



Youth & Family Mass at 11:00am
Next Sunday, 9/20

September 13, 2026

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sir 27:30—28:7 | Rom 14:7-9 | Mt 18:21-35

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

It strikes me that the real issue in the Gospel is that the first man whose debt the king forgives fails to see that his fellow servant who owes him a smaller debt is just like himself. “Could anyone refuse mercy to another like himself, can he seek pardon for his own sins?” Sirach asks. I think we sometimes languish in unforgiveness because we think of others’ wrongful actions as being somehow worse than ours. As a result, we hold others to a higher standard, while expecting people to easily excuse our failings. Perhaps the first step toward the radical forgiveness that Jesus calls us to in today’s Gospel is to foster compassion for our fellow human beings. When we are wronged, it may be helpful to remind ourselves of the classic phrase, “There but for the grace of God, go I.” When we recognize that those who wrong us have the same struggles as our own, we are more likely to extend the same mercy we wish to be offered to us.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

After the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II by Mehmet Ali Ağca in 1981, the future saint forgave his would-be assassin from his hospital bed, only four days after the shooting that nearly took his life. Later, the pope went to visit Ağca in prison, and the two spoke for more than 20 minutes. Since that time, John Paul’s example has stood as a witness to the power of God at work in us; the strength to forgive, it is clear, comes not from ourselves, but from the Lord. Our willingness to receive God’s grace and to extend forgiveness to others offers a powerful witness to the goodness of God, who is “kind and merciful, slow to anger and rich in compassion.”

PRAY

Radical forgiveness is a challenging spiritual practice; it is not easy! To forgive as Christ calls us to requires that we cultivate an interior disposition of humility and compassion. This ancient prayer from St. Ephrem can help to open our hearts to overcome anger or judgment toward those who have wronged us: *Lord and Master of my life, spare me from the spirit of indifference, despair, lust for power, and idle chatter. Instead, bestow on me, your servant, the spirit of integrity, humility, patience and love. Yes, O Lord and King, let me see my own sins, and not judge my brothers and sisters for you are blessed for ever and ever. Amen.*

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

No Limits on Forgiveness

One of the hardest things to do is to forgive. While God's forgiveness and mercy is constant, you still have to accept it, and that means more than an inner spiritual acceptance: It involves active love of both the lovable and also the people who you don't like or don't like you, even your enemies. That kind of forgiveness needs a special kind of love that makes you willing to sacrifice. What goes around comes around. Show mercy, and God will be merciful to you. Your salvation depends on forgiving "not seven times but seventy-seven times"—that is, without limit. - *Takefiveforfaith.com*

25th Anniversary of 9/11

"As we pray for our nation's continued healing, for the souls of all those lost on that day and the comfort of their families, let us implore the Holy Spirit to conform us, increasingly, into the image of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, and together build a civilization of love and universal fraternity," said Archbishop Paul S. Coakley, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

National Migration Week - Sept 21-27

This is an opportunity to reflect on our history as an immigrant Church, and to appreciate the challenges faced by migrants and refugees in the US and beyond, to be in solidarity in prayer, accompaniment, advocacy.

Christian Initiation Will Start Soon

- * Do you know anyone considering the Catholic faith?
- * Do you know any adult who has not received First Communion or Confirmation?

Invite them to explore our Faith and Tradition.

Start date: **Sept. 27** (11am - 12:30pm).

Learn with the community: **Oct. 4** (12:15pm- 1:45pm).

Call 725-3939 to talk to Fr. Hao, Arlene, or Tony.

Collection for Catholic Education - Sept. 13

Ninety percent of the funds collected will remain in our Diocese to support tuition assistance, lay ecclesial ministry formation. The rest will be for the Catholic University of America. Thank you for your generosity.

WEEKLY OFFERING

Aug 30

-Total: **\$5,380** (\$4,527 + online: \$853). Goal: \$7,000.

-YTD Sunday: \$50,499. Budget: \$63,000.

-Mission Co-op: **\$409** (To date: \$4,798)

Sept 6

-Total: **\$7,205** (\$4,228 + online: \$2,977). Goal: \$7,000.

-YTD Sunday: \$57,705. Budget: \$70,000.

-Flowers: **\$100**. Thank you for your generosity.

MASS INTENTIONS

Sep 12	Sat	05 pm	Louise Harpham (L)
Sep 13	Sun	07 am	Gary S. H. Chang +
		09 am	Henry Stolz +
		11 am	Dorothy Thomas +
		05 pm	Ana Karen Sanchez (L)



Learn from Saint Francis' Life

October 4, Sunday

12:15 pm - 1:45 pm in Worner Hall

For All Ages

Come for a shared *meal, learning, and discussion* around the life of Saint Francis.

In this **Year of Saint Francis**, the Church commemorates the beloved saint who passed away 800 years ago on October 3, 1226.

Blessing of Animals: Sat, October 3 at 9:30am.

This is the 1st **monthly gathering** as part of Ascension's Spiritual Renewal.

REGISTRATION in church
or on our parish website/QR code >>
Suggested \$5 donation
at the gathering.



Next Monthly Gatherings

Nov. 8: Seeing God in All Creation

Dec. 6: Embracing Humility & Poverty.

Youth & Family Mass Every Sunday

Youth and Families and anyone else are invited to the **11:00am Mass** every Sunday starting on September 20, when we will **worship**, listen to the **word**, and learn to be **witnesses** to the Risen Lord.

This Mass replaces the 10:15am catechetical class.

Children preparing for sacraments will follow a special schedule.

Youth Faith Formation This Year

-**Weekly:** Praying and Learning together at the **11am Mass every Sunday** (instead of the Faith Formation sessions at 10:15am). Starting Sunday, **Sept. 20**.

-**Monthly:** Sharing a Meal and Learning together at the **Faith Forward Gathering** from 12:15pm to 1:45pm). Details above (Oct 4: St Francis' Life)

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. Couples of all faiths and cultures are welcome. Scan QR code for more info.

