



St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Community

Madison Heights, MI www.stvincentferrer.net

AUGUST 24, 2025 + TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

From The Pastor

It is frequently said that to find the right answer one must ask the right question. It seems clear that as Jesus was teaching and preaching about the Kingdom of God, the wrong question is, 'how many will be saved.'

One might wonder what inspired such a question. Jesus himself must be a little befuddled, if not agitated by the inquiry. He is presenting the reality and invitation of God in one way, yet it inspires a question of when and how many. The question comes from a worldly perspective. The bottom line of the question is really asking; will I be saved? What must I do to be saved?

What does it mean to be 'saved'? In most Christian denominations, including Catholicism, to be saved means to accept Christ as Savior and Lord in a committed personal way. The means of expression vary among churches, but the essential understanding is to accept the salvation of God revealed and given through the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

This is a simple and social understanding of salvation. In basic terms, it expresses one's belief and allegiance to the person of God in Christ. It is clear from the gospel today that an allegiance by association is not enough; this is not what it means to be saved. One is not saved by association.

The parties in the gospel seem to imply this very thing with Jesus. 'We ate and drank in your company, and you taught in our streets.' Could this kind of association mean that one is saved? It does not.

The word salvation comes from the Latin form of *halus*, which means health or wholeness. To be saved means I accept the redemption of Christ with an active desire to be in a living relationship with the Lord Jesus. Wholeness does not mean perfection. It means that through the dying and rising of Jesus, I am free to accept and love my whole self, both the good and the imperfect in me. This is not a relationship of generic association, but one of deep knowing and sharing of life with God through Christ.

This is the kind of knowing to which we are called. Such a relationship with Jesus is to know him and to be known by him; to love him and allow him to love me. In this knowing and loving of Christ, I begin to experience the fruit of my redemption through personal experience. This is what it means to be saved in a personal sense. Accepting my human nature, sinful and redeemed, I can allow the love of

God to transform my life. In faith, I do not have to beg the Lord to open the door for me. The door is open because God/Christ recognizes me as one of his own. I will reap the fruit of His friendship which includes mercy, the forgiveness of the Cross, and a place at the table in the Kingdom. This is not my doing, it is God's gift. Mine is to offer a willing yes, surrendering with confidence to the truth and promise of faith.

Jesus instructs his listeners to 'strive to enter through the narrow gate.' Relationships take effort. To be in an active, mature, and confident relationship one strives to be alert and attentive to the other. This is more than a pleasant acquaintance, or one that merely seeks to gain favor. To know someone and to be known by them takes time and effort calling for honesty, and a sincere willingness to share oneself with the other. This striving comes from the grace of the Holy Spirit drawing us to Jesus.

The effort of this striving is the narrow gate. Many want to share the fullness of the Lord, but few take the time to follow the path of active friendship with God. Many take this to mean staying on the 'straight and narrow' in keeping moral laws. This is not the case as proven by the Lord's interaction with the Scribes and Pharisees and their justification through the Law alone. It is not just about laws and rules. It is about love and relationship. Living in right relationship with God through Jesus will lead to a moral life. In times of sin or failure, one can humbly approach Jesus seeking mercy and forgiveness.

To be saved is to be safe in Christ. This safety is the confidence and surety of faith in an open and trusting friendship with God. Surety in the Lord leads to a healthy manner of life that moves toward the wholeness and completeness that God intends for us in Christ. This is salvation: to know and to be known by Jesus, placing all our hope and trust in him. To know Jesus is to strive to be like Jesus. Through the dying and rising of Jesus for our sake, he would never say to a believer seeking the Kingdom, 'I do not know you.'

Feed your faith through sincere prayer, confident hope, and engaging actions of love. Believing, trusting, and living in love will make the presence of the Lord evident and joyful. Wherever you are, God will always be.

Father John Esper

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

DAILY MASS

8:00am Monday thru Thursday

WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday - 4:00pm

Sunday - 9:00am

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturdays 3:00 - 3:45pm
in 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
Thursdays following Mass

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



MONDAY, August 25, 2025

8:00am Mass: Jerome Esper† req. by Family

TUESDAY, August 26, 2025

8:00am Mass: Clergy in our Family of Parishes

WEDNESDAY, August 27, 2025

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

THURSDAY, August 28, 2025

8:00am Mass: Angeline Lopez† req. by Family

SATURDAY, August 30, 2025

4:00pm Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer
Vincas Mickevicius (38th R.A.) req. by Regina Juska-Svoba

JoAnn Rearick (for health) req. by Mary Beth & Bill Hochstetler

SUNDAY, August 31, 2025

9:00am Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer
Bernadette Gutowski (for healing) req. by Mary Beth & Bill Hochstetler

Dianne Karolski† req. by Tom Karolski

Joseph Dong Kim Pham† req. by Family

Leonette & Bob Ciepielowski (55th Wedding Anniv.) req. by Bernadette Gutowski

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 SUMMER 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
Matthew Zinser, Evangelical Charity Coordinator/
Order of Christian Initiation of Adults(OCIA) Coordinator
Carl Copen, Facilities Supervisor
Alex Mototolea, Maintenance

FAITH FORMATION OFFICE

248-542-8720 – call for appointment

Matthew Zinser, Childhood Faith Formation Coordinator

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

August
Month
of



READINGS FOR THE WEEK

August 24, 2025

Sunday: Is 66:18-21/Ps 117:1, 2 (Mk 16:15)/
Heb 12:5-7, 11-13/Lk 13:22-30

Monday: 1 Thes 1:1-5, 8b-10/Ps 149:1b-2, 3-4, 5-6a and 9b/Mt 23:13-22

Tuesday: 1 Thes 2:1-8/Ps 139:1-3, 4-6/Mt 23:23-26

Wednesday: 1 Thes 2:9-13/Ps 139:7-8, 9-10, 11-12ab/Mt 23:27-32

Thursday: 1 Thes 3:7-13/Ps 128:1-2, 4-5/Mt 24:42-51

Friday: 1 Thes 4:1-8 (429)/Ps 97:1 and 2b, 5-6, 10, 11-12/Mk 6:17-29

Saturday: 1 Thes 4:9-11/Ps 98:1, 7-8, 9/Mt 25:14-30

Next Sunday: Sir 3:17-18, 20, 28-29/Ps 15:2-3, 3-4, 4-5 (1a)/Heb 12:18-19, 22-24a/Lk 14:1, 7-14



Anointing of the Sick

HEALING MASS NEXT SATURDAY

AUGUST 31, 2025 - 4:00pm

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

THIS MONDAY COME PRAY THE ROSARY

**Administration Bldg. Patio
August 25, 2025 - 7pm**



The Immaculata prayer group invites all to join them on the Administration Building Patio to pray the Holy Rosary this Monday. The Immaculata group prayers will be prayed at 6:30pm and the rosary will begin at 7:00 pm. Please bring your own lawn chair, a rosary, your prayer intentions, and, if needed, a bottle of water. No rosary? We will provide one. Don't know the prayers? Come and learn.

AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE HEALING CHRIST

**A Manresa Silent Healing Retreat
Friday to Sunday - September 12-14**

There are quiet places in our hearts where we have placed doubts, memories, fears and hurts which need the loving hand of Jesus to heal. Receive His embrace during a precious few days of quiet and serenity. It is a place of peace where we can light a path which can lead to freedom, forgiveness, healing. God is waiting for you. Don't miss the invitation.

Directors:
Fr. John Esper &
Debbie Tourville



Weekend schedule: Registration, Friday 5:00pm
(Dinner 6:30pm)

Closure of Retreat: Sunday at Noon

A nonrefundable deposit of \$50 is required
for this retreat

You may register on line at www.manresa-sj.org
For more information call 248.644.4933

Intergenerational Healing Mass

Tuesday, September 9th—7:00pm

Rev. John Esper - Celebrant

Intergenerational healing involves understanding how the wounds and sins from previous generations can affect individuals in the present.

The liturgy of the Mass does not change except for an extended period of petitions. The petitions are intended to identify and bind the various bondages caused by generational sin in order to heal any spiritual, physical or mental maladies that have been passed down.

Anointing of the Sick is not part of this liturgy.

DEMENTIA AND HOMELIFE

TUESDAY, SEPT. 16TH - 7-8:30PM

PRESENTER: MARIE SANKUER

CERTIFIED DEMENTIA PRACTITIONER & PARISH MEMBER

PRACTICAL TIPS

Safe transfers within the home
Wandering
Everyday furniture and stairs
Everyday helping. Watch your back!
Disposables & reusables
Name tags and other visuals
Noise and speed!
Blinds, curtains, lights
Going out
ER, Hospital—what to take with!

OBSERVATIONS

Pain - Mood - Temp
Intake & Output
Declines and losses...vision - hearing - balance
Meds and Over the Counters
Attachment/Detachment
Grief - theirs, yours, the family's

ASK FOR RESOURCES

Encourage abilities or they will be gone to early

Pain Scale handout
3 E's of dementia care handout
⇒ Environment
⇒ Emotions
⇒ Energy

Registration fee of \$10
Register by Friday, September 12th
at the parish office - 248-542-8720



...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.

...respect for life from conception to natural death

...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

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP & SCRIPTURE REFLECTION

**Saturday, August 30th at 9:00am
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.

DEVOTIONS, *EXPLAINED!* – CONNECT WITH TRADITION AND GROW YOUR FAITH

IGNATIAN SPIRITUAL EXERCISES, *Explained!*

The Ignatian Spiritual Exercises are prayers and meditations developed by St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus (commonly referred to as the Jesuits).

St. Ignatius of Loyola (1492-1556) was born to a noble Basque family. In his youth, he spent time at the Royal Court of Castile and fought in the Spanish army. He experienced a profound religious conversion during a long period of convalescence following a battle injury. Living in a cave outside of Manresa, he began to keep the journal that became the basis of the famous Spiritual Exercises.

The Spiritual Exercises are meant to accompany souls on a journey toward deeper contemplation of God's love and a more meaningful understanding of his call to discipleship in the life of each person. Divided into four stages, or "weeks," the exercises focus on the interior movements of the heart to unveil the will of God. ©LPI

DO YOU KNOW HIM, OR JUST KNOW ABOUT HIM?

Facebook, Twitter, and other forms of social media can be powerful tools of communication. They allow people to stay in touch. They provide an avenue for fresh ideas. People can be engaged in conversations and be exposed to issues of the day in ways few could have dreamed of just a few decades ago. But social media can also give the false sense of really knowing someone, when only the surface has been scratched about who a person is in reality.

You don't really know someone just because you know a lot about him or her and are linked to a profile online. Unfortunately, people develop emotional attachments to the idea of a person all the time. If they do find themselves fortunate enough to meet the person face-to-face one day, they can often find out they never really knew the person in the first place.

There are people who believe they know Jesus so very well. They can readily share their view of what Jesus would do or wouldn't do in a given situation. They own items like crosses and Bibles that seem to provide evidence of this person they know so well. Sometimes, they even strongly admonish others because their view of Jesus is certainly not in line with their own.

But in Luke 13, Jesus speaks about those who claim to know him, but they really do not belong to him at all. They make claims based upon what they have seen and heard, but they have never allowed Jesus to truly change them. They are like Facebook followers; seemingly close, but with no real relationship at all.

Do you know Jesus? Don't just be a fan. Invite Jesus into your life and let the real relationship begin.

—Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS ©LPI

OBSERVANCES OF THE WEEK

Sunday: 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Monday: St. Louis; St. Joseph Calasanz, Priest

Wednesday: St. Monica

Thursday: St. Augustine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Friday: The Passion of St. John the Baptist

Next Sunday: 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time ©LPI

WHY DO WE DO THAT? CATHOLIC LIFE EXPLAINED

BASILICA VERSUS CATHEDRAL

Question: What is the difference between a basilica and a cathedral?

Answer: Basilicas are churches that are so titled because of their antiquity, dignity, historical importance, or significance as centers of worship. A cathedral is the principal church of a diocese, which contains the chair of the bishop, or "cathedra" in Latin. The chair is the symbol of the bishop's teaching authority. ©LPI

Evangelical Charity/Evangelization & Catechesis News

Dear Parishioners,

I hope you have been having a restful summer! September is right around the corner, and we are gearing up for many upcoming events and the start of our parish catechetical programs.

On behalf of our Evangelical Charity/Christian Service Committee, I would like to thank all of you that donated school supplies for our Backpack Drive. These items have been sent to Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan and to the Jail and Outreach Ministries in Pontiac to support their ministries.

Our Childhood Faith Formation/Religious Education program is scheduled to begin on Monday, September 29th at 6:15 p.m. in church. Classes are held on Mondays from 6:15 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. for children in grades 1-8. If you have any questions about our program, or have children you need to register, please contact me at **646-369-8619** or **matthew@stvincentferrer.net**.

We will also begin our Order of Christian Initiation for Adults (OCIA) this Fall. OCIA is a way for adults who have not received the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and/or Eucharist) to enter the Church and receive their sacraments. If you, or someone you know, is interested in receiving the sacraments, please contact me at **646-369-8619** or **matthew@stvincentferrer.net**.

We will host a movie night for children on **Friday, September 12th**. We will show the film *King of Kings*, a 2025 animated film that tells the story of the life of Christ through the eyes of a child, and was inspired by Charles Dickens' "The Life of Our Lord". The film will be shown in the Admin Bldg. at 7:00 p.m. There is no cost. We will have popcorn and refreshments for those who attend. Please consider bringing your children and grandchildren for a fun evening. Please call Sheryl at the parish office (248-542-8720) to let her know if you are planning to attend or sign up in the back of church today.



Sincerely,
 Matthew Zinser
 Coordinator of Evangelization & Catechesis/
 Evangelical Charity

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK FOR REFLECTION

1st Reading: Is 66:18-21

Question: Isaiah reveals to us God's plan to gather and unite all His people and witness His glory in the age to come. What are you hoping for in the future?

2nd Reading: Heb 12:5-7, 11-13

Question: The author of Hebrews offers words of encouragement for community members struggling and discouraged in their faith. Is there a friend or co-worker you could look to support this week?

Gospel: Lk 13:22-30

Question: Jesus speaks to the crowds of the dire consequences of rejecting his call to salvation. What could be some effective ways to bring others to faith in Jesus?

©LPi

Ministry Schedule

August 30/31, 2025

Mass	4:00pm	9:00am
Sacristan	P Miles	D Tourville
Reader #1	D Tourville	A Goll
Reader #2	P Miles	D Tourville
EME	D Tourville	A Goll
	M Kairis	M Black
	J McCown	N Virga
Greeters	R Bertolini	B Turchin
	L Collins	D Vu
	R Juska-Svoba	N Oparka
	M Smith	T Oparka
Traveling Chalice Host beginning week of Aug 30/31, 2025		
Jane McKay		



CATHOLIC SERVICES APPEAL

Thank you to all who have made pledges and one time contributions to Catholic Services Appeal 2025.

We continue to accept donations. To donate, visit our website or contact the Parish Office. Excess funds are being returned to St. Vincent Ferrer Church and are being used toward our budget deficit.

GETTING TO KNOW OUR SAINTS

**SERVANT OF GOD THEA BOWMAN
1937-1990**

Servant of God Sister Thea Bowman was a second generation free Black American born Bertha Bowman in Yazoo City, Mississippi in 1937. She later took the name Sister Thea when joining the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration. Being the only black woman in her order, Sister Thea committed her life to serving Black Catholics and their unique spirituality. When asked what it meant to be a black Catholic, she said —

“It means that I come to my church fully functioning. I bring myself, my black self, all that I am, all that I have, all that I hope to become. I bring my whole history, my traditions, my experience, my culture, my African-American song and dance and gesture and movement and teaching and preaching and healing and responsibility as gift to the Church.”

She held a Ph.D. in English from the Catholic University of America where she also taught, committing herself to educating others. Additionally, over the course of her life, she taught at Xavier University in New Orleans, Viterbo College in La Crosse, an elementary school in Wisconsin, and a high school in Mississippi.

Sister Thea Bowman helped shape Black Catholic identity in countless ways. She was instrumental in the 1987 publication of the first Black Catholic hymnal, *Lead Me, Guide Me: The African American Catholic Hymnal*, making sure the hymnal properly showcased black spirituality and culture. She sang and recorded 25 spirituals and worship songs that were recently remastered and released on most music streaming platforms as recently as 2020!

She traveled and spoke around the world, captivating audiences with her ministry of joy. Sister Thea taught those she ministered to about celebrating each culture’s unique differences and lifting those differences up in each culture’s distinctive expression of the Christian faith. When confronted with the fact that women were not allowed to preach in the Catholic church, she noted in one speech she gave that this rule could not stop her from preaching everywhere else!

Dying of cancer on March 30, 1990, at the age of 52, Sister Thea’s legacy lives on in the more than 18 institutions named after her, her music, numerous works she authored, and countless students who received a college education thanks to the Sister Thea Bowman Black Catholic Educational Foundation. The U.S. bishops endorsed her cause for sainthood on Nov. 14, 2018.

©LP

Heaven and Regina George

Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

There are certain phrases that serve as a kind of shibboleth for millennials, a dog whistle that only ears formed between 1981 and 1996 can discern. “You can’t sit with us!” is one of those phrases.

It’s from the movie *Mean Girls*, (which, I hear from my younger family members, has now become cool with the kids again, so maybe my point about it being niche is incorrect). The character Regina George, merciless ruler of the cool kids, is rejected from the ultra-exclusive lunch table she herself formed when her minions, tired of her cruelty, serve her the most devastating words a teenager can hear in public: “You can’t sit with us.”

So passes earthly glory, as they say.

At first blush, this Gospel gives “Mean Girls” vibes. We have an image of the unlucky masses clamoring for entry into the kingdom of heaven as God locks the door against them, saying, “I do not know where you are from.”

Very “you-can’t-sit-with-us.”

But we need to remember that the people pounding on the door of heaven in today’s Gospel aren’t people who wanted a seat at God’s lunch table — at least, not until it was the only lunch table left, because they had Regina George’d their way out of all the other ones.

Jesus’ whole thing was that you *can* sit with us, whoever you are, wherever you’re from and whatever you’ve done. But there are a lot of lunch tables in the world, and not everyone wants to be at one with rules like “repent” and “be good to that person you really don’t like.” It’s not always an easy table to sit at, especially when there are so many other options.

We have to choose heaven before heaven becomes our only choice.

©LPi

INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK



“Strive to enter through the narrow gate,” Jesus tells us. “Many will attempt...but will not be strong enough.” So let us never be so foolish that we rely on our own strength. Narrow does not mean unpassable — not if we ask for help.

©LPi



Traveling Vocations Chalice
 Families and individuals are needed to host the Traveling Vocations Chalice for a one week commitment. Prayers come with the chalice. Please sign up at the table outside the chapel wall near the



MASS SCHEDULES

National Shrine of the Little Flower Basilica

2100 W. 12 Mile, Royal Oak, 48073

SATURDAY- 8:30am and 4:30pm (livestreamed)

SUNDAY-7:30am, 9:30am, 11:30am 3:30pm (Spanish), and 6:00pm

WEEKDAYS (*Monday thru Friday*) 6:30am (livestreamed), 8:30am

St. Justin-St. Mary Magdalen

50 E Annabelle Ave. Hazel Park, 48030

SATURDAY - 4:00pm - St. Mary Magdalen

SUNDAY - 10:00am - St. Mary Magdalen

St. Mary

730 S. Lafayette, Royal Oak, 48067

SATURDAY - 4:30pm

SUNDAY - 9:00am, 11 am

MON, TUES, THURS, FRI - 7:30am

WED - 12:10pm

To support St. Vincent Ferrer with a financial contribution scan the code below to connect to our tithe.ly giving site.



21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

I've been hiking Camelback Mountain in Phoenix, Arizona most of my life. It is a vigorous forty-five minutes to the top. Near the peak,

the end suddenly appears much further away, and steeper. At that moment, a descending hiker often offers encouragement: "Keep going! The peak is right there. It's not as far as it looks. You can do it!" It usually works. After another five minute push, you summit and enjoy a glorious panorama of the Sonoran Desert in the Valley of the Sun.

When Jesus is asked about how many people are saved, he says: "**Strive to enter through the narrow gate**" (Luke 13:24). How many? Strive! Focus on your journey. What does heavenly census taking have to do with you or me? How would it help a hiker on a mountain to ask the others coming down, "How many people are going to make it to the top?" A normal response would be something like: "How is that a relevant question? Carry on!"

Jesus links one virtue directly to salvation: perseverance (cf. Matt 24:13; *hypomone* in Greek). Strive! Endure! Keep going! The one absolutely necessary virtue is perseverance, to not give up on our journey. The mountain we struggle to climb is often our own weakness, failures, and sins. Persevere in prayer. Keep celebrating the sacraments. Embrace daily duties. With God's grace, you are strong enough to keep going. Perhaps the peak is not as far away as you might fear. Keep going!
 — *Father John Muir* ©LPi

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP GIVING - WEEK ENDING AUG. 16/ 17, 2025

<i>Fiscal Year 7-1-25 to 6-30-26</i>	Budgeted	Actual	Over/Under	YTD
Offertory Env. Used & e-fund participants	240	104		
Offertory	\$ 5,185.00	\$ 5,229.42	44.42	2,396.19
Energy, Coffee/Donuts, Flowers/Trees, Candles, Mass Intentions	472.00	278.00	(194.00)	(831.00)
Fundraising: includes Budget Deficit envelope, CSA returned	1,673.00	266.00	(1,395.00)	(10,231.00)
Bequests		105.00		175.00
AOD Collections: Gaza		236.00		236.00
Holy Days: Assumption		730.00		869.00
CSA 2025 Pledged 68,978.50				Paid 60,822.50

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