



# Jesus thirsts for you. Repent & Believe.

ST. TERESA OF CALCUTTA



*On this First Sunday of Lent, we share a letter that St. Teresa of Calcutta (Kolkata) wrote in 1993 to her religious community - Missionaries of Charity. It is a reminder that "Jesus thirsts for you. Repent and believe."*

"My dearest Children,

Jesus wants me to tell you again, how much is the love He has for each one of you - beyond all that you can imagine. I worry some of you still have not really met Jesus - one to one - you and Jesus alone. We may spend time in chapel - but have you seen with the eyes of your soul how He looks at you with love?

Do you really know the living Jesus - not from books, but from being with Him in your heart? Have you heard the loving words He speaks to you? Ask for this grace, He is longing to give it. Never give up this daily intimate contact with Jesus as a real living Person - not just an idea.

How can we last - even one day living our life without hearing Jesus say "I love you" - impossible. Our soul needs that as much as the body needs to breathe the air. If not, prayer is dead - meditation is only thinking. Jesus wants you each to hear Him - speaking in the silence of your heart.

Be careful of all that can block that personal being in touch with the living Jesus. The hurts of life, and sometimes your own mistakes - [they] make you feel it is impossible that Jesus really loves you, is really clinging to you. This is a danger for all of you. And so sad, because it is completely opposite of what Jesus is really wanting, waiting to tell you.

Not only He loves you, even more - He longs for you. He

misses you when you don't come close. He thirsts for you. He loves you always, even when you don't feel worthy. Even if you are not accepted by others, even by yourself sometimes - He is the one who always accepts you.

My children, you don't have to be different for Jesus to love you. Only believe - you are precious to Him. Bring all you are suffering to His feet - only open your heart to be loved by Him as you are. He will do the rest.

You all know in your mind that Jesus loves you - but in this letter Mother wants to touch your heart instead. Jesus wants to stir up our hearts, so not to lose our early love...

Why is Mother saying these things? After reading [Pope John Paul II's 1993 Lenten message based on Christ's words "I thirst"], I was struck so much - I can not tell you what I felt. His letter made me realize more than ever how beautiful is our vocation. How great is God's love for us in choosing [us] to satiate that thirst of Jesus, for love, for souls - giving us our special place in the Church. At the same time, we are reminding the world of His thirst, something that was being forgotten.

I wrote to Holy Father to thank him. [His] letter is a sign... to go more into what is this great thirst for Jesus for each one. It is also a sign for Mother, that the time has come for me to speak openly of the gift God gave ... to explain fully as I can what means for me the thirst of Jesus.

For me, Jesus' thirst is something so intimate.... Jesus' words on the wall of every MC chapel, they are not from the past only, but alive here and now, spoken to you. Do you believe it? If so, you will hear, you will feel His presence. Let it become as intimate for each of you, just as for Mother - this is the greatest joy you could give me.

Jesus Himself must be the one to say to you “I Thirst.” Hear your own name. Not just once. Every day. If you listen with your heart, you will hear, you will understand. Why does Jesus say, “I thirst”? What does it mean? Something so hard to explain in words ... “I thirst” is something much deeper than just Jesus saying, “I love you.” Until you know deep inside that Jesus thirsts for you - you can’t begin to know who He wants to be for you. Or who He wants you to be for Him.

How to approach the thirst of Jesus? Only one secret - the closer you come to Jesus, the better you will know His

thirst. “Repent and believe”, Jesus tells us. What are we to repent? Our indifference, our hardness of heart. What are we to believe? Jesus thirsts even now, in your heart and in the poor - He knows your weakness, He wants only your love, wants only the chance to love you. He is not bound by time. Whenever we come close to Him - we become partners of Our Lady, St John, Magdalen. Hear Him. Hear your own name. Make my joy and yours complete.

God bless you,

M. Teresa, MC.”

# WORLD DAY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE ~ FEB. 20

## EVERY HUMAN LIFE IS SACRED - OUR MORAL OBLIGATION

As the world honors Feb. 20th as World Day of Social Justice, be mindful of the essential part of our faith - Catholic social teaching - to help those struggling with unemployment, social exclusion, and poverty.

As the Catechism of the Catholic Church explains, “To receive in truth the Body and Blood of Christ given up for us, we must recognize Christ in the poorest, his brethren” (no. 1397).

Whether poverty, poor in spirit, poor health, or working poor, we have many opportunities to work to help secure social justice through the Church, Catholic Charities, Catholic Relief Services, Catholic Sharing Appeal, Knights of Columbus, Mary’s Refuge, local parish projects, Catholic school community service efforts, and Catholic organizations events.

“We are called to reach out and to build relationships of love and justice. Catholic social teaching is based on and inseparable from our understanding of human life and human dignity. Every human being is created in the image of God and redeemed by Jesus Christ and therefore is invaluable and worthy of respect as a member of the human family. Every person, from the moment of conception to natural death, has inherent dignity and a right to life consistent with that dignity. Human dignity comes from God, not from any human quality or accomplishment” (United



States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Sharing Catholic Social Teaching).

Students in our Catholic schools are immersed in lessons that weave empathy, self-management, social awareness, and problem-solving skills into the curriculum.

Inspired by the lives of saints, Pope Francis, Bishop Mark Brennan, our priests and religious, each one of us is continually reminded to open up their hearts and bring hope to others by sharing our gifts and talents.

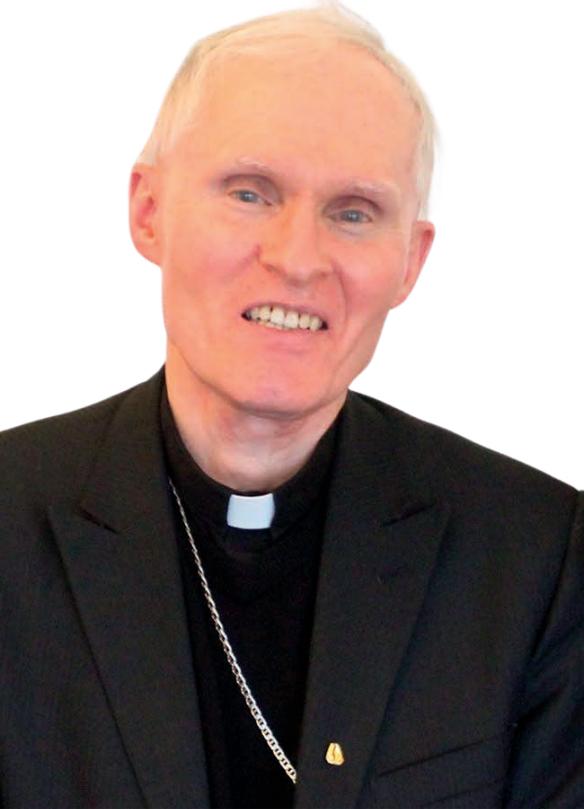
The Church’s Fundamental teachings for social justice declare that every human life is sacred; we are responsible for protecting human dignity with rights and meeting responsibilities; solidarity (what is it like to walk in the shoes of these people facing hard times); and subsidiarity (accepting responsibility and asking, ‘what can we do to come together and make a difference to provide the most fundamental things -food, water, clothing, security).

“Every human life is sacred- every person is a child of God.”

As a Church we all have the responsibility to teach children the importance of caring for others and that every human life is sacred, because every person is a child of God. Teaching children in our families, parishes, and schools how to make a difference in the world beginning in preschool is our moral obligation.



# THE 10<sup>th</sup> NATIONAL EUCCHARISTIC CONGRESS



**BISHOP ROBERT  
BARRON**



**SR. MIRIAM  
JAMES HEIDLAND**



**FR. MIKE  
SCHMITZ**



**SR. JOSEPHINE  
GARRETT**



**MATT  
MAHER**



**KATIE PREJEAN  
MCGRADY**



**FR. JOSH  
JOHNSON**



**MONTSE  
ALVARADO**



**FR. ROCKY  
HOFFMAN**



**DEACON HAROLD  
BURKE-SIVERS**



**BISHOP ANDREW  
COZZENS**



**SR. BETHANY  
MADONNA**



**CHRIS  
STEFANICK**



**CHIKA  
ANYANWU**



**MARI  
PABLO**



**GLORIA  
PURVIS**

*Join Bishop Mark this summer!*

**WILL YOU BE ONE OF THE 250 IN THE WV DELEGATION?**

**Register by March 15**

There are only 109 seats left! Thanks to Bishop Mark and the Catholic Sharing Appeal, 250 tickets were purchased so each parish and mission could be represented at the National Eucharistic Congress.

The complimentary five-day pass is available to all the faithful in the diocese with the WV delegation's travel package.

Bishop Mark encourages parishes (priests, parish council, Knights of Columbus, women's groups, etc.) to work together to find ways to finance the travel package for their parish representatives.

**Sign up now before it's too late!**

**[dwc.org/year-of-the-eucharist](http://dwc.org/year-of-the-eucharist)**

# GROW IN FAITH THIS WEEK



**February 20th is the Feast Day of the Little Shepherds of Fatima - sibling Saints Francisco and Jacinta Marto.** They were two of the three Portuguese children to whom the Angel of Peace appeared three times in 1916, and Mary, Our Lady of Fatima, appeared six times in 1917.

It was during World War I, when anti-Christian forces were determined to abolish even the thought of God and Christianity in Portugal and eastern Europe. For the Marto family prayer became increasingly important in those days. Praying the rosary for peace became a beautiful ritual especially for the children, who often prayed while out tending sheep on their family's land.

Saints Francisco died at the age of 11, and Jacinta died at the age of 10, just as Our Lady of Fatima said they would. Pope Francis canonized Francisco and Jacinta together on May 13, 2017, at a Mass in Fatima.

According to memoirs written by their cousin Lucia, who was also with them, the Angel of Peace taught them the prayer, *"My God, I believe, I adore, I hope, and I love You. I ask pardon for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope, and do not love You."*

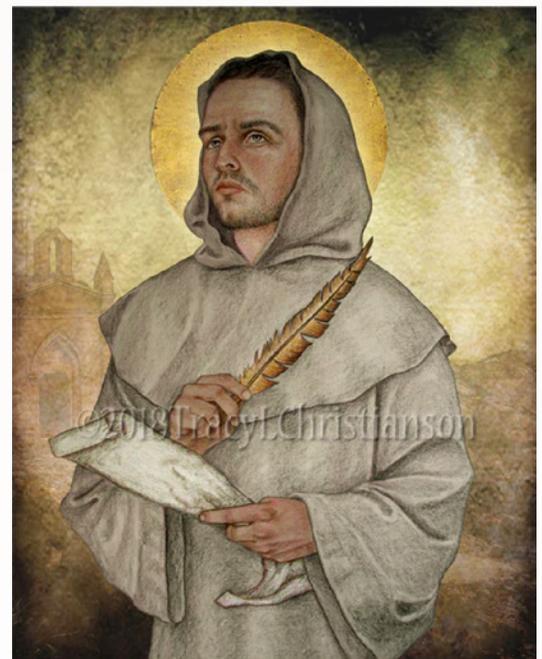
The angel stressed the importance of continuous prayer, begging for mercy for sinners, sacrificing for God, and the significant graces received from adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

**On Feb 21st, the Church honors the Feast Day of St. Peter Damian.** He was a humble monk of the 11th Century, wanting to live quietly in prayer and away from any limelight, but his love of God, leadership skills, peaceful nature, and theological intelligence could not be kept a secret. He was appointed Cardinal Bishop of Ostia to help reform the Church. He took the position only out of obedience for the faith. He worked in that role for 10 years before being allowed to return to life in the monastery.

However, two years later the Church called upon St. Peter Damian again. This time, he was sent to Frankfurt for it was believed he was the only one who could prevent Henry IV from divorcing his wife, Bertha. Four years later after fulfilling other missions of the Church, he was returning to his beloved hermitage, when he fell ill. He was taken in by a Benedictine monastery, where he ultimately died.

St. Peter Damian is an example of one who was blessed with the gift of counsel, compassion, and leadership among believers and non-believers; and was obedient to God by sharing those gifts even if it meant going out of his comfort zone, being away from the place he loved most, and down a path that was way more challenging than one he would have chosen for himself.

Let his words echo in our hearts - *"May Christ be heard in our language, may Christ be seen in our life, may he be perceived in our hearts."*





## February 22, Pray for Pope Francis on the Feast of St. Peter's Chair.

The significance of celebrating the Feast of the Chair of Saint Peter the Apostle celebrates a pivotal act of Jesus Christ and our history of the universal Church on earth.

The Feast of St. Peter's Chair honors the role bestowed in the 1st Century unto Simon Peter the first Pontiff (from the Latin word that means "bridge builder") of the Catholic Church founded by Jesus Christ. The Chair of Saint Peter represents servant authority of the Church that God gave Peter and his successors.

Matthew recounts the moment in Chapter 16:16-18. Jesus says to Peter: You are the Messiah, 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.

At the Vatican in the back of St. Peter's Basilica there is an actual "Chair of St. Peter," the Cathedra Petri. It is suspended above the altar. This bronze sculpture is actually an encasement for an ancient oak chair that St. Peter may have sat in, but historians are uncertain.

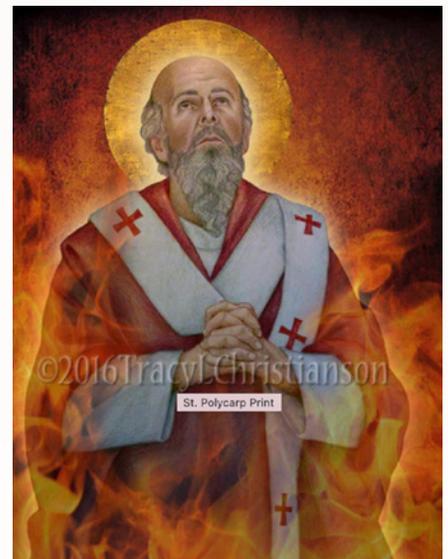
Regardless, the chair is a concrete symbol for the mission and ministry of St. Peter and his successors - serving, evangelizing, and shepherding the faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

Today, let us pray for our Holy Father Pope Francis, who has lovingly accepted the role of "bridge builder," and gracious bishop over the world-wide Church.

**On Feb. 23rd we honor the Feast Day of St. Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna and a disciple of the Apostle St. John.** He lived from 69 AD to 156 or 157 AD. He was a praised holy man to whom people flocked to wanting to hear for the one who learned about Christ right from the apostles' mouths. But it is his death that he is most known.

When he was about 87, he was arrested and sentenced to death for his Christianity and refusing to curse Christ. The story of his execution is astounding, recorded by witnesses in the publication *The Martyrdom of St. Polycarp*.

As the story goes, the bishop was charged for being an atheist of the gods of Rome and Caesar. He was taken to a stadium to be burned to death in a front of a huge crowd. Fires were lit at his feet, but he didn't burn. In fact, there was a sweet incense aroma that filled the air, according to the letter by the Smyrnaeans published in *The Martyrdom of St. Polycarp*.



*"And as the flame blazed forth in great fury, we, to whom it was given to witness it, beheld a great miracle.... For the fire, shaping itself into the form of an arch, like the sail of a ship when filled with the wind, encompassed as by a circle the body of the martyr. And he appeared within not like flesh, which is burnt, but as bread that is baked, or as gold and silver glowing in a furnace. Moreover, we perceived such a sweet odor [coming from the pile], as if frankincense or some such precious spices had been smoking there."*

A soldier was ordered to stab the bishop and with that the blood of St. Polycarp extinguished the fire and a dove appeared as he died.

St. Polycarp, pray for us!



**The Diocese requests the honor of your presence!**

**The Synod on Synodality Continues**

**Towards October 2024**

The Interim Stage

For a Synodal Church: Community, Participation, Mission

After three years of the Universal Church's journey of Synodality, we *still* must ask ourselves...

**Do we yet know how to be a synodal Church in mission?**

We must identify the paths to follow and the tools to adopt to empower all of **the baptized** to contribute to the Church's one...

**MISSION: To Proclaim the Risen Lord and His Gospel to the World Today**

Let us remember what Pope Francis has taught, regarding this Synod:

**"The important thing is *how* the reflection is done, that is, in a synodal way."**

### **Diocesan-Wide Listening Sessions**

The Bishops are asking us to hold more listening sessions – at the Diocesan level – to deepen our reflection.

Therefore, we will be conducting six (6) listening sessions, one in each vicariate, starting at 6:30 PM. They are:

- Wednesday, February 21<sup>st</sup>: St. John XXIII P.C., Charleston
- Thursday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>: St. Leo, Inwood
- Tuesday, February 27<sup>th</sup>: St. Francis de Sales, Beckley
- Wednesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>: Immaculate Conception, Clarksburg
- Thursday, February 29<sup>th</sup>: St. Francis Xavier, Parkersburg
- Thursday, March 7<sup>th</sup>: St. Michael, Wheeling

### **The Nature of This Year's Sessions**

More than just *listening* sessions, these gatherings are to be "**Conversations in the Spirit**" to **discern** the Will of God for our Church, by listening both to the stirrings of the Holy Spirit, within, and the contributions of one another.

### **Two Guiding Questions**

The Bishops have provided us with two (2) guiding questions that we are going to discern responses to, together.

1. Where have I seen or experienced successes—and distresses—within the Church's structure(s)/organization/leadership/life that encourage or hinder the mission?
2. How can the structures and organization of the Church help all the baptized to respond to the call to proclaim the Gospel and to live as a community of love and mercy in Christ?

### **Preparing Yourself for These Sessions**

We need to prayerfully and spiritually prepare for these sessions, by personally reflecting upon synodality.

We ask that you read and reflect upon some Scripture, in preparation for the listening session:

**John 14, Romans 12, and Isaiah 61.**

Entrust yourself to the Father, converse with the Lord Jesus, & listen to the Holy Spirit, about these questions.



# JOURNEY TO HOPE



**Join us for a seven-week bereavement program that offers education, support and sharing with people who have experienced the death of a loved one.**

**Topics covered include: Self-Help Strategies, Stress Management, Spiritual Issues, and the Value of Memories.**

**DATES:** Thursday, March 14, 2024  
Wednesday, March 20, 2024  
Wednesday, April 3, 2024  
Thursday, April 11, 2024  
Wednesday, April 17, 2024  
Thursday, April 25, 2024  
Wednesday, May 1, 2024

**TIME :** 2:30 P. M. - 3:30 P.M.

**LOCATION:** St. Joseph Retreat Center  
137 Mount St. Joseph Road  
Wheeling, WV

**RESERVE YOUR SPOT TODAY!**

**CONTACT  
Anna Marie Troiani**

**304-907-0171  
OR VIA EMAIL:  
[atroiani@csjoseph.org](mailto:atroiani@csjoseph.org)**

**Free will donations accepted**



Fr. Cyprian Osuegbu is a Catholic priest. He is currently serving as a chaplain at WVU Medicine - Wheeling Hospital. He is a board-certified chaplain and has a certificate in International Critical Incident Stress Management. He holds a Master of Psychology, Bachelor of Religious Studies (Masters equivalent), Bachelors of Theology and Philosophy. Fr. Cyprian is an empathetic listener, non-judgmental and an outgoing person. He loves music, prayer, sports, and reading. He has been facilitating the bereavement program at Wheeling hospital for the past six years. He has accompanied many people through their grief journey towards hope, strength and healing and finds joy in providing spiritual support to people experiencing existential crisis.



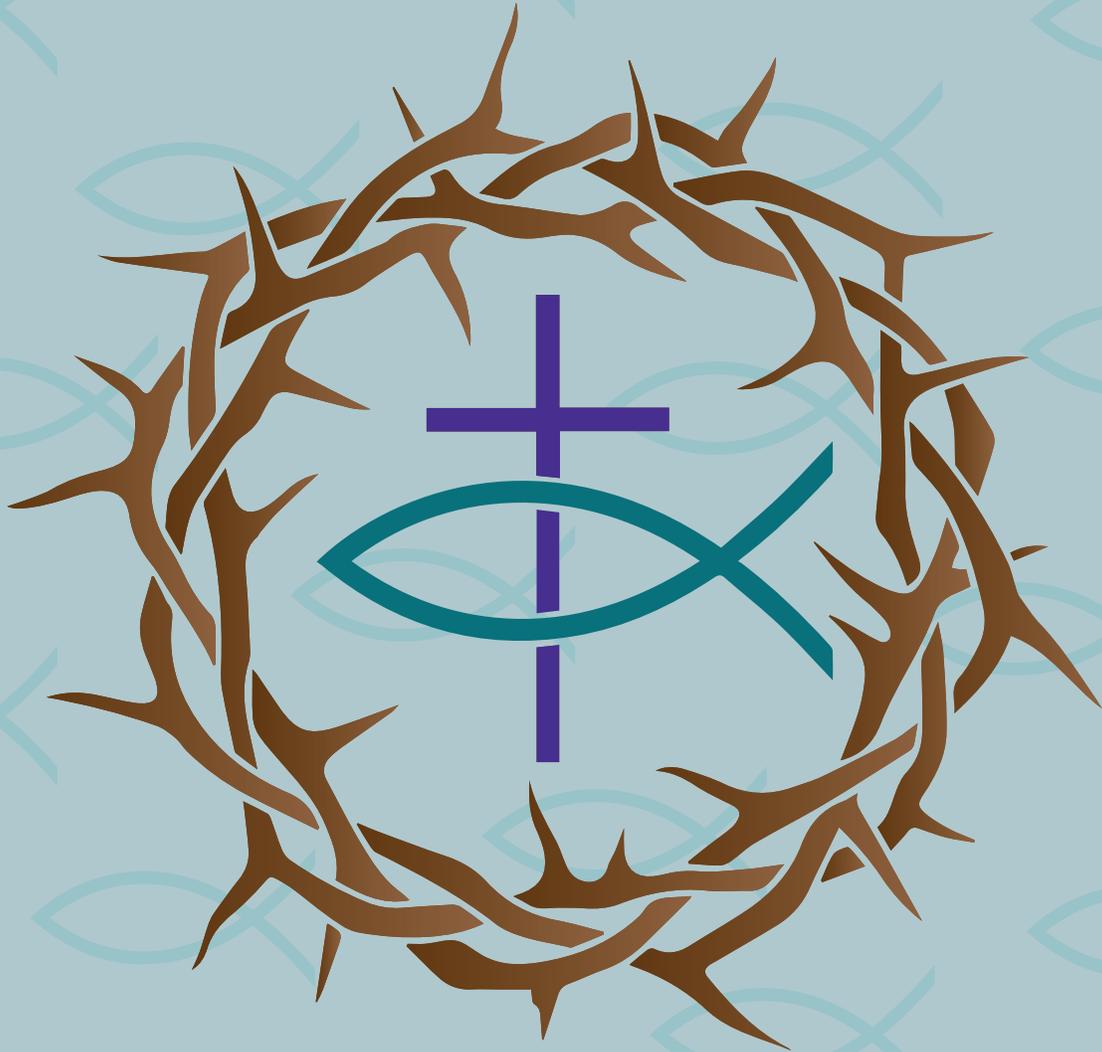
WHEELING HOSPITAL

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# READY TO SERVE

Serving fish for a greater good.



## Support Lenten Fish Fry Fridays

*Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston • [www.dwc.org/fish-fries](http://www.dwc.org/fish-fries)*

## FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

### First Reading: Genesis 9:8-15

God's covenant with Noah - "Never again shall all bodily creatures be destroyed by the waters of a flood, nor another flood to devastate all the earth."

Then God put a rainbow in the sky to serve as a sign of the covenant.

### Responsorial: Psalm 25

"Your ways, O Lord, are love and truth to those who keep your covenant."

### Second Reading: 1 Peter 3:18-22

The water of the flood prefigured Baptism, which saves you now. Christ, the new covenant, suffered for our sins to lead us to God.

### Gospel: Mark 1:12-15

The Holy Spirit drove Jesus into the desert to face temptations by Satan and survive among wild beasts. Mark shares that the angels ministered and cared for Him. Emerging from the desert, Christ proclaimed that this is the "time of fulfillment the kingdom of God is at hand - repent and believe!"

[CLICK HERE FOR FULL SCRIPTURE TEXT](#)

[BIBLE.USCCB.ORG/BIBLE/READINGS/021824.CFM](http://BIBLE.USCCB.ORG/BIBLE/READINGS/021824.CFM)

## PRAYER INTENTIONS

For the Church, that we remain faithful to the covenant God forged with our ancestors, brought fully alive in Christ Jesus, and entered into at our own baptism, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For world leaders, that they resist the temptations of the devil to get what they want - power and wealth; and let their hearts be alert allowing the Holy Spirit to guide them towards justice and peace for all people, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For all those preparing for baptism and entering into the Church, that they may undeniably feel the love and grace they receive from God as they follow Jesus's call, let us pray to the Lord. . .

That our prayer, fasting, and almsgiving strengthen our faith and through our example lead others to Christ, let us pray to the Lord. . .

*Lord hear our prayer*

## WV CATHOLIC RADIO BROUGHT TO YOU BY YOU

Berkeley Springs - Hancock, MD	FM	96.3
Berkeley Springs	FM	107.9
Clarksburg-Bridgeport	FM	97.5
Dunbar - Charleston	AM	1450
Eastern Panhandle - coming soon	FM	88.5
Grafton - Clarksburg	AM	1190
Montgomery - Beckley	FM	89.7
Purgitsville	FM	98.7
St. Marys - Parkersburg	FM	105.3
Star City -Morgantown	FM	89.7
Summersville	FM	91.3
Wheeling - Martins Ferry, OH	FM	90.7
Weirton - Steubenville	FM	97.9

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## Liturgy of the Hours LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Pray the prayer for this day, this hour!

[EBREVIARY.COM](http://EBREVIARY.COM) LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Scan the QR code or visit the link below to view a PDF version of the Liturgy of the Hours.



## 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).