

MASS INTENTIONS

SATURDAY, AUGUST 26

4:00 p.m. Frank Boehm

SUNDAY, AUGUST 27

8:00 a.m. Margaret & Jim Ryan

9:30 a.m. Seth Jenkins

11:30 a.m. For the People

MONDAY, AUGUST 28

8:30 a.m. Tom Raphael

TUESDAY, AUGUST 29

8:30 a.m. Virginia Stack

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30

8:30 a.m. Moe Mattone

THURSDAY, AUGUST 31

8:30 a.m. Kevin E. Cleary

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 1

8:30 a.m. Hank Nini

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2

4:00 p.m. Richard P. Cleary

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3

8:00 a.m. Bob Roehrer

9:30 a.m. For the People

11:30 a.m. Alex Lorms

PASTORAL STAFF

Pastor Fr. Matthew Hoover icoffice@iccols.org
Permanent Deacon Rev. Mr. Christopher Campbell ccampbel@cdeducation.org
Weekend Assistants Msgr. Anthony Frecker
 Msgr. Christopher Schreck
Pastoral Minister Sr. Ruth Hamel, O.P. srhamel@iccols.org

FAITH FORMATION & MUSIC MINISTRY

Evangelization & Sacramental Coordinator Rev. Mr. Carl Calcara ccalcara@iccols.org
Music Ministry Mark Voris mvoris@iccols.org
Youth Ministry Gina Cecutti gcecutti@iccols.org
P.S.R. Coordinator Paulette Mudrey icpsr@iccols.org

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PARISH SUPPORT SERVICES

Faith-Based Counselor Mary Ann Jepsen jepsen.ma@gmail.com, 614-309-2270
Planned Giving Liaison Kelly Noll knoll@gbq.com, 614-352-1655

WELCOME DESK

Parish registration forms are available at the Welcome Desk and the Parish Office. Please notify the Parish Office of any updates or changes in your family information.

HOSPITALITY SUNDAY

Join other parishioners for fellowship, coffee, juice and donuts in Marian Hall after Sunday Masses the first weekend of each month. Exceptions are the months of February and November.

LITURGICAL MINISTERS SCHEDULE – SEPTEMBER 2 & 3, 2017

MASS TIMES	4:00 p.m. Saturday Vigil	8:00 a.m.	9:30 a.m.	11:30 a.m.
EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS	Bobbi Mitch Mark Kelsey Betty Kelsey Dom Do Judi Mehling	Judi Mehling Kathy Copeland Suzanne Smith Jerry Bennett Paul Duffy Marilynne Poirier	Cecilia Bruzzese Diane Schlegel Wendi Jenkins Karen Cannell Kim Cannell Bob Welsh <i>NEEDED</i> <i>NEEDED</i>	Sharon Tantes Chris Mahler Susan Gillespie Patty Bitler Ron Bitler Jeff Doon
LECTOR	Nathan Dedino	Dennis Wilcox	Heather MacKinnon	Jonathan Fortkamp
ALTAR SERVERS	Paige Sapp M.K. Schloss Devon Schneider Megan Stasik	Natalie Garrett Stephen Garrett Elizabeth Intihar	Jason Noll Maeve O'Shea Gus Ruschau Sylvia Rinderle	Kiera Yeck Luke Baird Jack Byrne Kiernan Clegg
USHERS	E.J. Davis Dick Conway Mike Hatzo <i>NEEDED</i>	Jim Ryan Ralph Mathews Regis Mckenna Michael Girard	J. Ruebensaal Matt Hangen Paul King Scott Leathley	Bob Poirier Bob Taylor Jeff Doon Chris Mahler
WELCOME DESK	Pat Conway	Diana Marie Winkler/ Suzanne Smith	Lynn Boardwine	Janine Oman Anne Campbell Carolyn Smith

BULLETIN DEADLINE

The deadline for all articles for the Sunday bulletin is Friday afternoon, (9) days before the article appears in the bulletin. Please include contact information with a phone number and email address. Your written submission may be sent to the parish office or emailed to ic.bulletin@iccols.org. All bulletin items and flyers must be approved by the parish office. Notices for bulletin boards must also be approved by the parish office before posting.

LOW-GLUTEN HOSTS

Using low-gluten hosts is an available option at Immaculate Conception. If you require a low-gluten host, please stop in the Sacristy before Mass and talk to the priest or deacon.

AUGUST CONTRIBUTORS TO THE SANCTUARY LAMPS

The Sanctuary lamp burns constantly to proclaim the real presence of Jesus in the Tabernacle. For the month of August, the Sanctuary candles in the Church and in the Adoration Chapel were donated by the **Jenkins Family**.



ASSISTED LISTENING DEVICES

Assisted listening devices are available in the Sacristy for use during Mass. If you are interested in using one of these devices, please go to the Sacristy prior to Mass.

IN OUR PARISH

NEW PARISHIONERS: We welcome these new parishioners to the parish: **Brian Laliberte, Julie Kennel, Parker and Grant.**

BAPTISMS: We welcome these new members of the parish: **Paige Catherine Siefert, Kyleeah Hartke Wheeler and Tyler Andrew Ralston** who were baptized on August 20, 2017.

WOMEN'S CLUB BLOOD DRIVE RESULTS

A big thank-you for all that came to support the I.C. Women's Club blood drive. We collected 32 units that could save 96 lives.

PSR VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Anyone interested in the opportunity to deepen their faith by teaching class/music or assisting a teacher for 1st-8th grade Parish School of Religion (PSR) students, please contact Paulette Mudrey at icpsr@iccols.org or 614-668-1292.

PLEASE WELCOME OUR NEW YOUTH MINISTER!!

Hi there, my name is Gina Cecutti and I am the new youth minister here at Immaculate Conception! I was born and raised in Columbus and have parents, three younger sisters, and a cat (who is also a girl much to my dad's dismay). I thoroughly enjoy games (gaga ball anyone?), eating snacks (specifically chips), praise and worship music (Elevation Worship is my current go-to) and many more enjoyable things. I am excited to share some of my favorite hobbies with you at youth group and get to know your favorites. Thank you for welcoming me into this wonderful community and I look forward to spending time with you all. Check out the bulletin each week for all things youth ministry! Please feel free to email me anytime with anything at gcecutti@iccols.org. God Bless!

ALPHA RETURNS TO IC!



Become a part of the program to explore Christian life that is like no other! Alpha is a worldwide program open to all who are interested in encountering Jesus in a new and personal way with the purpose of reinvigorating active Catholics and encouraging dialogue with others who may not know – or have fallen away from – Christ. It consists of 10 weekly sessions featuring food, a short video and small group discussion and is open to anyone, at any stage of faith. The fall sessions will be held Tuesday evenings from 6:30-8:30 p.m. starting September 12 and continuing through November 21. Online registration is now open! Visit <http://bit.ly/ICAlphaRegistration> to secure your spot today.

SUNDAY CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS – REGISTRATION



The I.C. Wee Care Nursery is a complimentary Nursery offered during 9:30 a.m. Mass to all registered I.C. parishioners and is held in the Parish Education Center (formerly the Children's Center) next to the grotto. It is offered for children ages six months through three years (or potty trained). The Nursery is fully staffed and runs from mid-September until mid-May. Registration will follow all Masses on Sunday, September 10 in the Gathering Space. For more information, please call Wendi Jenkins at 614-447-9335.

Sunday Preschool is for 3, 4, and 5(K) year-olds and meets during the 9:30 Mass each Sunday. The curriculum is designed to allow children to discover God's presence and love in the experience of self, family, neighborhood and the larger church community. Three year-olds must be potty trained. Classes begin on September 17 and end May 13. Cost is \$25 for one child and \$35 for two or more. Registration is September 10 in the Gathering Space after all Masses. Please contact Katie Ponesse with any questions at anderson.ponesse@gmail.com or 614-209-2483.

The Children's Liturgy Program is held during the 9:30 a.m. Mass starting September 17. Children in grades K to 3 are escorted to Room A of the Rectory just before the readings for child-friendly readings and a reflection that will often include an activity related to the Gospel. They rejoin their families at Mass for the Liturgy of the Eucharist. A sign-up list for participation in the procession can be found before Mass at the east door. There is no registration or fee for participation in Children's Liturgy. If you have any questions, or are interested in facilitating, please contact Laura Wise at 614-580-8261.

Parish School of Religion – The parish religious education program provides religious instruction and sacramental preparation for parish children who do not attend the parish school. Registration for Parish School of Religion (PSR), grades 1-8 will be held in the Gathering Space after all Masses on Sunday, September 10. The fee for one student is \$45 (each additional family member/student is \$15). Classes will begin on September 17 at 10:30 a.m. and will end mid-May. If your child/children will be receiving a sacrament this year and they were not baptized at Immaculate Conception parish, please bring a copy of their Baptism certificate. A calendar and more information will be provided.

WALKING WITH PURPOSE



We are inviting all women of the parish to join us as we begin a new series of Walking with Purpose. We will be starting KEEPING IN BALANCE, and will also be offering the OPENING YOUR HEART study again. These two programs will occur at the same time/day and in the same location, Marian Hall. Opening Your Heart will be offered to new participants, and Keeping In Balance for returning participants. Walking with Purpose is a Catholic Bible Study program that aims to bring women to a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. We offer personal study and small group discussion that links our everyday challenges and struggles with solutions given to us through the teachings of Christ and the Catholic Church. The study runs for 22 weeks, 11 sessions before Advent, and the remaining sessions will conclude before Holy Week. When: Begins September 6, Wednesdays from 7-8:30 p.m.; Cost: \$60.00 (\$40 covers cost of book/\$20 supplies). If you have questions or are interested, please email icwomenoffaith@gmail.com, or call Mary Ann Rivera at 614-558-1329. Please RSVP by September 1. We look forward to seeing you!

*Lord, your love is eternal;
do not forsake the work of your hands.*

TIME, TALENT & TREASURE

Fostering Stewardship as a Way of Life

Fiscal Year 7/1/2017-6/30/2018 • Offertory Report 8/20/2017

	8/20/2017	YTD 2017/2018
Envelopes/Checks/EFT	\$20,074.05	\$ 163,281.96
Loose	\$ 1,364.51	\$ 7,375.76
Total	\$ 21,438.56	\$ 170,657.72
Budgeted Offertory	\$20,530.00	\$ 164,240.00
Over (under) Budget	\$ 908.56	\$ 6,417.72

Feast of the Assumption	\$ 205.00
Catholic Home Missions	\$ 60.00

Remember this:

"Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously."

2 Corinthians 9:6

THAT MAN IS YOU!



The parish is beginning a new session with all new content for That Man is You! All men are invited on Thursday evenings beginning September 21, 2017. Light refreshments and beverages will be served beginning at 7:30 p.m. followed by a presentation and discussion concluding at 9 p.m. That Man is You! is a faith-inspiring opportunity for men that will reward you with purposeful and personal insight. Discover "Why?" through the promise of new inspiration for your life and faith. Join us at TMIY beginning September 21. For details, contact Dan Costello at 614-774-8873 or dancolls@aol.com.

IC YOUNG PROFESSIONALS – COME JOIN US!

The IC Young Professionals are a group of 20-40 year-olds who get together once a month for faith and fellowship. We are having a cookout at the Park of Roses Sunday, August 27 around 1 p.m. to discuss plans for the coming months and socialize. Carpools will be available after the 11:30 a.m. Mass. Please contact Julie Laudick to RSVP at laudick.15@osu.edu. For more information on other gatherings, join the IC Young Professionals Facebook group.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY – NOW HIRING

Wanted: School-Age Child Care Assistant: IC Parish is seeking a, paid part-time School-Age Child Care Assistant for this school year. This position requires a BCI background check and successful completion of the Protecting God's Children Program.

Duties: Provides support to the SCC Director in planning and implementing SCC programs, incorporating all components of the program, and caring for groups of students; performs clerical/receptionist duties and other duties as assigned. If interested, please submit resume and three references to Laurie Johnson at ljohnson@iccols.org.

SPECIAL COLLECTION FOR THE TRINITY DOME AT THE BASILICA OF THE NATIONAL SHRINE

The Bishops of the United States have approved a special one-time collection to take place in parishes across the country to support the mosaic ornamentation of the Trinity Dome at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. The National Shrine has been a century in the making, and our bishops are grateful for people's support of this initiative to help complete America's Catholic Church in advance of its 100th anniversary in 2020. **This second collection will take place this weekend.** Envelopes are in the pews or you may place a donation in an envelope marked Trinity Dome and place it in the offertory basket. For more information visit www.trinitydome.org or www.nationalshrine.org.

SCHOOL NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

Our school year is off to a fantastic start. What a blessing it is to see so many bright-eyed, eager children enter Immaculate Conception School each year knowing they will grow immensely academically, socially, emotionally and most importantly spiritually. Teaching our beautiful Catholic faith through all the subject areas is a true privilege and a gift that will remain with them for a lifetime.

Please know that all IC parishioners are welcome to come into the school any time! This is YOUR school and we would be delighted to share with you all the great things that are happening each and every day. Student-led prayers, STEM projects, plays, and schoolwide service projects are all examples of things you could see on any given day. Just stop in the office to sign in and we'd be happy to show you around. Again, this is your parish school and I am sure you would be quite proud of all that happens here.

Please keep us in your prayers as the school year starts and we will definitely have you in ours.

Sincerely,
Colleen T. Kent
Principal

SOCIAL CONCERNS MINISTRY

OPEN SHELTER MINISTRY – DATE CHANGE

The Open Shelter is a ministry that serves dinner to the homeless and marginally housed persons in Columbus. The next date is this Thursday, August 31, 2017. We need volunteers to make sloppy joes, macaroni & cheese or cookies. If you are interested, please call Cheryl Costello at 614-774-8879. Food must be hot and will be picked up behind the rectory at 5 p.m. on Thursday. Arrangements can be made for pick-up if this time is inconvenient. Donations for buns, bananas and drinks are welcome.

FRIENDS OF THE POOR WALK

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is sponsoring the Friends of the Poor Walk on Saturday, September 16, 2017, at Topiary Park in downtown Columbus. Walkers will gather between 8 and 9 a.m. for fellowship and refreshments, and the walk begins at 9 a.m. The event signifies "walking" in the shoes of the poor. Money raised for the walk will support efforts of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. For details, call 614 221-3554 or visit www.vincentianvoice.org.

MUSIC MINISTRY'S NEW BULLETIN BOARD!

See our new bulletin board in the back of church!
If you wondered how to sign up and to share your
God given talents...

See the BOARD!

**Men's voices are in demand! Come on guys and
challenge yourselves, let's serve our God!**

Please contact me at:

mvoris@iccols.org or 614-267-9241, ext. 289

**Director of Music Ministry
Mark Voris**

RETREAT FOR MARRIED COUPLES

Cultivating Intimacy: 7 Steps to Creating a Eucharistic Marriage. All married couples are invited to the Diocesan Retreat for Married Couples, Saturday, September 9 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at St. Agatha Church, 1860 Northam Rd., Upper Arlington. Bishop Frederick Campbell will celebrate Mass and offer a morning reflection. Greg Schutte, author of *"Discovering our Deepest Desire"* and director of *Marriage Works! Ohio*, will continue with presentations on enhancing the intimate relationship of husbands and wives. A guided Holy Hour will also be included in the day's schedule. Continental breakfast and warm lunch will be provided. The cost for the event is \$65. Kindly register by September 1 at columbuscatholic.org/retreat or call 614-241-2560.

JOSEPHINUM LECTURE SERIES

Pontifical College Josephinum invites you to join us for the first lecture in the **2017-2018 Lecture Series**, **"Building Spiritual Bridges To The Community"** on Wednesday, September 6, 2017, at 7 p.m. in the Jessing Center. **His Eminence, Daniel Cardinal DiNardo**, currently serving as President of the USCCB, will present **"The Gospel of Joy is the Gospel of Life: The Human Person."**

FALL TOUR DAY AT THE JOSEPHINUM

Seminarians of the Pontifical College Josephinum will offer tours of the seminary, and the newly renovated chapel, on Saturday, September 16, 2017, from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Admission and parking are free. Tours will begin every half-hour and are approximately 45 minutes, followed by refreshments. Reservations encouraged but not required. For more information or to make a reservation, please call the Advancement Office at 614-985-2203.

THE WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR CREATION

September 1 is the World Day of Prayer for Creation. Pope Francis invites Catholics to observe this day of prayer and witness. In his encyclical *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis calls us to live out an integral ecology, establishing right relationships with God, other human beings, and the good things of the Earth. A *Care for Creation Guide* is available at www.columbuscatholic.org/documents/2017/4/Creation%20Care%20Guide.pdf or by contacting Social Concerns at 614-241-2540 or socmailbox@columbuscatholic.org.

HEALING MASS AND PRAYER MINISTRY

September 10 at St. Elizabeth Church. This day begins with recitation of the Rosary, 2:30 p.m.; several priests available for Reconciliation at 3 p.m.; a brief explanation of healing ministry precedes 4 p.m. Mass, **Fr. John Vadakkettom, CFIC**, Celebrant. Fr. John offers individual healing prayer following Mass. Sponsored by Columbus Catholic Renewal, go to www.ccr.columbus.org for information.

MOUNT CARMEL HOSPICE INVITES YOU TO "HOSPICE VOLUNTEERING 101"

If you are interested in becoming a hospice volunteer whether at the bedside or behind the scenes, join us for a special panel discussion. A group of Mount Carmel Hospice volunteers will discuss their roles and contributions then answer your questions. The session can help you find the best way to serve your community at end-of-life. Please join us on September 12 from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. or on September 19 from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Mount Carmel Hospice and Palliative Care Center. Register by calling 234-LIFE (5433). The Fall Training Class is forming now.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY - REGISTRATION

Jesus wants you to be more than just a believer - He wants you to be His disciple and friend. Immaculate Conception Parish will begin a new 8-episode, Bible Study Program on **September 20, 2017, 9:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.** **Paul's Letter to the Ephesians** reveals the amazing inheritance we have been given. For more information, contact Sue Beman at 614-214-5333, beman_sue@yahoo.com or Don Muenz at 614-314-0496, butsir@columbus.rr.com.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY REGISTRATION, FALL 2017

Paul's letter to the Ephesians reveals the amazing inheritance we have been given. The cost of the Program is \$22.00, which includes a student workbook, session overviews, engaging study questions for small-group discussion, responses to the questions and talk notes for the video presentations.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____

Phone: _____

E-mail _____

Couples, if desired, may share a single set of materials. Number of workbook sets ordered: _____ (\$22 ea.). Make checks payable to Immaculate Conception Parish. Mail or drop off this form with your payment at the Church Rectory: Immaculate Conception Parish, 414 E. North Broadway, Columbus, OH 43214 or place this form with your check in the Sunday Mass collection basket. Please register by September 5, so we can have the Workbook available for you at our first meeting on September 20.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION YOUTH

Blog: www.ICYG414.wordpress.com
on Twitter and Instagram @ICYG414
For questions, contact our youth minister,
Gina Cecutti, gcecutti@iccols.org

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ICY UPCOMING EVENTS

For more information about upcoming events, check out the ICY blog www.icyg414.wordpress.com and on the ICY bulletin board in the vestibule of the church.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION PAGE

Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, August 27, 2017

Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time

Catechism Corner

“The Lord made Simon alone, whom he named Peter, the ‘rock’ of his Church. He gave him the keys of his Church and instituted him shepherd of the whole flock. ^[Cf. Mt. 16: 18-19; Jn. 21:15-17] ‘The office of binding and loosing which was given to Peter was also assigned to the college of apostles united to its head.’ ^[310] This pastoral office of Peter and the other apostles belongs to the Church’s very foundation and is continued by the bishops under the primacy of the Pope.” (CCC, 881)

310: *Lumen Gentium* 22 § 2.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is the process through which persons inquire into and determine if they are called to live out their faith life as a member of the Roman Catholic Community. RCIA is open to anyone who wishes to learn more about the Catholic faith, including those who want to become members of the Catholic Church.

Typically, groups consist of people who are unbaptized and want to become initiated into the Church, those who were baptized into other Christian faiths and want to become Catholic, and those who were

baptized Catholic, but have not received the other sacraments of initiation.

Also welcome are those who are curious about what Catholics believe and wish to attend for informational purposes only. All are welcome!

CALLING SPONSORS AND TEAM MEMBERS!

Sponsor and Team member training will be provided to those who respond in taking on this ministry invitation.

The introduction and general instructions for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (R.C.I.A.) within the Catholic Church states:

“The initiation of catechumens is a gradual process that takes place within the community of the faithful. By joining the catechumens in reflecting on the value of the paschal mystery and by renewing their own conversion, the faithful provide an example that will help the catechumens to obey the Holy Spirit more generously.” (4)

“...the people of God, as represented by the local Church, should understand and show by their concern that the initiation of adults is the responsibility of all the baptized. (Vat. II, Decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity *Ad gentes*, no 14) Therefore the community must always be fully prepared in the pursuit of its apostolic vocation to give help to those who are searching for Christ.” (9)

“...all the followers of Christ have the obligation of spreading the faith according to their abilities. (Vat. II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen gentium*, no 17) Hence, the entire community must help the candidates and the catechumens throughout the process of initiation...” (9)

We are in great need of Team members and Sponsors for the coming R.C.I.A. process which begins in September. Training is available and will be given for those who are interested in this ministry.

If you are interested in finding out about ways you can help with the R.C.I.A. process this year; or if you want to become a team member or sponsor, please contact: Sr. Ruth Hamel, O.P. at the rectory office. (614) 267-9241 X293. Email: srhamel@iccols.org

Thank you in advance for your willingness to serve!

World Day of Prayer for Care of Creation

On September 1, 2017, join Pope Francis and Catholics across the globe in praying for our common home.

PRAYER TO CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME

Father of all,
Creator and ruler of the universe,
You entrusted your world to us as a gift.
Help us to care for it and all people,
that we may live in right relationship--
with You,
with ourselves,
with one another,
and with creation.

Christ our Lord,
both divine and human,
You lived among us and died for our sins.
Help us to imitate your love for the human family
by recognizing that we are all connected—
to our brothers and sisters around the world,
to those in poverty impacted by environmental devastation,
and to future generations.

Holy Spirit,
giver of wisdom and love,
You breathe life in us and guide us.
Help us to live according to your vision,
stirring to action the hearts of all—
individuals and families,
communities of faith,
and civil and political leaders.

Triune God, help us to hear the cry of those in poverty, and the cry of the earth, so that we may together care for our common home.

Amen.

This prayer from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops is based on Pope Francis’ *Laudato Si’: On Care for Our Common Home*...



exploring

THE SUNDAY READINGS

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME WHAT OTHER PEOPLE SAY

FIRST READING

ISAIAH 22:19-23

"I will fix him like a peg in a sure spot."

Public opinion rises and falls. You can be on the cover of *Rolling Stone* or *Time* one week, and on the *National Enquirer* the next. Sometimes both in the same week! How God values and evaluates is another matter entirely. God isn't fooled by Internet chatter or how many "likes" a person gets on Facebook. God sees what's in the human heart, so there's no disguise we can don to sneak past that critique.

We don't know the story of Shebna, the master of the palace in today's passage, or why he lost his job and was replaced. We know even less why Shebna's replacement got the boot, too (see two verses later at 22:25, as the "peg in the sure spot" gives way). What it does suggest is that honors and titles are transitory things, not the foundation on which our self-understanding should be based. How much of your personal identity is circumstantial, and how much is sure? Our identity in Christ is one thing that won't pass away.

» *Make a list of twenty things that are true about you. How many are for keeps, and how many are temporary?*

SECOND READING

ROMANS 11:33-36

For from God and through God and for God are all things.

Because I speak to parish groups regularly, I get introduced to strangers a lot. Sometimes I'm identified as "Sr. Alice," even though I'm a laywoman, or called Dr., even though I don't have a Ph.D. I'm introduced as a Bible scholar, when I'm actually just a catechist of the Church. Long lists of items have been attributed to me, including books I've never written, jobs I haven't held, places I've never lived. It makes me wonder if the person introducing me is embarrassed about how little authority she can claim on my behalf and so feels the need to pad my stature!

Working for the Church in my 20s, I too felt insecure about how little I could claim so that others would take me seriously. Eventually I learned that being taken seriously is not the goal of ministry – and anyone who thinks so is probably in the wrong profession. We claim the name of Christian, which is as grand a title as any could wish. We stand on the authority of the gospel, and God alone is our witness. What else do we need?

» *What does it mean to you to say you are a Christian? What does this claim imply about you?*

GOSPEL

MATTHEW 16:13-20

"Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"

Jesus was compared with many figures of great stature in the Jewish tradition: Abraham and Moses, John the Baptist or the prophets. The person making such a comparison surely thought to honor Jesus with it. Peter, however, describes Jesus most accurately: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Only Martha of Bethany, in John's gospel, chapter 11, makes as insightful a claim when she says: "I have come to believe you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world." Getting Jesus right means getting beyond the great-man attribute, and onto something beyond what this world can produce.

The otherworldly power of Jesus was such that religious leaders of his generation called him Beelzebub or a devil – anything but a man operating under his own authority. Christian author C.S. Lewis perceptively noted that the only rational ways to identify Jesus are Son of God, devil from hell, or madman; what you can't logically say was that Jesus was simply a great guy.

» *What does it mean to you to say: "Jesus is (my) Lord?" Source*