

CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

323 Reform St. N.
NYA, MN. 55368

PASTOR

Fr. Abraham Kochupurackal CMI

OFFICE952-856-1050
frabraham@st-bernard-cologne.org

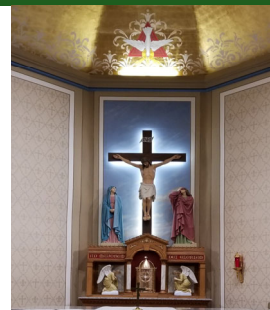
ST. BERNARD CHURCH

212 Church Street E.
Cologne, MN. 55322

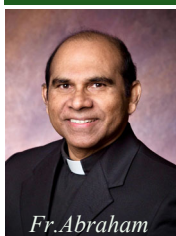


Website: AscensionNYA.org
Parish Office Hours:
Mon.—Wed & Fri. 9am—2pm
Office Phone: 952-467-3351
Business Administrator:
Sherry Witte.....952-777-0110
busadmin@ascensionnya.org
Safe Environment Coordinator:
Sarah Smith....952-777-0111
bookkeeper@ascensionnya.org

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Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time - August 29, 2021



Fr. Abraham

Nature of True Religion

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This Sunday readings explain the nature of true religion. The Law of Moses was very important for the people of Israel. They were rightly proud of the legal system they had in their desire to be God's people. There was, then, great emphasis on the observance of the Law as a sign of commitment and obedience to God. But, by the time of Jesus, the law had become so hopelessly complicated in its applications. Observing the law had become an end in itself. The emphasis was not on building a relationship with God and one's fellow human beings but on checking out one's own observance of laws and rituals externally.

This problem is presented in the Gospel (Mark 7:1-23) today by a conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees. "Why do your disciples not follow the tradition of the elders but instead eat a meal with unclean hands?" Washing hands before eating is a very sensible precaution. How often as children were we told: "Don't come to the table until you have washed your hands!"? It is very relevant always especially in this Covid-19 situation. There were many prescriptions in Jewish law which seems to be primarily hygienic in origin. Jesus is not criticizing such precautions. What he is criticizing is the disproportionate importance given to these things to the neglect of what is far more important, the love of God and the care for one's fellow human beings. It was this sense of deep compassion that made St. Francis of Assisi to kiss the leper he met on the road.

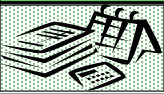
So, Jesus today quotes from the prophet Isaiah: 'This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship is meaningless, the doctrines they teach are mere human regulations. They put human traditions before the commandments of God.' (Mark 7:6-8). These words seem directed not only against the Pharisees but also against rigidly legalistic people in our time. Jesus then speaks of where real uncleanness comes from. The source of uncleanness is not any food or drink that comes from outside. Real uncleanness is in the heart. A person does not become "unclean" by eating something or by not washing hands before eating but by "evil intentions" that arise in the depths of the heart: evil thoughts, unchastity, adultery, stealing, murder, greed, deceit, jealousy, arrogance and blasphemy. (Mark 7:21-22). All these are in direct conflict with a genuinely loving relationship with God and people.

In today's second reading St. James speaks of the real source of law: 'All that is good, everything that is perfect...comes down from the Father of lights.' (James 1:17). Jesus, as the Word of God, is the bearer of all this goodness and perfection. So, St. James exhorts us: "Humbly welcome the word that has been planted in you and is able to save your souls. Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves. (James 1: 21-22). And, in striking contrast to what the Pharisees and scribes were saying to Jesus, James continues: "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained by the world." (James 1: 27). In other words, religion has little to do with the observance of laws but of being liberated from the corrupting influences of our environment, and being sensitive to the needs of others, especially, of the weakest and the most marginalized among us inspired by love of God. And this is true religion because "whatever you did for one of these least brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40). It is possible to keep all the laws and rules perfectly and yet be very far from the spirit of Jesus and the Gospel.

Obviously in our Church and in our parish and wherever people have to work together, we have to have rules. But they are only means to help us work together more smoothly. Once the rules start dictating to us then we are in trouble. Laws are meant not to restrict but to maximize the freedom of individuals and groups to serve and love one another. We often curse the traffic lights when they turn red against us but we curse even more when they break down because of the chaos that creates.

Each one has to discern for themselves just how, in given circumstances, they can best love and serve Christ. It calls for a great deal of honesty, integrity and a high level of real freedom, the freedom to choose what is good and what is more loving. The Gospel is not a code of laws. It is focused on loving relationships with God and others.

Yours in Christ, Fr. Abraham Kochupurackal, CMI, Pastor



CALENDAR FOR ASCENSION AND ST. BERNARDS' PARISHES

Sept 6: Labor Day—Offices Closed
Sept 8: 6:00pm FF Family Night/Registration @ Asc

Faith Formation Volunteers Needed: As summer winds down, we are beginning to make plans for our faith formation program. Weekly classes will be held @ Ascension on Wednesday night. We are in need of several volunteers to help teach. There is one opening to co-teach in our confirmation program. We also need three volunteers in the middle school program--which is called the Edge. For middle school, you would be a small group leader and have some occasional teaching opportunities. **We need to fill these positions before classes can start.** You can make a difference by sharing your unique gifts! **Contact:** Julie Kleindl to learn more.

Faith Formation Registration has been sent out. Registration forms are due back by September 8th or a late fee will apply. The first night of "class" - Family night/registration will be held on Sept. 8th from 6:00pm to 7:30pm at Ascension.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Patricia Prchal whose funeral was held at Ascension on Mon., Aug 16th. May she rest in peace and may her soul and all the souls of the faithfully departed, with the mercy of God, rest in peace. Also pray for peace and comfort for Pat's family.

Please extend a **BIG Thank You** to all those who helped with the Faith Formation move to Ascension on Thurs., Aug.19th. We appreciate ALL the volunteers who helped make this another successful move. A special **Thank You** to Kara, Lisa and Tamara for their work in packing and unpacking all the Atrium materials. Add another **Thank You** to Sue and Rich Tellers and their cleaning team of Wendel, Joan, Kathy and Pam who came in ahead of the move to dust, vacuum and prepare the rooms for classes. Sept. 8th will be the first day of classes. Please pray for a healthy and successful year.

Special Haiti Emergency Collection: August 28/29

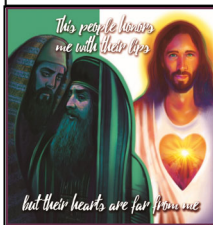
Archbishop Hebda has asked all archdiocesan parishes to join with U.S. Catholics to take up an emergency collection for those suffering the devastating earthquake in Haiti. On August 14, a massive 7.2 magnitude quake hit Haiti leveling homes and businesses, leaving many without shelter or food. Hospitals and clinics are overwhelmed. Haiti, still struggling from the 2010 damaging earthquake, was also hit by Tropical Storm Grace adding to the devastation. Your help is critical for our Haiti brothers and sisters desperate to survive. Your gift will be forwarded to the USCCB Bishops Emergency Disaster Fund created to support relief efforts through Catholic Relief Services in situations like Haiti. Please offer what you can at your parish collection. Or if that is not possible, you can donate at www.centerformission.org/contribute-donation-form.

Bulletin copy is due by Thursdays @ NOON for the bulletin two weekends out;
St. Bernard copy must be emailed to: bulletin@st-bernard-cologne.org and pquinn55322@hotmail.com
Ascension copy must be emailed to: busadmin@ascensionnya.org
All inserts and weekend Mass announcements can be emailed or a paper copy brought to the Parish office at St. Bernard or Ascension.

Spiritual Resources! **TV:** Diocese of St. Cloud: Sun., 11 AM. on KSTCTV/45;— Diocese of Winona-Rochester: Sun., 11:30 AM. on Fox 9+;— Our Lady of Grace, Edina: Sun., Noon on Fox 9+ (Dish/Direct 29, Comcast 10/807; Over Air 9.2);— EWTN: 7:00 AM, 11:00 AM, 6:00 PM.
Radio: Relevant Radio 1330am: Weekdays and Sun. at noon, and at 9 a.m. __ EWTN: ewtn.com/radio/listen-live
Please pray the Rosary daily for our nation, our world, an end to Abortion and an end to the Coronavirus.
 The following is a list of a few TV and Radio stations that air the Rosary.
TV:EWTN: 6:30am, After the TV Mass at Approximately 8:00am.; 2:30pm.; 8:30pm.
 __ Catholic TV Network: 2:00 am; 9:00am; 5:30pm Nuvera Nu Tel Cable TV Ch. 21
Radio: Revelant Radio 1330am: 7:00pm. "Family Rosary across America"

Mark your calendars for the annual Chili Feed & Cash Raffle. The date has been set for Saturday, November 6th. Stay tuned for more details as they become available.

“Benefit Banquet for Relevant Radio 1330 AM and Catholic Schools - All are cordially invited to join Relevant Radio Executive Director Father Francis Hoffman (“Father Rocky”) and radio show hosts Patrick Madrid, Father Richard Simon, Glen Lewerenz, and Paul Sadek, as we honor Saint Joseph at the 10th Annual Christ Brings Hope Benefit Banquet. This festive evening will take place at the DoubleTree - Bloomington/ Minneapolis South on Thursday, September 16, 2021. Gifts made to Relevant Radio that evening will be matched to assist with tuition funds of participating Catholic schools. For details, visit the Events tab at www.relevantradio.com, or call Celine at 612-643-4117. Space is limited! Register today!”



MOSAIC LAW: WHAT GOD WANTS OF THE PEOPLE
 Moses gives the Israelites their Law, which provided the structure for daily life. As recorded in the Bible, over half of the Law is about rituals for worship and sacrifice. A related concept is the concept of a person’s ritual purity (or cleanliness), which is required for participation in both social and religious activities, since persons become unclean by physical contact with other unclean persons, animals, or objects. Other ways a person becomes unclean include the presence of skin lesions, bleeding, or a bodily discharge. Unclean persons are required to purify themselves to be again considered clean. Despite the Law’s complexity, observant Jews considered it a privilege, not a burden, to observe its precepts, and they continue to do so today.

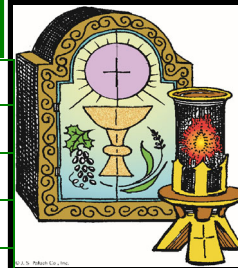
ON THE OTHER HAND . . . The scribes and Pharisees are focusing on the disciples’ failure to properly wash their hands prior to eating. But nowhere in the biblical texts of the Law are there regulations regarding the washing of hands before or after meals. These regulations, as described by Mark, are merely practices like those that arise in all societies; if they continue long enough, they can seem like sacred duties, sanctified as “the traditions of their elders.” This distinction is the source of the tension in these three readings. Moses and James both tell their people that they are recipients of a divine gift that requires special care, while Jesus is practically livid when the scribes and Pharisees react harshly to the disciples’ failure to wash their hands according to Jewish practices. Such a distinction between divine law and human practices is valuable for our own lives. When we hear of another’s misdeeds, we should evaluate the seriousness of the offense before forming our own impression. Is this truly a serious moral matter? Or something less weighty? Carefully discerning the seriousness of such matters might reveal that things are not as grave as they first appear. Such care is an exercise in Christian charity, one way of acting on the word we have received as members of the Body of Christ. *Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co., Inc.*

Mass Ministry Schedule - September 4-September 5, 2021

Mass Ministry	St. Bernard Sat. 5:00 pm	Ascension Sun. 8:00 am	St. Bernard Sun. 10:00 am
Sacristan	Doris Mielke	Kathy Kloempken	Patricia Quinn
Servers	Volunteer	Bill Hart	Dan Worm
Reader	Roger Storms	Cheryl Coyle	Patricia Quinn
Eucharistic Ministers	Bernie Shambour	Steve Coyle	Pam Kunkel
Ushers	Danny Hoen	Don Whitaker & Steve Schrupp	Bob Symanitz & Brian Vos
Greeters	Eileen Fasching	Jamie & Matt Smith	Volunteer
Homebound Ministers	N/A	Grp A: Michael & Anita Harrison Grp B: Corrine & Paul Prosocki	Doris Mielke Patricia Quinn

Mass Times/Intentions

Monday	Aug. 30	No Mass	
Tuesday	Aug. 31 6:15 pm	Ascension	All Souls in Purgatory
Wednesday	Sept. 1 8:00 am	St. Bernard	Paschal Monteleone †
Thursday	Sept. 2 8:00 am	St. Bernard	Nancy Sinnen †
Friday	Sept. 3 8:00 am	Ascension	All Souls in Purgatory
Saturday	Sept. 4 5:00 pm	St. Bernard	All Parishioners
Sunday	Sept. 5 8:00 am	Ascension	Don Bohlinger †
Sunday	Sept. 5 10:00am	St. Bernard	Donald Beckrich †



Eucharistic Adoration

Ascension
Every Tuesday
3:00 pm until 6:00 pm

St. Bernard
Every Wednesday
2:00 pm until 7:00 pm

SACRAMENTS

Baptisms: By appointment.

Marriage Arrangements

The couple should contact the priest as soon as they become engaged. They must meet with the priest twice before setting a marriage date. These two meetings need to be completed 6 months before the proposed date.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Ascension: Tues. 5:45pm - 6:05pm

St. Bernard: Wed: 7:30am-7:50am

Saturday: 4:30pm—4:50pm

at parish hosting the Mass

By appointment with Father- Call 952-856-1050

Communion for Homebound

Ascension - Sue Tellers.....612-247-6881

St. Bernard - Barb Knorr.....952-466-2447

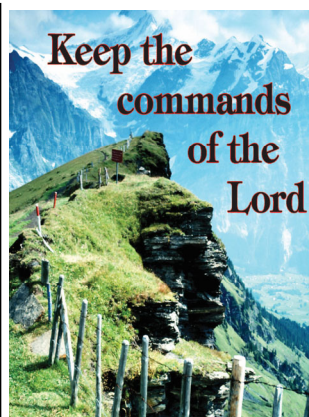
Anointing of the Sick

Call the parish office at any time.

SCRIPTURE READINGS Aug 30-Sept 5, 2021

Monday: 1 Thes 4:13-18; Ps 96:1, 3-5, 11-13; Lk 4:16-30 **Tuesday:** 1 Thes 5:1-6, 9-11; Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14; Lk 4:31-37

Wednesday: Col 1:1-8; Ps 52:10-11; Lk 4:38-44 **Thursday:** Col 1:9-14; Ps 98:2-6; Lk 5:1-11 **Friday:** Col 1:15-20; Ps 100:1b-5; Lk 5:33-39 **Saturday:** Col 1:21-23; Ps 54:3-4, 6, 8; Lk 6:1-5 **Sunday:** Is 35:4-7a; Ps 146:7-10; Jas 2:1-5; Mk 7:31-37



St. Bernard Stewardship of Treasure

Budget for week	2,930.47
Contributions 08-11 through 08-17-21	4,031.17
Total Actual Collection YTD	23,101.18
YTD 12-31 Collection Over (Under) Budget	2,246.77
Forward in Faith	
Envelope Income	175.00
Electronic Donations	543.42
Forward in Faith Total	718.42
Forward in Faith YTD	4,117.84

Did you know you can have your contributions automatically deducted from your checking or savings account?
For more information call the parish office 952-466-2031, or visit www.st-bernard-cologne.org

Ascension Weekly Collection Report

Totals as of 8/15/2021

Weekly Operating Budget:	\$ 2,788.47
Contributions:	2,113.50
E-Giving:	240.00
Weekly Budget YTD:	19,519.29
Actual Collection YTD:	21,897.25
Total Collected Over (Under) YTD:	2,377.96
Capital Improvement Offering:	40.00
Capital Improvement-E-Giving:	25.00
Capital Improvement YTD:	1,480.00

Sign up for electronic giving at ascensionnva.org
Under Links -> E-giving. Or call the parish office for more information: 952-467-3351.