

SAINT POLYCARP CATHOLIC CHURCH

8100 Chapman Avenue, Stanton CA 90680 | (714) 893-2766 | www.stpolycarp.org

MISSION STATEMENT

We are a faith-based Catholic community whose members are enriched by the celebration of the Sacraments and opportunities to deepen our prayer lives. Guided by the Word of God and family values, we strive always to be a beacon of light for the lost, the lonely, the marginalized, and all those seeking the truth as we walk in the footsteps of those first disciples of Jesus and our patron St. Polycarp.

CLERGY

PASTOR

Rev. Viet Peter Ho

PAROCHIAL VICAR

Rev. Nicolaus Duy Thai

Rev. Luis Segura

DEACONS

Dcn. Ramiro Lopez

Dcn. Larry Leone

Dcn. Davis Tri Do

Dcn. Juan Ochoa

SUPPORT STAFF

BUSINESS MANAGER

Tom H. Ma

FAITH FORMATION (ENGLISH/SPANISH)

Sister Jessica Corral

FAITH FORMATION (VIETNAMESE)

Sister Mary Anne
Thiên Hương Nguyễn

CONFIRMATION PROGRAM

Sister Anna Anh Trâm Trần

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Kara Ford

YOUTH COORDINATOR

Joseph Do

WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday

5:00 PM English

7:00 PM Vietnamese

Sunday

7:30 AM English

9:00 AM Spanish

11:00 AM English

1:00 PM Spanish

4:00 PM Vietnamese

6:00 PM Spanish

WEEKDAY MASSES

6:30 AM English (Mon-Fri)

8:30 AM English (Mon-Sat)

6:30 PM Spanish (Mon)

6:30 PM Vietnamese (Fri)

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

9:00 AM - 10 AM (Fri)

3:30 PM - 4:30 PM (Sat)

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

7:15 PM (Monday)

9:00 AM (Friday)

3:30 PM (Saturday)

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday

9:30 AM - 12:00 PM

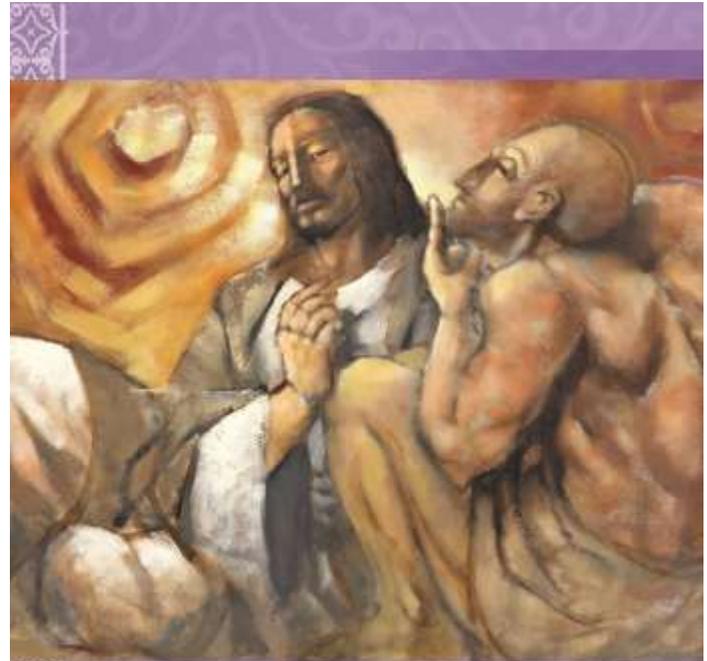
1:30 PM - 5:30 PM

Sunday

8:30 AM - 12:30 PM

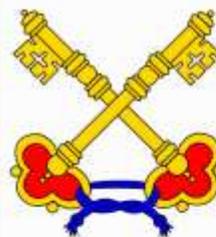
1:30 PM - 3:30 PM

info@stpolycarp.org
BULLETIN: editor@stpolycarp.org



1ST SUNDAY OF LENT

"The tempter approached and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread.' He said in reply, 'It is written: One does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.'" Mt 4: 1-4



POPE'S INTENTION - FEBRUARY

For Children with Incurable Diseases

Let us pray that children suffering from incurable diseases and their families receive the necessary medical care and support, never losing strength and hope.

FEBRUARY 22, 2026

**MASS INTENTIONS/INTENCIONES DE MISA/
XIN Ý LỄ CẦU NGUYỆN**

Saturday, February 21, 2026

5:00 PM Palasigui Angels✠
7:00 PM Phuoc Dai Nguyen (finding);
Joseph Nguyen✠ & Ba Huan

Sunday, February 22, 2026

7:30 AM Jose Lasam✠; Peter Trap Mai✠ &
All Ancestors✠
9:00 AM Honorio Urban✠, Antelmo Avila✠ &
Socorro Enriquez✠; Ricardo Perez✠;
Alexander William Martinez (health)
11:00 AM Phaolo Lucia Quang✠, Hien✠ & All Ancestors✠
1:00 PM Guadalupe Bello✠;
Rodrigo de Jesus Montenegro & Raquel Matos
4:00 PM All Souls✠ & Joseph
6:00 PM Apolinar Uriostegui; Ernest Hurst✠ &
Venancio Yuney Jimenez (birthday &
conversion); All Souls in Purgatory✠

Monday, February 23, 2026

6:30 AM All Souls✠; Martha's Family
8:30 AM Mario Cacananta✠; All Souls in Purgatory✠
6:30 PM Fernando Cervantes Villafana & Hector Vega✠;
Jose Madriz (health); The Innocent Saints✠

Tuesday, February 24, 2026

6:30 AM Nelia Padua✠; Thanksgiving
8:30 AM Loreso Phuoc✠; Diana Garcia (health)

Wednesday, February 25, 2026

6:30 AM Martha Canseco✠ & Angel Escalante✠;
All Souls✠
8:30 AM Ramona H. Gomez✠; Celia Delgado Tellez✠

Thursday, February 26, 2026

6:30 AM Jorge Torres✠; Martha Canseco✠ &
Angel Escalante✠
8:30 AM Pedro Lamas✠; Priests

Friday, February 27, 2026

6:30 AM Agnes Nguyen✠ & John the Baptist Son Dao✠;
Mario Angel Escalante✠
8:30 AM Josefina Ruiz Salvador✠;
Catarina Hong Pham✠
6:30 PM All Priests

Saturday, February 28, 2026

8:30 AM All parishioners

Pray for the Sick

Marta Mercado
Alani Vargas

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Sunday: Gn 2:7-9; 3:1-7/Ps 51:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 17/
Rom 5:12-19 or 5:12, 17-19/Mt 4:1-11
Monday: Lv 19:1-2, 11-18/Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 15/
Mt 25:31-46
Tuesday: Is 55:10-11/Ps 34:4-5, 6-7, 16-17, 18-19/
Mt 6:7-15
Wednesday: Jon 3:1-10/Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 18-19/
Lk 11:29-32
Thursday: Est C:12, 14-16, 23-25/Ps 138:1-2ab, 2cde-3,
7c-8/Mt 7:7-12
Friday: Ez 18:21-28/Ps 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-7a, 7bc-8/
Mt 5:20-26
Saturday: Dt 26:16-19/Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 7-8/Mt 5:43-48
Sunday: Gn 12:1-4a/Ps 33:4-5, 18-19, 20, 22/
2 Tm 1:8b-10/Mt 17:1-9



SCAN QR CODE TO DONATE



| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Feb 14/15 Masses | \$ 20,026.00 |
| Feb 14/15 Online Giving | \$ 2,264.67 |
| Total collection: | \$ 22,290.67 |

Thank you for your support! ¡Gracias por su apoyo! Cảm ơn tấm lòng quảng đại của mọi người.



PSA 2026 REPORT

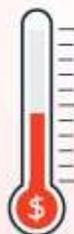
AS OF 02/18/2026

PLEDGES RECEIVED: 164

AMOUNT PLEDGED: \$46,222.00

TOTAL PAID: \$37,850.00

OUR 2026 PSA GOAL: \$109,760.00



Thank You!

SAINT POLYCARP
CATHOLIC CHURCH
www.stpolycarp.org

Las lecturas de la semana del 22 de febrero

Domingo: Gn 2, 7-9; 3, 1-7/Sal 50, 3-4. 5-6. 12-13. 17/
Rom 5, 12-19 o 5, 12. 17-19/Mt 4, 1-11

Lunes: Lv 19, 1-2. 11-18/Sal 18, 8. 9. 10. 15/
Mt 25, 31-46

Martes: Is 55, 10-11/Sal 33, 4-5. 6-7. 16-17. 18-19/
Mt 6, 7-15

Miércoles: Jon 3, 1-10/Sal 50, 3-4. 12-13. 18-19/Lc 11, 29-32

Jueves: Est C, 12. 14-16. 23-25/Sal 137, 1-2. 2-3. 7-8/
Mt 7, 7-12

Viernes: Ez 18, 21-28/Sal 129, 1-2. 3-4. 5-7. 7-8/
Mt 5, 20-26

Sábado: Dt 26, 16-19/Sal 118, 1-2. 4-5. 7-8/Mt 5, 43-48

Domingo: Gn 12, 1-4/Sal 32, 4-5. 18-19. 20. 22/
2 Tm 1, 8-10/Mt 17, 1-9

Las conmemoraciones de la semana del 22 de febrero

Domingo: 1er Domingo de Cuaresma
Lunes: San Policarpo, obispo y mártir
Viernes: San Gregorio de Narek, abad y doctor de la Iglesia
Domingo: 2º Domingo de Cuaresma

(PRACTICANDO) CATÓLICA: RECONOCE A DIOS EN TUS MOMENTOS ORDINARIOS

Por Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Mini reflexión: Hay muchas razones por las que el Verbo se hizo carne. Pero creo que una de las razones más importantes debe haber sido que Dios quería mostrarnos que Él sabe, íntimamente, con qué facilidad el diablo explota nuestra experiencia física de este mundo.

En el Desierto

Cuando estábamos recién casados, yo quería saber todo lo que mi esposo estaba pensando, exactamente cuando él lo estaba pensando.

Trece años después, todavía quiero saberlo todo. Pero quiero saberlo después de que haya comido un refrigerio.

Creo que él todavía quiere saber lo que estoy pensando también. Pero quiere saberlo después de que haya tenido 10 minutos sin escuchar la palabra "¡Mami!"

La vida nos ha enseñado, como ves, que es difícil ser una buena persona, una linda persona, una persona amable, cuando tu cuerpo no se siente bien, agradable o gentil. Cuando tienes hambre. Cuando estás agotado. Cuando estás ansioso.

No es imposible, por supuesto. Es solo... *difícil*.

Estamos entrando en una temporada penitencial, un tiempo en el que nos privamos a propósito de ciertas maneras. Durante la Cuaresma, entramos intencionalmente en el

desierto del hambre y la debilidad física. ¿Por qué, en preparación para la Pascua y en un esfuerzo por purificarnos espiritualmente, vamos a este lugar donde es *tan difícil ser bueno*? ¿Por qué vamos al desierto?

Porque Cristo nos ha mostrado que el desierto es donde se toman las decisiones.

Hay muchas razones por las que el Verbo se hizo carne para cumplir el plan de Dios para nuestra salvación. Pero creo que una de las razones más importantes debe haber sido que Dios quería mostrarnos que Él sabe, íntimamente, con qué facilidad el diablo explota nuestra experiencia física de este mundo. Lo vemos en el Evangelio de hoy: Jesús, hambriento y cansado. Jesús, burlado y tentado.

Lo vemos. Lo reconocemos. Somos él.

Y escuchamos su voz, aunque tiembla de fatiga: "¡Aléjate, Satanás!"

Hoy, entramos en el desierto. Porque el desierto es donde se toman las decisiones.

MEDITACIÓN DEL EVANGELIO – ALENTAR UN ENTENDIMIENTO MÁS PROFUNDO DE LA ESCRITURA (

Con el Miércoles de Ceniza inicia el Tiempo de Cuaresma. Los colores litúrgicos cambian, indicando un tiempo especial de conversión y arrepentimiento. La Cuaresma es tiempo para encontrarnos con Jesús en el desierto, y nos invita a la conversión y a la reconciliación de todo lo que nos aleja de Dios. Es también un tiempo de renovación espiritual profunda, de oración, de ayuno y de dar al que no tiene. Esto es importante porque nos ayuda a llegar a la Pascua de la Resurrección de Jesucristo con un corazón puro y limpio.

Habrán muchas tentaciones que debemos rechazar y vencer. Esto se logra con un acercamiento sincero al Sacramento de la Reconciliación. Recordemos que las tentaciones son siempre seductoras y engañosas. El Señor Jesús fue tentado por el diablo tres veces en el desierto y salió victorioso. Al final, nos relata el Evangelio: "Entonces lo dejó el diablo y se acercaron los ángeles a servirle" (Mateo 4:11). Seguir los pasos de Jesús es importante en este Tiempo de Cuaresma. ¿Cómo seguirlo?, quizá se pregunte. Confiando en su Palabra, rezando en familia, como nos lo pide el Papa León XIV, y teniendo un altar en casa, donde se pueda apreciar que Dios es el centro de nuestra vida. Estos pequeños detalles nos conducen a la Verdad y a la Vida, que es Dios mismo. Pidamos al Señor que su Palabra penetre en la tibieza de nuestro corazón en esta Cuaresma, para que dé fortaleza a nuestras debilidades y no nos deje caer en la tentación, como decimos en el Padrenuestro.

©LPi

Tiệc Mừng Tân Niên

Trong tâm tình đầu năm mới, chúng ta cùng nhau Tạ Ôn Chúa vì muôn ơn lành Người đã ban cho.

Kính mời quý ông bà, anh chị em đến tham dự:

Tiệc Mừng Tạ Ôn Hiến Xuân Bình Ngộ

Chúa Nhật - ngày 01/03/2026

Ngay sau Thánh Lễ 4:00 chiều tại Hội Trường

Chương trình văn nghệ và ẩm thực do các hội đoàn phụ trách.

Kính mong cộng đoàn cùng hiện diện để chung vui, hiệp thông và cầu chúc nhau một năm mới bình an, tràn đầy hồng ân Chúa.



Đại Hội Thánh Mẫu Orange 2026



GHI DANH THAM GIA HAI CA ĐOÀN TỔNG HỢP

Đại Hội Thánh Mẫu Orange kỳ V sẽ được tổ chức trong ba ngày 9, 10 và 11 tháng 7 năm 2026, với bốn Thánh Lễ:

1 Thánh Lễ lúc 8:00 sáng Thứ Bảy,

3 Thánh Lễ lúc 7:00 tối vào Thứ Năm, Thứ Sáu và Thứ Bảy.

Ban Tổ Chức trân trọng kính mời quý anh chị em ca viên của 18 cộng đoàn Việt Nam trong Giáo phận Orange ghi danh tham gia phục vụ trong hai Thánh Lễ 7:00 tối

Thứ Sáu, ngày 10/7/2026 và Thứ Bảy, ngày 11/7/2026

Xin vui lòng truy cập melavangoc.com để ghi danh và biết thêm chi tiết.

Hạn chót ghi danh: ngày 9 tháng 3 năm 2026

Ban Tổ Chức chân thành cảm ơn sự quảng đại và tinh thần phục vụ của quý ca viên.

40 NGÀY

MÙA CHAY - MÙA SÁM HỐI

Bác Ái - Giữ Chay - Cầu Nguyện

22/2/26

Chúa Nhật I
Mùa Chay

01/3/26

Chúa Nhật II
Mùa Chay

08/3/26

Chúa Nhật III
Mùa Chay

15/3/26

Chúa Nhật
Màu Hồng

22/3/26

Chúa Nhật V
Mùa Chay

LỄ LÁ

29/3/26

THỨ NĂM
TUẦN THÁNH

02/4/26

THỨ SÁU
TUẦN THÁNH

03/4/26

THỨ BẢY
TUẦN THÁNH

04/4/26

ĐI ĐÀNG THÁNH GIÁ

Cộng đoàn sẽ có giờ **Đi Đàng Thánh Giá** vào **mỗi Thứ Sáu** lúc **6:00** giờ chiều trước Thánh Lễ.
(Sẽ không có giờ Châu Minh Thánh Chúa và đọc kinh)

TÌM HIỂU KHĂN LIỆM CHÚA GIÊSU THÀNH TURIN

Trong tinh thần sốt sắng bước vào Mùa Chay, Cha Quản Nhiệm sẽ có buổi chia sẻ về **Khăn Liệm Chúa Giêsu thành Turin** vào **mỗi chiều Thứ Sáu** lúc **5:35** ngay trước giờ **Đi Đàng Thánh Giá**.

Buổi chia sẻ nhằm giúp cộng đoàn đào sâu hơn ý nghĩa thiêng liêng của Khăn Liệm Thánh, qua đó cùng chiêm ngắm và suy niệm về mầu nhiệm Thương Khó của Chúa Kitô, để sống hành trình Mùa Chay một cách sốt sắng và trọn vẹn hơn.

FAITH FORMATION OFFICE HOURS

English/Spanish Religious Education

(714) 892-3158

Monday/Thursday 2 PM—6 PM

Saturday 9 AM—1 PM

Confirmation Programs

(714) 890-5200

Tuesday/Wednesday 1 PM—5:30 PM

Friday 1 PM—5 PM

Sunday 8 AM—3 PM

Vietnamese Religious Education

(714) 620-7895

Monday/Wednesday/Friday 2 PM—5:30 PM

Saturday 10 AM—1 PM

SAINT POLYCARP WARMLY INVITES THE ENTIRE PARISH COMMUNITY TO JOURNEY TOGETHER IN PRAYER AND REFLECTION ON THE PASSION OF CHRIST THROUGH THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS. ALL ARE ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE AS WE WALK TOGETHER IN FAITH DURING THIS LENTEN SEASON.

SCHEDULE

EVERY FRIDAY BEGINNING FEBRUARY 20, 2026, THROUGH MARCH 27, 2026

9:00 AM - 9:30 AM | ENGLISH

6:00 PM - 6:30 PM | VIETNAMESE

7:30 PM - 8:00 PM | SPANISH



SAINT POLYCARP CATHOLIC CHURCH

LENTEN BLESSING

Bless us in Your mercy, Lord, as we enter these 40 Days of Lent. Use this time to call, anoint, bind, strengthen, and inspire us anew. Like a good shepherd, teach us Your voice, and give us the strength to follow.

Amen.



Pro Sanctity Movement



Lenten Prayer Group

Join us weekly on Thursday mornings for coffee and refreshments as we pray with the Sunday Gospel.

Where: St. Polycarp Room

When: Thursday Mornings

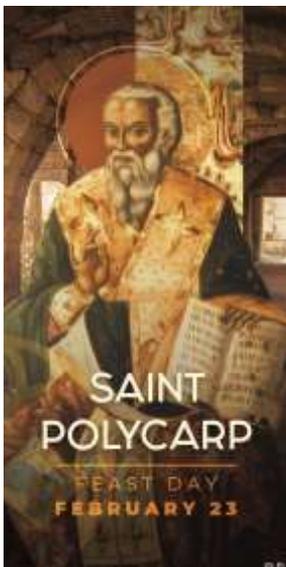
(Feb. 19, 26; March 5, 12, 19, 26)

after 8:30 AM Mass until 10:30 AM

No registration is needed.

Please contact Cathy McDonnell for any questions at 714-496-9597

Pro Sanctity is an International Catholic lay movement founded by the Servant of God, Guglielmo Giaguinta, in 1947. Its mission is to lead our brothers and sisters on the path of holiness and to elicit in everyone a total response of love to God's infinite love. Pro Sanctity offers people specific spiritual opportunities to help them respond to this universal call in three ways: personal holiness, communal holiness, and societal holiness. The Apostolic Oblates are consecrated women who support and spread the message of Pro Sanctity, assisting in bringing about a "world of saints; a world of brothers and sisters."



In additional celebration of the Feast day of St. Polycarp, we will have a relic available for veneration after all of the Masses on Monday, February 23rd.

- 6:30 AM
- 8:30 AM
- 6:30 PM

Additionally, there will be no confessions on Monday evening following Mass.

Funerals

2/21—Ramon Martinez Aceves

2/26—Johnathan Carrillo

Wedding Banns

LIFE WINS!
A Lenten Morning of Reflection

These days, we might be feeling anxious, unsettled or sad. During our Lenten Morning of Reflection, we will go with Jesus into the Garden of Gethsemane. With Simon of Cyrene, we will explore what carrying the cross really means. What looked like defeat as Jesus hung dead on the cross turned into victory through his resurrection. Life wins! Come and see how life continues to win even though at times it may not look like it. You will not want to miss this opportunity to be refreshed and renewed by God's grace!

SATURDAY,
MARCH 14, 2026

9:30 AM /
ST. POLYCARP ROOM

Fr. Christopher Smith has served as a priest of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Orange since 1978. He holds a Master's in Divinity from St. John's Seminary and a Master's in Religious Education from Fordham University. He has served in several capacities in the Diocese of Orange, including Parochial Vicar, Director of the Office for Religious Education, Vicar for Religious Education, Pastor of St. Joseph Church in Santa Ana, Episcopal Vicar for Priests, and Director of the Ministry to Christ Cathedral. He was the first Rector of Christ Cathedral and is now the Rector Emeritus. He hosts the radio program Cathedral Square broadcast every Saturday 11:00 a.m. until 12 noon on Relevant Radio AM1000, with podcasts of the shows available on the OC Catholic website.



Fr. Christopher Smith
Speaker

SAINT POLYCARP
CATHOLIC CHURCH
8820 Chapman Avenue | Orange, CA 92667 | 714.851.2700 | www.saintpolycarp.org

Sacred Heart Family
Retreat Camp

With the Sacred Heart Sisters

June 25-28, 2026 or
July 2-5, 2026

Registration Opens
February 26th!



or go to our website for more information:
<https://sacredheartretreatcamp.com/family-camp/>

(909)866-5696
896 Cienega Rd.
Big Bear Lake, CA 92315



St. Polycarp Annual Men's Retreat

Mater Dolorosa Passionist Retreat Center
Sierra Madre

March 20-22, 2026

Men from our parish are invited to make their annual retreat at Mater Dolorosa Retreat Center in Sierra Madre. The Center provides a private room and bath, delicious meals, beautifully landscaped grounds and the guidance of the Passionist Retreat Team. The atmosphere of this silent, preached retreat will help you to relax, reflect and rejuvenate spiritually.

This year's theme-
"Faith: Trusting in the God Who Waits for You"

Reservations can be made by contacting our parish retreat representative:
Ralph Gonzalez at 714-761-3089 or 714-815-1753.

A \$50 deposit is required.



SAINT POLYCARP
CATHOLIC CHURCH
www.saintpolycarp.org

UNPLUG. EXPLORE. BELONG.

SUMMER FUN
JUNE 14 TO JULY 9 - 2026
FOR BOYS ENTERING 3RD TO 8TH GRADE
DAY & BOARDING OPTIONS AVAILABLE

EARLY BIRD PRICING EXPIRES SOON!
ENROLLMENT NOW OPEN!

ST. CATHERINE'S ACADEMY — WHERE BOYS BECOME LEADERS OF FAITH AND CHARACTER.

FALL ENROLLMENT IS NOW OPEN!
Now Enrolling Grades TK to 8
Anaheim, CA

ST. CATHERINE'S ACADEMY
Give your son the best!

- Rigorous Academics
- Small Class Sizes
- Competitive Sports
- Leadership Development
- Faith Formation
- Camp-Innovative Music Department
- Extracurricular Activities
- Day and Boarding Options Available

SCAN HERE

Bishop Kevin Vann has requested that the parishes of the Diocese of Orange begin sharing in their weekly bulletin the catechesis series that Pope Leo XIV started on the Second Vatican Council. On weeks we have available space, we will do this. We are commencing from the first catechesis from the Pope on this topic, which is from an address on January 7, 2026.—*Editor*

Brothers and sisters, good morning and welcome!

After the [Jubilee Year](#), during which we focused on the mysteries of the life of Jesus, we will begin a new cycle of catechesis which will be dedicated to [Vatican Council II](#) and a rereading of its Documents. It is a valuable opportunity to rediscover the beauty and the importance of this ecclesial event. [Saint John Paul II](#), at the end of the [Jubilee 2000](#), stated: “I feel more than ever in duty bound to point to the Council as *the great grace bestowed on the Church in the twentieth century*” (Apostolic Letter [Novo millennio ineunte](#), 57).

Together with the anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, in 2025 we remembered the sixtieth anniversary of [Vatican Council II](#). Although the time that separates us from this event is not so long, it is equally true that the generation of bishops, theologians and believers of [Vatican II](#) is no longer with us. Therefore, while we hear the call not to let its prophecy fade, and to continue to seek ways and means to implement its insights, it will be important to get to know it again closely, and to do so not through “hearsay” or interpretations that have been given, but by rereading its documents and reflecting on their content. Indeed, it is the Magisterium that still constitutes the guiding star of the Church’s journey today. As [Benedict XVI](#) taught, “as the years have passed, the Conciliar Documents have lost none of their timeliness; indeed, their teachings are proving particularly relevant to the new situation of the Church and the current globalized society” ([First Message at the end of the Eucharistic Concelebration with the Members of the College of Cardinals](#), 20 April 2005).

When [Pope Saint John XXIII](#) opened the Council on 11 October 1962, he spoke of it as the dawn of a day of light for the whole Church. The work of the numerous Fathers convened from the Churches of all continents did indeed pave the way for a new ecclesial season. After a rich biblical, theological and liturgical reflection spanning the twentieth century, [Vatican Council II](#) rediscovered the face of God as the Father who, in Christ, calls us to be his children; it looked at the Church in the light of Christ, light of nations, as a mystery of communion and sacrament of unity between God and his people; it initiated important liturgical reform, placing at its centre the mystery of salvation and the active and conscious participation of the entire People of God. At the same time, it helped us to open up to the world and to embrace the changes and challenges of the modern age in dialogue and co-responsibility, as a Church that wishes to open her arms to humanity, to echo the hopes and anxieties of peoples, and to collaborate in building a more just and fraternal society.

Thanks to [Vatican Council II](#), the Church “has something to say, a message to give, a communication to make” (Saint Paul VI, Encyclical Letter [Ecclesiam suam](#), 65), striving to seek the truth by way of ecumenism, interreligious dialogue and dialogue with people of good will.

This spirit, this inner disposition, must characterize our spiritual life and the pastoral action of the Church, because we have yet to achieve ecclesial reform more fully in a ministerial sense and, in the face of today’s challenges, we are called to continue to be vigilant interpreters of the signs of the times, joyful proclaimers of the Gospel, courageous witnesses of justice and peace. At the beginning of the Council, Monsignor Albino Luciani, the future [Pope John Paul I](#), as Bishop of Vittorio Veneto, wrote prophetically, “As always, there is a need to achieve not so much organizations or methods or structures, but a deeper and more widespread holiness. ... It may be that the excellent and abundant fruits of a Council will be seen after centuries and will mature by laboriously overcoming conflicts and adverse situations”. [\[1\]](#) Rediscovering the Council, then, as [Pope Francis](#) remarked, helps us to “restore primacy to God, to what is essential: to a Church madly in love with its Lord and with all the men and women whom he loves” ([Homily on the sixtieth anniversary of the beginning of Vatican Council II](#), 11 October 2022).

Brothers and sisters, [Saint Paul VI](#)’s words to the Council Fathers at the end of its work remain a guiding principle for us today. He affirmed that the time had come to leave the Council assembly and go out towards humanity to bring it the good news of the Gospel, in the awareness that they had experienced a time of grace in which the past, present and future were condensed: “The past: for here, gathered in this spot, we have the Church of Christ with her tradition, her history, her councils, her doctors, her saints; the present, for we are taking leave of one another to go out towards the world of today with its miseries, its sufferings, its sins, but also with its prodigious accomplishments, its values, its virtues; and lastly the future is here in the urgent appeal of the peoples of the world for more justice, in their will for peace, in their conscious or unconscious thirst for a higher life, that life precisely which the Church of Christ can and wishes to give them” (Saint Paul VI, [Message to the Council Fathers](#), 8 December 1965).

This is also true for us. As we approach the documents of [Vatican Council II](#) and rediscover their prophetic and contemporary relevance, we welcome the rich tradition of the life of the Church and, at the same time, we question ourselves about the present and renew our joy in running towards the world to bring it the Gospel of the kingdom of God, a kingdom of love, justice and peace.

[\[1\]](#) A. Luciani – John Paul I, *Note sul Concilio*, in *Opera omnia*, vol. II, *Vittorio Veneto 1959-1962. Discorsi, scritti, articoli*, Padua 1988, 451-453.

Weekly Prayer

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

The LORD God formed man out of the clay of the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life. (Gn 2:7)

Psalm:

Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned. (Ps 51)

Second Reading:

For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so, through the obedience of the one, the many will be made righteous. (Rom 5:19)

Gospel:

At that time Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights. (Mt 4:1-2)

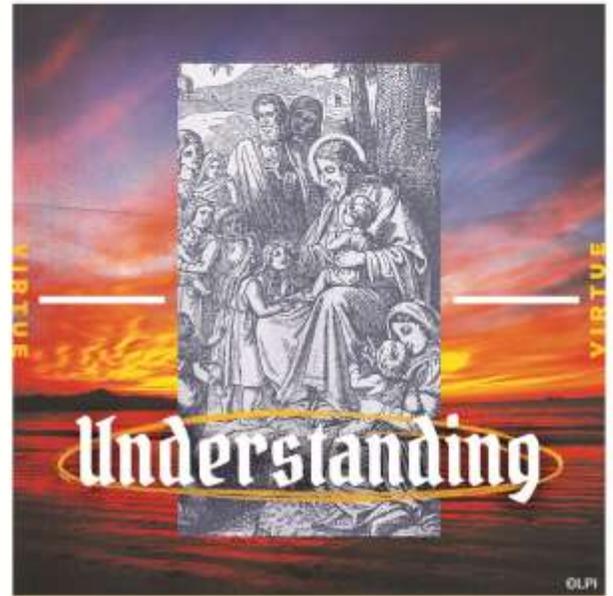
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Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

Our Lord is so humble that he allows us to see him experience temptation. The vulnerability of this moment is awesome to behold. Let us learn from Jesus' interaction with the devil, and be transformed by it. Let us say, with him: "Get away, Satan."

Observances for the week of February 22, 2026

- Sunday:** 1st Sunday of Lent
Monday: St. Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr
Friday: St. Gregory of Narek, Abbot and Doctor of the Church
Next Sunday: 2nd Sunday of Lent



Virtues, Explained!

Understanding is the "food" of faith. "I believe, in order to understand," said St. Augustine. We must constantly ask the Holy Spirit for greater and more profound understanding, for though understanding proceeds from faith, it in turn nourishes that faith.

Lenten Blessing

Bless us in Your mercy, Lord, as we enter these 40 Days of Lent. Use this time to call, anoint, bind, strengthen, and inspire us anew. Like a good shepherd, teach us Your voice, and give us the strength to follow. Amen.

(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

Mini Reflection: There are many reasons why the Word became flesh. But I think one of the most important reasons must have been that God wanted to show us that He knows, intimately, how easily the devil exploits our physical experience of this world.

Into the Desert

When we first got married, I wanted to know everything my husband was thinking, exactly when he was thinking it.

Thirteen years later, I still want to know it all. But I want to know it after he's had a snack.

I think he still wants to know what I'm thinking, too. But he wants to know it after I've had 10 minutes without hearing the word, "Mommy!"

Life has taught us, you see, that it's hard to be a good person, a nice person, a gentle person, when your body doesn't feel good or nice or gentle. When you're hungry. When you're exhausted. When you're anxious.

It's not impossible, of course. It's just ... *hard*.

We're entering a penitential season, a time in which we purposefully deprive ourselves in certain ways. During Lent, we intentionally enter into the desert of physical hunger and weakness. Why, in preparation for Easter and in an effort to spiritually purify ourselves, do we go to this place where it's so *hard to be good*? Why do we go to the desert?

Because Christ has shown us that the desert is where decisions are made.

There are many reasons why the Word became flesh to accomplish God's plan for our salvation. But I think one of the most important reasons must have been that God wanted to show us that He knows, intimately, how easily the devil exploits our physical experience of this world. We see it in today's Gospel: Jesus, hungry and weary. Jesus, taunted and tempted.

We see him. We recognize him. We are him.

And we hear his voice, even though it trembles with fatigue: "Get away, Satan!"

Today, we enter the desert. Because the desert is where decisions are made.

— Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Why do we do that? Catholic Life Explained

Question:

What does Jesus mean when he talks about taking up our cross?

Answer:

Our journey of faith begins in baptism. When we are faithful to it, we find God's plan for us, his way of allowing us to participate in his saving work, which in turn becomes for us our own salvation. Stated simply, we share in the mission of Jesus each day. We live our life with all of its ups, downs, joys, and sorrows in union with the mission of Jesus. Our work then is holy. It is joined to the cross, God's will for Jesus — the way in which he destroys sin and death and makes eternal life possible. His sacrifice accomplishes what we ourselves cannot do.

To take up the cross, then, means that we share in the mission of Jesus and so embrace the sufferings of the cross. It is our daily life made holy, given a redemptive mission. It is our purpose and goal to unite our life to that of Christ. St. Paul says it best, "If we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection" (Rom 6:5).



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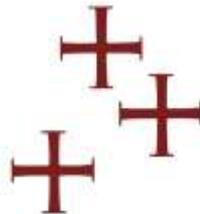
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