

Church of the Ascension

ascensionsaratoga.org | 408-725-3939

Masses: (Sat) 5p; (Sun) 7a, 9a, 11a, 5p
(Mon-Fri) 8a; (Sat) 9a

Confessions: (Sat) 4p – 4:45p

August 16, 2026

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Is 56:1, 6-7 | Rom 11:13-15, 29-32 | Mt 15:21-28

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

I have often wondered why Jesus' words to the Gentile woman in today's Gospel sound so harsh. The woman was simply asking Jesus to heal her daughter, as so many others before her had done. Jesus' reply that he had been sent only to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" may have been true under the old covenant. But with his coming, Jesus initiated the new covenant where all are invited, all are welcome. Through the woman's gift of faith (whose prayer says simply, "Lord, help me"), she brings herself and her daughter into the joy and goodness of the kingdom. Jesus commends her faith (and her persistence) and heals her daughter. This passage demonstrates the healing God wishes to provide for all of his people.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Thus says the Lord in Isaiah: "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples."

Responsorial psalm: "O God, let all the nations praise you!"

Jesus to the Canaanite (Gentile) woman: "O woman, great is your faith!"

Our readings today spell out loud and clear that our God's love and forgiveness is meant for all. Not just the few. This is good news, indeed. What does God ask of us in return? He asks that we strive to do *what is right ... what is just*. In short, we must *join [our]selves* to the Lord, as Isaiah says, and God will welcome us into his holy kingdom. How do we do that? We can start by trying to imitate the generosity of God's grace and welcome those who seek God's mercy and healing. In other words, we reach out in love to each other and seek to build up the unity of his Church, the Body of Christ.

WELCOME

On some level, all the readings today speak of disparate people coming to the faith: foreigners, all the nations, the Gentiles, a Canaanite woman. Does your parish have some form of welcoming ministry – a welcome desk, ushers, greeters? The power of a friendly smile, a warm handshake, a disposition of "we're happy you're here" cannot be underestimated for visitors to our churches. Consider becoming a part of the team that welcomes the stranger to your parish.



Christ and the Canaanite Woman (1694-1695) by Annibale Carracci, public domain



CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION • SARATOGA

Parish Picnic

Come celebrate as one parish family!

Sunday, September 13, 2026

Noon • Following the 11AM Mass

On the front lawn of the parish

ON THE MENU

Catered BBQ and Burgers Kids' Activities Ice Cream and Dessert

\$20

PER PERSON

Kids come
free!

Children 12 & under — no charge

Please buy tickets in advance

Available after all weekend Masses and for purchase in the parish office,
or contact Don Goers at (630) 329-9765

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Learning from the Liturgy and from Saint Francis

Pastoral
Plan at
Ascension
Part III

Starting in late September, as part of the ongoing Diocesan Liturgical Renewal, we will learn about the **Liturgy of the Word**. This will deepen our appreciation for the life-giving Word and enrich the meaning of the Eucharist. Consequently, the Sunday Mass will motivate us to live each day with purpose as missionary disciples. Particularly during the 11:00 am Sunday Mass, we will assist youth and families in relating the liturgy to their lives.

Furthermore, during our community Monthly Gatherings from October to April in the Year of Saint Francis, we will draw lessons of Christian faith from his examples as follows.

October 4: **St Francis: His Life**

Speaker: *Fr. Peter Eugenio*, OFM Capuchin.

November: Seeing God in All Creation

December: Embracing Humility & Poverty

January: Songs & Prayers

February: Vocations

March: Willingness to Suffer for Christ

April: Brotherhood and Peace.

Every month on a Sunday from 12:15pm to 1:45pm, we gather for a communal meal, learning, and discussions centered on a specific theme. **We will need your assistance:** facilitators, session assistants, meal helpers, setup and cleanup crew, communications, and more.

Further details will follow.
Scan QR code for Parts I & II.



Mission Co-op - August 22-23

Fr. Anthony Kekai will visit Ascension next Sunday to seek our support for the Diocese of Bomadi in his native Nigeria. Thank you for your generosity.

Marriage Renewal - Sept. 18-20

This workshop/retreat at Ascension helps couples strengthen communication, deepen their faith, renew their relationship. Registration: \$250 per couple (Meals included). Financial assistance is available. Married and engaged couples of all faiths and cultures are welcome. Scan QR code for more info.



August: National Make-a-Will Month

Planning your estate gives directions to your family and keeps them from guessing. It also offers the chance to share your gifts to sustain the Church's mission. Our Diocese has partnered with FreeWill to help create a legal will at no cost to you. Visit partner.freewill.com/dsj.

WEEKLY OFFERING - August 9

-Total: **\$6,560** (\$3,397 + online: \$3,162). Goal: \$7,000.

-YTD Sunday: \$35,905. Budget: \$42,000.

-Church in Africa: **\$2,120**. Thank you for your generosity.

MASS INTENTIONS

Aug 15	Sat	05 pm	The Alvarez-Munita Family
Aug 16	Sun	07 am	Joseph & Rosaria Fiorentino +
		09 am	Richard Firato +
		11 am	Wai Ping Leung +
		05 pm	Gabrielle Mancuso (L)
Aug 22	Sat	09 am	Theresa Stolz +