two cities with three different administrative staffs and three school advisory boards. However, Fr. Joseph Konikattil is eager to help and sees it as an exciting opportunity to enable students to “carry Christ in their hearts and soar high in the community with the wings of knowledge.” Fr. Joe, as he prefers, because most people stumble over his last name, which is pronounced Ko-nah-‘kah-til; is no stranger



to school leadership. In fact, he has an impressive list of accolades that includes being named by the Federal Government of India the best principal for promoting information technology in a school. He was also recognized three times as an elite principal by the State Government of Manipur, in Northeast India. He is certain his beliefs on the importance of Catholic schools will be evident in his leadership.

See the full story and more on the upcoming school year in the Sept. 4 issue of The Catholic Spirit. Sign up to receive The Catholic Spirit by e-mail to [CROWAN@DWC.ORG](mailto:CROWAN@DWC.ORG).

For more news and information from The Catholic Spirit visit [THECATHOLICSPIRITWV.ORG](http://THECATHOLICSPIRITWV.ORG) or follow on Facebook at [WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/THECATHOLICSPIRITWV](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/THECATHOLICSPIRITWV)

## THE CATHOLIC SPIRIT IS NOW AVAILABLE BY E-MAIL!

You are invited to join our new e-list to receive The Catholic Spirit by e-mail. To be added to the e-list, send an e-mail to Colleen Rowan, [CROWAN@DWC.ORG](mailto:CROWAN@DWC.ORG), with “The Catholic Spirit e-list” in the subject line. Please let us know your preference saying: “E-mail only, and remove me from print mailing list” or “I would like both print and e-mail versions.”

By joining the e-mail list, you will receive an e-mail on each issue date of The Catholic Spirit with a link to the full issue.

The Catholic Spirit will now be available under “Downloadable Spirit” at

[THECATHOLICSPIRITWV.ORG](http://THECATHOLICSPIRITWV.ORG).

## ROCKWELL'S VISUALIZATION OF THE GOLDEN RULE

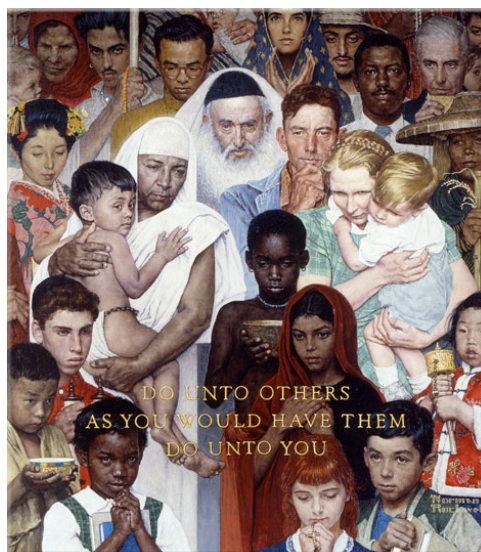
The Golden Rule. It seems today more than ever we need to repeat it over and over to ourselves – Do unto others as you would have them do unto you!

One of the best illustrations of this fundamental key to peace was presented by Norman Rockwell in his 1961 painting of “The Golden Rule.”

Most of his nostalgic paintings were covers of the Saturday Evening Post, depicting the fun natured and warm America most could relate to or longed to have. They stirred many emotions. Rockwell's peak of fame was in the 1960s when civil rights were at the spotlight.

He like those seeking justice and equal rights, wanted a world where people could live in peace and without fear.

“I try to entertain with my Post covers, but once in a while I get an uncontrollable urge to say something serious,” he said in an interview that can be heard online at [THE MAKING](http://THE MAKING)



[OF THE GOLDEN RULE VIDEO](#). “Like everyone else I’m concerned with the world situation and like everyone else I like to contribute something to help. The only way I can help is through my pictures.”

The video sited above gives an amazing account of the painting, Rockwell's intentions, and his desire to contribute to a greater good. He describes the people he painted – who they really are and who they represent. A world traveler, Rockwell notes various religions he was exposed to during his trips across the globe. He said they all have one thing in common – the

basic belief to be strong in faith is to treat people fairly. The short documentary is an interesting look at this artist's way to contribute to creating a better society.

Grow in faith, understanding, and compassion. Reflect on the painting and its meaning.

## MASS READINGS FOR THE TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### First Reading EZEKIEL 33:7-9

Thus says the LORD:

You, son of man, I have appointed watchman for the house of Israel; when you hear me say anything, you shall warn them for me. If I tell the wicked, "O wicked one, you shall surely die," and you do not speak out to dissuade the wicked from his way, the wicked shall die for his guilt, but I will hold you responsible for his death. But if you warn the wicked, trying to turn him from his way, and he refuses to turn from his way, he shall die for his guilt, but you shall save yourself.

### Responsorial PSALM 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9

**R. (8) If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Come, let us sing joyfully to the LORD; let us acclaim the rock of our salvation. Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us joyfully sing psalms to him.

**R. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Come, let us bow down in worship; let us kneel before the LORD who made us. For he is our God, and we are the people he shepherds, the flock he guides.

**R. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Oh, that today you would hear his voice: "Harden not your hearts as at Meribah, as in the day of Massah in the desert, Where your fathers tempted me; they tested me though they had seen my works."

**R. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

### Second Reading ROMANS 13:8-10

Brothers and sisters:

Owe nothing to anyone, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; you shall not kill; you shall not steal; you shall not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no evil to the neighbor; hence, love is the fulfillment of the law.

### Alleluia 2CORINTHIANS 5:19

**R. Alleluia, alleluia.**

God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

**R. Alleluia, alleluia.**

### Gospel MATTHEW 18:15-20

Jesus said to his disciples:

"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that 'every fact may be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If he refuses to listen to them, tell the church. If he refuses to listen even to the church, then treat him as you would a Gentile or a tax collector. Amen, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again, amen, I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

## PRAYER INTENTIONS

For leaders of nations, that they may seek peaceful ways to resolve differences as they serve the people entrusted to them, we pray . . .

For those who work for a living, that they may receive a just wage for their labors, and for those who are unemployed or underemployed that they may not lose heart, we pray . . .

For peace in our communities, that all people may be treated with dignity and respect regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, or social status, we pray . . .

For an end to the Coronavirus, for safety to those returning to school, and that an effective vaccine may be made available soon, we pray . . .

*Lord hear our prayer*

## SPIRITUAL COMMUNION PRAYER

My Jesus,

I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.

I love You above all things,

and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.

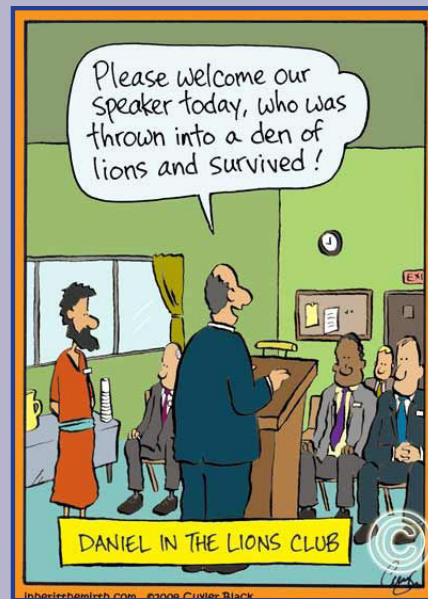
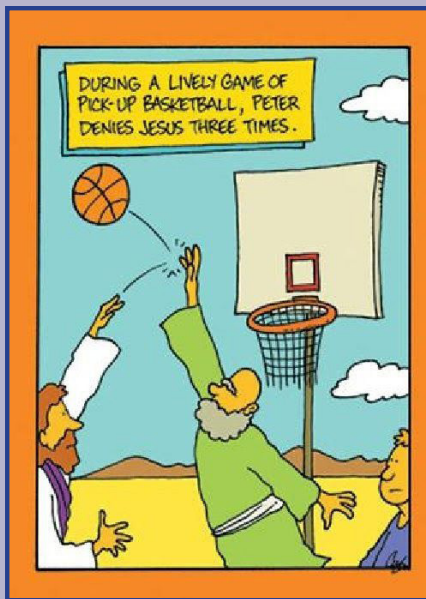
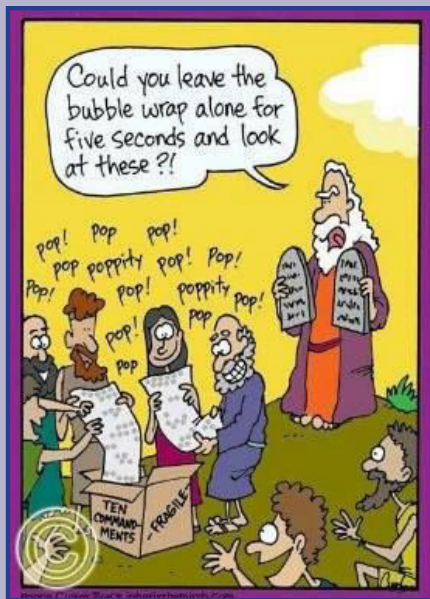
I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You.

Never permit me to be separated from You.

Amen.



# A LITTLE CATHOLIC HUMOR



*Liturgy of the Hours*  
LITURGY OF THE HOURS

**Pray the prayer for this day, this hour!**

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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](http://DWC.ORG).

Below are four options for enriching your spirit through daily Mass online.

- EWTN airs daily Mass from Our Lady of Angels Chapel, in Irondale, Alabama, at 8am, noon, and 7pm:  
<https://www.ewtn.com/tv/watch-live>
- St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York has daily Mass live streamed at 7am: <https://saintpatrickscathedral.org/live>
- Catholic TV also streams its daily Mass: <http://catholicTV.org/masses/catholicTV-mass>
- Daily Mass Online at Notre Dame' Basillica of the Sacred Heart is live at 11:30 am Monday-Friday:  
<https://campusministry.nd.edu/mass-worship/basilica-of-the-sacred-heart/watch-mass/special-masses/>