

Dear Padre,

Why can't a Protestant receive the Eucharist at a Catholic Mass?

United by baptism, fellow Christians are our brothers and sisters in the Lord. As such, they are always welcome at Catholic Mass, but they do not ordinarily participate in holy Communion. "Because Catholics believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is a sign of the reality of the oneness of faith, life, and worship, members of those churches with whom we are not yet fully united are ordinarily not admitted to holy Communion" (Code of Canon Law, 844 §4).

When Catholics receive Holy Communion, they firmly believe the bread and wine are transformed into the Real Presence of Christ. In the Eucharist, we become part of the body of Christ and share in holiness and unity with one another. Our "Amen" to "The Body of Christ" and "The Blood of Christ" means, "Truly, so be it!" It indicates that we affirm our belief in this mystery, which is fundamental to our Catholic identity. If non-Catholics receive the Eucharist but do not embrace this identity and same belief, it may disrespect Catholics who do, as well as disrespect their own identity in the denomination to which they belong.

However, at Mass, fellow Christians can join their prayers with Catholics in praising God. Together, we also pray that the divisions which separate us will finally disappear, in keeping with Christ's prayer for us "that they may all be one" (John 17:21). ●

Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR / DearPadre.org



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
January 26	January 27	January 28	January 29	January 30	January 31	February 1
<i>Sts. Timothy and Titus, Bishops</i>	<i>Weekday</i>	<i>St. Thomas Aquinas, Priest and Doctor of the Church</i>	<i>Weekday</i>	<i>Weekday</i>	<i>St. John Bosco, Priest</i>	<i>Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time</i>
2 Tm 1:1-8 or Ti 1:1-5 Mk 3:22-30	2 Sm 6:12b-15, 17-19 Mk 3:31-35	2 Sm 7:1-17 Mk 4:1-20	2 Sm 7:18-19, 24-29 Mk 4:21-25	2 Sm 11:1-4a, 5-10a, 13-17 Mk 4:26-34	2 Sm 12:1-7a, 10-17 Mk 4:35-41	Zep 2:3; 3:12-13 1 Cor 1:26-31 Mt 5:1-12a

Do you have a question for the Padre? Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.



A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

Dear brothers and sisters, all too much violence exists in the world and our societies. Amid wars, terrorism, human trafficking, and widespread aggression, our children and young people need to be able to experience the culture of life, dialogue, and mutual respect. Above all, they need the witness of...those who have suffered injustice and violence [and] resist the temptation to seek revenge.

ADDRESS TO THE "ARENA OF PEACE," ROME, MAY 30, 2025



Judged or Invited?

FR. THOMAS M. SANTA, CSSR

"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:2) is the message preached by Jesus after the arrest of John the Baptist. It is important to place this message in context. Jesus is not repeating the preaching of the Baptist. His message is unique and compelling.

Look closely at what Jesus is saying. Do not automatically fill in the blanks with the memories of every sermon you have heard. Try to hear Jesus' words again, for the first time. Is the emphasis on "repent," or is the emphasis on the announcement, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand"? Does it make any difference?

Repeat these words and change the emphasis each time. Play with the words. Let the words play with you. Notice how you respond. Notice what makes a difference. Notice how you react, and, most of all, notice whether you feel invited or you feel judged.

The Baptist made no bones about it. You are being judged: "Even now the ax lies at the root of the trees" (Matthew 3:10). Jesus, on the other hand, seems not to judge but to invite: "for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17).

In the invitation, we are challenged to see in a different way. Use different skills. Refrain from automatic judgments. Seek to understand but, most of all, to accept and to love. ●

Reflect

**What does "repent" mean to me?
A threat or an invitation?**



LEARN ABOUT THE AUTHORS OF OUR PARISH COMMUNITY



"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"

MATTHEW 3:2



The
Catholic Church
in Pocahontas County
West Virginia

OUR MISSION

If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all.
(Mark 9:35, NAB-RE)

ST. JOHN NEUMANN PARISH & CHURCH OFFICE, 714 Tenth Avenue, Marlinton WV 24954
ST. MARK THE EVANGELIST MISSION, 92 Catholic Church Road, Rts 250 & 92, Bartow WV 24920
ST. BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX CHAPEL, 6332 Snowshoe Drive, Snowshoe WV 26209
Telephone: St. John Neumann 304-799-6778, St. Bernard of Clairvaux 304-572-0847
Website: PocahontasCatholic.org
E-mail: Pastor@PocahontasCatholic.org



Patty Bryant
Margaret Bryant
Ann Burke
Danielle Cade
Dick Connor
Drema Moore
Cynthia Olson
Quinn Riffle
Tristan Sizemore

EUCHARIST THIS WEEK

Monday	8:00 a.m.	St. John
Wednesday	8:00 a.m.	St. John
Friday	8:00 p.m.	St. John
Saturday	5:30 p.m.	St. Bernard
Sunday	9:00 a.m.	St. John
	11:30 a.m.	St. Mark



St. John Neumann Church is open for private prayer every day during daylight.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered before each Eucharist or by appointment, and at St. Bernard on Saturdays 4:30-5:00 p.m.

The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is available any time upon request.



Please call the Church office (304-799-6778) if you know of a parishioner who is sick, in the hospital or nursing home, homebound, deployed, or in prison.

To report an incidence of suspected child sexual abuse, please contact your local law enforcement agency, or you may confidentially contact WV Child Protective Services at 800-352-6513.

To report suspected cases of sexual abuse by personnel of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to the Diocese, please contact the Diocese at 888-434-6237 or 304-233-0880.

To report suspected cases of sexual misconduct or sexual abuse by a bishop or eparch, please contact ReportBishopAbuse.org or call 800-276-1562.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

"Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men."
(Matthew 4:19, NAB-RE)

Prayer for Justice and Peace

"How long, O Lord, how long?"

We see violence and hatred on every side, cruel language and crueler actions.

Many of your children are treated harshly by those who should protect them, and others, lacking food, are given stones when they ask for bread and a scorpion when they ask for a fish.

"How long, O Lord, how long?"

We see friends and neighbors suffering because of who they are or where they come from.

We have forgotten that you are the Father of us all and that we are brothers and sisters.

Turn our hearts to you and to those who share our land. Make us peacemakers committed to work for that justice which alone can ensure a lasting peace among your children, so that we may be in truth a single family united in fraternal love.

Bind us together, Father, as your beloved children.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Son, the King of Justice and the Prince of Peace.

(Bishop Mark Brennan, 21 March 2026, cf. Psalm 13, Psalm 40)

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LAST WEEKEND

	<u>attendance</u>	<u>collection</u>
St. John Neumann	40	\$875.01
Developing Countries collection		\$80.00
votive candles		\$45.00
St. Mark the Evangelist	15	\$264.50
Developing Countries collection		\$35.00
St. Bernard of Clairvaux	100	\$972.00
Fund for the Poor		\$519.00
total	155	\$2,790.51

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - YEAR A

First Reading (Isaiah 8:23-9:3)

First the Lord degraded the land of Zebulun
and the land of Naphtali;
but in the end he has glorified the seaward road,
the land west of the Jordan,
the District of the Gentiles.

Anguish has taken wing, dispelled is darkness:
for there is no gloom where but now there was distress.
The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom
a light has shone.
You have brought them abundant joy
and great rejoicing,
as they rejoice before you as at the harvest,
as people make merry when dividing spoils.
For the yoke that burdened them,
the pole on their shoulder,
and the rod of their taskmaster
you have smashed, as on the day of Midian.

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 27:1, 4, 13-14,
Grail translation, 1963)

Response: The Lord is my light and my salvation.

The Lord is my light and my help;
whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
before whom shall I shrink?

There is one thing I ask of the Lord,
for this I long,
to live in the house of the Lord,
all the days of my life,
to savor the sweetness of the Lord,
to behold his temple.

I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness
in the land of the living.
Hope in him, hold firm and take heart.
Hope in the Lord!

Second Reading (1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17)

I urge you, brothers and sisters,
in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
that all of you agree in what you say,
and that there be no divisions among you,
but that you be united
in the same mind and in the same purpose.
For it has been reported to me about you,
my brothers and sisters,
by Chloe's people, that there are rivalries among you.
I mean that each of you is saying,
"I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos,"
or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ."
Is Christ divided?
Was Paul crucified for you?
Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?
For Christ did not send me to baptize
but to preach the gospel,
and not with the wisdom of human eloquence,
so that the cross of Christ
might not be emptied of its meaning.

Gospel Acclamation (Matthew 4:23)

Jesus proclaimed the Gospel of the kingdom
and cured every disease among the people.

Gospel (Matthew 4:12-23)

When Jesus heard that John had been arrested,
he withdrew to Galilee.
He left Nazareth
and went to live in Capernaum by the sea,
in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali,
that what had been said through Isaiah the prophet
might be fulfilled:
*Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,
the way to the sea, beyond the Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles,
the people who sit in darkness have seen a great light,
on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death
light has arisen.*
From that time on, Jesus began to preach and say,
"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee,
he saw two brothers,
Simon who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew,
casting a net into the sea; they were fishermen.

He said to them,
“Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.”
At once they left their nets and followed him.
He walked along from there and saw two other brothers,
James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John.
They were in a boat, with their father Zebedee,
mending their nets.
He called them,
and immediately they left their boat and their father
and followed him.
He went around all of Galilee,
teaching in their synagogues,
proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom,
and curing every disease and illness among the people.

Reflection (2023)

In the first reading today, Isaiah says that the Lord has brought “abundant joy and great rejoicing” to the people because “the yoke that burdened them, the pole on their shoulder, and the rod of their taskmaster you have smashed, as on the day of Midian.”

Well, sometimes we might be the yoke that is placed on others, or we might be their taskmaster. Ever thought of that? The Gospel of the Lord is meant to free us and lighten our loads, but even the Church is often the source of burden, often in the form of unbending rules or rigid rituals.

On the other hand, whenever a difficulty or a burden is lifted from any one of us, I am sure it makes us happy. In fact, often we begin to appreciate the little things that we could not do, or the little things that we could not have, when we were burdened. Burdens might come in the way of illness, or maybe from unexpected expenses, or maybe even a setback or not achieving a goal we had.

Just remember, God’s plan for us is for “abundant joy and great rejoicing,” and not just for us, but for all people.

Reflection (2026-a)

The Gospel passage today relates the beginning of Jesus’ ministry, where he calls his first followers, the brothers Simon Peter and Andrew, and then the brothers James and John. There are some interesting details about who was called and how they responded.

First, they were not prominent or learned people, they were the “working class.” Jesus didn’t have an application process, and he didn’t go out of his way to find the best followers he could find – he picked very ordinary people, people we know from later in the Gospels who were anything but perfect, and often were a disappointment to him.

Second, when he called they responded. That might seem noble, right? Well, think about their fathers. In each case, the brothers just abandoned their father! But the point is that to follow Jesus, a person has to be *willing* to let go of everything and everyone else – not that you will have to, but that you must be willing to.

Often when we talk about vocations to ministry in the Church, this passage from the Gospel is cited. Like Jesus, we should be looking for the willing, from among the ordinary, the working class. And then, when in a Church vocation, they should strive to be willing to serve and to work, not become Pharisees or princes, but rather be simple and humble.

Reflection (2026-b)

When you hear about division in the Church in Paul’s letter to the Corinthians, are you surprised? Often we think that everything was wonderful among Christians in the early Church – but it wasn’t always as harmonious as we might imagine.

One of the sources of division was who people chose to follow, and who people chose to listen to. Paul says of what he hears “I belong to Paul,” or “I belong to Apollos,” or “I belong to Cephas,” or “I belong to Christ.” and he asks the rhetorical questions “Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?” And the obvious answer is Christ is not divided, and we are saved by Jesus Christ, no other.

Times have changed, but so much has not changed. Today, we have “liberal” Catholics, “traditionalist” Catholics, those who want to go back to the 17th century, and those who want to go back to the 1970’s, and each with their own Paul or Apollos as their leader and guide – and so we have divisions.

But there is only one Christ and one Church. The sooner we realize that, and follow that, the sooner our divisions will cease.

25 January 2026
Third Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year A

Penitential Rite

Lord Jesus, you teach us to follow your ways: Lord, have mercy.
Christ Jesus, you teach us the way of service: Christ have mercy.
Lord Jesus, you teach us to be humble disciples: Lord, have mercy.
May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.

Prayer of the Faithful

Almighty Father, you fill our days with blessings in answer to our prayers. We turn now to you with our needs:

- for the Bishops of the Church, that they will promote peace where there is conflict and justice where there injustice, we pray
- for those in government, that they will be guided by the values of the Gospel, we pray
- for vocations to church ministry from among simple and humble people, we pray
- for all of us gathered for Eucharist, that we will promote cooperation and harmony among all peoples, we pray
- for those who have died, that they will be saved, we pray
- and for your other intentions

(pause)

for all our intentions spoken and unspoken, we pray

Merciful Father, you are the creator of all life and the ruler of all creation. Hear our prayers and lead us always to be your hands in our world. We pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.