Saint Alphonsus

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

MARCH 19, 2023: FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT



He spat on the ground
and made clay with the saliva,
and smeared the clay on his eyes, and said to him,
"Go wash in the Pool of Siloam" — which means Sent — .
So he went and washed, and came back able to see. (Jn 9:6-7)

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Mass Schedule

Mon, Tue, Thur, Fri	8:30 AM
Wed	6:00 PM
Sunday	9 AM, 11 AM, 12:30 (Spanish) and 5 PM

Alphonsus Academy & Center For the Arts

Friday	8:30 AM or as announced

Eucharistic Adoration

Wednesday	6:30—7:30 PM

Confessions

Wednesday	6:30—7:30 PM
Saturday	11:00—11:30 AM

**Or call one of the priests for an appointment*

Worship

This Week's Readings

Sunday: 1 Sm 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a/Ps 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6 (1)/Eph 5:8-14/ Jn 9:1-41 or 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38
Monday: 2 Sm 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16/Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29/Rom 4:13, 16-18, 22/ Mt 1:16, 18-21, 24a or Lk 2:41-51a
Tuesday: Ez 47:1-9, 12/Ps 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9/Jn 5:1-16
Wednesday: Is 49:8-15/Ps 145:8-9, 13cd-14, 17-18/Jn 5:17-30
Thursday: Ex 32:7-14/Ps 106:19-20, 21-22, 23/Jn 5:31-47
Friday: Wis 2:1a, 12-22/Ps 34:17-18, 19-20, 21 and 23/Jn 7:1-2, 10, 25-30
Saturday: Is 7:10-14; 8:10/Ps 40:7-8a,8b-9, 10, 11/Heb 10:4-10/Lk 1:26-38
Next Sunday: Ez 37:12-14/Ps 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8 (7)/Rom 8:8-11/Jn 11:1-45



Please Pray for the Sick

Dorothy Bonds
Jamie Wallett
Sandra Wilson
Monica Alexis Rios
Margaret Nichols
Maria Eisler
Tessa Sergent
Diane Mareci
Fidel Mercado Chavez
Emilia Hurtado
Bernard Zapp
David Birks
Celeste Soult
Carol Reckwerdt
Magdalena Gonzalez
Michael Aldape
Jane Christensen
William Ahearn
Janet Horvat
Frank G. Bauer
Al Corleone
Mary Perisin
Judy Fredrickson
Tracy Duda
Jacob Duda
Dorothy O'Brien
Ryan Meadow

At Rest in the Peace of Christ

Maria Swachta

Giving Update

Weekly Budget Amount: $15,218

Offertory for 3/12: $16,697

Please remember to help the poor. Donations to the poor box in the narthex go to our St. Vincent DePaul Society.

WEDDING BANNS

Grace Jones

and

Michael Lynch

Welcome Our Recently Baptized

Beatriz Catherine Byrne
Macsen Paulo Macht
Lucas Samuel Cipolla

Eucharistic Adoration: A Source for Peace: Sometimes our weeks can be quite hectic, making it hard to find quiet time to pray. If this sounds familiar, join us for Mass on Wednesdays at 6 PM., followed by Eucharistic Adoration from 6:30-7:30. This can be a great way to re-center yourself in God and experience the peace that only Christ can give.

Wednesday Evening Men's Vespers
Men of the parish are invited to attend our Communio prayer group each Wednesday at 8:15-9 PM in the rectory chapel (come to the rectory side door) It's a great way to take your spiritual life a step further as we enrich our knowledge of the faith, encourage each other in life's challenges, and grow in fortitude together. We chant the Liturgy of the Hours, share reflections on the upcoming Sunday gospel reading, followed by a social with refreshments, fellowship, and conversation. All men of the parish are invited. Questions or more info, contact James Morrow, jemseoul@hotmail.com

MASS INTENTIONS

Sunday, March 19
9:00 AM +Veronika Stankeviciene
11:00 AM Sandra Felipe and Family
12:30 PM For the People of St. Alphonsus
5:00 PM +Charles and Shirley Feeney

Monday, March 20
8:30 AM For the People of St. Alphonsus

Tuesday, March 21
8:30 AM For the People of St. Alphonsus

Wednesday, March 22
6:00 PM +Bartolome Sr., Bartolome Pagalunan Jr., Dante, Rosita

Thursday, March 23
8:30 AM +Dr. Anthony Caruso

Friday, March 24
8:30 AM Jennifer Orillaza (Health and Blessings)

Sunday, March 26
9:00 AM +Christian Kebr
11:00 AM +Elizabeth Litzinger
12:30 PM +Delfina y Dolores Gutierrez, +Florentina Ornelas
5:00 PM For the People of St. Alphonsus

News and Events

Friends Through Faith—Volunteers Needed!

The newly formed Friends Through Faith Adult Social Group hopes to foster essential faith-filled connections and build our St. Alphonsus community through fellowship and fun.

In order to maintain this group, we need volunteers. We will have a zoom committee meeting to discuss specifics. If you are interested, please email Amy Keefner, amykeefner@gmail.com.

We gather for breakfast, cocktails, coffee, and tea the last Sunday of every month following the 11 AM Mass. Connecting with other parishioners can lead to lasting friendships, fruitful ministries, or even just a friendly wave and smile the next time you attend Mass. We hope to create small service groups, outings and friendships out of this community. To register for the March 26th gathering, please email Amy.

The Stations Art Exhibition at ACTC

Now Through April 16



Athenaeum Center for Thought & Culture is pleased to present Lucas Reiner's *The Stations*. Following a traditional medieval devotional narrative that recounts Christ's ultimate passage through death to redemption, The Stations paintings transcend religious affiliation to embrace an expanded vision of empathy in peaceful accord with nature, engaging the profound capacity of art to embody a universal human longing to comprehend suffering, loss, and the passage of time.

All are encouraged to join us on **Thursday March 23 at 6 PM**. Our pastor Father Bauer will be giving a prayer reflection on *The Stations*.

Fr. Paul Anel, a visiting priest and an artist himself from Con-Solatio (formerly Heart's Home) in Brooklyn, NY who has written and spoken widely on different artistic topics, including Lucas' Stations, will be giving a talk on Monday March 27 at 7 PM. More details to come!

Learn more and get tickets, (suggested free-will donation) at athenaeumcenter.org/events/2023/the-stations/

Cleaning Angels Ministry

In anticipation of our Holy Week liturgies, our St. Alphonsus Cleaning Angels ministry will be volunteering to help clean and beautify our Church! This service project will take place this morning **Saturday, April 1** from 9 AM to 10:30 AM. Come and help out your church! This will involve basic cleaning such as wiping the pews, vacuuming and more. We all know St. Alphonsus is a spacious church and caring hearts and hands are needed. There will be no online sign-up; simply come to the church to help!

Donate Blood at St. Alphonsus!

Our parish will be hosting an American Red Cross blood drive on **Sunday March 26** in the Festival Hall. You can register for an appointment by going online to www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/find-drive and scrolling through the dates until you see St. Alphonsus on the 26th.

Polling Place

Pope Francis offered during a 2013 homily: *"Good Catholics meddle in politics, offering the best of themselves, so that those who govern can govern..."* On Tuesday April 4 from 6 AM to 7 PM, our parish Festival Hall will be utilized as a polling place as Chicagoans will vote for our next mayor.

Holy Week & Easter Schedule



Palm Sunday, April 2
Mass times: Sunday 9:00, 11:00 AM, 12:30 PM (Spanish) and 5:00 PM

Holy Thursday, April 6
8:30 AM Liturgy of the Hours
7:00 PM Mass of the Lord's Supper

Good Friday, April 7
8:30 AM Liturgy of the Hours
3:00 PM Stations of the Cross
7:00 PM Good Friday Liturgy

Holy Saturday, April 8
12:00 PM Blessing of Easter Baskets
8:00 PM Easter Vigil

EASTER SUNDAY, April 9
7:30 AM
9:00 AM
11:00 AM
12:30 PM
No 5 PM Mass

Divine Mercy Sunday, April 16
3:00 PM Holy Hour & Confessions



All parishioners are asked to fill out the **Disciple Maker Index (DMI) Survey,** a great way to reflect on your own spiritual growth while helping our parish plan for the future. Complete the short 10 min anonymous survey at portal.catholicleaders.org/dmi/survey/gg6g64 or use the QR code here. Available now to March 31.

Faith Formation

Walking With Purpose Women's Group

Tuesday mornings/evenings



Come as you are. You are welcome here. Make authentic connections with other women! Refuel and Refresh! Learn more about God!

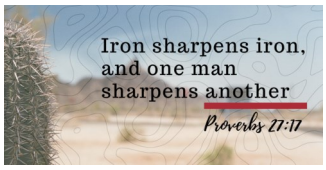
We live in a self-centered culture that all too often leaves us feeling empty and dissatisfied. A fuller view of God and His glory is the perfect antidote— find this during our journey through the Beholding Your King Bible study.

We'll study King David, select psalms, the temple, and many Old Testament prophets and see the ways in which they all point to the coming King of Kings, Jesus Christ. This Nine-Lesson Bible study is the second part of a two-part series and is ideally completed after Beholding His Glory.

Our new Beholding Your King bible study group meets ***Tuesdays from 9:30—11 AM and 6:30—8 PM***. Questions? Contact Susan Combes at suecombes@hotmail.com

St. Alphonsus Men's Group

Thursday Evenings



St. Alphonsus Men's group meets Thursday nights to pray the liturgy of the hours, have fellowship, and to propose challenging topics to discuss.

When great conversations happen, synergy that creates connections and helps values be shared develops. *Proverbs 27:17* describes this as two iron tools being sharpened and made more effective. The same applies with friends coming into contact, sharpening and encouraging each other to greater service.

We meet every Thursday night at 7 PM in the rectory. Food and drinks provided. All men are welcome, with most men being in their 20s and 30s. Access can be gained at the west facing rectory door in the parking lot. For questions or more information, contact Matt Duff at mduff527@gmail.com.

Stewardship—First Fruits

FIRST FRUITS
time talent treasure

We want to invite all parishioners who want to participate in online giving to do so by enrolling through GiveCentral and setting up your donation via the First Fruits campaign (weekly Mass offering).

A huge thank you to those that are already giving online. Please consider making St. Alphonsus an extension of your home and family when contributing.

Sign up at *www.givecentral.org/location/39*

Lent 2023

Lenten Fish Fry— Friday March 31 at 6 PM!

Truly a highlight and staple of Lent, St. Alphonsus will be hosting one grand Lenten Fish Fry this year. This event is sponsored by our Knights of Columbus council to benefit charitable projects of the parish.

Date: Friday, March 31st
Where: Festival Hall, beneath the church
Time: 6-9 PM
Cost: $15 for adults. $7 for kids 5-12. Free for 4 and under.
Adults can purchase tickets online at www.givecentral.org/location/39/event/36528

Menu: Fried Beer Battered Cod, Coleslaw, Peas, Carrots, Chips, Hawaiian Bread, mini-cupcakes
BYOB Alcohol only. Non-alcoholic drinks and desserts will be for sale
Entertainment: Cornhole/Bags for Adults, Two performances by Trinity Irish Dancer Troupe
Multiple kids games and prizes
Parking/Directions: Limited free parking in the church lots off of Oakdale and Southport

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!! Sign-up to volunteer at bit.ly/stalsffvolunteer

Contact Carlos Medina, cmedina15158@gmail.com for more information.

Coming to Confession During Lent



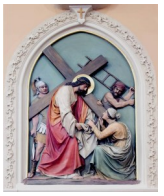
Lent is a traditional time to 'take stock' and discover the ways in which we can turn more fully toward the Lord and away from the sin that weighs us down. It is a great season in which to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.

The sacrament is Reconciliation is regularly offered twice each week: Wednesday from 6:30 to 7:30 PM; Saturday from 11:00 to 11:30 AM. You may also contact the rectory office and schedule an appointment with a priest.

Divine Mercy Chaplet

The Divine Mercy Chaplet will be prayed at 6:40 PM on Fridays before Stations. If you need a refresher on how to pray the chaplet, you can go to www.catholic-link.org/how-to-pray-the-divine-mercy-chaplet-your-step-by-step-visual-guide/

Stations of the Cross



Each Friday during Lent, the Stations of the Cross are prayed at 7 PM. This prayer allows us to meditate on Christ's Passion and death while walking the "Way of the Cross." It is a wonderful way to grow in one's knowledge of being a disciple of the Lord.

St. Alphonsus Baptism

Choosing A Baptism Date - Most baptisms at St. Alphonsus are celebrated at 2:00 PM on Sundays. To request a date, please complete the Baptism Request form on our website (one form per child).

If your child is age 7 or older, please contact Erica Cook (ecook@stalphonsuschicago.church) for religious education classes.

Preparing For Baptism - First time parents are required to take our baptismal prep class. We hold this class once a month via Zoom, please rsvp in advance. Godparents are welcome to attend class at St. Alphonsus or at their local parish.

If you have already had a child baptized at St. Alphonsus, you need not attend the preparation session again, unless you would like to.

Godparent requirements: It is required to have at least one Catholic godparent who is confirmed and over the age of 16. Godparents are typically one male and one female. The maximum number of Godparents is two.

Contact **Kaitlin Holyk** for questions and inquiries. ***weddings@stalphonsuschicago.church***

Lent— Random Acts of Kindness



Lent is a good time to re-familiarize and recommit ourselves to knowing, living and sharing the fruits of the Holy Spirit. And one of those fruits is kindness *(Gal 5:22)*. Throughout our Lenten journey, exercise those muscles of virtue and demonstrate kindness in action.

- Come to the rescue of someone in need.
- Smile and laugh easily. Bring a positive, good attitude to all you do.
- Be generous and share whenever possible.
- Give up your seat on the bus or train to another
- Be on time, never disrespect another by being late.
- Send an *I love you* note to a loved one, or an *I appreciate you* note to a co-worker.
- Compliment your mate and co-workers generously.

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

Illinois March for Life & Life Advocacy Day

The 2023 Illinois March for Life will be held in Springfield on March 21, and includes additional events.

Mass for Life
Tuesday, March 21, 2023 at 10 a.m.
Sangamon Auditorium, UI-Springfield Campus
Celebrated by Bishop Thomas J. Paprocki
Sponsored by the Diocese of Springfield

March for Life
March 21, 2023 at 12 p.m.
Springfield, IL
Meet at the Lincoln Statue at the Capitol
Sponsored by all Illinois dioceses

Adoration
March 21, 2023 from 12:30 – 5:15 p.m.
Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception
524 E. Lawrence Ave., Springfield, IL 62703
Pray for an end to abortion

Life Advocacy Day
Wednesday, March 22, 2023
Includes training, lobbying and lunch
Sponsored by all Illinois dioceses

There are rooms available at the Courtyard Marriott Springfield from Monday through Wednesday night at a special group rate of $125 per night. Register for the March and contact Dawn Fitzpatrick at **dfitzpatrick@archchicago.org** to get the code.

More information and links to sign up are available at **respectlifechicago.org**.



Helpful Household Hints by Harvey Levin

Here are the recipes to dye your Easter eggs without the commercial dyes.
Easter Egg Dyeing

Add one tablespoon white vinegar to every cup of strained dye liquid.
Per cup of water use the following:
1 cup chopped purple cabbage = blue on white eggs, green on brown eggs

1 cup red onion skins = lavender on red eggs

1 cup yellow onion skins = orange on white eggs, rusty red on brown eggs

1 cup shredded beets = pink on white eggs, maroon on brown eggs

2 tablespoons ground turmeric = yellow eggs

1 bag Red Zinger tea = lavender eggs

For every dozen eggs plan on using at least four cups of dye liquid.

Young Adult Ministry

Young Adult Speed Dating!



Young adult (21-39 yrs old) speed dating will take place on **Saturday, April 29** with registration check-ins beginning at 6:00 PM.

Cost per individual ticket is $50. You must pre-register for the event. Final day to register is Wednesday, April 26. At the door sign ups are not allowed, to ensure everyone is able to meet their matches for each round.

Women's Sign-up: www.givecentral.org/location/39/event/36787
Men's Sign-Up: www.givecentral.org/location/39/event/36788
Participants will be asked to please create a profile. More info on the GiveCentral registration page.

Join us for a tremendously fun evening of quality conversations with great dates, food and drinks included! Don't wait to register! Seats go super fast. All ticket sales are final, limited number of tickets available so buy yours now before they sell out.

Follow-up questions can be sent to stalsyamsocial@gmail.com

Wonder Series Discussion Group

Tuesday March 28, 7:30— 8:30 PM



Word on Fire has produced an excellent five-part video series called Wonder which explores the beautiful complementarity of faith and science and inspires awe at the mysterious beauty of God's creation. Please join YAM for a discussion series every other Tuesday from 7:30-8:30 PM in the St. Alphonsus Rectory conference room (enter through the rectory front door and signs/people will guide you). We will watch the video (10-15 minutes each) as a group then open it up for discussion. Contact Intellectual chair Jacob, kelleyjacobm98@gmail.com for info/questions.

3v3 Basketball Tournament

Saturday April 1 at 10 AM **Teams Are Almost Full; Last Weekend to Sign Up!**

3-on-3 Basketball is back!! Come join St. Alphonsus' Young Adult Ministry (YAM) for its annual 3-on-3 basketball tournament. Grab some friends and join us for one of our most exciting events of the year!



The tournament will be a round-robin group play followed by a single elimination tournament for the top 6 teams. Each team is guaranteed 3 games in the group play. There is not a separate tournament for men and women so teams can be co-ed. There will be a limit of 16 teams, so sign up before all of the spots are full. Teams are limited to 5 players. If you do not have a team and want to sign up individually without a team, we will place you with other individual sign ups to create a team. Please specify "Individual" in the team category at the registration link. Sign up here: www.givecentral.org/location/39/event/33435

As part of the event, we will provide snacks and drinks. All are welcome to come and watch the event for free if not part of a team. For those watching the event who are not part of a team but would still like to partake in the food and drink we ask that you make a $5 donation. After the event we will be heading to a bar (TBD) to socialize and watch the Final Four for March Madness

Time: Starts at 10:00 AM, Cost: $15 per person; each player must sign-up individually.



More Young Adult Events

Saturday March 25, all are invited to volunteer with YCP Chicago at St. Aloysius! St. Aloysius, 2300 W. Le Moyne, is a vibrant and diverse church community that serves Bucktown, Wicker Park, and Humboldt Park. Register at bit.ly/ycpchi_gbmarch

Please arrive at 9:30 and be ready to work! When the work is done or by 12:30, we can find a nearby lunch spot. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Nicole, the Volunteer Coordinator, at nicole.brennan@ycpchicago.org

Gospel Reflection

A Journey of Preparation

You were once in darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light, for light produces every kind of goodness and righteousness and truth. Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.
—Ephesians 5:8-10

For those involved in parish faith formation, the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent are, in many ways, among the most important celebrations of the entire year. These are the Sundays of the Scrutinies, ancient and meaningful rituals that are an essential part of the OCIA (the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults, also known as the RCIA).

As the Elect look forward to being received into the Church at the Easter Vigil through Baptism, Confirmation, and receiving the Eucharist, these Sundays provide the rest of us with a perspective on what the Season of Lent is really all about: preparing to renew our baptismal vows at Easter. Unfortunately, many of us don't always understand that preparation for baptism and the renewal of our baptismal commitments as being the ultimate goal of our Lenten penance and good works.

The liturgies for these Sundays, however, are all oriented to helping us reflect on the gift and grace of baptism. The prayers, the readings at Mass (especially the Gospels), and the rites of the Scrutinies all teach (or, at least, remind us) that conversion is an ongoing process. These days aren't only about the Elect and the Candidates for Full Communion, these are the celebrations of the entire Church.

On the Fourth Sunday of Lent — Laetare Sunday — with its rose-colored vestments and joyful tones, we hear the story of the "man born blind" from the Gospel of John (9:1-41). In this story about being enlightened, Jesus gives the gift of sight to a man who was blind from birth, empowering and enabling him to see, for the first time, his parents, the people of his community, the wonders of creation, and, most especially, the face of the Savior who was standing right before him.

In John's account of this event, the evangelist sets up an interesting parallel in this story. On the one hand, we have the blind man who, without any action on his part, is healed by Jesus. On the other, we have the crowd, including the righteous, believing observers who, it turns out, can't see the wonder and the truth of the one who stands before them. The physical blindness of the man-born-blind is not the real disability in this story. Instead, it is the emotional, intellectual, and spiritual blindness of those who condemn Jesus and refuse to open their minds and hearts to the truth of his message.



As we reflect on this story, we are invited to consider Jesus' words at the end of the passage. Responding to the Pharisees who ask, "Surely we are not also blind, are we?" Jesus replies, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you are saying, 'We see,' so your sin remains."

When we believe we have all the answers or know all that we need to know, we can, like the Pharisees, lose the ability to see how God is at work in our lives and in the world around us. The blind man, however, didn't have these pretensions — he was open to what Jesus was asking of him. After reading that he allowed Jesus to put mud on his eyes and washed in the pool of Siloam (a reference to baptism), we realize that it wasn't just his eyes that have been opened, his heart has been opened as well. This is why he is able to declare, "I do believe, Lord." As Saint Augustine of Hippo reflected, "See how [the blind man] becomes the herald of grace. See how he preaches the gospel. See how, once he is endowed with sight, he becomes a witness. That blind man testified, and the ungodly were troubled in their hearts because they did not have in their own hearts what they saw in him" (from Tractates on the Gospel of John).

The rose colors of this Sunday remind us that we are now more than halfway through the Season of Lent. As we continue our Lenten journey, we would do well to pause reflect on how our Lenten penances and good works are helping us have a right perspective and to prepare to renew our baptismal promises at Easter.

— Bro. Silas Henderson, SDS

PRAYER
By your grace,
O Lord,
make us stick to our resolutions,
act with courage,
remain constant in devotion,
extend forgiveness without measure,
love without ceasing,
and live ever in your friendship.
Enable us, with your help,
to put on Christ,
and to manifest him to others
and bear witness to him in the world. Amen.



THE MASS

Communion of People

Many large-scale events are designed to elicit an experience of communion. When we go to an NFL or college football game, we experience, for a couple of hours at least, what it means to belong to a collective body. While we might listen to the same music at concerts that we could enjoy in our homes, concerts allow us to enjoy it with a much large community. Even political rallies or protests allow us to experience what it means to be a resident of the United States. There is singing and dancing, the kind of revelry that brings about the communion of many people.

In each of these events, the communion that is brought about is the work of men and women, not God. Football games bring together the supporters of one team against the other. Concerts provide a moment of escape, before we find ourselves back in the workaday world, where tens of thousands of our neighbors won't dance with us. Political borders change, and this nation or that nation will likely disappear.

We may long for a communion larger than ourselves, but each of these moments of communion will pass away. They're limited experiences of closeness.

THE DISPOSITION OF COMMUNION

Communion, for this reason, cannot be reducible to a human creation. It must be received always as a gift bestowed by God.

In the final book of the Scriptures, we hear about the communion that human beings are destined to experience. The Book of Revelation, often misread as predicting the future, instead gives us a vision of a communion that transcends human self-interest. Revelation is a violent book, in which frequent wars break out among members of the city of men.

And yet in the Book of Revelation violence does not have the last word. Throughout, we get a glimpse of the communion that is possible because of the sacrifice of Christ. The Communion of Saints gathers around the Lamb once slain, offering the sacrifice of praise that gives all nations hope. Eventually, it is this sacrifice of praise that will descend from heaven to earth.

Salvation in Revelation is not described as an individual phenomenon, in which each person experiences salvation for him or herself alone. Rather, salvation is experienced in the context of a city, of a common dwelling of men and women among one another, assembled not through a political program but through the blood of the Lamb once slain.

That the Mass is important for experiencing this deeper communion of God and humanity should not be surprising. In the Gospel of John, right after the Last Supper, Jesus gives his disciples a new commandment: They are to love one another, just as the Son loves the Father. This love will come as a gift of the Spirit that binds the disciples to one another. The love that Jesus will manifest on the cross, offering it to every man and woman, will also be the glue that binds disciples together in the Church.

Before entering Mass, we must reflect on our capacity for communion.



PHOTO BY KAREN CALLAWAY

THE MASS BULLETIN SERIES

- Week 1 - Origin of the Mass
- Week 2 - Disposed for Confession
- Week 3 - Liturgy of the Word
- Week 4 - Liturgy of the Eucharist
- ➤ Week 5 - Communion of People

"If you are the body and members of Christ, then it is your sacrament that is placed on the table of the Lord; it is your sacrament that you receive. To that which you are you respond 'Amen' ('yes, it is true!') and by responding to it you assent to it. For you hear the words, 'the Body of Christ' and respond 'Amen.' Be then a member of the Body of Christ that your **Amen** *may be true."*
— Saint Augustine

Do I enter the celebration of the Mass with a longing for God, desiring not just the fulfillment of an obligation but a deeper communion? Do I love my neighbor, whoever that is, with fervor of heart?

THE COMMUNION RITE

After the Eucharistic prayer, the Church begins the celebration of the Communion rite. Based solely on context, we might see this moment as an occasion to prepare the individual alone to receive Christ's Body and Blood. But this is not sufficient. Rather, it is through this personal reception of Christ's Body and Blood that the Church comes together, remembering once more that she is made to offer this communion of love to the whole human family.

The Church begins the Communion rite by praying the Our Father. The words given to us by Jesus demand that we address God not in the first person singular but plural. God is the Father of the entire human family, who gives each of us our daily bread, and who asks that we dwell together in a communion of love. We are to forgive one another each day, just as God forgives us. To receive divine forgiveness means to offer it to the entire human family.

The sign of peace takes up this call to communion. The sign of peace is not just a moment to kiss our spouse and children. Instead, the sign of peace is the call to become the communion, the total gift of love, that we are to receive. If we want to receive Christ's love, we must create a space in our hearts for love of the entire human family.

At this point in the Mass, we begin to prepare to receive the Body and Blood of Christ. To sing a hymn to the Lamb of God is an act of faith. What we see on the altar looks like bread and wine. But here is the Lamb of God, who shed his blood for the human family. We are called to a supper, a feast, not ordered toward drunkenness or violence. It is the feast of those who are assembled through the peaceable love of the Lamb once slain.

Of course, none of us are worthy of this love, of this communion that draws us into union with God and with one another. For this reason, we ask that just as Jesus descended into the home of the man incapable of walking, Jesus might enter into our home.

Now, we each receive Christ's Body and Blood. The Church requires that we receive this Body and Blood without sin, not because Jesus can't handle sin. Rather, we are receiving the totality of love, the kind of love that is meant to find a space in the human heart. If we receive this love without awareness of what we're doing, cut off from communion with the Church, then we can't benefit from this gift.

This point of Mass necessitates and requires a bit of silence. This is not the silence of an individual, sitting all by him or herself. Rather, it is a common silence, the silence of those who reflect together on the gift of love they have received.

We then conclude this moment of silence with a prayer, a blessing, and then are sent off to adore the living God in the world. Having received this gift of communion, we are meant to become this communion to our brothers and sisters in need. For many of us, this need will start right away. It will be our children who demand lunch right after Mass. It will be our spouse inflicted by dementia who needs us to sit in their presence.

For others, we'll need to go to places where such love can be offered. We'll have to work on it, asking for grace from God through further prayer. We'll love the co-worker who is annoying. We'll offer gratitude or forgiveness where it's the hardest.

The communion of the Mass is not meant just to affect us individually. We are called to offer our lives back to God, to make our whole life into a Eucharistic sacrifice.

DISPOSED FOR COMMUNION

In some ways, the reception of Communion is the most intimate moment of the Mass. It is personal, allowing each of us to experience the fruits of Jesus' sacrifice on our very lips. We eat and drink the presence of the living God.

But such communion is not just about an individual experience, an interior delight unfolding apart from the rest of the human family. The Church, having feasted on the Body and Blood of Christ, now become for the world a sacrifice of praise.



WITTMAN

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Contact

Sacramental Information

Contact our parish office (773) 525-0709 for information regarding celebrating sacraments including Baptisms (infant and adult), Reconciliation (confession), Eucharist (Communion), Confirmation, Marriage, Anointing of the Sick. For information regarding Funerals, please first contact the funeral director of your choice to begin making arrangements.

How to Offer a Mass Intention

Did you ever notice that every Mass said here at St. Alphonsus is offered for a special intention? The entire congregation prays for that intention during the petitions (Prayers of the Faithful) when we say, "For those who have died, and for the intention of this Mass: (named intention)"

You can make a Mass Intention request here. Masses are often offered for family, friends and relatives that have died. Praying for the dead is a Spiritual Work of Mercy. Offering a Mass for someone that has died is an especially comforting gesture to the family. Mass can also be offered to commemorate joyful occasions and to give thanks to God for blessings received.

The customary offering for a Mass here is $15. However, any amount that you would like to offer is completely acceptable. You can request Masses by visiting the Parish Office during office hours or calling the Parish Office at (773) 525-0709.

You can ***register in the parish*** by coming to the rectory office or going online at *www.stalphonsuschicago.org*. The advantage to registering is that we know who you are and can better plan our programs by knowing whom we serve.

Want *to find out what is happening in the young adult community?* Join the St. Al's Young Adult Listserv. We send out monthly emails to let people know about our upcoming events. To register for the listserv, contact *stalphonsusyam@gmail.com*

The ***Knights of Columbus*** are the world's largest Catholic fraternal service organization. For more information, visit *www.stalphonsusknights.com*

Our parish has received permission to once again host important sacraments. Please be patient as the pandemic created a scheduling backlog regarding Baptisms and Weddings. You can find more info at:

www.stalphonsuschicago.org/baptism

www.stalphonsuschicago.org/marriage

St. Alphonsus Social Media

Choose to participate in meaningful engagement! Having an attitude of engagement challenges us to love our digital neighbor as ourselves. You can find St. Alphonsus' Facebook and Twitter by going to the parish website and clicking the icons at the footer of the page.

Directory

Parish Office

1429 W Wellington Ave, Chicago, IL 60657-4121
(P): 773-525-0709 |
www.stalphonsuschicago.org
parish@stalphonsuschicago.church

Parish Office Hours:

9:00 AM– 5:00 PM Mon, Wed, Fri
9:00 AM– 7:30 PM Tue, Thurs

School Office

1439 W Wellington Ave, Chicago, IL 60657-4121
(P): 773-892-1397 |
www.alphonsusacademy.org

School Office Hours:

8:00 AM– 3:00 PM

Staff

Parish Staff

Rev. Steven Bauer, Pastor
Rev. Patrick Gorman, Associate Pastor
Brooks Robinson, Pastoral Associate
Brian Bloye, Director of Music and Organist
Erica Cook, Coordinator of Religious Education
Daniel Szymanski, Director of Operations
Mario Serrano, Parish Office Manager
Kaitlin Holyk, Sacrament Ministry Coordinator

School Staff

Gerit McAllister, Principal
Angela Kladis, Assistant Principal
Mary Bodlak, Director of Admissions
Caroline Jordan, Advancement Director
Kim Wallett, Secretary
Connie Del Toral, Administrative Assistant