



St. Martha's Parish

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time - January 28th 2024

Gospel Reflection - Mark 1:21-28



People were amazed by Jesus' teaching: they were amazed, won over. And here's the reason: because He taught as one having authority. Jesus is authoritative because He is credible, in Him message and messenger coincide: He says what He is, and He is what He says. He doesn't play a role. Authoritative, literally means "that makes you grow". Jesus is growth of life, a breath, a wider horizon. He did not teach like the scribes...The scribes are intelligent, they have studied, they know the Scriptures well, but they listen to them only with their minds, in a reading that doesn't move the heart, doesn't ignite it, doesn't become bread and actions. Many times we too are like scribes with ourselves, we just need to approach the Gospel with our mind, we even seem to have understood it, we often like it, but existence doesn't change. Faith is not knowing things, but making them become blood and life.

Then a miracle takes place in the synagogue of Capernaum. A man with an unclean spirit is praying in the community, he is a regular on Saturday. He had listened to many sermons... You can spend your whole life going to the synagogue every Saturday, to church every Sunday, praying and listening to the Word, and yet keep inside a sick spirit, a distant soul that cannot be reached. You can live your whole life as a Sunday Christian without ever being touched by the Word of God, without it truly making your life new. The following two questions are beautiful and engaging: *what does Jesus have to do with us, with our daily life?* You, God, are in the Sunday memorial, You are in church, or in the highest heavens; but what do You have to do with our everyday life?

Do you want to know if you believe? If your faith changes your life. *Have you come to destroy us?* The answer is "yes!": He came to destroy the swords that become sickles; it is the destruction of the spears that become plows, of the hard shell that imprisons the pearl. Jesus, "my sweet ruin", who takes off masks, destroys fears and everything that spoils humanity.

Holy Mass Etiquette

No woman is under obligation to veil

Advocates say that wearing a veil is a symbol of a woman's modesty and humility; it is a sign of reverence and piety while in the presence of God. But nowhere did anyone explain why only women should pursue them. The same goes for saying veil is meant to symbolize the submission of the Church to the rule of Christ: the Church, the body of Christ, is comprised of both women AND men.

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

Mass, Confession, Prayer

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

ASH WEDNESDAY Mass times: 9am and 7pm

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

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.

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 February 19:** *“Finding the real Presence of God outside the Church”*

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.**

Day Home run by our parishioner Helen

Joyful Day Home on the West side near the University: Helen is an active member of our parish, compassionate and caring; she is looking for five children ranging from 3 to 4 years old. Joyful Day Home is under the We R Kids umbrella, with a vision of fostering a community where laughter, imagination and discovery abound | For info: hellowokingo@yahoo.ca

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, March 26, 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 29 Jan	9:00 am	Souls in Purgatory
Tue 30 Jan	7:00 pm	Benjamin Blatanic +
Wed 31 Jan	9:00 am	Benjamin Blatanic +
Thu 1 Feb	9:00 am	Benjamin Blatanic +
Fri 2 Feb	9:00 am	Geri Vanden Heuvel +
Sat 3 Feb	5:00 pm	Mary, Joe & daughter Sofka +
Sun 4 Feb	9:00 am	CWL

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.**

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 lenthbridgeNEThousing@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!

Called to serve!

Our parish needs people of good will to volunteer in any of the Ministry you are called to serve: **Lectors, Singers/Players for the choir, Sacristans, Hospitality team members and Eucharistic Ministers** for our Sunday Masses.

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

Assumption Charismatic Prayer group – pot luck

Assumption Charismatic Prayer Group is hosting another pot luck on **Wednesday, February 7, 2024**. Doors open at **5:30 pm**, supper at 6 pm with praise and worship starting at 7 pm at Assumption Hall.

Take a card to support the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition

Please find postcards prepared by the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition on the table by the bulletins during the weekend: with these postcards we ask the government to reverse its decision to permit MAiD for those suffering with mental illness; to provide quality mental health care and other social support; to provide advocacy and resources that support healing and resilience. Please take them, fill them out and post them (no postage necessary).

Youth nights

Join the NET team for fun games and snacks. There will be a new discussion topic each week.

Grades 6-9: Every Wednesday, 7:00 - 8:30 pm at **St. Martha's**

Grades 9-12: Every Sunday, 7:00 - 9:00 pm at **Assumption hall**

Questions? Get in touch lenthbridge@netcanada.ca

Save the date: There will be a family skate on Saturday March 23rd from 7:15 - 8:15 at Civic ice arena. Hot chocolate and treats to follow. Stay tuned for more information.

Events at Mount St. Francis Retreat Centre

To register call 403-932-2012 or write to mtfrancis@shaw.ca

Lenten Retreat: Tuesday, March 5, 2024.

Women's Serenity Retreat: Friday to Sunday, March 8 - March 10

For Info contact: Karen C., 403-479-6883, cklcleans@gmail.com

Stephanie D., 403-650-3067, stephanie.desouza@shaw.ca

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

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 Allie and Bailey from True Balance Counselling

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

Lethbridge Pro-life banquet

On **Thursday, Feb 8**, at Trinity Reformed Church, Lethbridge (1100 - 40 Ave. N). The guest speaker this year is Blaise Alleyne: Eastern Strategic Initiatives Director for CCBP. He will be speaking on "Changing Hearts and Minds on Assisted Suicide." | Doors open at 6:00 p.m. with a dinner served at 6:30 p.m. (PCS Caterers) and speaker to follow. Dinner tickets are by donation. Speaker only at 7:45 PM, free with a food item donation for our clients at Elsie's House. Reserve your dinner seat by texting 403-892-1925; e-mail: lproulife@shaw.ca

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

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

Lectio Divina Workshop

Pastoral Renewal is grounded in prayer. The Seeds of the Word Community will be coming to parishes to offer a series of evenings of praying with Lectio Divina, a very effective method of prayer and formation for spiritual growth and intimacy with the Word of God. They will be at STM on **Saturday, March 9, 10:30am - 11:30am: mark your calendar!**

Discernment Retreat

Weekend of Feb 2-4, 2024 at St. John Paul II Mission House in Calgary | The Seeds of the Word Community presents this retreat as an opportunity to pray and ask the Lord for discernment in many different areas of your life. Open to men and women. For more information or to register, call [587-892-9673](tel:587-892-9673).

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](#). 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 | **RITE OF ACCEPTANCE** is this Sunday, at 11am; **RITE of WELCOMING** on Feb 4 at 11am, all other RITES on the following Sundays at 11 am.

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.

Authority, love and service

If we merely have external authority, we are primarily concerned with the transmutational forms, roles, order, titles. All of which might have its place. But inner authority (which I always described as the power to author life in others - authority to author life in others, healing in other words) has to do not with the transmutation of forms and order and title and who's in charge, but the transmutation of substance. The movement, as Thomas Merton would put it, from the false self to the true self. The genius of Jesus' ministry is that he uses tragedy, suffering, pain, betrayal, and death itself, not to wound you but in fact to bring you to God. In Jesus' ministry, he points again and again to this mystery of suffering. He's saying that this is the only thing strong enough in most people's lives, certainly men's lives, to destabilize the imperial ego - to destabilize this "strutting" on the stage of life. This living up to who we think we are instead of collapsing back into who we already are hidden with Christ and God, as Paul puts it. In Luke 22 the apostles are arguing about who is going to sit at the right and the left side. They were looking for role, title, authority and importance. It seems to never end. If you're not transformed, that's all you have. That's all you have is "What robe can I wear?" and "What title can I have?" and "How can I assert my outer authority because I really don't have much inner experience or inner authority?" So, it's like this is already predicted in the text. In fact, three times they do it. Every time (in Mark's Gospel between chapters 8 and 10) he tries to lead them on the journey of transformation, the paschal mystery, death and resurrection, the loss of the false self, the collapsing into the great self, they fight him. And these are the so-called twelve apostles. These are the ones who are supposed to have started the whole thing. Every time they fight him. Jesus comes back and says to Peter in the Luke version, Peter you must be sifted like wheat and then you can turn around and strengthen the brothers and sisters. But until then, Peter, you really don't have any authority. It's all words. It's just ideas. It's just formulas. It's just technique. It's conclusions without the process.

What we see Jesus doing, not just in this text, but throughout the Gospels, is **relocating authority. Not at the top, on thrones at the right and the left, but at the bottom.** Here I am among you as one who serves. This is authority. What we call servant leadership - really having been there, standing by him through his trials. That's what he asked Peter to do: when, Peter, you have stood by me through my trials, then you can turn around and strengthen the brothers and sisters, then you'll have your thrones, your authority, then you'll have something to say. Until then don't be looking for thrones, for thrones of judgement.

You stop asking the good question - how good you are or whether you are good enough. All that does is appeal to that ego again where you can then take the temperature of how good you are. Do you pray enough? How many days a week do you fast? Did you go to mass on Sunday? All of that really does not lead to transformation. It simply leads to positioning: positioning of ourselves and conveniently usually positioning ourselves on the top, while conveniently positioning some other people so unfortunately on the bottom. How did we make the good news such bad news where it's all about being worthy? We're not worthy! We're all saved by the mercy of God from beginning to end. We're all saved - all of us, no exceptions, no papal exceptions, no episcopal exceptions. We're all in this human thing together. And we're all being saved in spite of ourselves. We're all being loved in spite of ourselves. God does not love you because you are good. God loves you because God is good.

Authority according to the Gospel is therefore a **"qualification" that God gives for a service.** A page from John that can explain this is the one about the washing of the feet, on the evening of the Last Supper, with which the fourth evangelist probably intends to convey the very meaning of the Eucharist: "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?", Peter exclaims. And Jesus: "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand"... (Jn 13,1-20).

It is not surprising that John introduced the scene of the washing of the feet and the events of the passion with the words: "It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end." (Jn 13:1).

And further on Jesus will say: "These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full." words that we can complete with those from the Acts of the Apostles: "There is more joy in giving than in receiving" (Acts 20:35).

From John, back to the Gospel of Mark, where Jesus is worried about not being assimilated to the great ones of the earth: He does not want to be served, but to serve. By giving His life, He wants to show that He knows how to take the truth He believes in and the mission He feels entrusted to Him by the Father to its extreme consequences; not only that, but He wants us to understand that Christian life is life joy: serving God, serving others, serving the Church gives joy.