



## ST. ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL

740 View Street, Victoria, BC V8W 1J8

**Office Hours:** Monday to Friday, 8:30 am - 4:00 pm

**Phone:** 250-388-5571

**Email:** standrewscathedral@gmail.com

**Website:** www.standrewscathedral.com

### Sacramental Information

**Baptism:** If you are seeking the Baptism of an infant, please contact the parish office at 250-388-5571. As Baptism is the first Sacrament of initiation into the Christian faith, we expect that the parents (or guardians) desire to raise the child in the Christian faith and will attend Mass regularly.

Upcoming dates available for baptisms will be the weekends of:

— 2025 —		— 2026 —	
Prep Class	Baptism	Prep Class	Baptism
Nov 8	Nov 22/23	Jan 10	Jan 24/25
		Mar 7	Mar 21/22
		May 9	May 30/31
		July 4	July 25/26
		Sep 12	Sep 26/27

**Marriage:** Because the Church is deeply concerned about each marriage, couples are asked to give a minimum of six months' notice prior to the intended date of their wedding. Church policy requires that marriages be performed in your home parish – unless you are registered and attend elsewhere.

**Funeral:** Individual arrangements with a priest. Begin by calling the parish office.

### Ministry to the Homebound

If you know of anyone who cannot make it to Mass each week due to sickness or infirmity, and who would like to receive Communion in their home, care homes, or hospital, please contact the parish office by phone (250-388-5571) or by email ([standrewscathedral@gmail.com](mailto:standrewscathedral@gmail.com)).

### St. Andrew's Cathedral Pastoral Council Members

Jonathan Eades (Chairperson)	John Mellis (Vice-Chair)
Maria Arsenault	Faye Baligod
Gladys Bravo	Richard Dunstan
Frank Falzon	Tim McGee
Jim O'Reilly	Chris Ryzuk

### Pastoral Staff & Ministries

Bishop of Victoria .....	Bishop Gary Gordon
Cathedral Rector .....	Fr. Dean Henderson
Hospital Chaplain / Priest in Residence .....	Fr. Sean Flynn
Deacon assigned to Parish .....	Deacon Philip Yuson
Office Manager & Parish Responsible Min. Coordinator .....	Rita Fichtner
Pastoral Assistant .....	Matthew Orlowski
Office Assistant .....	Anjali John
Custodian .....	Steve Thompson
Director of Musical Worship .....	Vacant
Sacristan .....	Sandi Riddett
Respect Life Ministry .....	Annette Turgeon (250-812-0087)
Finance Committee Chairperson .....	Dan Hickey

**Hospital Chaplain (RJH/VGH) ..... 250-889-3761**

### Weekday Eucharistic Liturgies

Monday - Friday: 12:10 pm

### Weekend Eucharistic Liturgies

Sunday: 9:00 am, 11:00 am, 5:00 pm

Saturday: 5:00 pm

### Eucharistic Adoration

Sat. at 9:00 am

### Reconciliation

Monday\* – Thursday: 11:30 am – 12:00 pm

Friday: 10:30 am – 11:30 am

Saturday: 3:45 pm – 4:45 pm

\*No confessions on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month.

**Welcome!** You enter this Church not as a stranger, but as a guest of God. As a baptized person, you enter it as a son or daughter of the Father in Christ. Come in then with humility of mind, joy of heart and thanks on your lips. Acknowledge the Lord's presence in the Tabernacle and adore him. Come in and pause in prayer in the midst of your busy life and its many worries. Be grateful to those who, for the glory of God and in honour of St. Andrew, built this place of worship with faith and sacrifice, and sanctified it with their songs and prayers.

Anyone who wishes to practice the Catholic faith by attending this Cathedral church may consider St. Andrew's as his/her own parish, no matter where one lives on the lower island. You simply need to register:

- ☐ New parishioner
- ☐ Current parishioner (change of address)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone (H): \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*If you find yourself pregnant and in need of accompaniment during your pregnancy, Respect Life Ministry is here for you. We have a broad means of support during and after the pregnancy. Call Annette at Respect Life Ministry to learn more: 250-812-0087*

## THIS WEEK IN THE PARISH

**Rosary:** Mon - Fri at 11:40 am; Sun at 4:30 pm

**Perpetual Help Devotions:** Wed following 12:10 pm Mass

**Cathedral Hours:** Mon – Fri 10 am – 4 pm; Sat/Sun 8 am – 6 pm

### Mon Oct 13 THANKSGIVING DAY

*Office closed - Cathedral closed after Mass*

11:30 am Sacrament of Reconciliation

12:10 pm **MASS** for Violeta Magnaye +

### Tue Oct 14 OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY

11:30 am Sacrament of Reconciliation

12:10 pm **MASS** for Coby Hilgersom +

5:00 pm Legion of Mary (DCR)

7:00 pm Pastoral Council

7:30 pm Prayer Group (Zoom)

### Wed Oct 15 ST. TERESA OF JESUS

11:30 am Sacrament of Reconciliation

12:10 pm **MASS** for the Int. of Modesto Benitez

2:00 pm Bible Study (CDR)

6:30 pm Bible Study (Zoom)

7:00 pm Break Free (MTL)

### Thu Oct 16 ST. MARIE-MARGUERITE D'YOUVILLE

11:30 am Sacrament of Reconciliation

12:10 pm **MASS** for Grant Laakso +

### Fri Oct 17 ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH

10:30 am Sacrament of Reconciliation

12:10 pm **MASS** for the Int. of Francis Angelo Valeros

### Sat Oct 18 ST. LUKE

9:00 am Eucharistic Adoration

11:00 am **FUNERAL MASS** for Rein Matthew Santos

1:00 pm **VALIDATION/BAPTISM** -- Ferrer

2:00 pm Handmaids of the Lord (DCR)

3:45 pm Sacrament of Reconciliation

5:00 pm **MASS** for Deceased Members of Grosset Family +

6:00 pm C4C – Christian Life Seminar (Seghers Hall)

### Sun Oct 19 29<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

9:00 am **MASS** for the intention of Anne Ducluzeau

11:00 am **MASS** for St. Andrew's Cathedral Parishioners

12:30 pm Children's Religious Ed (Parish Centre)

1:00 pm El Shaddai (Seghers' Hall)

5:00 pm **MASS** for Merlinda Quiambao-White +

6:00 pm KP General (Library)

## Children's Religious Ed Classes

Please note that the Children's/Teens Religious Education Classes have been **cancelled this Sunday (October 12<sup>th</sup>)** as it is Thanksgiving weekend. Classes will resume next Sunday (October 19<sup>th</sup>).

## Understanding today's miracles

**Lk 17:11-19**

*Liz Summers*

A wonderful priest told this story which is so appropriate for today's Gospel. There was a man who was always quite overwhelmed when he had to find parking, so on the way to the mall he prayed like mad, 'God, please help me find a parking spot.' when he got to the lot, there was a spot, right in front of the entrance. 'It's OK God,' he said, 'I found one!'

When we are confronted with a problem we cannot solve ourselves, we often turn to God for help. The next day, when all the knots have been untangled and the solution is straight ahead of us, how often do we think, 'well that wasn't so bad', and skip merrily along our way. Although it would not take long to stop and look up to God and cry hallelujah! we forget it was He to whom we had turned for help.

In today's Gospel ten lepers ask Jesus, "Have mercy on us,". He tells them to walk to the priest and as they 'went, they were made clean.' They were cleansed from leprosy.

However, there was one special person who Jesus wants us to focus on, the Samaritan. Jesus says "Your faith has made you well."

He had 'praised God in a loud voice', he had humbled himself, his gratitude was to God.

We know that all the lepers were cleansed. But only the one with faith in God was made well.

What is this wellness that comes from the actions of the Samaritan? Jesus tells us it is FAITH. Its components are humility, praise and gratitude. Lord, please help us remember this, always.



**From the Rector's Desk**  
**28<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**October 12, 2025**

Fr. Dean is away this weekend, but will be back on October 14<sup>th</sup>.

## Bishop's Appeal

The 2025 Love & Unity Appeal is now in full swing. Your support of the Bishop's Appeal helps foster vocations and sustain clergy and religious life. Together, we form future priests and pastoral leaders, while also caring for retired priests who have served faithfully. This is one way our Love and Unity becomes a living witness to the strength of our Church family.

This year our parish project will be for a new, permanent baptistry for the Cathedral.

Every gift strengthens our parishes and reaches far beyond, bringing the love of Christ to our communities and the world.

Parish Goal: \$ 107,000

### Areas of Support for this year's Appeal:

- **Vocations/Clergy/Religious Support \$120,000**

*Supports the formation and spiritual growth of current and future priests and other pastoral leaders, while also caring for retired priests who have faithfully served our Diocese.*

- **Local Missions \$325,000**

*Sustains our Mission churches as they bring the Gospel to some of the most remote communities on Vancouver Island, by covering operating costs, maintenance, pastoral leadership and religious support.*

- **Community & Relationship Building \$185,000**

*Passes on the richness of our faith through communications, faith formation, and parish/school grants that strengthen outreach, community connection. and spiritual growth.*

- **Parish Portion \$180,000**

*Fosters parish unity as each community directs its share of the Appeal toward a meaningful local project chosen by the pastoral and parish leadership.*

- **Diocese of Whitehorse \$45,000**

*Supports our twinned Diocese in northern Canada by helping provide pastoral care, sacraments, and outreach in remote and often challenging environments.*

- **Global Church in Need \$45,000**

*New this year, our initiative will extend support beyond our Diocese to Aid to the Church in Need (ACN)-an organization that serves the faithful around the world.*

*Through ACN, we will help fund projects such as supporting religious sisters in the Diocese of Odesa-Simferopol in Ukraine, enabling them to continue offering humanitarian aid, hope, and the love of Christ to those suffering from conflict, poverty, or persecution.*

Watch Bishop Gary's video and learn more about the 2025 Appeal: [www.rcdvictoria.org/bishops-appeal](http://www.rcdvictoria.org/bishops-appeal)

***Due to the current postal strike, you were not able to receive the Bishop's Appeal brochure in the mail. These addressed envelopes are now available for pickup in the Narthex. Completed pledges/donations should be placed in an envelope clearly marked for the Bishop's Appeal and placed in the collection basket. Staff will ensure that these envelopes are then delivered to the Diocesan Appeal office.***

## Discovery Faith Study

**Discovery** is a 6-week, small-group faith study that focuses on the person of Jesus. It gives a foundational understanding to the Catholic faith and explores what it might mean to have a personal relationship with Jesus, while at the same time challenging our perspectives towards God. Do you feel that God is distant, impersonal and wish you could grow closer to Jesus in your spiritual life?

If you're new to the Catholic faith, or a long time Catholic, but your faith has mostly become a matter of routine... Consider taking Discovery, and bring your questions, thoughts, and an openness to encountering Jesus Christ. To register, please contact the parish office at 250-388-5571 or email [standrewscathedral@gmail.com](mailto:standrewscathedral@gmail.com) and register by Thanksgiving (October 13).

We will meet on Monday evenings from 7:00 – 9:00pm, beginning October 20 in the Parish Centre. Questions: Contact Matthew at [morlowski@rcdvictoria.org](mailto:morlowski@rcdvictoria.org)

## Parish Finances: August 2025

### STEWARDSHIP

*"Giving alms to the poor is a witness to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God."* (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2462.)

OPERATIONS	AUGUST YTD 2025	AUGUST YTD 2024
Donations	\$ 468,874	\$ 427,196
Expenses	\$ 531,651	\$ 488,544
Deficit	(\$62,777)	(\$61,348)

## The Art of Authentic Listening

Do you want to learn how to listen authentically to another person? Do you want to experience being listened to authentically? We are looking for participants.

The Diocese of Victoria has asked all parishes to facilitate listening circles as part of a program for Diocesan Permanent Pastoral Synods (DPPS). The purpose is to get people used to the process and the concept of listening to each other through answers to questions that the Diocesan Team have formatted. The answers will help us shape action plans for the Diocese in the future. Participation involves 2 hours to meet in small groups to receive instruction, pray, listen, and share.

"While the ancient practice of synodality can be found throughout Church history, where leaders of the Church gathered in a way to listen and discern together, what is different here is this invitation into the practice of synodality is for the people of God. We are all invited to integrate this ancient practice at all levels of the Church - including local, diocesan, national and global - changing how we gather, how we listen, how we include, how we plan, how we discern, and how we move forward together as a people of God. When we build on this style of encounter, when we include different voices and open the space to all, to discern and dream together, we can we strengthen the bonds of love and enrich all aspects of Church life".

To register your interest in participating (or to find out more), please register your name & contact details with the parish office: 250-388-5571 or [standrewscathedral@gmail.com](mailto:standrewscathedral@gmail.com)

## Looking for a Treasurer to join our Board!



The Soup Kitchen, operating in the basement of St. Andrew's Cathedral, is looking for a Treasurer to join its Board of Directors. Working with the organization's bookkeeper, the Treasurer oversees financial operations and provides monthly

reports to the Board. Keen to learn more? Email the Chair Teri Hustins at [info@thesoupkitchen.ca](mailto:info@thesoupkitchen.ca). For over 44 years, as the city's oldest volunteer-run food resource, The Soup Kitchen has been a comfort and a lifeline for the downtown community. Please consider joining our dedicated team of volunteers - you will find it personally rewarding.

## Gone to Dwell in Our Father's Home

*Please remember in your prayers:*



**Sr. Doreen Trautman SSA**, who died on Sep 28<sup>th</sup> at Mount St. Mary's Hospital. Her funeral will be held on Wednesday, Oct 15<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am at Holy Cross Parish (4049 Gordon Head Road). Following Mass there will be a lunch at Holy Cross. Interment will be at Ross Bay Cemetery. To obtain the livestream details or to offer condolences, please visit [www.sandsvictoria.ca](http://www.sandsvictoria.ca).

**Rein Matthew Calubag Santos** who died on Sep 19<sup>th</sup>. His funeral Mass will be held on **Saturday, Oct 18<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am**.

**Fr. Piotr Golinski**, who died on Sep 25<sup>th</sup> in Brantford, Ontario. Fr. Piotr served in the Diocese of Victoria from 2005 – 2011.

*Eternal Rest Grant to Them, O Lord  
And Let Perpetual Light Shine upon Them*

## Sacred Heart CWL's Garage Sale

CWL's 4th Annual Community Garage Sale is on Saturday, October 18 from 9 am. Table rentals are \$30. Contact Miriam for more details [mirpod@yahoo.com](mailto:mirpod@yahoo.com)

## Prayer in the Style of Taizé



Join us for Prayer in the Style of Taizé on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month.

Please join us Friday, October 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm at Esquimalt United Church (500 Admirals Rd). All welcome.

Taizé is a meditative candle-lit service that centers around music, prayer, simple chants, and periods of silence, to quiet the mind, open the heart and feed the soul.

## Development and Peace

Development and Peace Fall campaign workshop, "Turn Debt into Hope" will be held at St. Patrick's Parish Hall, 2060 Haultain St. on Sat. Oct. 18 from 9:30-1:30. We will be offering a light lunch at the end of the workshop, to give time to socialize and exchange ideas for your parish activities. Our animator, Raphael Freston, will lead the workshop. All are welcome to attend. Please contact Nancy Stuart at [nancystuart7@gmail.com](mailto:nancystuart7@gmail.com) if you plan to attend.



<b>Groups to Join at St. Andrew's</b>	
<b>BIBLE STUDY</b>	
<i>Seasonal guided weekly bible studies. Registration required.</i>	
Contact: <b>Bernadette O'Connor</b>	
bernadette.oconnor@wsp.com	250-896-4136
<b>BREAK FREE MEN'S MINISTRY</b>	
<i>Helping men find freedom from impurity.</i>	
break.free.victoria@gmail.com	778-587-6421
<b>COUPLES FOR CHRIST</b>	
<i>Charismatic community journeying together as families toward holiness</i>	
Contact: <b>Alfred &amp; Rona Biona</b>	
standrewschapter@gmail.com	250-888-8670
<b>SMALL-GROUP FAITH STUDY</b>	
<i>Small-group faith study that focuses on the person of Jesus</i>	
Contact: <b>Matthew Orlowski</b>	morlowski@rcdvictoria.org
<b>EL SHADDAI</b>	
<i>Charismatic prayer, formation, and fellowship</i>	
Contact: <b>Florita Cadiz</b>	
florleopardas@yahoo.com.hk	250-415-7720
<b>FAMILY MINISTRY</b>	
<i>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday monthly potluck gathering for families with children</i>	
Contact: <b>Andrea &amp; Stephen Collins</b>	
awalkercollins@gmail.com	778-966-4623
<b>KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS</b>	
<i>Catholic men's organization for fellowship, service, and charity</i>	
Contact: <b>Joe Cavin</b>	
joseph.cavin@gmail.com	778-533-0405
<b>KP – FILIPINO CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH</b>	
<i>Fellowship and discipleship, as well as organizing church events rooted in Filipino Catholic traditions.</i>	
katesismongpilipino@yahoo.com	
<b>LEGION OF MARY</b>	
<i>Devotional prayer and works of ministry and mercy</i>	
Contact: <b>Faye Baligod</b>	
faye_baligod@hotmail.com	250-885-8773
<b>MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST</b>	
<i>Evangelistic community of families empowered by the Holy Spirit</i>	
Contact: <b>Alvin &amp; Michelle Almonte</b>	
mfcvictoriabc@gmail.com	778-350-5922
<b>PEOPLE OF HOPE PRAYER GROUP</b>	
<i>Charismatic prayer group that meets weekly online (Zoom)</i>	
Contact: <b>Lynn Weedmark</b>	
hilynn@telus.net	250-477-4700

<b>Affiliated Organizations</b>	
<b>DEVELOPMENT &amp; PEACE</b>	
<i>International humanitarian aid organization</i>	
<a href="https://devp.org/en/">https://devp.org/en/</a>	1-888-234-8533
<b>SOUP KITCHEN (9-10 CLUB)</b>	
<i>Serving soup to the hungry Monday to Friday mornings</i>	
<a href="https://www.thesoupkitchen.ca/">https://www.thesoupkitchen.ca/</a>	778-440-7687
<b>ST. ANDREW'S REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL</b>	
<i>Catholic high school for grades 8-12</i>	
<a href="https://standrewshigh.ca/">https://standrewshigh.ca/</a>	250-479-1414
<b>SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL</b>	

<i>Catholic lay organization dedicated to helping people in need</i>	
brian.mann7@gmail.com	250-812-5690
<b>YOUNG ADULTS GROUP</b>	
<i>Monthly Eucharistic adoration followed by fellowship</i>	
Contact: <b>Alastair Mascarenhas</b>	alastairmascar@hotmail.com

<b>Pastoral Ministries</b>	
<b>ALTAR SERVERS</b>	
Contact: <b>Ben Ocampo</b>	250-896-4136
<b>CHURCH STEWARDS</b>	
Contact: <b>Betty Boechler</b>	bettyboechler@outlook.com
<b>EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION</b>	
Contact: <b>Betty Boechler</b>	bettyboechler@outlook.com
<b>GARDENING</b>	
Contact: <b>Parish Office</b>	
standrewscathedral@gmail.com	250-388-5571
<b>HOMEBOUND MINISTRY</b>	
Contact: <b>Deacon Philip Yuson</b>	
pyuson@rcdvictoria.org	250-881-0049
<b>HOSPITALITY USHERS/GREETERS</b>	
Contact: <b>Parish Office</b>	
standrewscathedral@gmail.com	250-388-5571
<b>LECTORS</b>	
Contact: <b>Bernadette O'Connor</b>	250-896-4136
<b>REFUGEE COMMITTEE</b>	
Contact: <b>Annette Turgeon</b>	250-812-0087
<b>RESPECT LIFE MINISTRY</b>	
Contact: <b>Annette Turgeon</b>	250-812-0087

## Evening Masses w/Bp. Gary

Currently Bishop Gary celebrates Mass at 7:00 pm on many weeknights in the chapel at Holy Cross Parish (4049 Gordon Head Road, Victoria). Everyone is very welcome to join us! Since Bishop Gary's schedule can change at any time, please check the Holy Cross website for up-to-date information at <https://holycrossvictoria.org/>. Next week, Bishop Gary is scheduled to celebrate mass at 7:00 pm on Oct. 13th, 15th, 16th and 17th.



Find hope and healing  
at **Rachel's Vineyard:**  
A safe, confidential  
retreat for women & men  
seeking peace after abortion.

**Vancouver Island  
Retreat: Nov 7-9, 2025**

Find out more:  
[rachelsvineyardvancouverisland@gmail.com](mailto:rachelsvineyardvancouverisland@gmail.com)  
250-514-3973  
[www.rachelsvineyardvanisland.org](http://www.rachelsvineyardvanisland.org)

## **Carols of Hope – Together We Build**

A Christmas Music Festival in support of building the new parish church at Our Lady of the Rosary, Langford

Date: Saturday, November 22, 2025

Time: 1:00 PM – 3:30 PM

Venue: Coastline Church, 845 Caledonia Avenue, Victoria

Join us for an afternoon of joyful Christmas music and community celebration, with all proceeds going directly toward the construction of our new church. By purchasing tickets, inviting friends, or helping spread the word, you are making a lasting contribution to the future of our parish family.

For details and tickets, visit [carolsofhope.com](http://carolsofhope.com).

### **Roommates Wanted – Catholic Women's House**

A Catholic Women's House in the Gordon Head area (close to UVic) is seeking two new roommates to move in December or January. Rent: \$775/month + hydro and utilities. Women aged 18–35 are welcome to apply. The house accommodates five women (individual rooms) and fosters a supportive, faith-centered environment, with active involvement in the Catholic community of Victoria. If you're interested in joining, please contact the Holy Cross Parish Office at [office@holycrossvictoria.org](mailto:office@holycrossvictoria.org).

## **News from the Diocese**

- The Diocese of Victoria is offering a two-day, in-person marriage preparation course on November 15 and 22, from 10:00 am–4:00 pm at Holy Trinity Parish in Nanaimo. Open to all, this course provides essential guidance for couples preparing for marriage. A joint Certificate of Completion will be issued upon completion of both sessions. Please register by October 26 here: <https://in-person-marriage-prep-nov-2025.eventbrite.ca>
- The Diocese of Victoria is pleased to share that the solar panel installation at St. Joseph the Worker Parish is now complete and officially went online on September 19, 2025. The new solar system is expected to generate approximately 44,000 kWh of clean energy each year—covering nearly 90% of the parish's electrical needs. Read more about this sustainable solar project here: <https://www.rcdvictoria.org/news/completion-of-solar-panel-project-at-st-joseph-the-worker-parish>
- The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) has released a new video series on Family Catechesis titled "Called to Witness and Proclaim." Building on last October's Pastoral Letter on Family Catechesis, the series offers accessible and engaging content for parish

formation, family ministry, or personal reflection. Find the complete video series here: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?app=desktop&list=PLKPm9ivAroOMLZw5PQYsBcXXDWbARAD4N>

- On Friday, October 17, Listening Facilitators from across the Diocese will gather for the Diocesan Permanent Pastoral Synod 2025 Fall Plenary. Together with the Bishop's Advisory Council and the Council of Priests, they will discern the questions to be explored in the next cycle of Listening Circles. All are invited to participate in the opening Mass at 9:00 am, either in person at Holy Cross Parish in Victoria (4049 Gordon Head Rd), or via livestream. For more information and the livestream link, please visit: <https://www.rcdvictoria.org/events/october-17-dpps-2025-fall-plenary-mass>

## **St. Teresa of Jesus**

**Feast Day: October 15**

St Teresa of Jesus (also known as St Teresa of Avila) lived in the golden age of Spain in the latter half of the 16th century. She is the foundress of the Discalced Carmelites, both the female and male branch. In fact, she is the only woman founder of an order of men.



And she did this at a time when women had few rights in society and were often looked at with suspicion in the Church. In 1970, St Teresa became the first woman doctor of the Church. She was given the title Mater Spiritualium in the Catholic Church.

Teresa loved the gospel of the woman at the well because she saw herself in a similar light. She related to the woman's sinful past and the way that this meeting with Jesus changed everything about her life. Teresa was beautiful, had a vivacious personality and a very affectionate heart. From her autobiography we see that as a teenager she had certain friends who were not a great influence. While her words are not exactly clear, it seems she also developed a love interest with a view to possible marriage, but in secret and not according to the traditional systems in place. Her ever-vigilant father sensed the danger to her honor and took steps so that she had to make a break with these persons and placed her in a religious boarding school nearby. There she met a sister who was a good example to her of a happy, holy nun. This, plus the experience of the bitterness which her former life brought her and her own fear that she might not make it to heaven if she continued the way she was going helped motivate Teresa to make a dramatic decision: she too would become a nun.

After a lot of back and forth she eventually joined the nearby Carmelite convent of the Incarnation. There she was well-loved because of her warm and jovial

personality. Her sensitive feminine heart yearned for connections with others though, and she let herself get distracted by the many visitors she had, some of whom were noblemen who felt drawn to her, perhaps not always with the best motives. She admits that when she knew someone liked her, she could not stop thinking about them.

Teresa was torn. She knew she vowed her life to Jesus and wanted him to be her priority but also felt very needy towards others. She experienced great inner tension which even made her sick for long periods of time. She never stopped hoping though that God would rescue her from this painful state. One day, after an agonizing period of prayer asking God to help her belong completely to Him, Jesus gave her some of the living water he promised to the Samaritan woman. Teresa heard an inner voice declare: *"Do not be afraid my daughter, from now on you will no longer converse with men but with angels"* (Life 24,5).

This word from God brought her the emotional healing and strong conviction for Christ that she had yearned for. She was able to break from the things that were holding her back. Jesus became everything. He was no longer a faraway God who would simply reward or punish her in the afterlife. He became the love of her life, her best friend, her spouse. She now could see that Christ was always with her, that God lived in the deepest part of her soul. Her whole way of prayer became less of trying to think about God or ask him for things, and more about simply being in the presence of Christ and loving Him. Her definition of prayer that she later wrote down became *"an intimate sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with Him who we know loves us"* (Life 8,5).

Eventually, she would take her spiritual gifts and bring them to others. She was asked by her priest-friends to

write accounts of her life and prayer and these have become goldmines of spiritual teaching. She lived what it says in the book of Wisdom, *"What I learned without Self-interest, I pass on without reserve, I do not intend to hide her riches"* (Wis 7:13). She founded convents of nuns and monasteries of friars who would live in this same spirit.

The question Teresa asks all of us today is: Do you feel wearied at times by the burdens of disordered attachments? Do you thirst for something greater? Is it possible that God might be calling you? Not simply to say some prayers each night and come to church on Sunday, but to be open to His healing love which he wants to pour into your life; to let go of those things that you know are holding you back from him? Maybe Teresa's relationship with God is for you too. We can always have hope for this. God is so patient with us. The more we falter, like Teresa did for many years, the more he invites us to come to Him.

If St Teresa were here right now I think she might say, do not be afraid of this! Why not start now?

Fr. Michael-Joseph of St Thérèse, O.C.D.

#### REPORT SEXUAL ABUSE TO AN INDEPENDENT AGENCY

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