



SPIRIT OF THE MOUNTAINS CLUSTER

September 17-18, 2022 – 25th 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

September 26—Adoration after 5 PM Mass

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

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

Lebanon Office Hours: Wednesday and
Friday 9 AM to 12 Noon

EMERGENCY Need of Priest: 276-254-0176

E-mail: office@spiritofthemountain.org

NEW WEBSITE COMING SOON

Readings for this Week (September 18-24, 2022)

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

19 SEPT MON: Proverbs 3:27-34; Psalm 15; Luke 8:16-18

20 SEPT TUE: Proverbs 21:1-6, 10-13; Psalm 119; Luke 8:19-21

21 SEPT WED: Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-13; Psalm 19; Matthew 9:9-13

22 SEPT THU: Ecclesiastes 1:2-11; Psalm 90; Luke 9:7-9

23 SEPT FRI: Ecclesiastes 3:1-11; Psalm 144; Luke 9:18-22

24 SEPT SAT: Ecclesiastes 11:12:8; Psalm 90; Luke 9:43-45

Scripture for next Sunday, September 25, 2022 – 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Amos 6:1, 4-7; Psalm 146; 1 Timothy 6:11-16; Luke 16:19-31

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.

SECOND COLLECTION – Retired Religious - September 24-25 Weekend: Lighten the load. An abbot writes, “Your gift helps ease our worldly burdens and allows us to continue living out our mission of seeking God and serving the Church.” Donations to next week’s Retirement Fund for Religious collection help hundreds of US religious communities to provide for their aging members. Please give generously. Envelopes will be available at the back of the church—please be sure to include your name on the envelope.

PRAY FOR VOCATIONS: “No servant can serve two masters.” Are you discerning a vocation to serve the Lord as a priest? Call the Vocations Office, (804) 359-5661, to speak with Fr. Brian Capuano; or write to vocations@richmonddiocese.org.

August Monthly Financial Reports have been e-mailed/mailed to parishioners. If you have any questions concerning the reports, please contact the church office.

The **October Word Among Us** booklet is available at the back of the church—Spanish version is available at St. Therese and Good Shepherd. Please help yourself.

ST. MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

September 10 Offertory \$ 915 **Attendance 12**

September 10 Votive Candles Offering \$ 12

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. TERESE CATHOLIC CHURCH

September 11 Offertory \$ 166 **Attendance 10**

September 11 Donations \$ 175

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

September 11 Offertory \$ 609 **Attendance 18**

Votive Candles Offering \$ 6

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

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

- 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.
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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. Note *The Catholic Virginian* September 5, 2022, issue's article on the synodal process. If you are not receiving *The Catholic Virginian* please send an e-mail to the church 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. **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, September 20 at the Bridge Church (50 24th Street, Bristol, TN) at 6:00.**

Former Planned Parenthood manager Ramona Trevino, the director of outreach of the peaceful, prayerful, effective 40 Days for Life project, will tell the story of this groundbreaking effort in Bristol, VA on **Monday, October 3.** Trevino will be speaking at **St. Anne Catholic Church (316 Euclid Ave. Bristol, VA 24201), at 6:30 PM. Pizza will be served at 6:00** prior to Trevino's presentation. **RSVP** at 40daysbristoltn@gmail.com or call 1-276-644-0340 for additional information on this event at St. Anne Catholic Church Monday, October 3 at 6:30 PM.

Mended Women Lifestyle Recovery Facility. The Cluster church office has received information about the Washington County Women's Housing Coalition spearheading a community project to help women in our region who are struggling with substance abuse disorder (SUD) issues. The group is proposing the establishment of a 54-bed facility in Abingdon to tentatively open in early 2023 for women healing from SUD. This will help women coming out of jail with nowhere to go. We are asked to pray for and support this project. A fundraiser will be held Sunday, September 18, at the Abingdon Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center from 1 PM – 6 PM. Joy Scruggs (former Emory & Henry Women's Basketball Coach) will emcee an afternoon of music, food trucks, community resources, door prizes, and stories from women in recovery from our region. Families are welcome. For further information call 1-276-608-2578. Donations may be made in person, online, or mail (Mended Women Lifestyle Recovery, c/o Fairview Housing, PO Box 5746, Johnson City, TN 37602. See the bulletin insert for a recent Bristol Herald Courier newspaper article.

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Act of Hope

O my God, relying on your almighty power and infinite mercy and promises, I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of your grace, and life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer.

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PROFIT, POVERTY, POLITICS, AND PRAYER

Melanie B. Coddington

This Sunday's first reading gives us a snapshot of greed, as it operated in the days of the prophet Amos. Here the unrestrained pursuit of profit manifests in all manner of shady dealings. Those "who trample on the needy" observe religious festivals (e.g., "the new moon") and the Sabbath, but with an eye toward getting back to business-as-usual—skewing weights and measures in the marketplace and making debtors into slaves. This brand of dishonesty aims to exploit the vulnerable, who cannot defend themselves. According to Amos, the Lord God will not stand for this. He who lifts up the poor from the dunghill will not forget who put them there.

The warning of Amos still rings true in our time. Profit rules the economic landscape, the few accumulate extraordinary wealth, the many do not, and the poor struggle to survive, too often as victims of human trafficking. On the one hand, not much has changed. On the other,

PROFIT, POVERTY, POLITICS, AND PRAYER (continued)

Melanie B. Coddington

everything has, because Jesus Christ has come into the world and revealed God’s reign of justice, that topsy-turvy, first-shall-be-last rearrangement of the status quo that we pray will come “on earth as it is in heaven.” Do we really mean it, or are we, perhaps unknowingly, still serving another master?

Summer officially turns to fall this coming week and color changes herald the shift of season, though I speak not of trees. Yellow and black school buses chug along the local roads, stopping to collect or discharge pint-sized passengers. Halloween decorations in orange and black, day-glow green and purple, vie for the eye of each passer-by in the seasonal section of the grocery store. And on every street corner, the battle of red and blue commences, as signs promoting this or that candidate jostle for visual prominence and for the attention of potential voters driving by in their cars.

Yes, election day approaches, and the temptation arises for us to forget about the dignity that all persons share as human beings created in the divine image: whether they be enemies or friends of our particular nation; allies or opponents of our political preferences; aliens, refugees, immigrants, or citizens by birth; rich, poor or drifting along somewhere in between. Inevitably, it seems, elections generate division, along with plenty of rancor and some degree of hysteria. We hear a great deal of free speech (though, in truth, someone has paid well to deliver it to our ears). At times like these, we can wait in vain for influential people to set an example of civility, or we can start our own grassroots movement toward positive discourse and respectful dialogue.

In today’s 2nd reading from 1Timothy, St. Paul lays the groundwork for such an effort. He writes, “First of all, I ask that supplications, prayers, petitions, and thanksgivings be offered for everyone, for kings and for all in authority, that we may lead a quiet and tranquil life in all devotion and dignity.” By specifying the activities of public worship, “supplications, prayers, petitions and thanksgivings,” St. Paul focuses his remarks on the gathered assembly of the church. He directs the community of disciples, in its common prayer, to remember everyone, and especially those who have influence on the common good. He reminds Christians that our own ability to live decent lives and practice our faith freely depends on the protections afforded by the state.

St. Paul cites a simple reason for this profligate prayer: God the savior “wills everyone to be saved and come to knowledge of the truth.” The God of the universe sets the example of good will and generous love in Jesus, “who gave himself as a ransom for all.” In the final line of today’s reading, St. Paul encourages us to take home from our liturgy the practice of praying for leaders, lawmakers, and all who occupy positions of power and influence (yes, even candidates), whether they please us or not, so that “in every place” we might pray, “lifting holy hands, without anger or argument.” Amen.

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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/>