



# St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Community

Madison Heights, MI [www.stvincentferrer.net](http://www.stvincentferrer.net)

AUGUST 25, 2024 † TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

## From The Pastor

I am convinced that Jesus is the holy one of God. With conviction and confidence I claim and accept Jesus as the Christ sent into the world by God for its redemption and reconciliation from the death of sin. I make this conviction of faith in the awareness of my dependence on the mercy and justice of God in light of my personal weakness and the tension of sin that leans against me.

This expression of faith gives me a confidence and clarity of who I am in the world and what the purpose and intention of my life is. Despite the weakness and failures that are mine, and will be mine through the course of my earthly existence, I am convinced that the mercy of God through the redemption of Jesus will triumph over these failures. I am convinced that there is life after we die in the body. I believe in eternal life with God in heaven with all the angels and saints and all my loved ones who have preceded me.

The faith I hold gives me great consolation in times of trial, fear, failure, and the inevitable threats that come with life. I work to be a truth based person. This means that I believe in the truth of love and try, to my best ability, to live my life with love. I strive to be honest with myself about who I am, and who I am not. I try to integrate the good, the bad, and the unknowns of my life under the authority of God revealed in Jesus. I find this self-honesty a challenge that needs attention, but it is also a great consolation and security in my identity with God. As was once said to me, if there were an eleventh commandment it would be; thou shalt not lie to yourself.

I believe in the power of grace, particularly in the Sacraments of the Church. I personally experience and claim that grace in my life and in my ministry. Through regular prayer I experience the care and direction of God's love. I experience God hearing my prayer and giving me an answer. Sometimes the answer is silence, sometimes it is what I asked for, and sometimes it is something else. Even when I fail, and repent my sins I experience the presence and the action of God. My faith gives me peace, hope, and joy. I would never want to lose it.

I share this witness with you as a response to the readings today. The first reading and the gospel call for a decision; a choice for God the Lord, or a choice for some other god through idolatry. Faith is a decision; one that calls for clarity and commitment. Saying yes to God in Christ does not mean a life full of virtue, right living, or freedom from the pain and disappointment of life. Faith means that in the midst of the challenges of life, and there will be many, a person surrenders in trust to the truth of God who is Love. Failure is allowed because love triumphs with mercy for those who reverence and honor the Lord of all.

“...as for me and my house we will serve the Lord.”

This conviction of faith comes from Joshua as he leads the Israelites into the land of Canaan given them by God. The current residents of Canaan follow many false gods and idols. Joshua makes it clear that God alone is the Lord and calls for the faith conviction of those who seek to serve the living God.

The gospel follows on last week when many came to doubt and reject eating the body and blood of Jesus. For those who remain Jesus calls the question, “Do you also want to leave?” It is Peter who replies, “Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and we are convinced that you are the Holy One of God.”

Life decisions are hard to make because it means a commitment. Culturally, there seems to be an inability or unwillingness on the part of many to make long term commitments. This is seen in the realm of marriage, and in a clear commitment to a life of faith in God. I won't presume to know the underlying reason for this cultural shift. Has the secular nature of society weakened our capacity to make and accept the commitment of faith in an ultimate reality we cannot directly see or prove? Is it a fear of failure, resistance to the rules of religion, perceived loss of personal freedom, laziness, apathy, waiting for something better to come along, or truly a disbelief in a higher being as the Truth of Love?

There is little doubt that it is difficult to have and hold faith in today's world. That should tell us the necessity and wisdom of the very faith that is so readily resisted. The wisdom of faith helps us know who we are. Faith teaches us who God is, and who we are called to be in relation to the God who made us. Working to know and trust in a God of love, mercy, and truth becomes a secure foundation to develop self-love. Self-love is the foundation which can lead to a meaningful and fruitful life. Finding a secure self-love and identity through our secular culture is a minefield of false hope, idle promises, and regular disappointments. Seeking the truth of God in love, experienced in the person of Jesus will teach us why we believe, and why we are drawn to God in the first place. Human beings have a deep inner need and longing for love because we have been created by a God of love who seeks our unity and oneness with the Divine self of Love. This decision for love and its commitment is hard at times, and it is life-long. Secular pleasures and false gods abound to tempt our inclination to seek an easier way. Inevitably there will be some trial and error along the way. In the end, true faith finds its home in the love of God revealed and given in Christ Jesus. As for me and my house, I will serve the Lord; holding to the light of hope in the promise of eternal life.

Father John Esper

# Liturgical Schedule

## DAILY MASS

8:00am Monday thru Thursday

## WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday - 4:00pm

Sunday - 9:00am

Church doors open 1/2 hour before Mass begins

## SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturdays 3:00 - 3:45pm  
in the Chapel

Live Streaming of Mass  
Monday thru Thursday 8:00am  
and Sunday 9:00am

Adoration on Tuesdays  
8:45am to 10:00am

Livestream of Rosary on  
Thursday following Mass

LIVE  
STREAMING

Search for St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Church (in Madison Heights) on youtube to find our channel or connect via our APP or website

# Contact Information

## ST VINCENT FERRER PARISH OFFICE

28353 Herbert St., Madison Heights, MI 48071  
248-542-8720 Fax 248-542-8721  
Website: www.stvincentferrer.net

### PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Thursday  
9am to Noon - 1:00pm to 4:30pm,  
Closed Friday, Saturday & Sunday

### Parish Office Staff

Reverend John C. Esper, Priest in Solidum  
Deborah Tourville, Bus. Mgr/Adult Faith Formation  
Sheryl Brown, Parish Secretary/Bulletin  
Jim Balistreri, Music Coordinator  
Mary Ann Przybysz, Evangelical Charity Coordinator/  
Order of Christian Initiation of Adults(OCIA) Coordinator  
Carl Copen, Facilities Supervisor  
Alex Mototolea, Maintenance

### Faith Formation Office 248-398-1743

Matthew Zinser, Childhood Faith Formation Coordinator

For information on Baptisms, OCIA and  
Funerals contact the Parish Office 248-542-8720



## MONDAY, August 26, 2024

8:00am Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer

## TUESDAY, August 27, 2024

8:00am Mass: Christopher Hudy (Special Intention)  
req. by Mom

## WEDNESDAY, August 28, 2024

8:00am Mass: Joseph Pantano† req. by Family

## THURSDAY, August 29, 2024

8:00am Mass: Vincas Mickevicius (37th R.A.) req. by  
Regina Juska-Svoba

## SATURDAY, August 31, 2024

4:00pm Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer  
Dianne Karolski† req. by Barbara Batchik  
Peter Conway (Special Intention) req. by Mom

## SUNDAY, September 1, 2024

9:00am Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer  
Joseph Dong Kim Pham† req. by Family



# Readings for the Week

## August 25, 2024

- Sunday: Jos 24:1-2a, 15-17, 18b/Ps 34:2-3, 16-17, 18-19, 20-21, 22-23 (9a)/ Eph 5:21-32 or 5:2a, 25-32/Jn 6:60-69
- Monday: 2 Thes 1:1-5, 11-12/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 4-5/Mt 23:13-22
- Tuesday: 2 Thes 2:1-3a, 14-17/Ps 96:10, 11-12, 13/Mt 23:23-26
- Wednesday: 2 Thes 3:6-10, 16-18/Ps 128:1-2, 4-5/Mt 23:27-32
- Thursday: 1 Cor 1:1-9/Ps 145:2-3, 4-5, 6-7/Mk 6:17-29
- Friday: 1 Cor 1:17-25/Ps 33:1-2, 4-5, 10-11/Mt 25:1-13
- Saturday: 1 Cor 1:26-31/Ps 33:12-13, 18-19, 20-21/Mt 25:14-30
- Next Sunday: Dt 4:1-2, 6-8/Ps 15:2-3, 3-4, 4-5 1a/Jas 2:1-5/Jas 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27/Mk 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

**HEALING MASS  
NEXT SATURDAY**

**AUGUST 31, 2024 - 4:00pm**

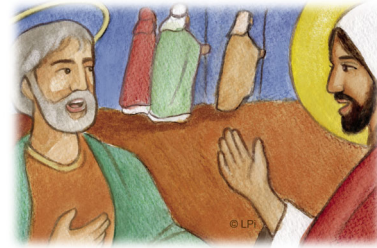
Fr. John will administer the Sacrament of the Sick after Mass. Prayer teams will be available for individual prayer.



Anointing of the Sick

**INTERGENERATIONAL HEALING MASS IN SEPTEMBER**

See Page 7 for details.



**21<sup>st</sup>  
Sunday in  
Ordinary  
Time**

The famous Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoyevsky said, “Love in action is a harsh and dreadful thing.” In the Gospel reading this week, Jesus does something harsh and dreadful — he watches his own disciples abandon him. What could possibly be loving about that?

Well, we notice the context is Jesus’ teaching about eating and drinking his body and blood. His followers hear this and say, “**This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?**” (John 6:60). We shouldn’t imagine we’d do anything different, because not even the ones who stay, like Peter, seem to understand what Jesus is saying. Then we hear this devastating line, “**Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him**” (John 6:66). Besides the night of the Last Supper, only now do Jesus’ disciples abandon him. And, painfully, Jesus just lets them go.

The best way to make sense out of this is love. Jesus is God’s love in action. He wants to become one with those whom He loves. He wants to love them as His own body. Yes, the oneness manifested in the Eucharist sounds harsh and dreadful because it is rooted in love which is willing to risk abandonment and separation to attain its goal: to be one body with the beloved. It is both terrifying and wonderful that Jesus will risk losing us in order to be one with us. Our response? Lord, we cannot grasp a love so great, but please help us never to abandon it, either.

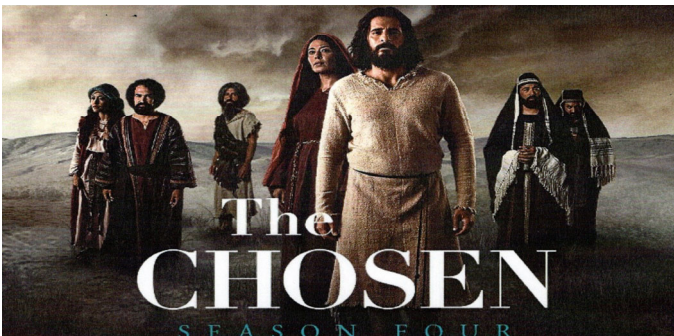
— Father John Muir  
©L.Pi



Please help us reach our goal of \$88,000.

\$68,560.34 pledged so far

Thank you to all who have already made contributions or pledges to CSA 2024. We continue to accept contributions and pledges to help reach our fundraising goal of \$ 88,000.00. Donate online at [www.stvincentferrer.net](http://www.stvincentferrer.net). If mailing contribution, follow the instructions on the pledge card and use the return envelope provided in the packet. **Checks need to be payable to Archdiocese of Detroit-CSA and mailed to the AOD gift center in Albert Lea, MN.**



**Experience the Life of Jesus  
Wednesdays  
Sept. 26 & Oct. 2, 9, 16  
11:30am to 2:00pm  
SVF Administration Bldg.  
Season 4 of the TV Series will be  
shown, followed by discussion  
Lunch will be served  
RSVP in the Parish Office  
or call 248-542-8720**



**Decorating Prayer  
Blanket Squares**

Calling all artists, crafters, and creative people. The Prayer Blanket Ministry will resume again the 4th Thursday of September. We are in need of decorated squares for the blankets. Please find the pre-cut fabric squares in a basket under the crucifix on the Herbert side entrance of the church. There are instructions in the basket as well. You can use markers made for fabric, embroidery, or iron on decorations. The decorated squares can be placed in the basket marked "Decorated Squares." May God bless you for your service.

## To Whom Shall We Go?

by Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

A friend of mine, who is a far better Christian than I can ever hope to be, once shared with me that her family sneers at her belief system and lifestyle.

She believes in fairy tales they tell her. She's looking for simple solutions from a kind-faced man in the sky because she doesn't want to grapple with complicated answers to complicated problems.

Religion, they argue, is the easy way out.

As she spoke about this, her voice became unsteady. Not with anger, but with emotion. "I would never call this life easy," she said. "If I was looking for something that was easy, I wouldn't choose Catholicism."

What was unspoken was *why* she has chosen Catholicism. I know the answer, but only because I know her. I knew her before she chose it wholeheartedly, and I know her now, and I see the difference. I see that these words are written so clearly across the days of her life: "Master, to whom shall we go?"

Once the truth is known in your soul, you see, it can never be unknown.

Following Christ is not about easy answers and simple teachings. Sure, it all sounds very basic: love one another as I have loved you. What could be more straightforward?

But what does that mean? What does that look like in daily, modern life, in a world full of the fallen, whose flaws have given us rough edges and weakened wills?

I'll tell you what it looks like — it looks like a struggle. It looks like failure and mess and confusion and losing your way and finding it again, all because you remembered that within you there is a compass pointing due north. It's a constant state of wandering in the dark, following a Voice that asks you to go where you're afraid to go. And you follow the Voice not because it's the only voice there is and not because it's the voice that says what you want to hear, but because it's the only one that speaks the truth, and the truth pulls on you in a way you can't quite resist.

When Christ asks, "Do you also want to leave?" he is not gaslighting us. It's a genuine question. We are free to go. We are not prisoners.

But we have heard the words of everlasting life, and now we can only have peace if we follow where they lead.

***"As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord." — Joshua 24:15***

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*...all government leaders to seek wisdom in finding peaceful solutions to world wars and tensions.*  
*...medical and humanitarian aid for those suffering from hardship due to catastrophic weather, fires, wars, floods, earthquakes and disasters.*  
*...the safety of men and women dedicated to protecting lives and freedom.*  
*...the homeless, the addicted and all who are suffering physically, spiritually, mentally, and emotionally.*  
*...all who are sick, homebound, undergoing or recovering from surgery, medical procedures, treatments or testing, and those who have made specific prayer requests.*

*Lord Jesus,*

*You are the Divine Physician and Healer. To You, we lift up in prayer all who are lonely, homeless, sick or addicted; all who are unemployed or underemployed; all who are anxious or depressed and all who are suffering in any way spiritually, physically or emotionally. In their pain and brokenness, we ask that you bring them the comfort of your loving presence. In You, may they find strength for the day and hope for the journey. Amen*

Dear Parishioners,

I hope your summer is going well! As the summer comes to an end and the school year begins, we are continuing preparations for the start of religious education/faith formation classes at St. Vincent Ferrer. Last year, we had 25 students in our program, and I know there could be many more, but for that to happen I need your help.



I'm asking all St. Vincent Ferrer parishioners to invite their Catholic neighbors (who have children in grades 1-8) to join our religious education program. Many times all it takes is a personal invitation and sharing of information for people to sign up. Classes are on Monday evenings from 6:15-7:30 pm beginning on September 23rd. If you know of anyone, please ask them to call or text me at (646) 369-8619 with questions or to sign up.

I thank you in advance for your help in spreading the news about our program, and God-willing helping it grow.

Sincerely,  
Matthew Zinser

## WHY DO WE DO THAT? CATHOLIC LIFE EXPLAINED

### FAITH IN MARRIAGE

**Question:**

What kind of religious practices should we begin, once we marry, to help us practice our faith each day?

**Answer:**

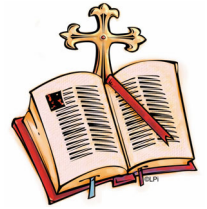
Your spiritual life as a couple is important. The sacrament of Marriage is a gift and a grace, but living it well isn't always easy! It requires intentionality and perseverance. Growing your spiritual life as a couple also requires a plan. Life can be incredibly busy. There's never "enough time" for everything we want to do. But we can live by our priorities. If we don't prioritize prayer, we'll find it slowly disappear from our lives.

If you're not already praying individually, that's a good place to start. If your schedules are similar, take some quiet time at the same time to help hold each other accountable. Praying together is also important! You could start by looking at the religious practices of your family and of families around you that you respect. Talk with your spouse about the ones who make the deepest impression on you or were most meaningful when you were young. Think about what you want your future children to experience. Making faith a commitment now will mean it is engrained habit when you grow your family. Ultimately, these faith practices should help us grow in our love for God and for one another.

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### MEN'S FELLOWSHIP & SCRIPTURE REFLECTION

Saturday, August 31st at 9am  
Faith Formation Office in School



The men's fellowship group gathers for a scripture reflection/sharing every other Saturday. All men are welcome. No fees or registration are required.

### QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK FOR REFLECTION

**First Reading:** Jos 24:1-2a, 15-17, 18b

Upon entering the Promised Land and remembering the Exodus from Egypt, both Joshua and all twelve tribes of Israel pledged their faithful to God alone. What has God done in your life that you can acknowledge and celebrate?

**Second Reading:** Eph 5:21-32 or 5:2a, 25-32

Toward the end of his letter to the Ephesians, Paul takes up the topic of husbands and wives. He speaks of the importance of mutual respect and love. What do you add as key parts for a successful marriage?

**Gospel:** Jn 6:60-69

John tells us that many of Jesus's disciples stopped following him because they found some of his teachings too hard to accept. What keeps you following Jesus?

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## Ministry Schedule

August 31/September 1, 2024

Mass	4:00pm	9:00am
Sacristan	P Miles	T Karolski
Reader #1	M Simmons	L Yolkievicz
Reader #2	D Tourville	T Karolski
EME	M Simmons	L Yolkievicz
	T Riley	A Goll
	D Tourville	R Grant
Greeters	L Collins	D Vu
	M Smith	B Turchin
	R Bertolini	P Rarus
	Volunteer	T Lane

Traveling Chalice Host beginning week of Aug. 31/Sept 1  
Tom Karolski

## GETTING TO KNOW OUR SAINTS



**ST. JUSTIN MARTYR | JUNE 1  
(c. 100 – 165)**

St. Justin Martyr was born in Samaria in the town of Flavia Neapolis to Greek parents. Justin's education was a classical mix of history, poetry, rhetoric, and philosophy. The future saint was fascinated by philosophy and studied in the various schools from stoicism to Socratic and Pythagoras to Platonic. Although he favored the Platonic school, he felt that the philosophical schools were missing something.

Justin continued to seek a higher truth. He was struck by the Christians he saw being persecuted for their beliefs. He observed these early martyrs go to their deaths fearlessly and wondered at the truth and peace they carried. He met an old man who spoke to him of the prophecies of the Jewish people and of Christianity. These powerful witnesses worked a conversion in Justin, and he was baptized around the age of 30.

The saint was most likely an ordained deacon, spending time at Ephesus with the Jewish population, and in Rome. He is most well known as the author of apologies, or explanations, of the early Church. These important texts give detailed descriptions of the early Church. The elements of faith and the Mass he gives correlate directly to how Catholic's believe and practice today. His witness also shows that the Church of the second century read from the same texts as we do, he mentions the first three Gospels, the letters of Paul and 1 Peter, and is the first known to quote the Acts of the Apostles.

Eventually, Justin's evangelical activity caused him to be arrested in the reign of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius in 165. He, along with six companions, was scourged and beheaded by Rusticus, a prefect of Rome. An eyewitness account of his martyrdom still survives. St. Justin Martyr, pray for us!

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## OUR 2,000 YEAR TRADITION

*An excerpt from St. Justin Martyr's First Apology...*

"No one may share the Eucharist with us unless he believes that what we teach is true, unless he is washed in the regenerating waters of baptism for the remission of his sins, and unless he lives in accordance with the principles given us by Christ.

We do not consume the eucharistic bread and wine as if it were ordinary food and drink, for we have been taught that as Jesus Christ our Savior became a man of flesh and blood by the power of the Word of God, so also the food that our flesh and blood assimilates for its nourishment becomes the flesh and blood of the incarnate Jesus by the power of his own words contained in the prayer of thanksgiving.

The apostles, in their recollections, which are called gospels, handed down to us what Jesus commanded them to do. They tell us that he took bread, gave thanks and said: Do this in memory of me. This is my body. In the same way he took the cup, he gave thanks and said: This is my blood. The Lord gave this command to them alone. Ever since then we have constantly reminded one another of these things. The rich among us help the poor and we are always united. For all that we receive we praise the Creator of the universe through his Son Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit.

On Sunday we have a common assembly of all our members, whether they live in the city or the outlying districts. The recollections of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as there is time. When the reader has finished, the president of the assembly speaks to us; he urges everyone to imitate the examples of virtue we have heard in the readings. Then we all stand up together and pray.

On the conclusion of our prayer, bread and wine and water are brought forward. The president offers prayers and gives thanks to the best of his ability, and the people give assent by saying, "Amen". The eucharist is distributed, everyone present communicates, and the deacons take it to those who are absent.

The wealthy, if they wish, may make a contribution, and they themselves decide the amount. The collection is placed in the custody of the president, who uses it to help the orphans and widows and all who for any reason are in distress, whether because they are sick, in prison, or away from home. In a word, he takes care of all who are in need.

We hold our common assembly on Sunday because it is the first day of the week, the day on which God put darkness and chaos to flight and created the world, and because on that same day our savior Jesus Christ rose from the dead. For he was crucified on Friday and on Sunday he appeared to his apostles and disciples and taught them the things that we have passed on for your consideration."

## Observances for the Week

Sunday: 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Tuesday: St. Monica  
 Wednesday: St. Augustine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church  
 Thursday: The Passion of St. John the Baptist  
 Next Sunday: 22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

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## INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

Many followers of Jesus could not accept his teachings. To those that remained, he posed a simple question: "Do you also want to leave?" He asks us the same, every moment of every day. Let us answer with confidence, in all that we do: "Only you have the words of eternal life."

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# Save THE Date!

## INTERGENERATIONAL HEALING MASS Tuesday, Sept. 10th - 7pm

Because of the fall of Adam and Eve, humanity has been affected by sin in each generation. Just as physical characteristics, types of behavior and health, each with good and bad qualities, are passed down through generational lines, so too is our spiritual inheritance. This spiritual inheritance from the blessings and sins of our ancestors can be found in Scripture. ( Deut 27-29)

Through extensive penitential prayer petitions and the power of Jesus in the Eucharist, an Intergenerational Healing Mass can help stop the negative effects of past sin and bring healing and peace to the minds, bodies and spirits of current and future generations.

**ALL ARE WELCOME**

### INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES ARE NEEDED TO HOST THE TRAVELING VOCATIONS CHALICE



Please commit to hosting the Traveling Vocations Chalice for one week. Prayers come with the chalice. Sign up sheets are at the table outside the chapel wall near the Herbert door entrance.



## FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP GIVING - WEEK ENDING AUGUST 18/19, 2024

Fiscal Year 7-1-24 to 6-30-25	Budgeted	Actual	Over/Under	YTD
Offertory Env. Used & e-fund participants	245	81		
Offertory	\$ 5,185.00	\$ 5,233.87	48.87	2,294.54
Energy, Coffee/Donuts, Flowers/Trees, Candles, Mass Intentions	472.00	298.00	(174.00)	(995.00)
Fundraising: includes Budget Deficit envelope, CSA returned	1,673.00	*3,992.50	2,319.50	3,225.34
Bequests				110.00
AOD Collections:				
Holy Days: Assumption		925.00		1,112.00
CSA2024 Pledged 68,560.34 *includes 3,852.50 CSA return				Paid 59,887.84