



Saint Francis de Sales Catholic Church

Devotion is not simply saying prayers
or doing religious things.
It is love of God made active in daily life...
Devotion is a spiritual readiness and vitality
that enables divine love to act in us—
and moves us to act
promptly and lovingly.

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

September 27, 2026

GATHERING

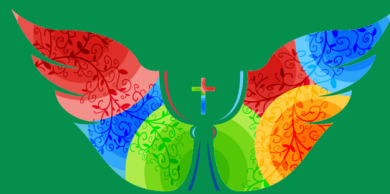
If friends invite you to dinner at seven, you understand that the meal may not begin until 7:30 or 8:00. Of course, you should get there close to seven because what happens before the meal is an important part of the meal itself. We gather. We say hello. We settle in. We start to form a little community before we sit down to the table. If we've socialized a bit we will enjoy the meal and the company much more. The Mass is very sensitive to this human need. The General Instruction of the Roman Missal says this about the Introductory Rites: "Their purpose is to ensure that the faithful, who come together as one, establish communion and dispose themselves properly to listen to the Word of God and to celebrate the Eucharist worthily" (46). Notice that before we listen to the Word and celebrate the Eucharist we are to become a worshipping community. This is the primary role of the assembly. The very first rubric from the Order of Mass offers a marvelous expression: "When the people are gathered" (notice who is mentioned first among the ministries: the people), "the Priest approaches the altar with the ministers while the Entrance Chant is being sung." The assembling of the people is how Mass begins. In the parking lot, in the vestibule, in the pew, we gather to prepare ourselves for prayer by becoming a worshipping community. When you wave at your friends, nod to strangers, or hold open the door for another worshiper, you're already beginning Mass. We assemble as one because we have a common mission. We are not like folks on an elevator, thrown together as individuals with separate missions, who do not speak during the ride. We form a community and join our prayer as one. It's just like the time before a dinner party. We visit with one another before the food is served so the meal can celebrate unity. That's how important our time is before Mass. Are there folks you worship with whose names you don't know? People you keep bumping into in the parking lot? Would you share a dinner with people whose names you don't know? Come to Mass early. Introduce yourself to people. Introduce a friend to a friend. Practice the names. Form a — community. Assemble. Gather. Then worship and eat.

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PRAY WITH US



MASS~LA MISA

SUNDAYS:

9:00am, 11:00am,
12:30pm Spanish

MONDAY, TUESDAY,
THURSDAY FRIDAY:
8:30am

THE ROSARY

prayed
after the 8:30 AM Mass
during the week.
All are welcome to pray with us.

VISITS TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

(Praying in Church)
WEEKDAYS 9am - 4pm

MASS INTENTIONS

Sunday, Sept 27, 2026

9:00am--Kimaya Barranda (L) Birthday

11am-Erik John Dimalanta (D)
Evelyn Walker (D)

12:30pm-Miguel Castilla y Estela Juarez (D)

Monday, Sept 28, 2026

8:30AM--Roman & Vasiliy Nikiporenok (D)

Tuesday, Sept 29, 2026

8:30am-Robinson Barranda, Sr. (D)

Thursday, Oct 1, 2026

8:30am-

Friday, Oct 2, 2026

8:30am-Sr. Maryellen Ryan (D)

FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK

Peter Ney
Kathleen Schultheis
Dawn Roberts

for our loved ones,
for those in hospitals
and nursing homes
for those who have no one
to pray for them

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE DIED

Robert Petitto, Sr.
Miguel Cruz
Jose Crews



SACRAMENTS

BAPTISM OF INFANTS

The Baptism of a Child is an important event in the life of a family and the life of the Church.

We encourage registered active members of the parish to contact us to begin preparation.

We ask that this begins two months before the intended Baptism date.

Baptisms are celebrated at Sunday Mass once a month.

COMMUNION TO THE HOMEBOUND

If you or someone you love is unable to attend Mass due to serious illness or limited mobility, and are homebound, our parish ministers are ready to bring Holy Communion to them with prayer and care.

PENANCE AND RECONCILIATION (Confession)

If you would like to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, our priests are available before and after Mass or by appointment for a quiet, prayerful, and personal encounter with God's mercy.

For more information, please contact the Parish Office



STEWARDSHIP

WEEKLY GIVING

September 15th-September 21st

\$4,428.59 online debit giving

\$1,451.00 Sunday collection basket, mailed in Checks

TOTAL \$5,879.59



Tithely

ONLINE GIVING



venmo

PARISH MEETINGS AND MINISTRIES

THE ROSARY

The Rosary is prayed
after the 8:30 AM Mass during the week.
All are welcome to pray with us.

FAITH TALKS

Those interested in becoming Catholic ,
seeking Confirmation
or anyone with questions
Mondays at 7:00 PM in the Church Office

PARISH CHOIRS

11:00 Mass Choir rehearses
Sunday at 10:00 AM
El coro de la misa de 12:30
contact Travis Bloom
at travisbloom@sfdsnyc.org

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Opening Session: Sunday, September 27
10:00-11:00 AM
in the Parish Hall
Register today!

BOOK CLUB

Living in the Spirit of St. Francis by Ilia Delio
Monday, October 12-- 8:00 PM via Zoom
Contact Mary Braza at
brazamary@gmail.com

SOCIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY

Contact Pat Latona at
latonapal@gmail.com

YOUNG ADULT GROUP -20 and 30 year olds

Wednesday, October 7
Young Adult Mass- St. Patrick Cathedral
Bible Study--Wednesday, October 14
7:00 PM, Parish Hall

HOPE WALK

Saturday, October 11
10:00 AM in the Parish Hall

NEW LITURGICAL MINISTERS

For more information
contact Joe Long
joelong@sfdsnycorg

GRUPO DE JOVENES ADULTOS

30 de septiembre de 7:00 PM
en la salón parroquial

THE ASSOCIATION (Daughters) OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES

Sunday, October 11
1:45 PM in the Church Office

USING THE RESTROOMS

Because the safety and well-being of our children are important to us, we remind parents and guardians to accompany young children to and from the restroom.

This helps us maintain a safe and welcoming environment for everyone and follows the Archdiocese of New York's Safe Environment Guidelines.

Thank you for your patience, understanding, and cooperation.

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS



Sister Maryellen Ryan SUSA

September 12, 1936 – September 13, 2026

Sister Maryellen Ryan, SUSA (Sr. John Marie), who died on September 13, 2026, one day after her 90th birthday, was a Holy Union Sister for more than 70 years. Born in Astoria, New York, she entered the Holy Union Sisters in 1954 and devoted her life to Catholic education, religious education, and parish ministry. Sister Maryellen had a special connection to St. Francis de Sales Parish, where she served as a faculty member of the school and later as Director of Religious Education/Pastoral Associate.

In 1972, Sister Maryellen began what would become a long ministry in parish religious education in New York City. In many ways, she helped pioneer this growing ministry at a time when parishes were placing increasing emphasis on the religious formation of children, families, and adults beyond the Catholic school classroom.

Her education and formation included a degree in education from Catholic Teachers College and a master's degree in Religious Education from Fordham University. Her years of teaching and catechetical ministry touched generations of children, families, and parishioners.

We remember Sister Maryellen with gratitude for her service to St. Francis de Sales and for her lifelong commitment to sharing the Catholic faith.

Faith Talks

A place for questions, conversation, and discernment.

WHO IS FAITH TALKS FOR?



People thinking about becoming Catholic



Catholics returning after being away



Baptized Christians wondering about the Catholic Church



Parishioners wrestling with questions of faith



Catholics who never completed Confirmation or First Communion



Someone simply curious and not ready to make any commitment

**Come as you are.
Leave with more understanding.**

Ask your questions.
Share your thoughts.
Listen to others.
Grow in faith together.



**MONDAY NIGHTS
7:00 PM**



**IN THE
CHURCH OFFICE**

Questions are welcome. Everyone belongs. We'd love to see you there!

When the saints
go marching in...

REGISTER in the Parish!

You are part of our faith family.
Registering helps us know that you are here.



WHY IT MATTERS



STRONGER TOGETHER

Helps us build a vibrant parish community and plan for the future.



SUPPORT OUR MISSION

Enables us to serve, minister, and share God's love with others.



REPRESENTS OUR PARISH

The number of registered parishioners helps the Archdiocese assess our ministry needs and provide support.



STAY CONNECTED

Receive important updates, invitations, and news about parish life and opportunities.



LIVE YOUR FAITH

A visible sign of your commitment and active participation in our parish family.

Thank you

for being part of
St. Francis de Sales!

ONLINE GIVING

A simple way to support the life and mission of our parish.

Your gift helps St. Francis de Sales continue its prayer, service, outreach, and welcome.
Online giving makes it easy to support the parish faithfully and consistently.

Why give online?

- 1 It is simple and secure.
- 2 It helps the parish plan and budget more responsibly.
- 3 It supports the parish even when you are away.
- 4 Recurring gifts provide steady support for ministry and daily operations.
- 5 It is a practical way to care for the parish and its future.

Your gift makes a difference

Every contribution helps sustain worship, faith formation, hospitality, service, and the ongoing life of our parish community.

*Set up your gift
online today*

Visit: stfrancis96.org



Thank you for your support.



The Blessing of Animals

*All creatures
are God's creatures.*
— ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Sunday, October 4
After All Masses
in front of the Church

*The traditional feast of
St. Francis of Assisi*

*All are
welcome!*

Bring your pets
(on a leash or in a carrier)
to receive a special
blessing.

FAITH
COMPASSION
CARE FOR
GOD'S CREATION

At-Home Blessing Prayer FOR PETS

— On the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi —

Loving God,
You created all living things
and call them good.
We thank you for the gift of our pets,
who bring joy, companionship and love into our lives.
Bless them with your care.
Keep them safe, healthy and happy.
Help us to be responsible and compassionate caretakers.
May they always be treated with kindness and respect,
and may our love for them remind us
of your great love for all creation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.



Sprinkle the animal and all gathered
with holy water if available.

*All creatures
praise the Lord!*
Psalm 148



St. Francis de Sales Church

EDUCACIÓN RELIGIOSA PARA NIÑOS Y JÓVENES

Edades 5-13

Más que una clase

Un lugar para crecer en la fe,
prepararse para los sacramentos
y hacer amigos.



Sacramentos

Primera Reconciliación,
Primera Comunión
y Confirmación



Discipulado

Aprender a conocer
y seguir a Jesús



Amistad

Crecer con otros
en la fe y en la
comunidad



Aquí
pertenece



Comienza el domingo 27 de septiembre



A las 10:00 AM en el Salón



Inscríbese con anticipación en línea o en persona

Un lugar para orar, aprender y pertenecer.
Ven a crecer con nosotros.

NIÑOS Y JÓVENES BIENVENIDOS.

St. Francis de Sales Church

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH

Ages 5-13

More Than A Class

A place to grow in faith,
prepare for the sacraments,
and make friends.



Sacraments

First Reconciliation,
First Communion,
Confirmation, and more



Discipleship

Learning to know
and follow Jesus



Friendship

Growing with others
in faith and community



You
Belong
Here
♡



Begins Sunday,
September 27



10:00 AM
in the Hall



Register in advance
online or in person

A place to pray, learn, and belong.
Come grow with us.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH WELCOME.



— ARTIFICIAL — INTELLIGENCE OPPORTUNITIES AND FEARS

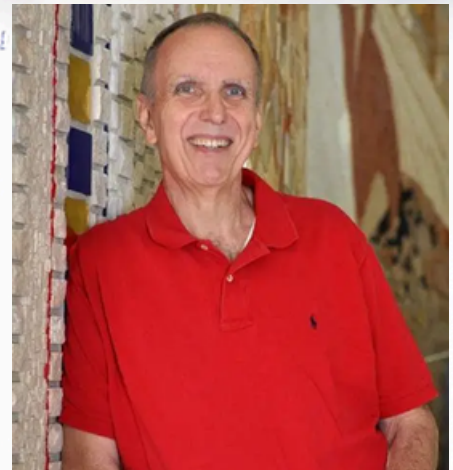
A Conversation about Pope Leo's Encyclical
on Artificial Intelligence

Magnifica Humanitas *On Safeguarding the Human Person in the Time of Artificial Intelligence*

Come to a parish discussion on your fears, hopes
and questions about Artificial Intelligence.

Pope Leo wrote a timely document “Magnificent
Humanity” that gives us guidelines on how to
deal with this important issue.

We will explore ways in this session on how to
use Spiritual Intelligence to understand Artificial
Intelligence.



Fr. Tony Ciorra

**Tuesday,
October 20, 2026
7:00 – 8:30 PM**

Read the Encyclical Online
<https://bit.ly/4yDjpuf>

*Paper copies are also available
by contacting Joe Long.*



corrected link and QR code

All are welcome!



Saint Francis de Sales Church

135 East 96th Street, New York

stfrancis96.org

Questions : contact Joe Long 212-289-0425 or joelong@sfdsnyc.org

**When we all VOTE,
we make sure our leaders work for us
(not just billionaires)**

***Cuando todos VOTEMOS,
Nos aseguramos de que nuestros líderes trabajen
para nosotros (no solo para los multimillonarios).***



**REGISTER TO
VOTE**

**REGÍSTRATE PARA
VOTAR**

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4TH
ST. FRANCIS DE SALES, CHURCH HALL
10:00 AM TO 2:00 PM**

**VOTE TO MAKE LIFE BETTER FOR
YOUR LOVED ONES, YOUR
NEIGHBORS, YOURSELF**

**VOTA PARA MEJORAR LA VIDA DE
TUS SERES QUERIDOS, TUS
VECINOS Y LA TUYA PROPIA.**



**TELL YOUR FRIENDS!
WE HAVE POWER WHEN WE
ACT TOGETHER**

**¡CUÉNTASELO A TUS AMIGOS!
TENEMOS PODER CUANDO
ACTUAMOS JUNTOS.**



Sponsored by SFDS Social Justice Ministry - latonapal@gmail.com

SEE. LOVE. VOTE. Checklist

As Catholics, we are called to love our neighbors. Today, we **SEE** how immoral policies are harming all of us – making our groceries, rent, and health care unaffordable, tearing apart immigrant families, and trying to keep us from voting. Grounded in the Catholic Social Justice tradition, we are responding with **LOVE** – love that propels us to **VOTE** in the 2026 elections and beyond, to make life better for all our communities!

How do Catholics love our neighbors?

We vote for leaders who will make sure that all of us have what we need to thrive!



"Democracy recognizes the dignity of every person and calls each citizen to participate responsibly in the pursuit of the common good."

NETWORK
NETWORK ADVOCATES FOR CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE

Candidate name: _____

Will your candidate work for...

Good-paying jobs with benefits and protections?

- ☐ Ensure all workers can earn a living wage with benefits including paid leave and a secure retirement
- ☐ Protect the right of all workers to join a union for better pay and working conditions
- ☐ Protect workers from unsafe and inhumane work conditions and from being replaced by artificial intelligence
- ☐ Make community college and training and apprenticeship programs free

Catholic teaching affirms the dignity of work and workers and calls for wages that let us "live a truly human life." (Mater et Magistra, #71)



This resource can support you in educating yourself as a faithful voter. Fill this out for your candidates, share it with friends, and make a plan to vote!

Learn more at
networkadvocates.org/vote

Quality, affordable health care for all?

- ☐ Expand affordable, quality health care for all and end medical debt
- ☐ Lower the cost of lifesaving prescription medicines
- ☐ Invest in maternal health programs to support the lives of parents and babies
- ☐ Reinvest in rural hospitals, nursing homes, maternity wards, and other critical services that have closed due to massive cuts to health care

The Catholic Church affirms that food, housing, and health care are not privileges reserved for the wealthy, but universal rights. (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, #166)

Affordable food and housing for all?

- ☐ Lower rent by expanding affordable housing programs, especially for seniors, young adults, disabled people, and low-income families
- ☐ Stop corporations from buying up single-family homes and driving up housing costs
- ☐ Lower the cost of groceries by removing tariffs on food and other essentials and stopping corporate price hikes

SEE LOVE VOTE Checklist



Candidate name: _____



Will your candidate work for...

An economy that puts families over billionaires?

- ☐ Ensure the wealthy and corporations pay their fair share in taxes, including with a billionaire's tax, to fund the essentials our families need
- ☐ Support U.S. jobs by removing corporate tax incentives that shift jobs overseas
- ☐ Fund childcare programs to ease the cost of living for families
- ☐ Provide the full Child Tax Credit to all families

Catholic teaching calls for an inclusive economy that places people over profit and ensures that we all have what we need to thrive. (Populorum Progressio, #33)

Affordable energy, clean air, and safe drinking water?

- ☐ Lower energy prices by investing in clean energy
- ☐ Protect our communities from AI data centers that pollute our water and drive up our utility bills
- ☐ Protect clean air and safe drinking water for every community

Care for our common home is a requirement of the Catholic faith. (Laudato Si', #8)

Safe and welcoming neighborhoods?

- ☐ Invest in vibrant neighborhoods instead of funding mass deportations and more for-profit prisons
- ☐ Keep families together, support the right to seek safety from persecution, and create pathways to earn citizenship
- ☐ Ensure immigrant families can go to religious services, schools, and hospitals without fear
- ☐ Support common-sense gun safety laws to save lives and create safe neighborhoods

The Catholic Church insists upon every person's intrinsic dignity, our right to live free of violence, and our right to migrate to seek a safe and good life for ourselves and our families. (USCCB, Strangers No Longer, #19, 28)

Our say in shaping our future?

- ☐ Ensure all eligible voters can cast a ballot and have an equal say in the decisions that affect us
- ☐ Ensure the will of the people prevails over the interests of corporations and the ultra-wealthy

Catholic teaching calls each of us to participate in public life, especially through voting, to serve the common good. (Christifidelis Laici, #42)

- ✓ Check or update your voter registration status
- ✓ Find your polling place
- ✓ See who and what is on your ballot
- ✓ Learn more and get involved!

VOTE!



networkadvocates.org/vote

SEE LOVE VOTE

Lista de verificación

Como católicos, estamos llamados a amar a nuestro prójimo. **VEMOS** cómo las políticas inmorales nos están perjudicando a todos: haciendo que los alimentos, la vivienda y la atención médica sean inasequibles, separando a las familias inmigrantes y tratando de impedir que ejerzamos nuestro derecho al voto. Juntos, respondemos con **AMOR**: un amor que nos impulsa a **VOTAR** en las elecciones de 2026 y más allá, para construir una vida mejor para todas nuestras comunidades.

¿Cómo amamos a nuestro prójimo como católicos?

¡Votamos por líderes que trabajen para que todas las personas tengan lo que necesitan para prosperar!



«La democracia reconoce la dignidad de cada persona y llama a cada ciudadano y ciudadana a participar responsablemente en la búsqueda del bien común.»

NETWORK
NETWORK ADVOCATES FOR CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE

Nombre del candidato/a: _____

¿Tu candidato/a trabajará para...

¿Empleos con buenos salarios, beneficios y protecciones laborales?

- ☐ Garantizar que todas las personas trabajadoras puedan ganar un salario digno y contar con beneficios, incluyendo licencias pagadas y una jubilación segura.
- ☐ Proteger el derecho de todas las personas trabajadoras a afiliarse a un sindicato para obtener mejores salarios y condiciones laborales.
- ☐ Proteger a las personas trabajadoras de condiciones laborales inseguras e inhumanas, y evitar que sean reemplazadas injustamente por la inteligencia artificial.
- ☐ Hacer gratuitos los programas de colegios comunitarios, capacitación laboral y aprendizaje profesional.

La enseñanza social católica defiende la dignidad del trabajo y de quienes trabajan, y sostiene que los salarios deben permitir a todas las personas “vivir una vida verdaderamente humana.” (Mater et Magistra, n.º 71)



Este recurso puede ayudarle a informarse y formarse como una persona de fe comprometida con el voto responsable. Complete esta guía para sus candidatos, compártala con sus amistades y familiares, ¡y haga un plan para votar!

Obtenga más información en:
networkadvocates.org/vote

¿Atención médica de calidad y asequible para todas las personas?

- ☐ Ampliar el acceso a una atención médica asequible y de calidad para todas las personas y eliminar las deudas médicas.
- ☐ Reducir el costo de los medicamentos recetados que salvan vidas.
- ☐ Invertir en programas de salud materna para apoyar la vida y el bienestar de madres, padres y bebés.
- ☐ Reinvertir en hospitales rurales, hogares de ancianos, salas de maternidad y otros servicios esenciales que han cerrado debido a los profundos recortes en la atención médica.

La Iglesia Católica enseña que la alimentación, la vivienda y la atención médica no son privilegios para unos pocos, sino derechos que pertenecen a toda persona. (Compendio de la Doctrina Social de la Iglesia, n.º 166)

¿Alimentos y viviendas asequibles para todas las personas?

- ☐ Reducir el costo de la vivienda ampliando los programas de vivienda asequible, especialmente para las personas mayores, los adultos jóvenes, las personas con discapacidad y las familias de bajos ingresos.
- ☐ Impedir que las grandes corporaciones compren viviendas unifamiliares y eleven los costos de la vivienda.
- ☐ Reducir el costo de los alimentos eliminando los aranceles sobre los productos alimenticios y otros bienes esenciales, y frenando los aumentos abusivos de precios por parte de las grandes corporaciones.



Nombre del candidato/a: _____

NETWORK
NETWORK ADVOCATES FOR GAY, LESB, BISS, AND TRANS JUSTICE

¿Tu candidato/a trabajará para...

¿Una economía que priorice a las familias por encima de los multimillonarios?

- ☐ Garantizar que las personas más ricas y las grandes corporaciones paguen la parte justa que les corresponde en impuestos, incluyendo mediante un impuesto a los multimillonarios, para financiar los servicios esenciales que nuestras familias necesitan.
- ☐ Apoyar los empleos en Estados Unidos eliminando los incentivos fiscales que recompensan a las corporaciones por trasladar empleos al extranjero.
- ☐ Financiar programas de cuidado infantil para ayudar a reducir el costo de vida de las familias.
- ☐ Garantizar que todas las familias reciban el Crédito Tributario por Hijos (Child Tax Credit) completo.

La enseñanza social católica nos llama a construir una economía que priorice a las personas por encima de las ganancias y asegure que todos podamos prosperar. (Populorum Progressio, n.º 33)

¿Construir comunidades seguras y acogedoras para todas las personas?

- ☐ Invertir en comunidades prósperas y seguras en lugar de destinar más recursos a las deportaciones masivas y a las prisiones con fines de lucro.
- ☐ Mantener unidas a las familias, proteger el derecho a buscar refugio frente a la persecución y crear vías para obtener la ciudadanía.
- ☐ Garantizar que las familias inmigrantes puedan asistir a servicios religiosos, escuelas y hospitales sin temor.
- ☐ Apoyar leyes de seguridad de armas de sentido común para salvar vidas y crear comunidades más seguras.

La Iglesia Católica enseña que toda persona posee una dignidad inherente, tiene derecho a vivir libre de violencia y puede migrar en busca de una vida segura y digna para sí misma y su familia. (USCCB, Strangers No Longer, nn. 19 y 28)

¿Garantizar energía asequible, aire limpio y agua potable segura para todas las personas?

- ☐ Reducir los costos de la energía mediante inversiones en energía limpia.
- ☐ Proteger a nuestras comunidades de los centros de datos de inteligencia artificial que contaminan nuestras fuentes de agua y aumentan las facturas de servicios públicos.
- ☐ Garantizar aire limpio y agua potable segura para todas las comunidades.

El cuidado de nuestra casa común es una exigencia de la fe católica. (Laudato Si', n.º 8)

¿Nuestro derecho a decidir nuestro futuro?

- ☐ Garantizar que todas las personas elegibles para votar puedan ejercer su derecho al voto y tengan la misma voz en las decisiones que afectan nuestras vidas.
- ☐ Garantizar que la voluntad del pueblo prevalezca sobre los intereses de las grandes corporaciones y de las personas ultrarricas.

La enseñanza social católica llama a cada persona a participar en la vida pública y, especialmente, a votar para servir al bien común. (Christifideles Laici, n.º 42)

- ✓ Verifica o actualiza tu registro de votante.
- ✓ Encuentra tu centro de votación.
- ✓ Conoce quiénes y qué medidas aparecerán en tu boleta electoral.
- ✓ ¡Infórmate más y participa!

VOTA!



networkadvocates.org/vote

ST. JEROME

MAKING THE WORD OF GOD ACCESSIBLE

“Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ.”

— St. Jerome

The Church celebrates St. Jerome on September 30. He is remembered as one of the great Scripture scholars of the early Church, but his story is about much more than scholarship. Jerome believed that Christians needed to know the Word of God—and that meant making Scripture understandable and accessible to people.

Jerome was born around the year 347 and received an excellent education. He had a gift for languages and eventually learned Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. He could also be difficult, impatient, and sharp-tongued. He was hardly a quiet scholar sitting peacefully in a library. He was passionate, intense, sometimes argumentative, and deeply convinced that the study of Scripture mattered.

Why did Jerome translate the Bible?

By Jerome's time, Christians had several Latin translations of the Scriptures, and they did not always agree with one another. Pope Damasus I asked Jerome to help produce a more reliable Latin text.

Jerome began by revising the Latin translation of the Gospels. Eventually, he devoted much of his life to translating and studying the Scriptures. For the Old Testament, he did something especially important: whenever possible, he worked directly from Hebrew, rather than relying only on earlier Greek or Latin versions.

The result of this enormous work became associated with what we call the Vulgate, the Latin Bible that would shape the prayer, worship, theology, art, and spirituality of Western Christianity for centuries.

Translation is more than changing words

Anyone who speaks more than one language knows that translation is not as simple as replacing one word with another. Words carry history, culture, images, humor, emotion, and layers of meaning. Sometimes there is no exact equivalent in another language. A translator has to ask: What was the original writer trying to say? How will people in another language hear it? How do I remain faithful to the text while making its meaning understandable?

Jerome wrestled with those questions more than 1,600 years ago.

The same work continues today. Our English Bibles are translated from ancient Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek manuscripts. That is also why different Catholic Bible translations sometimes use slightly different wording. The translators may make different choices while trying to communicate faithfully the meaning of the original text.

Scripture was never meant simply to sit on a shelf

Jerome did not study the Bible simply because he loved languages.

For him, Scripture was a way of encountering Jesus Christ. That is behind his famous statement: *Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ.*

Those words can sound harsh until we hear the invitation contained within them. Jerome is telling us: If you want to know Jesus more deeply, spend time with the Scriptures.

We hear Scripture every time we come to Mass. But the Bible belongs to the rest of the week too.

Read the Gospel for next Sunday before coming to church.

Spend five minutes with one of the Psalms.

Return to a passage that stayed with you after Mass.

Read one of the Gospels from beginning to end.

When a passage confuses you, ask questions about it rather than giving up on it.

You do not need to be a biblical scholar. You simply need to begin.

The Word still needs to be translated

Jerome translated Scripture from one language into another. Christians today have another kind of translation to do.

We are called to translate the Gospel into life.

We translate the words of Jesus when we forgive someone, care for a neighbor, welcome a stranger, speak for someone who has no voice, share what we have, choose mercy over judgment, or remain faithful when doing so is difficult.

The Bible is not simply an ancient book to be explained. It is the living Word proclaimed in the Church, prayed by the Church, studied by the Church—and then lived by the Church. Perhaps that is the best way to honor St. Jerome:

Open the Scriptures.

Listen to the Word.

Come to know Christ.

Then translate what you have heard into the way you live.

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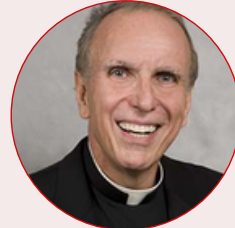
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