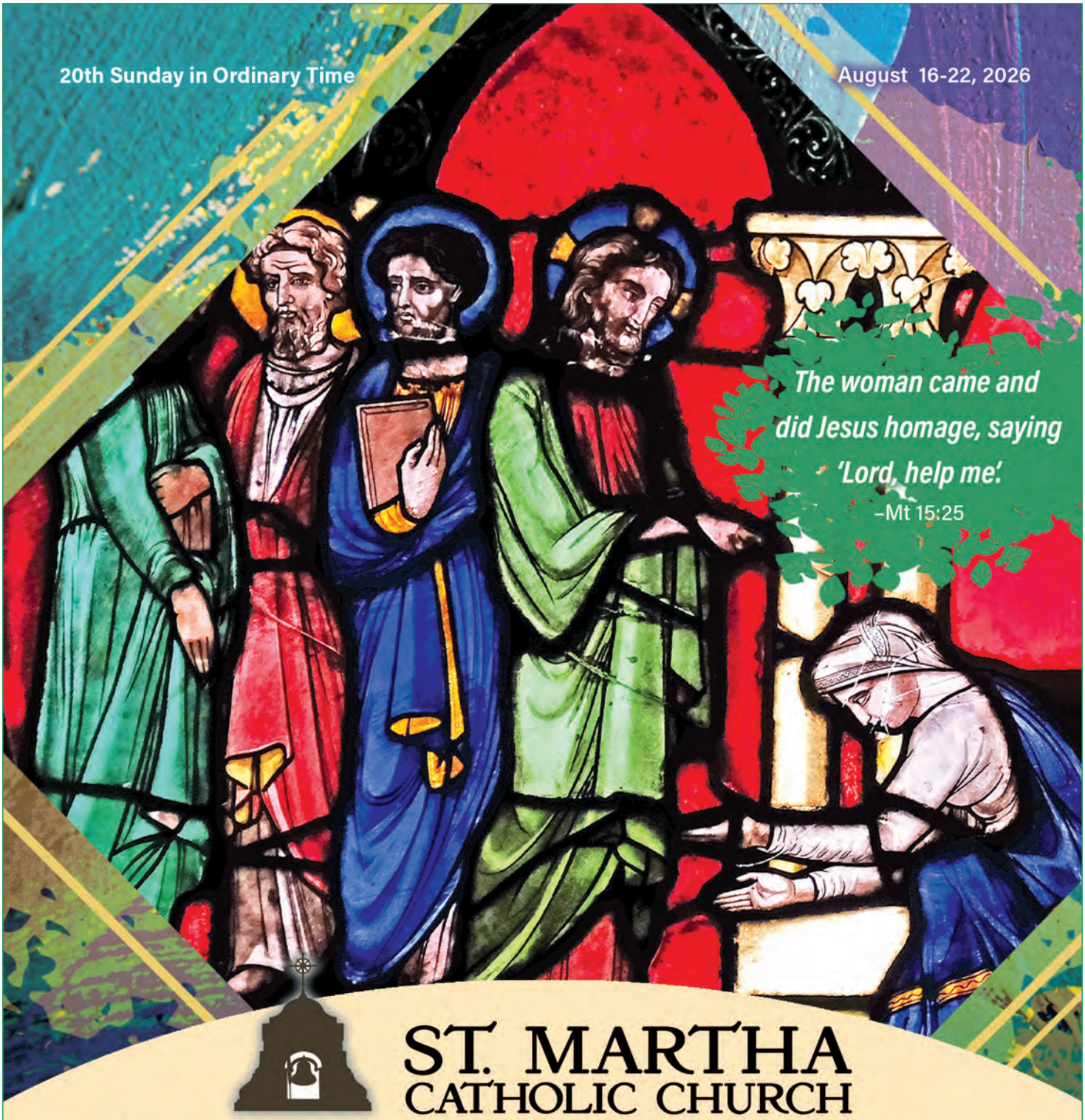
20th Sunday in Ordinary Time

August 16-22, 2026



The woman came and did Jesus homage, saying 'Lord, help me.'

–Mt 15:25

ST. MARTHA CATHOLIC CHURCH

Mass Schedule

Saturday 7:30am • 8:30am • 4pm *Vigil* • 5:30pm *Vigil*

Sunday 7:30am • 9am • 10:30am
12pm • 12pm Vietnamese (Hall) • 5:30pm

Weekday 7:30am • 8:30am • 12pm

Confession - Reconciliation Room
Saturday 3-4pm • Monday, Wednesday, Friday 11am

Eucharistic Adoration - Carosella Chapel
Tuesday-Thursday 9am-12pm

Rosary - Rosary prayed after 7:30am Mass

St. Martha Catholic Church

200 North Orange Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34236 • Tel 941.366.4210 • Fax 941.954.8434 • StMartha.org

Facebook St. Martha Roman Catholic Church • **Instagram** stmarthachurch_in_srq • **YouTube** St. Martha Catholic Church Sarasota, FL

Parish Office Hours Monday-Friday 8am-12pm and 12:30-4pm

August 16, 2026 - 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time

by Deacon Vern

This 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time calls Catholics to embrace the challenging call of discipleship, recognizing that following Jesus may bring division, suffering, and the need for perseverance.

In the Gospel, Jesus declares, *I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already blazing* and warns that His message will cause division even within families (Luke 12:49-53). This *fire* symbolizes both the purifying presence of God and the trials of discipleship. Catholics are reminded that faith is not always comfortable; it may challenge relationships and provoke opposition, yet it is essential for spiritual growth and fidelity to God's will.

The first reading, often Jeremiah's experience (Jeremiah 38:4-6, 8-10), illustrates the cost of speaking God's truth. Jeremiah is thrown into a cistern for his prophetic message but is rescued through God's providence. Similarly, the second reading from Hebrews (Hebrews 12:1-4) encourages believers to run the race of faith with endurance, keeping their eyes on Jesus, who endured the cross despite suffering and shame. Catholics are called to remain steadfast, trusting that God strengthens them in trials.

Following Jesus requires courage and commitment. The readings emphasize that discipleship may lead to conflict, misunderstanding, and even persecution, reflecting the reality that living the Gospel can disrupt worldly attachments and comfort. This is a call to prioritize God's kingdom above all else, even when it challenges family or societal expectations.

> *"Allow God's transformative presence to guide actions, purify intentions, and strengthen commitment to the Gospel."*
>
> *- Deacon Vern*

The *baptism by fire* that Jesus speaks of represents both His impending passion and the transformative power of the Holy Spirit. Just as the Spirit descended on the apostles at Pentecost as tongues of fire, Catholics are invited to allow God's Spirit to purify, strengthen, and transform their hearts, enabling them to live faithfully amid trials.

What we can reflect upon and apply to our daily lives:

- Examine personal faith: Are we willing to follow Jesus even when it brings difficulty or division?
- Persevere in prayer and virtue: Like Jeremiah and Jesus, we are called to endure hardships with trust in God.
- Embrace the Spirit's fire: Allow God's transformative presence to guide actions, purify intentions, and strengthen commitment to the Gospel.

continued to ↗

Our Pastor, Father George

Notes From Father George:

Let's think about the Centenary of St. Martha Parish - *The Sarasota mission post of the Tampa Jesuits became a parish when Fr. Charles L. Elslander (Founding Pastor, 1927 – 1968), as a young man, said Mass in the little frame church facing east on Adelia Street on* ***October 1, 1927****. The congregation numbered 132* (from 75th Parish Anniversary booklet). **The next year 2027 will mark 100 years of St. Martha Parish.** I invite you to think about the ways to celebrate this special anniversary and the ways to thank God for this achievement.

What are the 12 assets of St. Martha's Parish? - In my opinion, the following: location downtown, beautiful church, sacramental ministry (availability of Masses and Confession), Sarasota Hospital ministry, Catholic School, community of priests and deacons, dedicated staff, tens of volunteers, Religious Education Department, beauty of the Campus, courtyard, renovated rectory. If you see other assets of St. Martha Parish, let us know and add to the list.

The Altar stage/platform in the parish hall - The Parish Council is trying to coordinate the works of upgrading our parish hall. One thing we would like to do is to replace the stage on which the Altar stands with a new and bigger stage. Currently, we are discussing the possible project, materials it should be made of, and all elements of the stage/sanctuary.

Fr. John Belmonte SJ moved into our former *Bethesda House* - Fr. John is the superintendent of the Education Department in the Diocese of Venice who has lived in the *Convent* house next to Cardinal Mooney High School. Fr. George and Fr. Joseph stayed in that house with Fr. John in the recent past. That house is being knocked down, and at Fr. John's request, I allowed him to move in 1670 4th Street.

Next Sunday, August 23, 2026, is the 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time.

With prayers for God's blessing to you and your family,
Father George

↙ Sermon continued from previous column

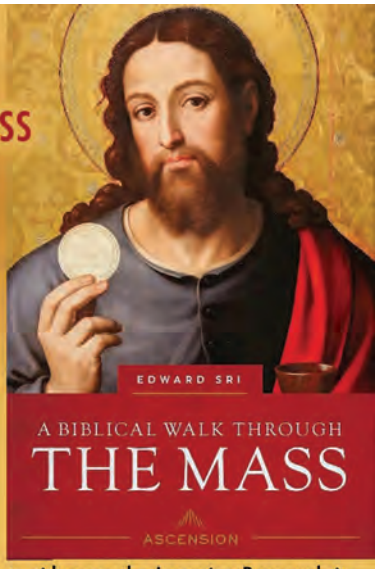
The 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time challenges Catholics to face the realities of discipleship with courage, endurance, and trust in God, recognizing that the fire of faith, though demanding, leads to spiritual growth and the ultimate peace of God's kingdom.

The woman in the Gospel demonstrated her faith in Christ. Of course, Christ showed her mercy by healing her daughter. Her persistence is also worth emulating. Despite all odds and what looked like Jesus' refusal to answer her, she did not give up. So, like this Canaanite woman, each one needs God's mercy. We need to demonstrate our faith in Christ, and He will show us His mercy.

Today, Jesus is close to us. So, like this woman, we must cry to Him: *Son of David, take pity on me*.

Peace be with you all!

A Biblical Walk Through the Mass



Tuesdays from **6-7:30pm**
- August 25
- September 1
- September 8
- September 15

St. Martha Parish Hall Conference Room
To register, please email **sileo@stmartha.org**
Book/Workbook Materials will be given however participants need to purchase the $5.95 access to videos on the Ascension Press website.

Are you thinking about becoming CATHOLIC?

Or, are you Baptized and want to complete your Sacraments?

Interested in the Catholic Faith and want to know more?

If you have questions and want to be serious about converting to Christ and learn the *next steps* to take or maybe you are Catholic but would like to learn more about your Faith, Prayers, and the Bible ... pray and listen to God calling your heart!

We are here to help
ORDER OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

To make an **appointment with Fr. George** please contact our parish office at **941.366.4210 x0**
Any questions contact **Patricia Sileo DRE sileo@stmartha.org**

Emmaus Journey *Bible Study*

- **Tuesdays** 10:30-11:30am
- St. Martha Conference Room
- **All are Welcome!**
- Bring your Bible, a desire to share and learn with participants, a facilitator, and parishioner Lindy Donahue.

Call Lindy 724.263.8285 • lindydonahue@mac.com

2026-27 Religious Education/ Faith Formation Classes

Registration Available Online Now!
stmartha.org

WOMEN'S EVENING BIBLE STUDY

We meet once a month, year-round from 5:30-7:30pm at Selby Library, Conference Room, Downtown Sarasota
If you would like to join the group or for more information:
contact Perla Johnson
972.322.1095 psarabiaj88@gmail.com

Information for
Families with Students in Catholic School

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that parents receive the responsibility of evangelizing their children and calls them the first heralds of the faith. The family is also called domestic church – the church of the home. It is so important for parents to be strong role models as active Catholics, becoming the primary catechists in the faith development of their children.

In keeping with this important role of parents, there will be two requirements to qualify for the Practicing Catholic Tuition Discount when submitting the Parish Affiliation Form.

The first requirement is 50% attendance at Sunday Mass for the year. To confirm your attendance, please place your offertory envelope in the basket during the offertory collection (No contribution is needed inside the envelope).

The second requirement is participation in at least one parish ministry.

Please see the list (right) of qualifying ministries for parents, children, and families.

Ministries for Children

Altar Server Assigned to serve at a Saturday Vigil Mass or Sunday Mass (training program provided) Frequency at least once a month.

Ministries for Families

Greeters & Offertory Gift Bearers Before Mass, greet and welcome parishioners/visitors at the main entrance of the church, and during Mass bring offertory gifts to the altar. Frequency once a month.

Family Ministry

Parents and children serve coffee and donuts to parishioners on Sunday morning for a ninety-minute shift between 7am & 1pm. Frequency once a month.

To enroll in a ministry, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator
Stuart Love at **volunteer@stmartha.org** or **941.780.7834**

Events from the Diocese of Venice

Surrender! ***Young Adult Conference*** - All young **adults 18–35**, please join us on **Saturday, September 5** from **7am-7pm** at **St. Peter the Apostle Parish** in Naples for a day of faith, fellowship, and spiritual growth featuring inspiring talks, interactive activities, games, Holy Mass at 6pm, and much more. More info or to register, email **ea.youngadultgroup@gmail.com.**

Save the Date! - ***Together in Holiness Marriage Conference*** for married and engaged couples **October 24** from 9am–4:30pm at **Our Lady of Light Parish in Fort Myers**. Registration: $64/couple and $5/child for on-site childcare. Early Bird discount through September 14. To register: **togetherinholiness.org/venice.**

Is God calling you? - Are you considering the priesthood, or do you think it might be right for someone you know? Please reach out to Father Alex Pince, Diocese's Director of Vocations to answer your questions, provide more information, or resources to help you to discern whether the priesthood is right for you. **Father Pince 941.486.4703**

DISCERN: A Young Adult Retreat - **September 13** from **9am-4pm** ***Hearing God's Voice in Everyday Life*** with speaker Mother Nikopoia, SSVM, is $35, at **Our Lady of Perpetual Help Retreat Center**, 3989 South Moon Drive, Venice. How can we recognize God's voice in the middle of everyday life? Join us for a day dedicated to prayer, reflection, and learning how to discover God's will. Registration fee includes morning coffee and pastries, lunch, and retreat materials. **Register** Andres Prias, prias@dioceseofvenice.org.

Volunteer Usher Needed

▪ Friendly, personable usher to serve at weekend liturgies.
▪ Member of a four-person team, duties include: welcoming, assisting with seating, collecting the offertory, distributing bulletins, and insuring a safe environment.

Shifts last 1 ½ hours. **Volunteers are needed to join the Sunday 7:30am, 9am, 12pm, 5:30pm usher teams.**
No experience required. Training provided.

Contact Stuart Love: 941-780.7834 ▪ volunteer@stmartha.org

Observances for August 16-23

Sun, Aug 16	20th Sunday in *Ordinary Time*
Wed, Aug 19	St. John Eudes, Priest
Thu, Aug 20	St. Bernard, Abbot and Doctor of the Church
Fri, Aug 21	St. Pius X, Pope
Sat, Aug 22	The Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Sun, Aug 23	21st Sunday in *Ordinary Time*

Virtues, *Explained!*

They say that wisdom comes with experience, and it does - but only if you accept it. Wisdom originates in both our will and in our intellect, meaning we must ask the Holy Spirit for the gift of wisdom - and remember to be ready when it comes.

Prayer in Faith in Trial

Dear God,

Move in our community: Bring Your light to the darkness, Your justice to the oppressed, Your hope to those in despair, Your healing to those in pain. Work in us, Lord, and change our hearts, making us more loving, more merciful, and more compassionate.

Amen.

Live The Liturgy - Inspiration of the Week

The Canaanite woman did not take Jesus' initial refusal as rejection, but as an invitation to engage with God, to show Him the depth of her faith. When our prayers are not answered as we wish, will we have the courage to do the same?

Join the Volunteer Team of
Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Great opportunity for teens needing service hours.

We need your help:
• Reception
• Dining Room
• Dishwashing
• Gardening

941-486-0233
info@olph-retreat.org • olph-retreat.org
3989 South Moon Dr., Venice, FL 34292

Weekly Mass Intentions

Sun, Aug 16 ..... **Is 56:1, 6-7; Rom 11:13-15, 29-32; Mt 15:21-28**
7:30am .... [GR] ... (L) Maria Corsaro by the Corsaro Family
9:00am .... [FS] ... (L) Judy Kozlowski by Marcia
10:30am ... [WG]... For All Parishioners
12:00pm ... [WG]... (L) Joshua and Andres Duarte by Mom
12:00pm ... [JV].... (Hall/Vietnamese) Special Intentions
5:30pm .... [GS] ... L & D Mbrs of the Plouffe Family by Betty & Joe Plouffe

Mon, Aug 17..... **Ez 24:15-23; Mt 19:16-22**
7:30am .... [GS] ... (L) John R. Linderman by Peter
8:30am .... [JV].... Peter Collette by Dan and Pat McAneny
12:00pm ... [WG]... Daniel Ordonez by Sue Constable

Tue, Aug 18 ..... **Ez 28:1-10; Mt 19:23-30**
7:30am .... [JV].... RD and Ceceilia Kelly & Family by Thomas & Jacqueline Kelly
8:30am .... [GR] ... (L) Rual Carrascal by Daughter
12:00pm ... [GS] ... For Greater Respect for Human Life

Wed, Aug 19 ..... **Ez 34:1-11; Mt 20:1-16**
7:30am .... [GR] ... Thomas J. Hilger by Bridget and Scott Hakes
8:30am .... [GS] ... Roger Dufour by Kathryn Edstrom
12:00pm ... [WG]... Madelyn Heibel by the Heibel Family

Thu, Aug 20..... **Ez 36:23-28; Mt 22:1-14**
7:30am .... [GR] ... Grace Gioioso by Kathryn Edstrom
8:30am .... [WG]... (L) Harlow Dapello by John Dapello
12:00pm ... [FS] ... Mary Jane Vincent by John

Fri, Aug 21 ..... **Ez 37:1-14; Mt 22:34-40**
7:30am .... [GS] ... Daniel U. Dunson by Pauline
8:30am .... [GR] ... L & D Mbrs of the Brienza Family by Ljubica Plisic
12:00pm ... [FS] ... Michael Raymond Lewallen by Sue Constable

Sat, Aug 22 ..... **Ez 43:1-7ab; Mt 23:1-12**
7:30am .... [WG]... (L) Marcella Levin by Mary and John McGruder
8:30am .... [GS] ... John Fox by Michael Houlihan
4:00pm .... [FS] ... (L) Aldo C. Zucaro by Cathy Giblin
5:30pm .... [GR] ... L & D Mbrs of the Desilets Family by Philip Desilets

Sun, Aug 23..... **Is 22:19-23; Rom 11:33-36; Mt 16:13-20**
7:30am .... [GS] ... Jim Corsaro by the Corsaro Family
9:00am .... [WG]... (L) David & Allyson Corchado & Family by Ann Crowley
10:30am ... [FS] ... For All Parishioners
12:00pm ... [GR] ... (L) Dr. Richard Furman by Wife
12:00pm ... [JV].... (Hall/Vietnamese) Special Intentions
5:30pm .... [GR] ... L & D Mbrs of the Burch Family by Betty & Joe Plouffe

Fr. George (GS), Fr. Joseph (JV), Fr. Fausto (FS) Fr. Gennadi (GR), Fr. Walter (WG)

CATHOLIC FAITH *Appeal*

2026 Catholic Faith Appeal GOAL $450,000

Given to Date $229,522
Pledged $276,047
% of Goal 61.34%

$450,000
$425,000
$400,000
$375,000
$350,000
$325,000
$300,000
$275,000
$250,000
$225,000
$200,000
$175,000
$150,000
$125,000
$100,000
$75,000
$50,000
$25,000

$229,522 →

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CHECK: Payable to CATHOLIC FAITH APPEAL

Credit or Debit Card, Gift of Securities, IRA:
Send us the info via the pledge card or
dioceseofvenice.org/ways-to-give/cfa

DIOCESE OF VENICE

SCAN HERE

Info: call 941.486.4719 or email cfa@dioceseofvenice.org

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

St Martha Legacy Society

St. Martha Catholic Church — Legacy Society

Interested in joining?
Contact Greg Massarella
gmassarella@gmail.com
or
Samantha McDonald,
Parish Hall 941.366.4210
smcdonald@stmartha.org

The Legacy Society at St Martha is open to all parishioners. There is no financial donation required to join, only the commitment to leave something – anything – to St Martha in your will.

As a member of the Legacy Society, you will ensure the future of our beautiful historic church in downtown Sarasota. Through your efforts St Martha will be able to minister to present and future generations in Sarasota.

To become a member, you only need to get in touch with us and express your interest in leaving something to the church in your estate. We will never ask how much, and we will not ask for verification.

There are some nice perks, like having your name added to the donor tree in the church courtyard. And you will be hosted by Fr George at our Annual Legacy Society Dinner. This year's dinner at Michael's Wine Cellar on Tuesday, February 24 was enjoyed by over 30 members.

His Holiness Pope Leo XIV

Prayer Intention for August 2026

For Evangelization in the City

Let us pray that in large cities often marked by anonymity and loneliness we find new ways to proclaim the Gospel, discovering creative paths to build community.

Go to the poor and you will find God.

– St. Vincent dePaul • That is the Vincentian Mission.

It is said that no form of charity is foreign to the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

We invite you to be part of a community of Vincentians who go to the poor.

Call the Incarnation parish office **941.921.6631** or come to one of our meetings on the last **Monday** of each month at **6:30pm**.

The harvest is indeed great, but more laborers are needed.

St Martha Melody Makers Youth Choir

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord! - Psalm 100.1

All St Martha's youth are invited to join in the singing!

Info, schedule, join:

Joy 941.587.3584 / mjoylfl@comcast.net

Wedding Banns

Steven Marchetti & Elisabeth Tufano (2)

FOOD DONATIONS NEEDED

We Need Your Help to Feed Local Families in Sarasota and Manatee Counties

- Shelf Stable Items Preferable
- Canned Vegetable / Fruit / Chicken / Tuna
- Pasta • Jar Sauce • Cereal
- Peanut Butter

CATHOLIC CHARITIES
Diocese of Venice, Inc.

Although Catholic Charities, Diocese of Venice does not operate food pantries in Sarasota or Manatee counties, we regularly receive requests for help from local families experiencing hardship. To ensure no one goes hungry while seeking longer-term support, we provide temporary food assistance and help connect individuals and families with resources in their community.

DROP OFF LOCATIONS

5055 N Tamiami Trail, Sarasota
1219 16th Street, West Bradenton

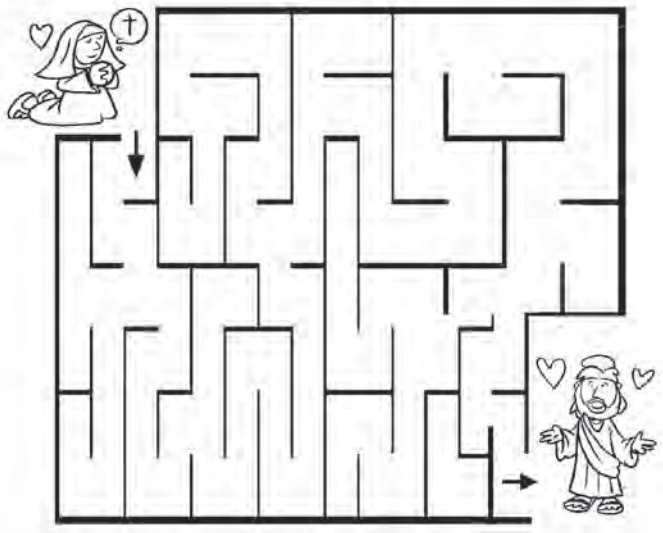
Questions or Can't Drop Off?

Claudia Iacona **ciacono@ccdov.org**

Monetary Donations Accepted Scan →
Donate Securely Select: Pantry RY 7 FOOD

PUZZLE

Help this woman find Jesus.



Mission for the Week

When I hear a siren, I will pray for the people inside the ambulance.

Sharing the Gospel

A woman begged Jesus to cure her daughter who was possessed by demons. This lady believed that Jesus could cure her daughter. He cured her daughter because of her faith. Ask God to help someone you know who is very sick. Ask God to help the homeless find jobs so they can pay for a place to live. Ask God to help you and your sisters and brothers play without fighting. He will help because of your faith.

Read the Gospel and color the image.

Prayer

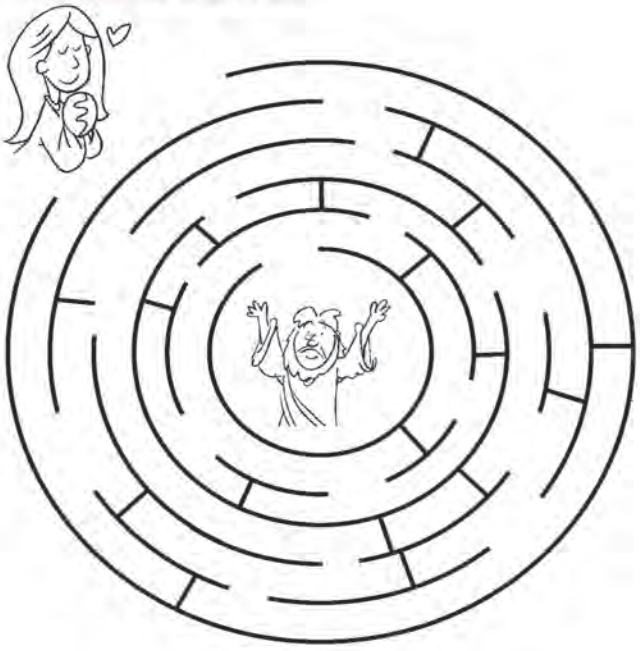
Jesus, I believe you can help.

Color

Color the picture from today's gospel.

PUZZLE

Help the woman find her way to Jesus.



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St Martha School Faculty & Staff Prep Week

St. Martha School faculty and staff had a busy Prep Week, with Professional Development Workshops and getting classrooms ready to welcome back all of the students!

DIOCESE OF VENICE IN FLORIDA

Day of Reflection

For Sacramental Marriage

Pre-registration Required
Scan the QR Code or register dioceseofvenice.org

Day of Reflection for Sacramental Marriage is a day for couples preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage in the Catholic Church. A volunteer team of married couples, and a priest, share their experiences and information, enabling couples to be more aware of the privileges and responsibilities of marriage.

2026 SCHEDULE 8:30am - 4pm • $60 per couple*

September 12
St John the Evangelist
Pulte Hall
625 111th Ave N, Naples 34108

November 14
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Retreat Center
3989 S Moon Dr, Venice 34292

Questions · 941.486.4754
gontis@dioceseofvenice.org
Jim Gontis, *Director, Dept of Evangelization*

*The $60.00 registration fee includes all retreat materials & lunch.

Welcome New Parishioners!

We are so happy to welcome you to St Martha Catholic Church
and are glad you have joined us!
To register, please visit stmartha.org
or scan the QR code ↘

St. Martha Parish Staff
941.366.4210 · StMartha.org

Samantha McDonald, *Business Manager*
Patricia Sileo, *Director of Religious Education*
Blanca Goetz, *Event Coordinator*
Pamela Paulson, *Reception/Data Entry*
Maxine Brand, Reception
Thomas Varas, *Music Director*
Susie Runnells, *Sacristan*
Janet Cocco, *Sacristan*
Joe Angelicola, *Sacristan*
Miguel Jimenez, *Facilities Manager*
Eris Nunez, *Maintenance*
Carlos Sierra Napoles, *Maintenance*
Claudia Moschini, *Rectory Chef*

St. Martha Clergy

Rev. George Suszko, S.A.C. Pastor
Rev. Guennadi Romachko, S.A.C
Rev. Joseph Vu, C.R.M., Hospital Chaplain
Rev. Walter Grobowski
Very Rev. Fausto Stampiglia, S.A.C. (Retired)
Deacon Robert Gaitens
Deacon Vern Smith

Important Contact Information

Outreach Ministries

Altar Servers	Dn. Vern Smith	.dcvern@stmartha.org
Catholic Charities	Diocese of Venice	.941.484.9543
Community Pregnancy Clinics		.941.260.5427
Casa Santa Marta		.941.366.4448
Choir/Cantor	Thomas Varas	.tvaras@stmartha.org
Eucharist Adoration	Parish Office	.941.366.4210
Extraordinary Ministers	Dc Pat Macaulay	.dcpatrick@stmartha.org
Finance Council	Emil Efthimides	.ede24@usa.com
Family Ministry	Gary Kerschner	.Kerschg56@gmail.com
Herrig Caritas (9-11am, M-F)	Tony Cocco, Chair	.941.366.5620
Hospitality Ministry	Beth Cannata	.941.321.2953
Knights of Columbus	Dale Thompson	.941.350.9010
Lectors	Randy Kelly	.510.853.0401
O.C.I.A.	Patricia Sileo	.941.366.4210
Parish Council	Beth Cannata	.941.321.2953
Prayer Line	Parish Office	.941.366.4210
Solve Maternity Homes	Peggy Kerwin	.941.748.0094
Ushers	Steve Mislyan	.941.993.0997
Volunteer Coordinator	Stuart Love	.941.780.7834
Witness to Love	Jim & Agnes Rutushni	.941.960.5128

Diocese of Venice

1000 Pinebrook Road, Venice, FL 34285 . . . . 941.484.9543

Neighboring Diocesan Parishes

St. Jude	Sarasota	941.955.3934
Christ the King	Sarasota	941.924.2777
Incarnation	Sarasota	941.921.6631
Our Lady Queen of Martyrs	Sarasota	941.755.1826
St. Patrick	Sarasota	941.378.1703
St. Mary Star of the Sea	Longboat Key	941.383.1255
St. Thomas More	Sarasota	941.923.1691
St. Joseph	Bradenton	941.756.3732
St. Michael the Archangel	Siesta Key	941.349.4174
Our Lady of the Angels	Lakewood Ranch	941.752.6770

Bishop Nevins Academy 4380 Fruitville Road, Sarasota, FL 34232
St. Martha Catholic School, Mrs. Mari Jo Hanson, *Principal* 941.953.4181
St. Mary Academy, Mrs. Rebecca Reynolds, *Principal* 941.366.4010

Cardinal Mooney Catholic High School
4171 Fruitville Road, Sarasota, FL 34232 . . . . 941.371.4917

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Sunday Brunch!
8:30am-4:30pm
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ReStore
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Tuesday - Saturday ▪ 10:00am - 5:00pm
2095 17th Street ▪ Sarasota
Large item?
COMPLIMENTARY Pick Ups
(941) 444-5782
www.habitatsrq.org
Donation drop-off times for smaller items 10am-4:30pm
Our vision is everyone deserves a decent place to live.

Najmy Thompson
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Estate Planning | Probate | Real Estate
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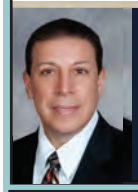

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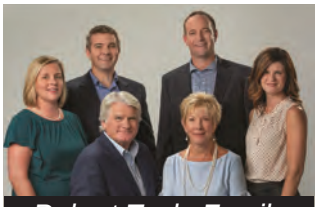

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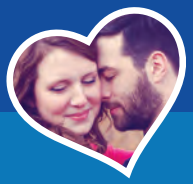

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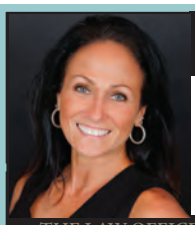

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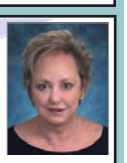
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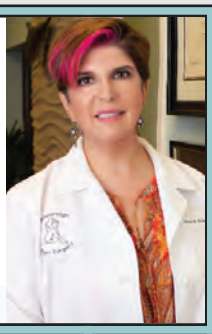

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