



SPIRIT OF THE MOUNTAINS CLUSTER

July 23-24, 2022 – 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)

Reverend Zaverio Banasula, Administrator

St. Mary Catholic Church

109 Beech Ave., PO Box 1724
Coeburn VA 24230

Saturday Vigil Mass 4 PM

Tuesday Mass 5 PM

St. Therese Catholic Church

16661 Wise St., PO Box 56
St. Paul VA 24283

Sunday Mass 8:30 AM

Good Shepherd Catholic Church

890 W Main St., PO Box 730
Lebanon VA 24266-0730

Sunday Mass 11 AM

Wednesday Mass 6 PM

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/Spirit-of-the-Mountain-Cluster-107130504274408>

Cluster Contact Information

Telephone Office: 276-889-1690

EMERGENCY Need of Priest: 276-254-0176

e-mail: office@spiritofthemountain.org

Website: www.spiritofthemountain.org

Readings for this Week (July 24-30, 2022)

24 JULY SUN: Genesis 18:20-32; Psalm 138; Colossians 2:12-14; Luke 11:1-13

25 JULY MON: 2 Corinthians 4:7-15; Psalm 126; Matthew 20:20-28

26 JULY TUE: Jeremiah 14:17-22; Psalm 79; Matthew 13:36-43

27 JULY WED: Jeremiah 15:10, 16-21; Psalm 59; Matthew 13:44-46

28 JULY THU: Jeremiah 18:1-6; Psalm 146; Matthew 17:47-53

29 JULY FRI: Jeremiah 26:1-9; Psalm 69; John 11:19-27

30 JULY SAT: Jeremiah 26:11-16, 24; Psalm 69; Matthew 14:1-12

Scripture for next Sunday, July 31, 2022 – 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Ecclesiastes 1:2; 2:21-23; Psalm 90; Colossians 3:1-5, 9-11; Luke 12:13-21

CLUSTER PICNIC: July 31 (SUNDAY) NOON is the day of our cluster picnic. It is hoped as many parishioners and their family/guests will be able to come to the Lebanon Community Center Park (45 Gibson Street, Lebanon) (behind the First Bank & Trust Company, 359 West Main Street). The church has rented the back larger pavilion down at the end of the parking lot where the splash pad is. There will be bingo (**if anyone has bingo prizes they'd like to donate, please let your committee person know and bring items to church for them**), corn hole, splash pad, volleyball, and maybe softball (bring your baseball glove) and of course we hope plenty of food. To plan food we need a count of how many people will be attending. **If you plan to attend the picnic be sure to let your committee person (Donna Bates, Ruby Dorton, and Betty Meade) know by July 24, Sunday.** The pool is open Sunday 1pm-5pm and costs \$3 for ages 12 and under and senior citizens. The cost is \$5 for ages 13 and up. Bring your favorite picnic food—items already accounted for is the meat (hot dogs and hamburgers), buns, fruit, watermelon, plates, etc., condiments, onions, lettuce, tomatoes, baked beans, chips, hot dog chili, lemonade, ice tea (sweet and unsweet), water, ice, cole slaw, potato salad, vegetable salad, banana pudding, deviled eggs, chocolate pudding, cookies. We hope to have a big crowd so food items are needed—bring your favorite dish or dessert and please let your picnic committee member know the dish you plan to bring. Hope to see everyone next Sunday.

SACRAMENTS: Please contact the church office or priest to make arrangements for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation, Anointing of the Sick or Holy Matrimony as well as funerals.

COVID-19 News. As of July 8, 2022, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website reports **Russell County** with a **medium COVID-19 transmission rate**. Per the (CDC) and the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), and our Diocese, with a COVID-19 Community Level designation of medium or low, it is recommended: Masks be worn at the discretion of the individual. Here is a link to the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html>

The **Fiscal Year 2022 Annual Reports** are in the process of being prepared and approved by the councils. If any parishioner would like to have a copy of these documents, please contact the church office at 276-889-1690 or e-mail office@spiritofthemountain.com. The June monthly financial reports e-mailed to parishioners this week will reflect yearend figures.

PRAY FOR VOCATIONS: "Give us this day our daily bread." Are you being called to help feed the people of God as a priest? Call the Vocations Office, (804) 359-5661, to speak with Fr. Brian Capuano; or write to vocations@richmonddiocese.org.

IRA Bulletin Blurb: Did you know that individuals 72 and older are eligible to make tax-free Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD) from and IRA of up to \$100,000 annually? This type of gift counts toward the donor's Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) and may not be counted toward his or her adjusted gross income (AGI). A QCD is an easy way to make a tax-free gift to your parish. To learn how you can make an impact through your IRA right now, contact your financial advisor or Maggie Keenan at the Catholic Community Foundation - 804-622-5221 or mkeenan@richmonddiocese.org.

For **World Youth Day 2023, Lisbon, Portugal**, the Diocese is sponsoring two options:
CORE PILGRIMAGE: July 28-August 7, 2023. The core pilgrimage that includes a day and a half at the shrine of Our Lady of Fatima followed by full participation in the World Youth Day festivities. This option is estimated to cost roughly \$4,000 per person.
EXTENDED PILGRIMAGE: July 24-August 7, 2023. An extended pilgrimage that starts with visits to the grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes as well as the cathedral in Santiago de Compostela. This option also includes the entire core pilgrimage to Fatima and World Youth Day. This option is estimated to cost roughly \$5,000 per person.
This pilgrimage is open to youth (ages 16-18 and in or graduating high school in 2023) and their adult chaperones as well as to young adults (ages 18-35 and at least a full year out of high school). Register by July 31, 2022 and save \$500 with the early bird price! Have questions? Plan on bringing a group from your parish? Email us at evangelization@richmonddiocese.org.

The Spirit of the Mountain Cluster and our Bishop Knestout encourages anyone aware of sexual abuse of minors on the part of clergy or staff of our diocese to notify civil authorities, call the Attorney General's Clergy Abuse Hotline at 1-833-454-9064 and reach out to the Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator at 1-877-887-9603, or visit the Safe Environment page at <https://richmonddiocese.org/protecting-gods-children/>

ST. MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

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|--------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| July 17 Offertory | \$ 610 | Attendance 14 |
| Donation | \$2,000 | |

PRAYERS REQUESTED: Alton Lawson, Jr., Sister Stacey Hanrahan, Lillie Peters, Billy Hunsaker, Charles Bennett, Jim Hatch

July Birthdays: Rachael Bates (6), Alton Lawson, Jr. (22), Gregory Perry (24), and Patty Nauss (27).

- We **pray for the repose of the soul of Gen (Genevieve) Kelly** (formally **Hunsaker**) who passed from this life July 15. Gen was a founding matriarch of St. Mary Catholic Church in Coeburn. She was married to the late Bill Hunsaker. She was the mother of Bill and David Hunsaker, Barbara Kyle, Mary Gable and the late Carolyn Kane. **Genevieve Hunsaker's funeral mass will be at St. Mary's on Monday, August 1 at 11 AM. Fr Tim Drake will be the main celebrant, and Fr Xavier will do the graveside service.** Food will be served for family and friends at the farmhouse in Coeburn after the graveside service. Please keep this family in your prayers and eternal rest grant unto Gen, O Lord; and let perpetual light shine upon her.
- **Please note Tuesday weekday Masses in Coeburn have resumed—Mass will be celebrated each Tuesday at 5 PM. There will be Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at St. Mary's on Tuesday July 26 following the 5 PM Mass.**
- St. Mary has been blessed to receive a check in the amount of **\$2,000** from The **Catholic Community of St. John Neumann in Califon, New Jersey.** For many years this Church community has remembered St. Mary's with their donations enabling the church to maintain and improve the beauty of their church building and surrounding area (parking area) by contributing funds to go along with Diocesan Home Mission grant funds.
- The **St. Mary pastoral council** will meet **next Saturday, July 30, after the 4 PM Mass. Review of fiscal year 2022 annual report materials** will be on the agenda.

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ST. THERESE CATHOLIC CHURCH

July 17 Offering **\$ 121** **Attendance 9**
PRAYERS REQUESTED: Margaret Meade, Jackie and Scotty White, Helen Moretz, Danny Laney, Tom Lusk, and Marty Jessee

July Birthdays: Angel Cardenas (14), Bill White (20), Bj Molinary (28), and Marty Huber (31).

- The St. Therese **pastoral council** will meet after the **July 24 Sunday 8:30 AM Mass. Reviewing end of fiscal year 2022 annual reports** will be on the agenda.

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GOOD SHEPHERD CATHOLIC CHURCH

July 17 Offering **\$ 402** **Attendance 31**
Votive Candle Donations **\$ 5**

PRAYERS REQUESTED: James White, Bob Dorton, Danny Laney, and Jackie & Scotty White

July Birthdays: Kelly Gilmer (2), Francisco Hernandez (12), Ruby Dorton/Maggie Lindvall (14), Ximena Onate (18), Taylor Settle (24), Ronnie Gilmer (27), and Shyann Hubbard (30).

- **Finance Council** will **meet TODAY** after **Mass July 24** to review the Fiscal Year 2022 annual report.
- Please **put your name and number of people on the list at the back of the church if you plan to be at the Cluster's July 31 picnic.** The number of attendees is needed so enough food will be prepared. Thank you to all who have already committed to attending.
- At the back pf the church there is a **July 31 cluster picnic sign-up sheet** for what you plan to bring to the picnic – your favorite picnic side or dessert. It would be good to put your food in a disposable container and also make extra to serve all three cluster church parishioners/guests. **Be sure to sign up.** Thanks to all who have generously volunteered to help with the food.
- The **Good Shepherd parish pastoral council** will be meeting after **Mass Sunday, August 14.** We only have three of six members for the council. If anyone wishes to share their time and talent and serve on the council, please contact Father Xavier.
- The **basket** for your **offertory donation** at this time is at the back of the church. **The offertory basket will begin to be passed on August 7, 2022.**

- **Note Father Xavier will begin celebrating the Wednesday 6 PM Mass this week beginning July 27.**

COVENANT CONVERSATION

Melanie B. Coddington

In the first reading this week, we eavesdrop on a conversation between Abraham and God that may strike us as shocking, if not positively scandalous. On the one hand, we have the LORD contemplating swift and deadly judgment against the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (not the most flattering portrayal of the Lord God in the Hebrew Scriptures). On the other, we have Abraham, the ancestor of Israel, a mere human, but one with the audacity to question the justice of God's impending judgment. Back and forth they go, with Abraham haggling in grand Mediterranean style, talking God down to a price of ten righteous people for the ransom of the countless wicked ones. We listen to this exchange as 21st century American bystanders, almost embarrassed to overhear such a candid, personal conversation. Yet the in-your-face honesty of it teaches us something essential.

If we turn back a few chapters from this reading in the Bible, Genesis 15:6 describes Abraham's response to God's promise of an heir and numerous descendants: "And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness." By way of commentary, James 2:23 starts with the quote and adds "and he was called a friend of God." This image of friend is also applied to Moses: "Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend." Friendship made manifest in direct and honest conversation presupposes trust. Only those who trust one another dare to reveal their less attractive feelings and intentions.

In the passage just before today's story, the Lord God deliberates on whether to trust Abraham with his intentions toward Sodom and Gomorrah: "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do...? No, for I have chosen him, that he may charge his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice..." (cf. Gen 18:17-19). By confiding in Abraham, the Lord God calls him into more mature friendship, into the deeper trust of intimates. In stepping up to question the Lord, Abraham responds in trust, taking the risk of greater intimacy with God.

This story sheds light on the meaning of covenant, the Old Testament term for Israel's relationship with God: a partnership in which each party has high expectations of the other. God expects Israel to express her fidelity with "righteousness and justice." In turn, Israel expects the Lord to act in accord with his past deeds and his self-declaration: "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness..." (cf. Ex 34:6-7).

The covenant between God and Israel prefigures our adoption as God's children through Christ in Baptism, and our vocation as disciples—partners in God's reign of justice. Thus we cry, "Abba, Father," (in today's alleluia verse), and we pray, "your kingdom come," (in today's gospel reading). May we live in the Holy Spirit who lives in us, the generous gift of the Father and Son, allowing God's compassion and forgiveness to flow outward from our grateful hearts to all who long for hospitality and healing, recognition and reconciliation.

What's the difference between a "Catholic Bible" and a "Protestant Bible"? Catholic and Protestant Bibles both include 27 books in the New Testament. Protestant Bibles have only 39 books in the Old Testament, however, while Catholic Bibles have 46. The seven books included in Catholic Bibles are Tobit, Judith, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Wisdom, Sirach, and Baruch. Catholic Bibles also include sections in the Books of Esther and Daniel which are not found in Protestant Bibles. These books are called the deuterocanonical books. The Catholic Church believes these books to be inspired by the Holy Spirit.