



SPIRIT OF THE MOUNTAINS CLUSTER

September 10-11, 2022 – 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)

Reverend Zaverio Banasula, Pastor

St. Mary Catholic Church

109 Beech Ave., PO Box 1724
Coeburn VA 24230

Saturday Vigil Mass 5 PM

Weekday Mass Tuesday Mass 5 PM

St. Therese Catholic Church

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

Sunday Mass 8:30 AM

Cluster Contact Information

Telephone Office: 276-889-1690

EMERGENCY Need of Priest: 276-254-0176

E-mail: office@spiritofthemountain.org

Website: www.spiritofthemountain.org

Good Shepherd Catholic Church

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

Sunday Mass 11 AM

Weekday Mass Wednesday Mass 6 PM

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

Readings for this Week (September 11-17, 2022)

11 SEPT SUN: Exodus 32:7-11, 13-14; Psalm 51; 1 Timothy 1:12-17; Luke 15:1-32

12 SEPT MON: 1 Corinthians 11:17-26. 33; Psalm 40; Luke 7:1-10

13 SEPT TUE: 1 Corinthians 12:12-14. 27-31; Psalm 100; Luke 7:11-17

14 SEPT WED: Numbers 21:4-9; Psalm 78; Philippians 2:6-11; John 3:13-17

15 SEPT THU: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Psalm 118; John 19:25-27

16 SEPT FRI: 1 Corinthians 15:12-20; Psalm 17; Luke 8:1-3

17 SEPT SAT: 1 Corinthians 15:35-37, 42-49; Psalm 56; Luke 8:4-15

Scripture for next Sunday, September 18, 2022 – 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Amos 8:4-7; Psalm 113; 1 Timothy 2:1-8; Luke 16:1-13

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.

PRAY FOR VOCATIONS: “He was lost and has been found.” Do you want to bring others to life in Christ as a priest? Call the Vocations Office, (804) 359-5661, to speak with Fr. Brian Capuano; or write to vocations@richmonddiocese.org.

ST. MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

August 27 Offertory	\$ 655	Attendance 12
September 3 Offertory	\$ 315	Attendance 12
September 3 Votive Candles Offering	\$ 18	
September 3 Donation	\$ 50	

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

September Birthdays: Barbara Kate Sanders (8), Father Xavier (10), Jordan Collins (16), and Chris Lawson (27)

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ST. THERESE CATHOLIC CHURCH

August 27 Offertory	\$ 424	Attendance 9
September 3 Offertory	\$ 296	Attendance 9

PRAYERS REQUESTED: Margaret Meade, Jackie and Scotty White, Helen Moretz, Danny Laney, Tom Lusk, and Marty Jessee

September Birthdays: Father Xavier and Frank Molinary (10), Cas Renkiewicz (21), Jackie White (30)

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GOOD SHEPHERD CATHOLIC CHURCH

August 27 Offertory	\$ 323	Attendance 16
Votive Candles Offering	\$ 7	
September 3 Offertory	\$1,035	Attendance 14

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

August Birthdays: Mathew Dillon (27), Alexa Castro (28), and Dave Britten/Bob Dorton (31).

September Birthdays: Jose Mendoza, Sr. (8); Ralph Griffith (9), Father Xavier (10), Katie Gilmer (15); Patti Silvers (29).

- Pray for the repose of the soul of Clifford O'Dell who passed away September 2. Clifford was the beloved companion of former parishioner Carol Courtney.
 - At the back of the church is a **signup sheet** for lectors, psalm readers, setting up the altar before Mass, ushers, collection counters after Mass. Training will be provided, if needed.
 - September 25 is the date for the next parish meal. Please sign up on the sheet at the back of the church. Thank you.
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Diocesan Synod Synthesis Report. The ad-hoc Evangelization Commission has notified the office this report is complete and available on the Diocesan website at <https://richmonddiocese.org/diocesan-synodal-synthesis-report/>. The translation of the report is also posted in Spanish. Thank you for all who participated in the Synod process earlier this year. If you are unable to view the report and wish to have a copy, please contact the office.

Offertory Giving. For some time the Diocese has provided an online parish offertory giving portal: offertory.richmonddiocese.org. This is beneficial to cluster parishes such as ours, which do not offer online giving. The Diocese is going to end the offertory portal after December 31, 2022. No one has utilized this portal in the cluster (it is recalled one non-parishioner contributed to St. Mary a while back). Usually there is a fee taken out of the contribution for online giving. The question is, do we want to look further into using online giving? If you have an opinion, please contact the church office. You may always mail your contribution to the church office or the church address (located on the front of the bulletin). Some donors on-line bill pay from their bank (if you are interested in this process, please contact the church office and bank information may be provided).

40 Days for Life Bristol. The Bristol Women's Health (abortion clinic) in Bristol, VA is open and taking patients. Diane Derzis, the owner of Jackson Women's Health (the clinic at the center of the case that overturned *Roe*), is highly involved with this clinic. If you look at their website, abortion is clearly their focus and it is professionally done. In short, money is being poured into Bristol to spread the evil of abortion in our community.

What can you do? Sign up now to pray during the fall 40 Days for Life Vigil Sept. 28-Nov. 6th. Here is the site to sign up for hours--<https://www.40daysforlife.com/en/Bristol>. You are also invited to come to the Kick-off prayer gathering on Tuesday, Sept. 20th at the Bridge Church (50 24th Street, Bristol, TN) at 6:00.

WRATH, IRONY, AND HOPE

Melanie B. Coddington

"Absence makes the heart grow fonder," or so I heard in childhood. In the intervening years, I have logged enough experience to realize that this adage needs a qualifier (e.g., "Sometimes") or at least a minor edit ("can make" in place of "makes"). Yes, absence can increase our longing for one with whom we have formed an attachment, but the quality of our connection and the means we employ to maintain it matter. "Out of sight, out of mind" also rings true at times.

In today's 1st reading, we overhear a pivotal conversation. Moses, on the holy mountain with the Lord for 40 days, hears some bad news: "Go down at once to your people, whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt, for they have become depraved." Notice the pronoun, "you" and its possessive form, "your." The Lord has, for the moment, disowned the rebellious people, handing them over to Moses. There is a certain logic to this, since, according to the verses that precede today's passage in the Bible, Moses' long absence has brought about their anxious (and ultimately sinful) behavior. (We can imagine hapless Aaron, left behind to manage the stiff-necked Israelites, getting backed into a corner, and caving-in to their wishes, melting their gold and carving the calf.)

WRATH, IRONY, AND HOPE

Melanie B. Coddington (continued)

Hearing the Lord's words, "Let me alone, then, that my wrath may blaze up against them to consume them," Moses steps up to talk the Lord out of extreme action. In negotiating for pardon, Moses appeals to memory, "Why, O Lord, should your wrath blaze up against your own people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with such great power and so strong a hand?" Notice how Moses turns the pronouns back God's way, reminding the Lord of His responsibility for Israel. In the next verse (Ex 32:12), missing from today's reading, Moses reminds the Lord that His reputation is at stake, since the Egyptians will surely use the people's destruction at God's hand to rewrite the embarrassing story of Israel's escape from captivity in Egypt. Finally, Moses gets personal, invoking the names of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, God's friends of old, and repeating back to the Lord His own promise to them. In the face of this three-fold argument, the Lord relents.

Our Sunday reading ends in this happy place. The biblical story, however, presses on toward a bitter twist of irony. After averting the wholesale destruction of Israel at the hand of her maker, Moses descends from the mountain and promptly loses his temper: He smashes the tablets; rebukes his brother, Aaron, for his part in the fiasco; and orders the faithful of Israel to raise the sword against the unfaithful, regardless of friendship or kinship. In this, another adage comes into play: The guilty get what they deserve.

Not so in today's Gospel. Jesus shows us a Father on the lookout for a wayward son, who welcomes him with open arms before the boy can stammer out an apology for his reckless behavior. St. Paul, too, extols God's mercy in calling the enemy-turned-apostle out of ignorance, arrogance, and evil actions, into ministry in the service of Christ. Both these New Testament passages reflect the corrective announced by Jesus in word and action—the recasting of a false God image, from wrathful avenger to loving, healing, forgiving redeemer.

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Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly believe that you are One God in Three Divine Persons, Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit; I believe that your Divine Son became man, and died for our sins, and that he will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches, because you have revealed them, Who can neither deceive nor be deceived.

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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/>