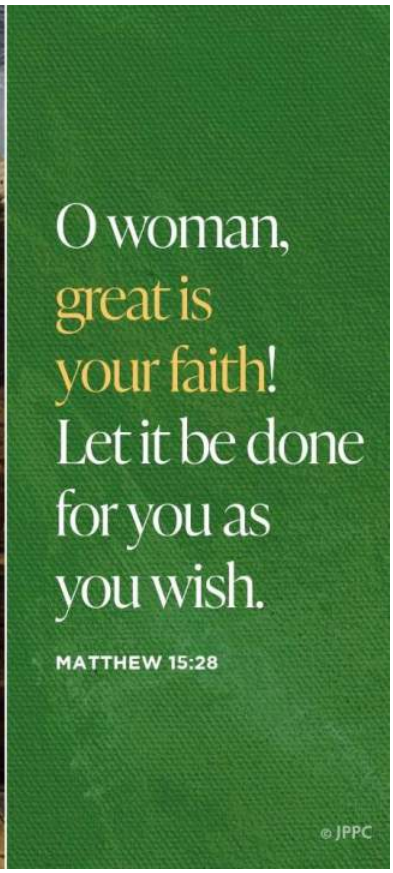
Saint Mary Roman Catholic Parish

94 Walnut Road, Hamburg, Pennsylvania 19526

610-562-7657 ~ WEBSITE: www.stmaryhamburg.org

20th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

August 16, 2026



A Parish Blessed by
St. John Neumann

Founded 1854

Rev. David J. Loeper, Pastor
daloeps@yahoo.com
Mr. Thomas B. Drogalis, Permanent Deacon
Mrs. Marie Dooley, Religious Education, Youth Ministry & Safe Environment Coordinator
stmarysformation@gmail.com
Mrs. Laura Ludovici, Parish Office
stmaryhamburg@aol.com
Mr. Robert Lesnefsky, Director of Music
Mrs. Marie Dinich, Financial Secretary

Weekly Office Hours: Monday through Friday, 9:30 AM to 2:00 PM
Sunday Weekend Masses: Saturday Vigil, 4:00 PM; Sundays, 8:00 AM and 10:45 AM
Daily Masses: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, 9:00 AM; Tuesday, 7:00 PM
Reconciliation: Saturdays, 3:15-3:45 PM; 15 minutes before Daily Masses; anytime by appointment

St. Mary Parish warmly welcomes any guests or visitors who are joining us for Mass. If you are new to the area and looking for a parish home, we kindly invite you to join our parish. Please contact our Pastor or Parish Office for information on registration. If you are traveling through Berks County, we are happy to have you with us. Please know that you are always welcome and be assured of our prayers for your safe travels home.

Parish Information

CONTACT INFORMATION

Phone: 610.562.7657
Religious Education (off hours): 484.575.1222
Email: **Stmaryhamburg@aol.com**
Web**: www.stmaryhamburg.org** *(Bulletin can be found here!)*
Facebook:
https://www.facebook.com/groups/St.MaryHamburg

OUR MISSION

To invoke the prayers and intercessions of the Blessed Virgin Mary, our patroness, as we seek to be drawn ever more deeply into the Paschal Mystery and the life of her Son, Jesus Christ. To provide the sacraments, liturgical services, pastoral guidance, and religious education for Catholic Christians in Northern Berks County. To provide opportunities to parishioners of all ages and abilities to share their time, talents, and treasure through religious and social programs. To support those in need through prayer, outreach, and good works. To manage the tangible assets of the parish with prudent administration through the cooperation of the pastor and the laity. To encourage participation in the inter-faith services and unite with all persons of good will in matters of faith and moral living. To be an asset to the Hamburg and Northern Berks Area and the Diocese of Allentown.

VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR

The Diocese of Allentown provides assistance to anyone who, as a minor, was sexually abused by a priest, deacon, or employee/volunteer of the Diocese/Parish. Parents, guardians, children and survivors of sexual abuse are invited and encouraged to contact the Diocese of Allentown for more information about this program. The fullness of compassion should be extended to these victims of the Church.

DIOCESAN VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR:
Ms. Wendy S. Krisak, M.A., NCC, LPC
DIRECT TELEPHONE LINE: 800-791-9209
DIOCESAN SECRETARY FOR YOUTH PROTECTION:
Ms. Pamela Russo, MSW, MS
610-871-5200, ext. 2204 OR prusso@allentowndiocese.org
CATHOLIC BISHOP ABUSE REPORTING SERVICE
1-800-276-1562, **www.ReportBishopAbuse.org**
PROTECTION OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE
Diocesan Policies & Procedures: **www.allentowndiocese.org**

ENVELOPE USE

With quite a few active parishioners, use of collection envelopes is the only way we have of knowing your Mass attendance. If you are asked to be a sponsor for Baptism or Confirmation, you will need a Certificate of Eligibility signed by Father Loeper. These certificates require Father to attest that he has knowledge of your practice of your faith. So please use your envelopes! If a minimal contribution is a financial burden, please put the empty envelope in the collection basket. This indicates that you attended Mass that week. *Please note, all envelopes are recorded according to when they were received, not according to the date on the envelope!*

SACRAMENT OF THE SICK

You are encouraged to seek the Sacrament of the Sick if you are suffering from a serious illness or are going to be admitted to the hospital for surgery. Please contact Father Loeper or the Parish Office if you would like to be anointed.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

is held weekly before 4:00PM Saturday Vigil Mass, from 3:15-3:45PM AND 15 minutes before daily weekday Masses. Also by appointment!

BAPTISM: Administered Sundays at 12Noon. Call the pastor to arrange. Families must be registered and practicing for at least 3 months. Parents are to attend an informational session. Catholic sponsors (at least 16 years old) must practice the faith and need a letter of eligibility from the home parish.

MARRIAGE: Contact the pastor *at least 6 months prior to the desired date.* Bride or groom must be registered and practicing the faith for at least 6 months.

CARE OF THE SICK for Homebound: Please notify the office of aged, seriously ill or infirmed persons desiring Holy Communion and/or Anointing of the Sick at home.

HOSPITALS & NURSING HOMES: When a family member is admitted, please notify the parish office.

SPONSOR LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION for Baptism or Confirmation will be issued only to practicing parishioners who are members for at least 3 months. See "Envelope Use" below.

CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: Family Faith Formation (PreK through grade 8) scheduled Sunday mornings during the school year. Contact Mrs. Dooley or the parish office, or email **stmarysformation@gmail.com**

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS: Depending on location, our parishioners might attend any number of Catholic elementary schools or Catholic high schools. Contact the pastor regarding the parish subsidy policy for students attending Catholic schools or for further information.

OCIA: The Order of Christian Initiation of Adults is a program for those preparing for baptism, reception into the Catholic church, or for those Catholics who are lacking one of the Sacraments of Initiation or who wish to return to the Church after an absence or simply wish to learn more about the faith. The program runs from September until Easter.

MEMBERSHIP & REGISTRATION: New members are to arrange to meet with the pastor. Membership involves a commitment to the life of the parish through regular participation spiritually and with one's time, talent, and treasure.

FOR CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER: If you are MOVING, PLEASE notify the parish office!

BULLETIN DEADLINES: All announcements are to be submitted in writing or by email to **StMaryHamburg@aol.com** by ***the Sunday of the week prior to publication.***

TECHNOLOGY NOTES: Follow our parish news and events on Facebook, on FlockNotes, or on our website.

MEMORIAL FUND: Memorial gifts may be made to the parish in memory of deceased loved ones.

WILLS & BEQUESTS: Consider designating your parish in your last will and testament or living trust so that the blessings the Lord has given you may continue to build His Kingdom.

DIRECTORY of PARISH MINISTRIES & SERVICES

Altar Servers & Ministers of the Altar: Fr. Loeper
Bulletin (weekly): Laura Ludovici, **stmaryhamburg@aol.com**
Catholic Charities: Reading or Kutztown: 610-376-7144
Pottsville: 570-628-0466
Cemetery: John Driscoll
Children's Choir: Keith Symons
Christmas Bazaar: Bonnie Katzaman
Choir & Music Ministry: Bob Lesnefsky
Facilities Manager: Mark Kopp
Guitar Group: Tony LaMastra
Holy Name Society: Mike Sauer
NorthStar Women's Center (pro-life): 610-321-7277
Parish Council: Fr. Loeper
Parish Prayer List: Gail Braun
FFF/Religious Education & Youth Ministry:
Marie Dooley (call 484-575-1222)
Rental Information (Pavilion & Ave Maria Hall): Parish Office
SCRIP Website: raiseright.com or call Office
Ushers: Ed Burns
Taste & See (mercy meals): Mary Alice Kuhns

Mass Intentions

Saturday, August 15: ***20th Sunday in Ordinary Time***
4:00PM + Rita & Paul Murphy

Sunday, August 16: ***20th Sunday in Ordinary Time***
8:00AM + Howard Wertz

Sunday, August 16: ***20th Sunday in Ordinary Time***
10:45AM + Thomas M. Schaeffer

Monday, August 17: ***Weekday***
9:00AM **+** Calogero Sottosanti

Tuesday, August 18: ***Weekday***
7:00PM + Patrick Carr

Wednesday, August 19: ***St. John Eudes, Priest***
9:00AM + Mae Fisch

Thursday, August 20: ***St. Bernard, Abbot & Doctor of the Church***
9:00AM + Cynthia Tracy

Friday, August 21: ***St. Pius X, Pope***
9:00AM ♥ Dorothy Muzopappa

Saturday, August 22: ***21st Sunday in Ordinary Time***
4:00PM + George & Lucille Miller

Sunday, August 23: ***21st Sunday in Ordinary Time***
8:00AM + Bea & Don Collins

Sunday, August 23: ***21st Sunday in Ordinary Time***
10:45AM ♥ Avila Dooley

+ Deceased **♥ Living**

Readings for the Week

Monday Ez 24:15-23 Dt 32:18-19, 20, 21 Mt 19:16-22
Tuesday Ez 28:1-10 Dt 32:26-27ab, 27cd-28, 30, 35cd-36ab Mt 19:23-30
Wednesday Ez 34:1-11 Ps 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6 Mt 20:1-16
Thursday Ez 36:23-28 Ps 51:12-13, 14-15, 18-19 Mt 22:1-14
Friday Ez 37:1-14 Ps 107:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9 Mt 22:34-40
Saturday Ez 43:1-7ab Ps 85:9ab, 10, 11-12, 13-14 Mt 23:1-12
Sunday Is 22:19-23 Ps 138:1-2, 2-3, 6, 8 Rom 11:33-36 Mt 16:13-20

Parish Calendar

Sunday, August 16 ~ Sunday, August 23

Sunday:
Monday:
Tuesday: **Adoration, 6PM**
Wednesday:
Thursday:
Friday:
Saturday:
Sunday:

Stewardship of God's Gifts

Received Sunday, August 9: $6,279

Facilities Maintenance Fund

Received Sunday, August 9: $725

The type of person I want to focus on is one you already know. He or she may have gone to elementary school with you. Or was it your college roommate? It may be a professional colleague or a fellow parishioner. Or an admired sports hero or a well-known religious leader. Or an honored figure in the world of music or other entertainment. Or one who lives in a foreign country. Or who lives next door. I refer to a person whom you believe to be ever humble.

Consistent with our assessment, this person never seeks the spotlight. They know themselves. Their true colors show especially when they take a courageous public stance. Consider, if you will, the unnamed Canaanite woman who has wound up in today's excerpt from St. Matthew's gospel.

She has a daughter with a serious health problem. As a pagan she has undoubtedly heard the stories of the traveling young Hebrew rabbi named Jesus, and the marvelous curing miracles He has worked. She may have thought to herself: "He might turn me away since I'm a Gentile. But I must try something to help my child." So, she cries out when Jesus drew near her: "Have pity on me, Lord, Son of David!" Giving Jesus those twin titles is itself a tribute to Him.

Jesus' first reaction is silence. The Apostles' first reaction is to chase a pest. Then Jesus speaks and tells the woman that His mission is "limited to Israel. I cannot throw food meant for children to dogs." Then in a response replete with humility she tells Him: "Even dogs eat the scraps fallen from the table." Jesus admires her pluck, her very faith in Him and above all her humility. He heals the woman's daughter immediately.

We learn two truths from this episode. First, the unlimited scope of Christ's earthly mission. It is not for one group, but for all who will listen and accept the truth about God's kingdom. Secondly, we learn the power of humble faith.

A common practice for lots of people is to take "the path of least resistance." Rivers do that. They always travel around a mountain because it is easier than going through one.

Frequently we are like that river. It is easier to sit scrolling through our smartphone getting angry rather than putting the phone down to care for a neighbor's needs. It is easier to get angry at one's mate and let that anger diminish with time rather than to sit down and work out the problem.

But there is one difference between ourselves and that river. It will never have to render an account of what it has done. But we will. Obviously, the better choice in life is to be humble and take the path of persistence. Just ask a certain Canaanite woman.

God love you and give you His peace.

--Rev. Leonard N. Peterson

ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of THOMAS M. SCHAEFFER by the Schaeffer and Reinhart Families.

HOLY NAME CORNER: "IRON SHARPENS IRON"

MEETINGS every third Thursday of the month!

TRAP SHOOT FOR 2026! Saturday August 22, 9AM at the Hamburg Game Assoc., 935 N. 5th St., Hamburg.

EUCHARISTIC ADORATION: A holy hour takes place in the chapel every Tuesday evening from 6PM to 7PM. Mass is then offered at 7PM. This is a simple holy hour (no Benediction).

QUILT NEWS: St. Mary's Quilting Bee is happy to announce the start of our 2026 quilt raffle. We extend our sincere thanks to Phyllis Yoder for donating this quilt from her collection. Tickets are $1.00 each or 6 for $5.00 and are available on the table in front of the quilt display in the side lobby. We also extend our appreciation to Gregory J. Rautzhan Insurance Agency for his generous donation to sponsor the printing of the quilt tickets. The winner will be drawn at our annual Christmas Bazaar on Saturday, November 21. Thanks!

FAITH NIGHTS AT THE HAMBURG STRAND THEATER: All films start at 7PM and are shown on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. Admission is $10 which includes popcorn and soda. Tickets sold at the door only! The next film shown will be *"Unsung Hero"* on September 8. *See flyer on lobby kiosk!*

PRAYER LIST: Let's pray for those in our parish & family community who are sick, recently deceased, or otherwise in need of prayer: TODD GLADFELTER, SHERRY LUDOVICI, CEREGHINI FAMILY, DAVID BACHMAN, TERRY DUNBAR, BETTY & MATTHEW SHAABER, FRICK FAMILY, DIANE OLEXSON, MARCUS KRAMER, JOSHUA & LORI KIDWELL, BOB PALKO, LEO SAUPPEE, MARGARET EBLING, BOB & KATHLEEN LLEWELLYN, MELISSA ENGLEMAN, KRISTIN YATES, RUTH KREMSER, JENNA PIASKOWSKI, LEO MUZOPAPPA FAMILY, THOMAS HOJNOWSKI, SR., THOMAS HOJNOWSKI, JR., JENNIFER MILLER, CLAIRE CRANDALL, CATHY & STACEY MONTES, JOE PEACOCK, LORI ODENATH, SALVATORE SANGUINITO, MICHELLE, ANTHONY SCARNATI, MICHELLE ANTALOSKY, MAHALA WACHTER, CHARLES SNYDER, PATTI GERMANSKI, ALEX VAUPEL, BOB WALLEY, CAROLYN BONKOSKI, CAIT DRISCOLL. Due to privacy laws, the actual person or an immediate family member needs to give us permission for inclusion & remain on the list for 3 mos. *Please let us know when your loved one is better.*

Our Church is meant to be a place of prayer and recollection. Please refrain from conversation while you are inside the church worship space. Thank you for respecting God's house!

DEAR PARISHIONERS:

This is an important time of year to think about OCIA: the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults. OCIA welcomes adults into full communion with the Catholic Church or helps them complete their Christian initiation. It is for several categories of people:

1. People who have never been baptized and feel called to enter the Catholic Church.
2. Christians baptized into other traditions (Lutheran, Presbyterian, Evangelical, etc.) who wish to enter full communion with the Catholic Church.
3. Those who were baptized Catholic, but for one reason or another, were not brought up in the faith.
4. Catholics who were brought up in the faith but for one reason or another did not receive all of the Sacraments of Initiation, such as Confirmation.

Because we are a relatively small parish, OCIA can easily be adapted to each person's needs. If you or someone in your life falls into one of the above categories and has an interest in entering full communion with the Church or completing initiation into the Church, please speak with me.

If there is someone in your life who you think is open to the Catholic faith, consider sharing this information with them. It is a good way to evangelize. Some people are simply waiting to be invited!

--Father Dave

BVM PILGRIM STATUE: August 15-August 22: R&C Dunlap; August 22-August 29: OPEN; August 29-September 5: OPEN. Please call the next host family on the schedule as a courtesy reminder.

PILGRIM STATUE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN: *There are weeks open. If you would like to sign up to have the statue in your home for a week, please call the parish office so that you can schedule a week from those available.*

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

Registrations have gone out for our upcoming 2026-2027 calendar year. All families with children in Preschool through 8th grades are welcome to join us! If you are new to our program, feel free to get in touch with Marie Dooley to complete registration as a new family. Our opening breakfast will be on Sunday, September 13th in the Ave Maria Hall.

POPE LEO'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR THE MONTH:
Let us pray that in large cities often marked by anonymity and loneliness we find new ways to proclaim the Gospel, discovering creative paths to build community.

LIFELINE SCREENING: You're invited to a LifeLine Screening Event, here at St. Mary on Monday, August 31. Screenings will take place for carotid artery disease screening, peripheral artery disease screening, atrial fibrillation screening and abdominal aortic aneurysm screening. *Please see the ad on the lobby kiosk for further information!*

Liturgy Schedule: Weekend of August 22 & 23
4:00PM
Lector: F Kearns; EMs: W Kearns, M Muncy
8:00AM
Lector: E Johnson; EMs: B Malloy, V Bray, N Rogers
10:45AM
Lector: R Nestor; EM: C Weyer, J Copeland, G Braun

RESPECT LIFE CORNER:
"As the family goes, so goes the nation, and so goes the whole world in which we live." – St. Pope John Paul II

CASH & GIFT CARD BINGO! St. Joseph Center for Special Learning, Schuylkill Haven, is having a Bingo event on Sunday, August 16. $1,000 Jackpot! Doors open at 11:30AM, games begin at 1:00PM. For advance tickets ($35), call 570-622-4638 or email ***apeters@stjosephctr.com***. *See flyer on lobby kiosk!*

NOW HIRING AT ST. JOSEPH CENTER FOR SPECIAL LEARNING! St. Joseph Center in Schuylkill Haven is seeking caring, dedicated individuals to join our mission of serving children and adults with diverse abilities in a faith-filled, supportive environment. We are currently hiring for a full-time Special Education Teacher, full-time Direct Service Worker for our Adult Program, part-time Administrative Assistant, part-time Behavioral Health Support, and part-time Teacher Aide positions. If you're looking for a rewarding career where you can make a meaningful difference every day, we'd love to hear from you. To learn more or apply, please visit our website or contact us at (570) 622-4638.

JOIN OUR CHRISTMAS BAZAAR COMMITTEE!
Please contact **BONNIE KATZAMAN** at 610-562-4036 OR email **Btopkat@verizon.net** as soon as possible! We had our first meeting, but look forward to anyone else giving us a hand! NEXT MEETING will be held on **MONDAY, AUGUST 24 AT 6:30PM!**

Our annual HARVEST FEST will take place on Friday, October 2 & Saturday, October 3!!!

HARVEST FEST CORK PULL: Donations of your favorite wine, spirits & beer are now being accepted for the cork pull. All donated items must be valued at $15 or more and may be dropped off during office hours or weekend Masses. Please consider donating! This has been a great addition to Harvest Fest!
RAFFLE AUCTION: Items can be dropped off to the Parish Office during the week or bring them with you to Mass on the weekend! Please make sure that items are attached together with your name, phone number, and value of the gift attached. Please contact Anita Homolo if you have any questions at **launc155@verizon.net**. New, unscratched lottery tickets are also needed!!!
THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE ALREADY DONATED ITEMS!

HARVEST FEST MEETING: Tuesday, August 25 at 7:30PM. All are welcome!

SAVE THE DATE! October 3-9 for this year's ***Eucharistic Rosary Congress Adoration.*** You don't want to miss this blessed experience. More info. will follow shortly. Mark your calendar now.

MSC OKTOBERFEST – October 11, 12:00-5:00pm **at the Reading Liederkranz.** *Hosted by and for the Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.* **Enjoy an authentic German Oktoberfest at the #1 Oktoberfest in the U.S.!** Enjoy live music & dancing with the Josef Kroboth Band from 1PM-4PM. $20 entrance donation online or at the door (under 18 free). Outdoor celebration in a scenic, accessible grove with a HEATED pavilion. Authentic German food & beer ordered by guests at cash/credit food and beverage stands. Raffles. To reserve, sponsor or donate, visit **www.mscreading.org**

Mothers & Daughters, 9-12 Years Old, 1-day Retreat: Milk & Honey, Theology of the Body for Me and Mommy. To be held at St. Benedict Church, Mohnton on Saturday, Sept. 19 at 9AM. See flyer on lobby kiosk!

FATHER, PLEASE TELL US: WATCHING MASS VS. ATTENDING MASS: WHAT'S THE SPIRITUAL DIFFERENCE?

A Catholic woman had been faithfully watching Mass on television every Sunday for several months because she was recovering from surgery. When she finally became well enough to return to church, she told her parish priest: "Father, I enjoyed watching Mass at home, but being here today feels completely different." The priest smiled and replied: "Because today you are not only watching the sacrifice, you are physically participating in it with the Church." ***Many Catholics ask*****:** *"If I can watch Mass online or on television, isn't it the same as attending Mass in person?"*

Technology has become a wonderful blessing. It allows the sick, the elderly, those caring for loved ones, and others who genuinely cannot leave home to unite themselves spiritually with the celebration of the Mass. But the Catholic Church also teaches that there is a profound spiritual difference between watching Mass and being physically present at Mass. To understand why, we need to begin with a story from the Bible:
On the night before He died, Jesus gathered His Apostles in one place...He did not simply ask them to remember Him from a distance. He took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them, saying: *"Do this in memory of me."* (Luke 22:19)
From the very beginning, Christians gathered together to celebrate the Eucharist. The Bible tells us:
"On the first day of the week when we gathered to break bread..." (Acts 20:7) The Eucharist was always celebrated as a real gathering of God's people.

First, Watching Mass Is a Blessing for Those Who Truly Cannot Attend.
The Church encourages those who are sick, homebound, or otherwise unable to attend Mass to unite themselves spiritually by watching a televised or livestreamed Mass.
This can strengthen faith, foster prayer, and help them remain connected with the Church.
It is a beautiful act of devotion when attendance is genuinely impossible.

Second, Watching Mass Is Not the Same as Being Present.
When we attend Mass in person, we participate physically with the worshipping community.
We stand, kneel, sing, listen to God's Word, join in the prayers, and most importantly, when properly disposed, receive Holy Communion. These are gifts that cannot be fully experienced through a screen.

Third, Spiritual Communion Is Different from Sacramental Communion.
When someone watches Mass but cannot receive the Eucharist, the Church encourages making a Spiritual Communion, a heartfelt prayer asking Jesus to come spiritually into one's heart. This is a beautiful devotion.
However, it is not the same as receiving Jesus sacramentally in the Holy Eucharist. The Eucharist remains the source and summit of the Christian life.

Fourth, The Sunday Obligation Still Matters.
When Catholics are healthy and reasonably able to attend Mass, the Church calls them to gather with the community for Sunday worship. Watching Mass from home does not ordinarily fulfill the Sunday obligation when one is capable of attending in person. The obligation exists because Christ calls His people to worship together as one Body.

Fifth, The Mass Is More Than Something We Watch.
The Mass is not a performance. It is the living sacrifice of Christ made present sacramentally. We are not spectators.
We are participants, offering ourselves with Christ to the Father. Being physically present expresses this communion in a unique way.

Finally, watching Mass is a wonderful gift for those who truly cannot attend because of illness, age, or other serious reasons. It helps them remain spiritually united with the Church. However, when we are able to attend in person, the Church teaches that nothing can replace physically participating in the Eucharistic celebration and, when properly prepared, receiving Holy Communion. The Mass is not simply something to watch, it is the greatest act of worship in which Christ invites us to participate.

In simple words, is watching Mass good? Yes, especially if you are sick or genuinely unable to go to church. But if you are able to attend, Jesus invites you to be there in person. Watching helps you pray. Attending allows you to participate fully in the Eucharist and receive Him in Holy Communion. That is the spiritual difference.
Now you know.

formed
Forming Catholics for Life.

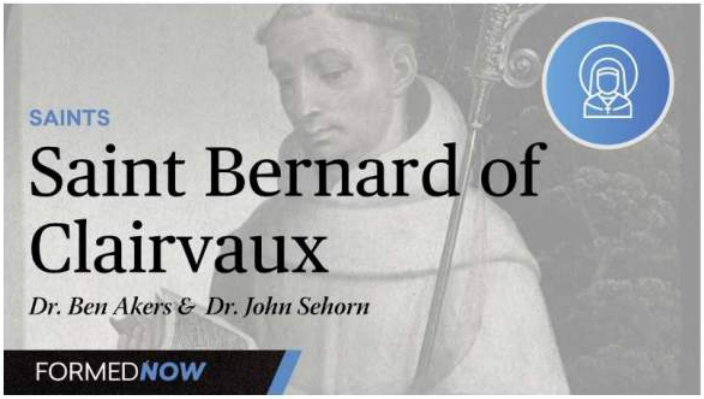
Pope Saint Pius X | Catholic Saints

Join Dr. Ben Akers with Lucas Pollice as they discuss the life of Pope St. Pius X and his work to restore all things in Christ.

Our parish has a free Formed subscription for you!
Simply scan the QR code or visit formed.org/signup
to create your account and select our parish
to get free access to this content and much more!

An offering from the Augustine Institute

formed
Forming Catholics for Life.



Saint Bernard of Clairvaux | Catholic Saints

Who was St. Bernard of Clairvaux? In this FORMED Now episode, Dr. Ben Akers is joined by Dr. John Sehorn to discuss this great saint and Doctor of the Church.

Our parish has a free Formed subscription for you!
Simply scan the QR code or visit formed.org/signup
to create your account and select our parish
to get free access to this content and much more!

An offering from the Augustine Institute

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.

Compliments of
Kuhn Funeral Home & Crematory, INC.
MICHAEL R. KUHN, SUPERVISOR
38-40 South Fourth Street
Hamburg PA 19526
www.kuhnfuneralhomes.com
610-562-2955
formerly Burkey & Driscoll Funeral Home

From Small to LARGE- We have Them!
KANTNER'S TIRE SERVICE INC
• Passenger • Truck
• Agriculture • Off Road
Mon.-Fri. 7:30-5:00
Closed Sat. & Sun.
230 Franklin Street
Shoemakersville, PA
610-562-2567 | www.kantnerstire.com

Richard L. Geschwindt
Attorney at Law
203 E. Noble Avenue
Shoemakersville, PA 19555
610-562-7125

TOM SCHAEFFER'S CAMPING & TRAVEL CENTER INC.
Route 61 Shoemakersville
610-562-3071
Huge New & Pre-Enjoyed RV Inventory
Selling fun for over 70 years!
www.tomschaeffers.com

LITTLE FEATHER CLEANING CO.
(484) 575-1822
LittleFeatherCleaning.com
RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL CLEANING SERVICES

HAHN EXTERIORS
Decks • Fences • Sunrooms • Windows • Siding
Honest High Quality Work For St. Mary's Families
3617 Kutztown Rd., Laureldale
610-929-2832
www.hahnexteriors.com

610-926-2737
PEACH TREE
Cremation Services, LLC
Compassionate Pet Cremation
• Local Family Owned & Operated
• Affordable
~Tell Your Vet About Us~
223 Peach Street • Leesport, PA 19533
www.peachtreecremationservices.com • peachtreecremationservices@gmail.com

TAYLOR FERRETTI REALTOR
kw PLATINUM REALTY KELLERWILLIAMS
TaylorFerrettiRealtor@gmail.com
Your Trusted Source in Real Estate
C: 610.763.6627
O: 610.898.1441

Home Care is Better... when people care
We Care!
Age in Place Home Care
When Quality and Dependability Matter Most
www.AIPHC.com • 888-990-4555

Leibensperger FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
OUR FAMILY SERVING YOUR FAMILY SINCE 1935
www.leibenspergerfuneralhomes.com
Donna M. Leibensperger Parr, Funeral Director / Supervisor
Derek M.D. Leibensperger, Funeral Director / Supervisor
Todd J. Kennedy, Funeral Director
65 South 4th Street • Hamburg, PA 19526 • 610.562.7823
223 Peach Street • Leesport, PA 19533 • 610.926.2737

Leesport DINER
5407 Pottsville Pike - Leesport
484-277-7114
open 7 days a week
Unlimited Soup & Salad Bar
Featuring Peel-&-Eat Shrimp
3 Soups Made On-Site Daily
Decadent Desserts • Daily Specials
Breakfast All Day • Gift Certificates
Order Online
SCAN ME!

ASK #WHATS MY NAME
in remembrance of samantha josephson
BEFORE YOU GET IN A RIDE SHARE
SAMI
STOP | ASK
MATCH | INFORM

Walters Monument/Mountain Memorials
314 Tremont Road, Pine Grove, PA • 348 E White Street, Summit Hill, PA
Creating Unique and Lasting Tributes
Cemetery Memorials • Cremation Memorials • Mausoleums
Pet Markers • On-Site Engraving & Headstone Restoration
Call For An Appointment Office (570) 645-3415 Cell (272) 900-2312

Pray for Peace

American Red Cross
Someone Needs You!
VOLUNTEER
and make a difference.

LifeTree MEDICINE
Lifestyle Medicine
Education Programs
Preoperative Medical Consultations
Internal Medicine Consultations
A Lifestyle Medicine Practice

Dr. Jeanne Gricoski
Multiple Locations
Video Visits Available
Call for appointment
570-516-9647

Finding FOBER
FREE DOWNLOAD!
CONNECTING LOCALLY TRUSTED BUSINESSES WHO SUPPORT OUR PARISH AND THE COMMUNITY.

MALLORY'S ARMY® Foundation
United Together In The Fight Against Bullying...
Don't Just Teach Kindness... BE KINDNESS!
www.MallorysArmy.org
(973) 440-8657 | info@mallorysarmy.org
It's easy to join our mailing list!
Just send your email address by text message:
Text MALLORYSARMY to 22828 to get started.
Message and data rates may apply.

INCREASE YOUR VISIBILITY IN THE COMMUNITY
Place Your Ad Here to Support Our Parish!
CONTACT ME
Michele Barron
mbarron@jppc.net
484.300.2062

catholicmatch® Pennsylvania

CatholicMatch.com/datePA

Stoudt Orthopedics
Dr. Calvin D. Stoudt
Orthopedic Specialist

• Board Certified Orthopedic Surgeon
• General Orthopedics
• Specializing in Knee and Hip Arthroplasty
• Sports Medicine
Providing Quality Orthopedic Care To Our Community For 27 Years
700 Schuylkill Manor Rd., Ste. 1
Pottsville, Pennsylvania 17901
570-622-5672