



## SPIRIT OF THE MOUNTAIN CLUSTER

January 18-19, 2025

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)

Reverend Emmanuel Darfour Appah, Administrator

### **Saint Mary Catholic Church**

109 Beech Ave., PO Box 1724

Coeburn, VA 24230

Saturday Vigil Mass 5 :00 PM

Reconciliation Saturday 4:30 PM

Tuesday Weekday Mass 5:00 PM

### **Saint Therese Catholic Church**

16661 Wise St., PO Box 56

St. Paul, VA 24283

Sunday Mass 8:30 AM

Reconciliation Sunday 8:00 AM

### **Good Shepherd Catholic Church**

890 W Main St., PO Box 730

Lebanon, VA 24266-0730

Sunday Mass 11:00 AM

Reconciliation Sunday 10:30 AM

Wednesday Weekday Mass 6:00 PM

### **CLUSTER CONTACT INFORMATION**

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Office e-mail: [office@spiritofthemountain.org](mailto:office@spiritofthemountain.org)

Website: <https://spiritofthemountain.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100078972283533>

**SACRAMENTAL EMERGENCY CALL 1-804-631-9027**

or [eappah@richmonddiocese.org](mailto:eappah@richmonddiocese.org)

### **Readings for this Week (January 19-25, 2025)**

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| 19 JAN SUN | Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 96; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; John 2:1-11 |
| 20 JAN MON | Hebrews 5:1-10; Psalm 110; Mark 2:18-22                     |
| 21 JAN TUE | Hebrews 6:10-20; Psalm 111; Mark 2:23-28                    |
| 22 JAN WED | Hebrews 7:1-3; Psalm 110; Mark 3:1-6                        |
| 23 JAN THU | Hebrews 7:25-8:6; Psalm 40; Mark 3:7-12                     |
| 24 JAN FRI | Hebrews 8:6-13; Psalm 85; Mark 3:13-19                      |
| 25 JAN SAT | Acts 22:3-16; Psalm 117; Mark 16:15-18                      |

### **Next Sunday Readings – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – January 26, 2025**

Nehemiah 8:2-6, 8-10; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 12:12-30; Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21

**RESPECT LIFE** Diocesan **second collection** will be taken up **this weekend, January 18-19.**

**Welcome to the 2025 Annual Diocesan Appeal – Sharing His Love with Others.** The 2025 Appeal will provide critical funding to three key areas of our Diocesan Church: Empowering the Next Generation, Providing for Those in Need, and Strengthening Catholic Communities.

In addition, our cluster parishes receive back half of the funds collected. This year, the funds returned will be used at

- **Saint Mary's** to build a retaining wall behind the new parish hall/confessional and do landscaping around the same area, at

- **St. Therese** will use their appeal funds to build up their checking account balance, and
- **Good Shepherd** hopes to use their appeal funds to purchase and install leaf guards for the church building.

In complement to the funds returned to our parishes through the parish sharing formula, the 2025 Appeal also benefits us through the following ministries and programs: Home Mission grants have assisted **St. Mary** to build their parish hall/confessional and adding the restroom at the back of the church, grants for **St. Therese** has put a new roof on the church building and replaced an old heat pump, and **Good Shepherd** has received grants to seal their parking lot and remove the steeple. Good Shepherd has also received fuel and hunger grant funds to assist people with food purchases and payment of their water and electric invoices. Also, the process of **obtaining and mentoring International Priests** is one more benefit our cluster has received because of the Appeal.

**Food Donations** continue to be collected by the Cluster for the Lebanon Community Food Pantry. If St. Therese or St. Mary parishes have food donations, Father Emmanuel will be happy to transport same to Good Shepherd. Thank you for your continued support.

**2025 Calendars** have arrived and are available at the back of the church. As always, we are grateful to Owens Funeral Service in Lebanon, VA, for taking care of the expense. The calendar is both English and Spanish and features places of pilgrimage for the Holy Year 2025.

**PRAY FOR VOCATIONS:** "There are different forms of service but the same Lord;" is your form of service to become a priest? Call the Vocations Office, (804) 359-5661, to speak with Fr. Matthew Kiehl, Vicar for Vocations; or write to [vocations@richmonddiocese.org](mailto:vocations@richmonddiocese.org).

**Catholic Community Foundation of the Diocese of Richmond's topic for January is bequests** with a New Year, New Legacy. As we begin a new calendar year, we the opportunity to reflect on the blessings of our lives and how we can create a legacy with Spirit of the Mountain Cluster parishes and its ministries. God calls us to be good stewards of our family, finances, and faith, and many parishioners include a legacy gift in their estate planning to support our parish for years to come. Spirit of the Mountain Cluster invites you to join them in 2025 with a free will-writing tool, sponsored by the Catholic Community Foundation of the Diocese of Richmond. Please consider taking 20 minutes to create a plan for your future and steward your resources for the Church and its ministries.

#### **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**Save the Date! SEE THE FLYER. January 29th, 2025.** Virginia Pro-Life Day. St. Anne Catholic Church in Bristol has a bus leaving their church at 5 a.m. on Wednesday, January 29 and returning at approximately 8 p.m. It will be a day of meeting Legislators to press our cause, lunch, and visiting the Cathedral in Richmond. We are asking for donations of \$30-\$40. If you want to join us for this important day contact Walter Joyce at [wjoyce@stannes-bristol.org](mailto:wjoyce@stannes-bristol.org) ASAP at 276-669-8200.

**Diocesan Work Camp. June 21-27, 2025. Bristol, VA.** Are you looking for an immersive experience of Christian service, prayer, and community for your teens? Join us at Diocesan Work Camp for a week that will give direct assistance to the local community and transform your youth ministry culture! Each day starts with daily Mass before heading out to work sites; each night has programming and prayer. A unique benefit of Diocesan Work Camp is that your parish gets to build friendships with other parishes in our own state. Save the date; more information will be available soon!

The Spirit of the Mountain Cluster and our Catholic Diocese of Richmond 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 email [vac@richmonddiocese.org](mailto:vac@richmonddiocese.org) or visit the Diocese's Child Protection/Safe Environment page at <https://richmonddiocese.org/protecting-gods-children/>

### SAINT MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

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

**January Birthdays:** Chad Bates (8).

### SAINT THERESE CATHOLIC CHURCH

**MASS INTENTION:** For the repose of the soul of + Helen Moretz + requested by Cathy Stiltner

**PRAYERS REQUESTED FOR:** Tim Long, Jackie White, Helen Moretz, James F. White, Brayn Whited, JoAnn Detta, and Rodney Altizer.

**January Birthdays:** Betty Meade (22)

- **Next Sunday**, January 26, the Christmas Catholic **Charities Diocesan Collection** will take place.

### GOOD SHEPHERD CATHOLIC CHURCH

|   |                   |                      |
|---|-------------------|----------------------|
| <b>January 12 Offertory</b>                 | <b>\$1,015.00</b> | <b>Attendance 18</b> |
| <b>January 12 Votive Offering Donations</b> | <b>\$ 1.50</b>    |                      |

**PRAYERS REQUESTED FOR:** Valerie Christian, James White, Bob Dorton, JoAnn Detta, Jackie White, Phyllis Dotson, Sherry Hubbard, Bill Taylor, and Dawn Borth.

**January Birthdays:** Juan Hernandez (12)

- Thank you to all who stayed last week to help take down the Christmas decorations.
- **Lector Schedule:** January 19 and 26 - Frank Taylor

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### **OVERFLOWING GRACE by Melanie B. Coddington**

Though the Christmas Season has ended, we hear its echo on this Second Sunday of Ordinary Time. Isaiah 62:1-5 gets a reprise, having recently appeared in

the Christmas vigil lineup; and Psalm 96, of Christmas midnight fame, returns with a new refrain and different selection of verses. Though we now enter Ordinary Time, we keep the wonder of Incarnation alive in our hearts. Marriage imagery in the Isaiah reading makes it a good match for John 2:1-11 (the Wedding at Cana). Interestingly, the latter once featured among the readings for Epiphany, describing as it does a clear manifestation of divine glory. One can imagine this story of wine (and grace) in abundance simply brimming over into Ordinary Time.

Isaiah offers a word of promise sometime after Cyrus of Persia's release of the exiles, as the restoration of Jerusalem gets underway. Discouraged by the endless heaps of rubble, and disappointed in the slow progress of rebuilding, the people hang on the prophet's hopeful words. He reminds them of God's regard, employing the glorious images of a royal wedding. Calling their beloved city "glorious crown" and "royal diadem" held by God, the prophet speaks of marriage between God and God's people, in which the old designations of "forsaken" and "desolate" give way to new names reflecting God's delight and desire for intimacy.

How fitting that this Sunday's selection from Ps 96 calls forth a "new song" from our people in response to this reversal of fortune! How fitting that the gospel reading tells of stone water jars, prescribed for ceremonial washings, now filled to overflowing with the wine of the Messiah's wedding feast! Even St. Paul chimes in with his take on the outpouring of the Spirit, in generosity and diversity, amidst the community, for the benefit of all.

The first line of today's gospel reading, "There was a wedding at Cana, and the mother of Jesus was there," sets the scene simply yet evokes a vivid picture. Of course, she's there! One of the GO TO people at this family event, she bears or shares responsibility for hospitality, paying attention to the guests, the food, and yes, the WINE. In her culture, hospitality is more than a virtue; it's a necessity for survival, and a deep-rooted cultural obsession. Before the bridegroom or the head waiter become aware of it, Mary knows: They have no wine. The last drop has been poured and it's only a matter of time before the celebration grinds to a halt and the disgrace of meager hospitality falls upon her family.

In this emergency, Mary does the unthinkable. She crosses the cultural boundary between Jewish women and their grown-up sons and calls upon Jesus for help in the "domestic sphere." He knows well the social implications of her statement, "They have no wine," yet he resists her prodding. Having left her world behind at puberty, he has every cultural right to say, "Woman, how does your concern affect me?" The tag line, "My hour has not yet come," has an ominous ring to it, foreshadowing the "hour" of his passion and death.

Singularly focused on the situation at hand, Mary ignores his protest, and instructs the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." In prompting her son to handle a crisis, she motivates the miracle that launches his ministry.

Jesus takes charge and tells the servants what to do: "Fill the jars with water...draw some out and take it to the head waiter." An air of surprise sweeps through the gathering, not because of the miracle (only the servants and disciples witness that), but because the new wine is so delicious, and there's so much of it! The head waiter, eager to avoid responsibility for a social blunder, gives the bridegroom "credit" for this surprise—for holding back the best wine until now.

Thus, Jesus sets the stage for his mission with this glorious sign of God's overflowing grace.