



St. Martha's Parish

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time - January 14th 2024

Gospel Reflection - John 1:35-42



Having the Baptist's eyes, seeing Jesus coming towards us, being able to see Him as He comes closer and closer: God looking for us, inevitable arms. Feeling desired and sought after, this is the only thing that saves the illnesses of the soul. The mission of Jesus is condensed by John in a single sentence: *Behold the lamb of God*. Dazzling words that at every Eucharist we launch towards the heavens and upon a little bread. Here is the lamb, here is the sacrificial flesh, the last born of the flock, the innocent cry that fills the temple every evening at the hour of sacrifices. Here is the last victim, sacrificed so that there are no more victims. The last one killed so that no one can be killed again. God does not ask us for sacrifices, He sacrifices himself for us. He does not ask for offerings, instead He is the one who offers himself as a holocaust. Here is the lamb of God: here is the death

of God so that there can be no more death. And we can only look out, with a sense of vertigo, at the edges of this abyss. Like the two disciples of John who begin to follow Jesus. "What are you looking for?": first words of the historical Jesus, first words of the Risen Christ: "Woman, Who is it you are looking for?" Questions. The history of the relationship between God and man is a history of questions and research. Both seekers: one of love, and it is man; the Other of love, and it is God. With this question Jesus addresses our deep desires, He appeals not to intelligence, not to will, not to emotions or choices, but to something even more vital and profound, He appeals to the heart. Jesus, master of desire, asks you to understand yourself: what you lack, what you are hungry for, what thirst is urgent. Only by initiating these answers will you find your identity, unfinished and in progress. Every human heart has written: *further!* "Where are you staying?" The Christian experience is an experience of encounter, of relationship and then of fidelity. "They remained with Him that day": I too will meet Him only if I stay, if I take time to listen to the heart, to listen to those questions that finally make life come alive.

Holy Mass Etiquette

Mass is NOT a SHOW, it is a memorial, the meal that nourishes us thru the Bread of Life and God's Word

Your gratitude for the music during Sunday masses is appreciated, but you are asked to participate in the Liturgy NOT through applause, but through singing along. The music ministry is not meant to perform, but to lead all congregants in song during the Holy Mass.

Contact Information

403-381-8891 • office@stmarthasparish.ca

Pastor: Fr. William Monis

To rent the Knights of Columbus Hall contact Marcus Lynch-Staunton (403) 359-4457

Please pray for the sick in our parish:

Juliana Barrajon, Vera Schwartzkoff, Pauline Chabot, Joe Gatner, Anthony Johnston, Riley Svoboda, Devassy Palissery, Helen Smith, Kathleen Roth, August Schulze-Ebbinghoff, Ernest Geisler, Veronica Eagle Bear, Teresa Andron, Roz Walderman, Lou Karpick, Ellsworth Braun, Ellis Watson, Adeline Sherman, Linda Westgeest, Peter Danielson, Raymond Sander, Most. Rev. Gerard Pettipas, Bernie Yaretz, Theresa Blackwater, Viola Mogus, Robert Dubois.

Mass, Confession, Prayer

Mass Times: Mon, Wed-Fri 9am Tue. 7pm
Sat. 5pm Sun. 9am & 11am

MASS TIME CHANGE: Mon, Jan 22 at 11:00am

Reconciliation: Sat. 4pm or by appointment

Adoration: Fri. 10am-8pm following Mass – schedule permitting

Rosary: 30min before Mass - **Divine Mercy Chaplet:** Fridays

3pm **Divine Office:** Morning prayers after weekday morning Masses

Enlarge the Tent – Art of Accompaniment

“Removing our Sandals before the Sacred Ground of the Other” with Fr. Tim Boyle. Each gathering will begin at 10:15. We will celebrate Eucharist at 11:15. **Monday January 22:** “Zacchaeus... the first of many seekers... and why they don’t want to join”

Plenary indulgence by praying before a Nativity scene

Catholics will be able to receive a plenary indulgence from Dec. 8 to Feb. 2, 2024, by praying before a Nativity scene in a Franciscan church; more info: <https://tinyurl.com/mpzh88k6>

Mothers’ Rosary Group

The Mothers’ Rosary group will be meeting weekly downstairs at St. Martha’s for prayer and fellowship, **every Wednesday from 9:30-11:30**. Babysitting is provided. Please join us! We are looking for babysitters. If anyone is interested in this paid position, please contact the office.

Pax Christi

Please join us for the Latin Rosary in the Chapel at 6:30pm on select Thursdays each month. Everyone is welcome. For specific dates or more information please contact Chris Robinson at 403-393-0400 or by email at rosariumlatinum@outlook.com.

Soap for Hope Canada

If you have extra soap/toothpaste/shampoo or any hygiene items you’d like to donate to those in need, you can drop them off in the box by the church’s door.

Grocery Cards Program

Support our Parish! It is a KofC & CWL Fundraiser. Purchase your Grocery Cards in our gathering space after all weekend Masses or **make an e-transfer: knightscards9280@gmail.com indicating the STORE name. Orders received & paid for by Thursday, will be available for quick pickup at our Grocery Card stand at the Masses on the following Saturday / Sunday.**

St Vincent de Paul looking for furniture.

The Society of St Vincent de Paul has received requests for basic **household furniture and other items for kitchen, living room and bedroom**. For more information or for pick-up of items, please leave a message at 403-328-5493. Phone lines are open Mondays @ 9:00 am to Thursdays @ 5:00 pm.

Hobby Prayer group & KofC outreach program

The Hobby Prayer group, which **meets on Mondays from 1:30 to 3:30pm** at STM, is teaming up with our KofC to support the less fortunate; we’ll be knitting/crocheting scarves, toques, blankets, mittens, while KofC will be going out in our community to help those in need. There is a **box in the gathering space** labeled “**KofC outreach**” for anyone who wishes to help by donating any of those items and/or leftover yarns that can be used in this new undertaking. THANK YOU!

Bereavement Group

Bereavement Group will meet on **Tuesday, Jan. 23, 1pm to 3pm**. Coffee/snacks, speakers, videos are part of the program. For more info, or to register for the upcoming meeting, contact the office, 4033818891 or ruth.mcmillan55@gmail.com

Mass intentions

Mon 15 Jan	9:00 am	Reginald B. Augustus +
Tue 16 Jan	7:00 pm	Jan Joung +
Wed 17 Jan	9:00 am	George De Guzman Sr. +
Seasons	1:30pm	Ben Stroeve +
Thu 18 Jan	9:00 am	Joanne Bywaters
Fri 19 Jan	9:00 am	Alice Worth +
Sat 20 Jan	5:00 pm	Vanden Heuvel Geri +
Sun 21 Jan	9:00 am	Daniel & Linda Westgeest

Mass Intentions guidelines

To those requesting multiple Masses (be it for one person or several different people) please note that **only one Mass per person requesting** can possibly be prayed here in this parish. We will make every effort to schedule one Mass here on the date you are requesting. **We cannot hold Mass requests for more than 2 months, all other requests will be sent away.**

Donation envelopes

Donation envelopes for 2024 can be picked at the parish office. If you wish to sign up for Pre-Authorized Giving Plan please contact Moncy: finance@stmarthasparish.ca **For those who already have PAD, a box of special donations envelopes is available at the parish office.**

Pancake breakfast

Our fantastic KofC team will serve a pancake breakfast on Sunday, **January 14:** join us!

Hosts for the NET team

A NET Team of 6 missionaries is staying until May. We need families to host the team (2 team members for 2 weeks). If this is something that you are willing to do, please contact Heather: 403- 380-4871 or email lethbridgeNEThousing@gmail.com

Legion of Mary

The Legion of Mary meets every **Saturday, at 10:00 am**, in the library of St. Martha’s Church. All are welcome!

Training for Hospitality Ministry

Come and join our wonderful HOSPITALITY TEAM! They welcome us before Mass and they help us socialize after Mass, keeping us warm with a cup of coffee. ☕️ Training is provided by Deacon Michael on Tuesday, **January 23 at 7pm**

Abiding Together Podcast group

Abiding Together Podcast group for adult women is **Thursdays from 6:30pm - 8:00pm** in the gathering space at St. Martha’s. Bring your bibles and a notebook. More info here: <http://www.abidingtogetherpodcast.com/> or email Shanice.scharchun@gmail.com

People of Praise Live In

This weekend will bring you to a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ. **Friday, February 23 – Sunday, February 25** | Location: **St. Joseph’s School, 1413 23 Avenue, Coaldale** | 1st Backup Meeting: Monday, January 22, 7:00pm St. Ambrose Church | 2nd Backup meeting: Monday, February 5, 7:00 pm St. Ambrose Church | 3rd Backup Meeting: Monday, February 19, 7:00pm St. Ambrose Church - For info contact: katie.lindsay51@gmail.com or petervanu@outlook.com

Mission Discernment Night with NET Ministries

Mission Discernment Night coming up in a few weeks in Calgary on **Jan 27**, from 7-9 pm at St. Bonaventure Parish! This event is for any young adults from grades 11-12 who may be interested in a year of mission! This will be a night of fellowship, food, and praise and will provide young people with a deeper look into what a year on mission with NET could look like! Register at: netcanada.ca/apply

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity | Jan 18-25

The Catholic Churches in Canada and all Christians are called to celebrate The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity from Jan 18-25. The importance of unity among Christians and the responsibility of the people of each parish. Throughout this Week, parishes and all the faithful are to pray for Christian Unity, and seek a deeper understanding of ecumenism. The 2024 theme of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, chosen by an ecumenical team from Burkina Faso with the facilitation of the local *Chemin Neuf* Community (CCN), is **"You shall love the Lord your God... and your neighbor as yourself"**: "It is not shared identities that should prompt us to come to the aid of the other, but love of our 'neighbor'. However, the vision of love of neighbor that Jesus puts before us is under strain in the world today. ... It is by learning to love one another regardless of our differences that Christians can become neighbours like the Samaritan in the Gospel." ~WCPU International Booklet.

Resources: "Eight Days of Prayer" (daily Scripture readings, reflections, discussion questions, and prayers): <http://tinyurl.com/bmd9bmkx> | For those who don't have means to download, please contact the parish office.

Mental Health Learning Sessions by Holy Spirit Catholic School Division

Every session will take place in-person at the **Sandman Signature Hotel** in Lethbridge, **Essie's Ballroom** | Online sessions will be available on Google Meet. Doors open at 5:00pm, dinner served at 5:30. Presentation will start at 6pm and go to 7:30pm | RSVP by email: wilistone@holyspiritab.ca

Jan 16: *Resiliency and Self-Care* -Ft. Lethbridge Family Services

Feb 15: *Healthy Relationships* -Ft Lethbridge Family Services

Mar 20: *ADHD - Understanding the Diagnosis and Treatment Strategies* -Ft. Aleigha from True Balance Counselling

Apr 18: *Emotional Regulation - How to help our kids when they have big feelings* -Ft Allic and Bailey from True Balance Counselling

May 14: *Digital Detox* - Ft Lethbridge Family Services

L'Arche looking for committee & board members

The L'Arche Lethbridge community consists of 3 homes and 12 "core members". We are part of an international community that believes in people with and without intellectual disabilities sharing life in communities; for more info: www.larchelethbridge.org
Current opportunities: Fundraising Committee, Public Relations Committee, Board of Directors. Connect with Tim Wiebe, Community Leader: twiebe@larchelethbridge.org

Old Palms from previous Palm Sundays

If you have old palms, please bring them to the church to be burned for Ash Wednesday (a container is by the sliding door).

Meaningful gifts

Lisza Bruder is selling really good quality beeswax Advent candles. She was a very active member of St Martha's and All Saints before needing to stay home due to chronic illnesses. Her website has many handmade items from candles to rosaries to greeting cards: <https://tinyurl.com/262jeuz6>

Hand made rosaries

Give a call to BERNIE; he also sells other religious items; 403 942 7413

FORMED

Quality Catholic media for everyone: formed.org. Enter our Parish Code to register: **3FT2YD**

MOVIE NIGHT: <https://watch.formed.org/movie-night> The Fourth Wise Man, Mary of Nazareth, Joseph of Nazareth: The Story of the Man Closest to Christ, Karol a man who became pope, and many more!

Youth Programs: <https://watch.formed.org/youth-programs> The Search Begins, Symbolon for Teens, Never Alone: Life with the Holy Spirit, Anima for Youth, Extraordinary Stories for Children,...

Faith Formation: <https://watch.formed.org/faith-formation> Sheen Gems - The Best Of Fulton J. Sheen, Opening the Word, Into the Breach, The Wild Goose with Fr. Dave Pivonka,...

Sacraments

Baptism Infant baptism is celebrated following the completion of our parish baptism preparation program. New and expectant parents are invited to contact Zachary Hampton, our Sacraments Coordinator, for more information: sacraments@stmarthasparish.ca

First Holy Communion, Confirmation: To register; fill out registration form on our [website](https://stmarthasparish.ca). Contact Zachary Hampton, Sacraments Coordinator, for more information: sacraments@stmarthasparish.ca

RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults): RCIA started on Tuesday, October 10, following the 7 PM Mass. If you are interested in becoming Catholic or know anyone who is, please register on the parish website as soon as possible. For more information, call the office or email: sacraments@stmarthasparish.ca

Marriages/Marriage Preparation: Couples registered within the parish are required to make arrangements at least **six months prior, no exception**, to the date of marriage by calling the office to schedule interviews with Fr. William and completing the marriage preparation program. Couples complete the marriage preparation course AFTER their first interview with a cleric. Calgary diocese marriage preparation courses: catholiccyc.ca/marriage-prep. There are also classes available at All Saints Parish, Lethbridge.

Anointing of the Sick If you have a relative who has been admitted to hospital please call the parish office.

Our parish relies on your Sunday offerings for maintenance and growth. By making your pre-authorized offertory gift, you are providing crucial support to care for your parish.

Contact our parish office to set up a direct debit deposit.

Please prayerfully discern where you are called to serve Our Lord at St. Martha's.

Not so... Ordinary

The season of Ordinary Time is the liturgical season when we are not celebrating a particular festival time (e.g., Christmas and Easter) or a time of preparation or penance (e.g., Advent and Lent). The Season is named Ordinary because the Sundays are numbered. The season is named after Latin word for numbers in a series, which is “ordinalis.”

However, this is not meant to be a time that is ordinary, meaning nothing special.

One great idea of the biblical revelation is that God is manifest in the ordinary, in the actual, in the daily, in the now, in the concrete incarnations of life. Our experiences of ordinary life will transform us if we are willing to experience them fully.

We see this “ordinariness” reflected in the seemingly laborious and boring books of Joshua, Judges, Kings, Chronicles, Leviticus, and Numbers. We hear in these books about sin and war, adultery and affairs, kings and killings, intrigues and deceit, and the ordinary, wonderful, and sad events of human life. Those books, documenting the life of real communities, of concrete ordinary people, are barely “religious” at all.

God’s revelations are through the concrete and specific. Spirituality is not a Platonic world of ideas and theories about which you can be right or wrong. Revelation is not something you measure, but something—or Someone—you meet! This pattern of incarnation reaches its fullness in one small place on the planet, in one short period of history, in one very ordinary man named Jesus. From this “kairos”, this particular moment of grace, our job is to universalize! Unfortunately, most of us call it a one-time miracle, bound to the past. Or we refuse to accept the “shock” at all, which is most of our contemporary society.

The biblical revelation is saying that we are already spiritual beings; we just don’t know it yet, and we have to be shocked into it. The Bible tries to let us in on the secret, by revealing God in ordinary human affairs and conflicts. That’s why so much of the text seems so mundane, practical, specific, and frankly unspiritual! We have created an artificial divide or dualism between the spiritual and the so-called non-spiritual. This dualism is precisely what Jesus came to reveal as a lie. The Incarnation proclaims that matter and spirit have never been separate. Jesus came to tell us that these two seemingly different worlds are—and always have been—one. We couldn’t even imagine it until God put all of this together in one body (see Ephesians 2:11-22), one life (1 John 1:1-2), and one shocking epiphany.

Adapted from Richard Rohr, *Things Hidden: Scripture as Spirituality*

Finding the extra-ordinary

We recently celebrated Christmas, the irruption of the divine in our humanity, of the eternal in time.

This extraordinary event took place in the ordinary, humble life of a young woman and a man of dreams and humility.

What is their secret? We don’t know much about St. Joseph, but the Gospels give us a glimpse on Mary’s heart. So how could she recognize God in a baby who looked exactly like all human babies, crying because of hunger and colic, needing care and the comforting arms of a mother?

Luke provides us with an answer: “Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.”

What does this mean?

The discovery of the Qumran scrolls has shed much light as to how the Jewish of the 1st century viewed the Old Testament Scriptures. In these scrolls we find techniques of interpretation of the Word of God that were common to that day. *Pesher* is one of these methods and it is an explanation of a verse of Scripture, in which a given statement (e.g., of a prophet) **is identified with an event or personality in the present time.**

The word “pesher” comes from Ecclesiastes 8:1 and from Daniel’s interpretations [pesharim] of dreams, and is based on the idea that **every verse in the Bible has a literal meaning but also conceals a deeper message for the present generation.**

Mary treasures the Word of God: Mary emptied herself to welcome the Word; She opened herself to be guided by a God whom She trusted.

Mary pondered God’s Words in her heart: Mary was able to read the Word of God in her daily life through a *pesher*, to see the fulfillment of God’s promise, to acknowledge the signs of the divine in the human, of the extra-ordinary in her ordinary days.

Holy Mary, woman of our times, by giving you as our mother, Jesus made you a contemporary of everyone, prisoner in the same fragment of space and time. No one, therefore, can suspect that you are not able to understand the tragedies of our life.

Then stand next to us and listen to us as we confide in you the daily anxieties that beset our lives. Make us feel Jesus’ reassuring presence. Mary, you pondered His words: help us to ponder more. When we do, how He calms us! Each fear is removed.

Mary, do you understand how insecure, how unworthy I feel? Pray for me Mother of God.

C.C.