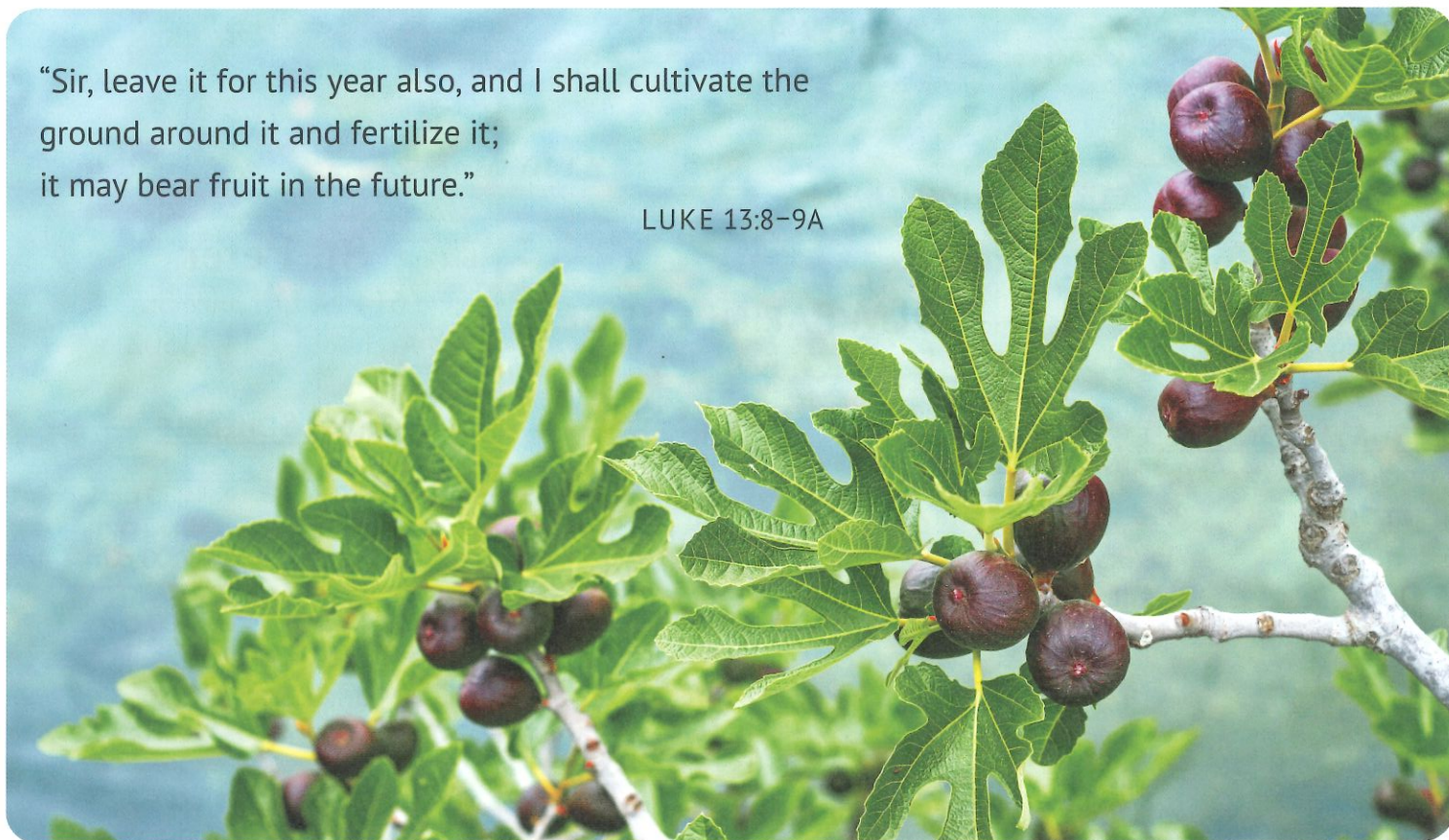




“Sir, leave it for this year also, and I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it; it may bear fruit in the future.”

LUKE 13:8–9A



A Gardener God

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

Charles Baudelaire was a French poet and essayist in the mid-1800s. He once observed that life is like a hospital in which each patient is possessed by the desire to change beds. In other words, he thought everyone seemed to think life would be so much better if only they had a different set of circumstances, a different job, a different marriage, a different place in life. Like trees, however, not everyone grows and matures at the same pace. There are forty-year-olds who still act and think like teenagers, and there are ten-year-olds who have an attitude toward life like that of an elder. Over time, we all grow into the lives we're given.

In this week's Parable of the Barren Fig Tree, some think God is like the owner who planted the tree, as

if God is impatient with us to begin bearing fruit and quick to uproot us if we fail. A case could be made, however, for God to be the gardener who patiently fertilizes and nurtures. In the beginning, it was God who had a garden called Eden, filled with all kinds of trees and plants among which God walked with Adam and Eve in the cool of the evening. After the resurrection, it was Mary Magdalene who went looking for the body of Jesus and mistook him for the gardener. It is God who hovers over us, watering and nudging and nurturing, waiting until in God's good time, we begin to bear fruit. ●

Reflect

*What needs nurturing in my life,
and what needs weeding out?*

Catholic Communities



Our Lady of Mercy

409 E. Main St.
Fayette, OH 43521

MASS SCHEDULE

Sunday 8:30 a.m.
Thursday 9:00 a.m.

PASTORAL COUNCIL

Ron Eisel
Pat Eisel
Ray Hollstein
Mike Burkholder
Traci Maginn
Barbara Roby

Clothing items can be donated via our drop off site on the east side of the building. Our store is open on Thursdays from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Contact Rhonda Monahan at 517-306-7986 for information.



Parish Pastor
Rev. William Pifher
419-446-9288

OLM PARISH OFFICE

P.O. Box 429
Fayette, OH 43521

Phone: 419-237-2441

Hours: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Tuesday and Thursday

PARISH STAFF

Secretary: Sherry Renner

OLOMFayette@olom2441.onmicrosoft.com

Bookkeeper

Tami Baker

OLOMBookkeeper@olom2441.onmicrosoft.com

CRE

Mary Bird

OLOMCre@olom2441.onmircrosoft.com

Website (bulletin online)

stpeterarchbold.com/our-lady-of-mercy



St. Peter

614 N. Defiance St.
Archbold, OH 43502

MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday 4:30 p.m.
Sunday 10:30 a.m.
Tuesday 7:00 p.m.
Wednesday 9:00 a.m.
Friday 9:00 a.m.

Parish Secretary

Kim Garrow 419-446-2150
email-stpeter@rtecexpress.net

Religious Ed

Deb Herring

Parish Council President

Stephen Bernath

SACRAMENT INFORMATION

- **Baptism:** Please call Father Pifher at 419-446-9288 to make arrangements for Baptism. A month's notice would be helpful.
- **Reconciliation:** Father will be available for confessions **starting 30 minutes before Mass each week.**
- **New Parishioners:** A warm welcome as you enter our Parish Community! You are asked to register at the parish office or see the pastor as soon as possible. If you are moving from the parish, please inform the office so we may remove your name from our parish records.
- **Anointing of the Sick:** Those who can participate: Anyone who is seriously sick or suffering a grave illness (not a cold, or flu) which is treated or medicated for by a doctor. Also for those of old age which often brings morale or depression factors (body, mind, or spirit). Please make arrangements with Father or call the parish office.
- **Matrimony:** Please contact the Parish Office *six months* ahead of your planned wedding date, for Marriage Preparation and scheduling.
- **RCIA :** The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is a series of classes designed to bring new members into the Catholic church. Weekly sessions begin in September. People who have not been baptized, who have not been practicing or who have been raised in another faith are all welcome to register. Parishioners are encouraged to invite interested family members and friends. There is no obligation to join the church. This is simply an opportunity to learn more about the Catholic faith. Contact Fr. William Pifher at 419-446-9288.

BULLETIN DEADLINE: Please note that the bulletin deadline is **Tuesday, Noon.** Please either call, email at OLOMFayette@olom2441.onmicrosoft.com or put in the collection basket any announcement for the following week's bulletin

SUNDAY, MARCH 23, 2025

3rd Sunday of Lent

ROSARY WILL BE PRAYED SUNDAY'S AT 8 A.M.

BFF'S

There is a BFF after Mass today. Come and enjoy Breakfast, Fellowship & Friends.

UPDATED CHURCH DIRECTORY

Please pick up an updated Church Directory on the back tables.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

After Mass –Mar. 30, Apr. 13, & Apr. 27

At Home –Mar. 23, Apr. 6, & Apr. 20

AREA LENTEN PENANCE SERVICES

St. Caspar – March 26, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

St. Peter – April 2, 2025 at 6:45 p.m.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Stations of the Cross will be prayed on Thursday, April 3, 2025 at 7 p.m. led by Deacon Larry.

APRIL FAYETTE COMMUNITY MEAL

Our Lady of Mercy will be hosting the April Fayette Community Meal on April 16, 2025, 5 p.m. – 6 p.m. Help is needed. There will be a short meeting on Sunday, March 30, 2025 after Mass for all who would like to help we will meet in the back of church. Any questions please see Sherry Renner or call the Parish Office on Tuesday's or Thursday's.

THE CHOSEN

Our Lady of Mercy will be viewing The Chosen – Season 1 (8 episodes) during the Easter season. We will begin Wednesday, April 23, 2025 at 7 p.m. (episodes are approximately 1 hour) in the church basement. We will conclude Season 1 on June 11, 2025

ACA UPDATE

Our Lady of Mercy Goal - \$4,190.00 paid to date \$1,410.00 (32.4%)

DAILY QUOTES FROM MOTHER ANGELICA PERPETUAL CALENDAR

"There is comfort in faith, and warmth in hope, but when we continue to love when these seem to be gone and there is but a thread to hang on to – then we truly love, then His purifying silence has completed its work; we have risen to a new level of union; we have climbed another mountain."

DIARY OF SAINT MARIA FAUSTINA KOWALSKA

Notebook 2

1045 Then some clergymen whom I did not know began to examine me and to humiliate me, (183) or rather, what I had written; but I saw how Jesus Himself was defending me and giving them to understand what they did not know.

1046 Then suddenly, I saw how the two rays, as painted in the image, issued from the Host and spread over the whole world. This lasted only a moment, but it seemed as though it had lasted all day, and our chapel was overcrowded all day long, and the whole day abounded in joy.

ST. PETER NEWS

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Every Tuesday starting at 8 a.m. ending with Mass at 7 p.m.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Tuesday's at 6:30 p.m.

FISH FRY-DAYS

Archbold Knights of Columbus Fish Fry-Days begin January 24 thru April 18

Did you know that Deacon Larry Zachrich is also available for Baptisms and Weddings? Contact Larry at 419-966-7091.

FAYETTE/SURROUNDING AREA COMMUNITY EVENTS

---Fayette Opera House March schedule: Mar. 23 – Dinner & Glasgow Reed Organ concert 12:30 pm

---April 8, 2025 5:30 p.m. – CPC 39th Annual Spring Benefit & Auction at Archbold Evangelical Church - \$10 per person – see flyer on bulletin board for additional information

If you know of any Fayette Community events, please either call or visit the office or email to OLOMFayette@olom2441.onmicrosoft.com

Prayer chain-ANYONE wishing to submit prayer requests can email or call Our Lady of Mercy office. Email olomprayerchain@olom2441.onmicrosoft.com

Privacy Issues for Parish Office:

IMMEDIATE FAMILY – must contact the parish office for all prayer requests to be posted in the parish bulletin. Please submit with the exact verbiage requested. Contact Sherry Renner at the parish office at 419-237-2441, no later than Thursday at noon. By law, the parish office does not divulge private information we receive from hospitals.

A Brief Examination of Conscience

Based on the Ten Commandments

I am the LORD your God: you shall not have strange Gods before me.

Have I treated people, events, or things as more important than God?

You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.

Have my words, actively or passively, put down God, the Church, or people?

Remember to keep holy the LORD's Day.

Do I go to Mass every Sunday (or Saturday Vigil) and on Holy Days of Obligation (Jan. 1; the Ascension; Aug. 15; Nov. 1; Dec. 8; Dec. 25)? Do I avoid, when possible, work that impedes worship to God, joy for the Lord's Day, and proper relaxation of mind and body? Do I look for ways to spend time with family or in service on Sunday?

Honor your father and your mother.

Do I show my parents due respect? Do I seek to maintain good communication with my parents where possible? Do I criticize them for lacking skills I think they should have?

You shall not kill.

Have I harmed another through physical, verbal, or emotional means, including gossip or manipulation of any kind?

You shall not commit adultery.

Have I respected the physical and sexual dignity of others and of myself?

You shall not steal.

Have I taken or wasted time or resources that belonged to another?

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Have I gossiped, told lies, or embellished stories at the expense of another?

You shall not covet your neighbor's spouse.

Have I honored my spouse with my full affection and exclusive love?

You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

Am I content with my own means and needs, or do I compare myself to others unnecessarily?

Christ's Two Commandments

How well do we love God and others? Do we love as Christ calls us to? In the Gospel of Matthew, Christ gives us Two Commandments: "He said to him, 'You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments'" (Mt 22:37-40).

Not sure what love is? St. Paul describes it for us in his Letter to the Corinthians. Is this how you love God and others? "Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, [love] is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails" (1 Cor 13:4-8).



Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation

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Saints of the Day (www.morningoffering.com)

Week of March 23 – March 29

Sunday, Mar. 23 – St. Rafqa/Rafka - St. Rafqa / Rafka (Arabic for Rebecca) (1832–1914) was born in Himlaya, a Maronite village in the Lebanese mountains. She was an only child, and her mother died when she was seven. After her father's remarriage there was much family discord as to whom Rafqa should marry. Not wanting to wed any of the men in question, she turned to God and entered religious life at the age of 21. She had a great devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary which she learned from her mother. She studied and served as a teacher for many years, but, after witnessing and surviving a massacre of Christians, she decided at the age of 39 to become a cloistered contemplative nun living under a strict rule in a monastery. Here, Rafqa prayed earnestly that she might share in the sufferings of Christ. Her prayers were heard almost immediately. She became blind and paralyzed, and over the course of 30 years she struggled with deteriorating health and incredible pain. All of her sufferings she united to the sufferings of Christ without complaint. Under obedience to her superior she worked on an autobiography near the end of her life. She died at the age of 82, and her grave is credited with many miracles. St. Rafqa is a Catholic Maronite saint canonized by Pope St. John Paul II in 2001. She is the patron of sick people, bodily ills, and loss of parents. Her feast day is March 23rd.

Monday, Mar. 24 - St. Catherine of Sweden - St. Catherine of Sweden (1331-1381) was the fourth of eight children born to St. Bridget of Sweden and her husband, Ulfo. As a child she was sent by her parents to be educated in a convent, and was later given in marriage to a German nobleman. Catherine was able to persuade her husband, a virtuous young man, to live together in a mutual vow of perpetual chastity. They lived happily together in complete devotion to God. After the death of her father, and with her husband's consent, Catherine accompanied her mother to Rome. While there, Catherine's husband died. She continued to be a companion to her mother and rejected further offers of marriage. Her mother worked to establish a new religious order, called the Order of the Holy Savior, or the Bridgettines. After her mother's death, Catherine took her body back to Sweden for burial while continuing the work of establishing the Bridgettines. She later traveled back to Rome to advocate for her mother's canonization and for Pope Urban VI to ratify her Order. While in Rome she became great friends with St. Catherine of Siena. St. Catherine of Sweden finally returned to Sweden and became abbess of the newly founded Bridgettines, living the rest of her days as a model of prayer and penance. St. Catherine of Sweden is the patron saint against abortions and miscarriages. Her feast day is March 24th.

Tuesday, Mar. 25– St. Dismas - St. Dismas (1st c.) is the name Church tradition has given to the "Good Thief," one of the two criminals who were crucified alongside Jesus Christ on Good Friday. All we know about St. Dismas is what is mentioned of him in the Gospels: "Now one of the criminals hanging there reviled Jesus, saying, 'Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us.' The other [St. Dismas] however, rebuking him, said in reply, 'Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation? And indeed, we have been condemned justly, for the sentence we received corresponds to our crimes, but this man has done nothing criminal.'" Then St. Dismas, as an expression of his faith in Christ as the Messiah, said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus replied to St. Dismas, "Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:39-42). The feast day of St. Dismas is March 25.

Wednesday, Mar. 26 – St. Margaret Clitherow - St. Margaret Clitherow (1556-1586), also called Margaret of York, lived in York, England, the daughter of a candlemaker and wife of a wealthy Protestant butcher. She was raised Anglican just after the time that King Henry VIII severed the Church of England from communion with the Roman Catholic Church. A few years after her marriage, at the age of 18, she converted to the Catholic Church due to the work of covert missionary Catholic priests. While her husband remained Protestant, she aided persecuted Catholics by sheltering priests (which included her brother-in-law) and having Mass and Confessions said in her home, which became a safe house and hiding place for priests. Margaret witnessed the torturous death of many of the priests she aided, and she would publicly pray on the spot of their martyrdom. Undaunted in her work, she was imprisoned numerous times. On her final arrest she was charged for harboring Catholic priests and was condemned to a public execution by being crushed to death, a martyrdom of which she considered herself unworthy. All three of her children entered the religious life, two priests and a nun. St. Margaret Clitherow, the "Pearl of York," is the patron saint of martyrs, businesswomen, and converts. Her feast day is March 26th.

Thursday, Mar. 27 – St. John of Egypt – St. John of Egypt (4th c.), also known as John the Hermit or John the Anchorite, worked alongside his father, a carpenter, until he was twenty-five years old. He then discerned a call from God to go out into the desert and become a hermit. He spent sixteen years in spiritual training under the care of a religious superior who commanded him to perform difficult and unreasonable tasks, which John obeyed with childlike simplicity. After this time of spiritual training he withdrew into greater solitude in a small cell at the top of a cliff, praying incessantly and avoiding contact with people for the last fifty years of his life. He had the gift of prophecy and could perform miracles, and foretold to Emperor Theodosius his future victories as well as the time of his death. People traveled from afar for his counsel or blessings, and to hear him preach. He would receive visitors two days a week from a tiny window in his cell. He became so famous for his holiness that St. Augustine wrote of him, making reference to the devils who came to tempt John continually. St. John of Egypt's feast day is March 27th.

Friday, Mar. 28– St. Conon of Naso - St. Conon of Naso (1139–1236) was a wealthy nobleman, the son of a Count, from Naso, Italy. He was a devout young man, and at the age of 15 become a monk. He lived as a hermit until being called to serve the local monastery as its abbot. Upon the death of his parents he distributed his inheritance to the poor. While on pilgrimage to Jerusalem he had a vision of a priest he knew being choked by a snake. Conan raced to the priest to warn him of the danger. The priest's heart was convicted by the truth of the vision and confessed that he was hoarding money and neglecting the poor. Under Conan's direction the priest gave his excessive savings to the poor and recommitted his life to serving others. After his death, Conon was hailed as a miracle worker. The city of Naso experienced a series of terrible storms which destroyed crops and disrupted the shipping trade, and the city ran out of grain and other food supplies. When the famine became severe, St. Conon appeared in a vision to a ship captain who was preparing to transport a load of grain. Conon told the captain to change course and take the grain to Naso. The captain obeyed the vision and arrived in Naso with food to relieve the famine. St. Conon's feast day is March 28th.

Saturday, Mar. 29– St. Berthold of Mt. Carmel - St. Berthold of Mt. Carmel (d. 1195), also known as Bartoldus of Calabria, was born in France, the son of a Count. He excelled at his studies and was ordained a priest. Berthold's brother, Aymeric, became the Latin patriarch of Antioch. The two joined together to participate in a Crusade to the Holy Land. While in the Holy Land, Berthold traveled to Mount Carmel and built a monastery and church dedicated to the Prophet Elijah. He gathered together a number of hermits scattered throughout Palestine to live together in imitation of the life of the great prophet as recorded in the Old Testament. Berthold became the group's superior and stayed with the community at Mount Carmel for 45 years until his death in 1195. It was the life and work of St. Berthold that laid the foundation for the Carmelite Order, whose rule was approved by Pope Honorius III in 1226. St. Berthold's feast day is March 29.



Our Lady of Mercy Parish



MARCH 23, 2025

PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church is united by our commitment to minister to the physical and spiritual needs of our rural families and steward the resources entrusted to us. We value the diversity within our Catholic community and invite all to walk with us on our journey of faith.

THIS WEEK'S MASS SCHEDULE

Date	Time	Church	Intention
Sun. Mar. 23	8:30a.m.	OLM	Rosemary Pontius Ron Lichtenwald
	10:30a.m	SP	For the People
Tues. Mar. 25	6:30 p.m.	SP	Stations of the Cross
	6:45 p.m.	SP	Rosary
	7:10 p.m.	SP	Rod Britenriker
	Mass		
Wed. Mar. 26	6:45 a.m.	SP	Rosary
	7:10 a.m.	SP	For the People
Thurs. Mar. 27	9:00 a.m.	OLM	For the People
Fri. Mar. 28	9:00 a.m.	SP	For the People
Sat. Mar. 29	4:30 pm	SP	Lydia Wlasiuk
Sun. Mar. 30	8:30a.m.	OLM	Rosemary Pontius Living & Deceased Sarnac family Giovanni Stella
	10:30a.m	SP	Frank O & Mary Smith Albert & Kathryn Deveau 40 th Anniversary

UPCOMING PARISH EVENTS

- Religious Ed. Dates
 - Mar. 23, Apr. 6 & Apr. 20 – at home
 - Mar. 30, Apr. 13 & Apr. 27 – after Mass
- Mar. 23 & Apr. 6 after Mass
 - Adult Lenten Study
- Mar. 23 – BFF after Mass
- Apr. 3 - 7 pm Stations of the Cross
- Apr. 6 - Adult Lenten Study after Mass
- Apr. 6 - BFF after Mass

SACRIFICIAL OFFERING REPORT

Reported for March 16, 2025

SUNDAY OFFERTORY (15 envelopes)	\$ 1,461.00
LOOSE OFFERINGS	\$ 184.00
BUDGET	\$ 1,747.00
Over / (Under)	(\$ 102.00)

OTHER COLLECTION

CPC Jar & Votives	\$ 30.00
St. Vincent de Paul	\$ 100.00
Maintenance	\$ 100.00
Mass Stipend	\$ 100.00

TOTAL COLLECTIONS (Sunday & Other)	\$ 1,975.00
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NEXT WEEK'S MINISTERS

March 30, 2025

Greeters/Gifts	Mike Maginn Family
Reader	Pat Eisel
Servers	Will Maginn
Ushers	Ron & Pat Eisel
Ministers of the Eucharist	Until further notice
Money Counters	Phil Baker Joanna Marry Barbara Roby

Word(s) of the week (from The America College Dictionary)

REPENT – to feel such sorrow for sin or fault as to be disposed to change one's life for the better; be penitent

“But I tell you, if you do not repent, you will all perish as they did! Or those eighteen people who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them – do you think they were more guilty than everyone else who lived in Jerusalem? By no means! But I tell you, if you do not repent, you will all perish as they did!” **Luke 13:2-5**

Dear Padre,

May I receive Communion if I'm divorced and haven't gotten an annulment?

Yes, you may. Divorce, in itself, is not an impediment to the reception of Communion. Divorce, although regrettable because of the many ramifications that may be part of the experience, is not in itself a sin. There are situations when divorce may be the most loving choice and make it possible for all parties involved to live the lives God is calling them to live.

Remarriage, when a person is not free to marry because of the presence of a previous bond, is an impediment to the reception of holy Communion. Although this situation is more and more common, it does not mean that the law of the Church, representative of the teaching of Jesus, can be set aside. As part of the process of healing from your divorce and moving on with your life, you may want to seek an annulment, particularly if you think you might want to marry again. The annulment process can often be healing and a source of great blessing. It also provides a rare opportunity to reflect on what was lost as a result of the original divorce and what can be learned as a way of moving forward and building a second marriage that is strong and life-giving.



STEVE LOVEGROVE / SHUTTERSTOCK

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSsR / DearPadre.org

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
March 24	March 25	March 26	March 27	March 28	March 29	March 30
<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>The</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Fourth Sunday of Lent</i>
2 Kgs 5:1-15b Lk 4:24-30	<i>Annunciation of the Lord</i> Is 7:10-14; 8:10 Heb 10:4-10 Lk 1:26-38	Dt 4:1, 5-9 Mt 5:17-19	Jer 7:23-28 Lk 11:14-23	Hos 14:2-10 Mk 12:28-34	Hos 6:1-6 Lk 18:9-14	Jos 5:9a, 10-12 2 Cor 5:17-21 Lk 15:1-3, 11-32



VATICAN MEDIA

A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

I like to think that a nice name for God could be “the God of another possibility”... [God] does not look at the achievements you have not yet reached, but the fruits you can still bear. He does not keep track of your shortcomings but encourages your potential. He does not dwell on your past, but confidently bets on your future.

ANGELUS, ROME, MARCH 20, 2022