



4609 Martin Street South, Cropwell, AL 35054
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Rev. William P. Lucas, Pastor

Deacon Terrence Rumore

Deacon Serge Brazzolotto

Deacon E. Lee Robinson

Director of Religious Education
Music Director
Parish Secretary

Jim Mathis
Charmaine Welch
Shelly Hamman

MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday : 5:00 p.m. Sunday: 8:30 a.m. & 11:15 a.m.
Weekdays: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 9:00 a.m.
Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.

OFFICE HOURS: Monday—Thursday 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

CONFESSIONS:

Saturday 4:00 p.m. - 4:50 p.m. or
by appointment.

MARRIAGES:

Must be scheduled with the Priest
at least 6 months in advance.

MORNING ROSARY:

8:30 a.m. before Mass.

MONDAYS:

Miraculous Medal Novena following Mass.

EVERY FIRST FRIDAY:

Novena To The Sacred Heart
of Jesus - before 9 a.m. Mass.
Eucharistic Adoration 9:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m.

HOLY HOUR OF ADORATION:

Third Sunday of every month at 7:00 p.m.
Second Wednesday of every month— 7:30 p.m.
Exposición del Santísimo el segundo Miércoles
de cada mes @ 7:30 p.m.

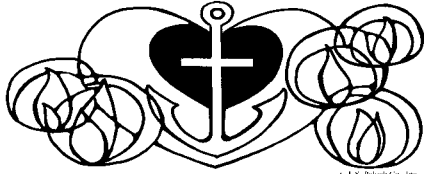
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

August through May. Ages 3 yrs. through
High School.

Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church

Saturday, January 29, 2022
Mass 5:00 pm

Sunday, January 30, 2022
Masses 8:30 am & 11:15 am



Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time January 30, 2022

*Faith, hope, and love remain, these three; but the
greatest of these is love.*
—1 Corinthians 13:13



Jan 31 - Feb 6

- Monday:** Maryann Hardwick Vega
by Mike & Carole DeCastras †
- Tuesday:** Jan Bowman by Jeff Bowman †
- Wednesday:** Sara Marie & Joe Lombardo by the Rumores
- Thursday:** Francisco Granillo by Erasmo Herrera †
- Friday:** Osvaldo Jimenez Sr. by Sharon Stice †
- Saturday:** Matthew Brazzolotto by Susan Moseley
- Sunday:** Jim Abernethy by Marti Baird †
For the People

Please pray for the ill and shut-ins:

Jacky Johnson, Ron & Diana Markevich,
Walton Smith, Juanita Crowson, Toni James,
Bob Walsh, Sarah Svetlay, Fred Brown, Silvia
Moten, Mary & Wayne Adams, Herb & Sherry
Kuntz, Bill & Loretta Frost, David & Audrey
Springer, Christine Jaks, Jeanie Reid,
Ruth Stanley, Jackie Thoma, Frank Troncalli,
Angela Ledlow, Michael Brayman, Shannon
Ray, Mark Boyle, Lee Walser, Judy Marston,
Geri Bunt, Jay Benson, Charles & Libby LaFleur,
Bill Trussell, Carol Lindsay, Tom Welch,
Lance Stella

Please pray for all our loved ones who are ill and our shut-ins.
To add a name, call the church office; or to add to the Prayer
Hot Line please email Sharon Stice at
sharonstice46@gmail.com or call 205-613-1053.

Weekly Readings January 31—February 6

- Monday:** 2 Sm 15:13-14, 30; 16:5-13; Ps 3:2-7; Mk 5:1-20
- Tuesday:** 2 Sm 18:9-10, 14b, 24-25a, 30—19:3; Ps 86:1-6; Mk 5:21-43
- Wednesday:** Mal 3:1-4; Ps 24:7-10; Heb 2:14-18; Lk 2:22-40 [22-32]
- Thursday:** 1 Kgs 2:1-4, 10-12; 1 Chr 29:10-12; Mk 6:7-13
- Friday:** Sir 47:2-11; Ps 18:31, 47, 50, 51; Mk 6:14-29
- Saturday:** 1 Kgs 3:4-13; Ps 119:9-14; Mk 6:30-34
- Sunday:** Is 6:1-2a, 3-8; Ps 138:1-5, 7-8; 1 Cor 15:1-11 [3-8, 11]; Lk 5:1-11

Today's Readings



First Reading — God appoints Jeremiah as prophet to the nations (Jeremiah 1:4-5, 17-19).

Psalm — I will sing of your salvation (Psalm 71).

Second Reading — Love with its many facets is the most important of the virtues (1 Corinthians 12:31—13:13 [13:4-13]).

Gospel — When Jesus claims his salvific mission is for all people, not just the Jews, he is expelled by the enraged members of the Nazarean synagogue (Luke 4:21-30).

ABORTION AND SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Years ago, I was on an advisory board for a crisis pregnancy center. The director told me she was grateful that a minister was willing to participate. I asked her why she had trouble getting clergy to serve. She explained that abortion isn't just evil; it is demonic. Most protestant ministers did not want to be involved in anti-abortion ministry because they would have to struggle against the devil. She concluded by saying, "The devil hates what we do."

That encounter gave me a new viewpoint about abortion. We may think of the issue being a struggle between "pro-choice" and "pro-life" forces. However, the real battle is between Satan and God. We are just pawns in their battle. There are many other issues which appear to be political or moral, but actually are part of the spiritual struggle between the Adversary and God.

Women who choose abortion deserve our compassion. They are less actors and more victims. They are being manipulated. Not by the media or the abortion industry, but by the devil. Even those who work for abortion are being manipulated. They may do so because of greed or a lust for power, but the Adversary is using that as the door through which he can enter and push them toward destruction.

We should vote Pro-Life. We should assist crisis pregnancy centers like Ann's New Life in Pell City. We should educate ourselves on the issues. But most of all, we should pray and do penance so that we don't become pawns for the devil instead of God.

Laws may change, but those are just skirmishes in the real war. Any victory is winning a battle, not the war. Only God can win this war. In fact, the Bible tells us God *will* win the war. The only question is whose side we will be on. Will we be victims of the Adversary or the redeemed of the Lord?

Columbarium News

We have started selling rights to use the niches in our Columbarium. Information packets are available in the parish office for interested parishioners.

The columbarium will consist of 80 niches which can hold the urns of two people. Contract for selection and use of the niches is allowed after full receipt of payment which is \$3,000.

Niche location selection is on a first come first served basis.

The construction of the columbarium is scheduled to begin this summer and be completed by the end of 2022. You can also contact the office at 205-525-5161 during normal office hours if you would like to purchase a niche or need more information.

Offertory Collection

July 2021 — June 2022

	Actual	Needed weekly
Jan 23 Offertory	\$4,446	\$6,500
Year to Date	\$203,868	\$195,000



Chair: Jeff Reach
jreach@protonmail.com

Vice Chair: Bernie Funderburg
boxacarbern1@aol.com

Secretary: Brenda Rochford
edenrochford@yahoo.com

Mary Burns: angels4maryb@gmail.com

Leslie Hutto: ljhutto@gmail.com

Britton Falkner: brittonfalkner@gmail.com

Debbie Gossett: debbiegossett@msn.com

Allen Ross: allentross5555@gmail.com

Cristy McKinney: cmckinney9839@gmail.com

Council meetings are open to all parishioners, and are typically on the third Wed. of the month after Mass.

THE LITERACY COUNCIL
OF CENTRAL ALABAMA



The Literacy Council of St. Clair County offers Programs in the following areas:

- *Adults learn to read or improve your reading skills. Our reading classes are normally taught "one on one". The classes will help with your reading skills and comprehension of what you have read.*
- *Assist you in preparing to get your GED.*
- *ESOL Classes (English for Speakers of Other Languages) The classes are offered every Tuesday night, upstairs, at the Pell City Municipal Complex, (The Pell City Library location).*

All classes are free and flexible scheduling is available. Call 205-378-9072 for more information

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You may enroll by visiting our website, or logging in directly to faith.direct/AL1065.



February 3rd is the Feast of St Blaise, the patron saint of throat illnesses. There will be blessing of the throats after each Mass the weekend of February 5-6, 2022.

The Christian Love Pantry

The Christian Love Pantry is helping the poor in the St. Clair County area. To assist them we are collecting canned soup at the church. You can leave donations in either vestibule.

There is also a box for cash donations in each vestibule. If you prefer, you may drop your donation at the parish office during normal office hours.



Goal –400 cans/month

**Cans donated to date in
January – 208 cans**

**Please consider donating
\$1 per week**

SILENCE BEFORE AND AFTER MASS

The 15 minutes before Mass and the 15 minutes following Mass are used by some people as a time for prayerful preparation and thanksgiving. That is why we try to maintain a “reverential silence” in the church during those times. Fellowship is also a part of our faith, but the place for that is in the foyers of the church or outside. Please try to be respectful of the needs of others and maintain a reverential silence in the church before and after Mass.

Father Bill

Assignments

February 2, 2022 – February 6, 2022

WEDNESDAY MASS

2/2/2022 7:00 PM

Lector: Teri Gagliano

Ministers: Deacon

SATURDAY EVENING MASS

2/5/2022 5:00 PM

Greeters: Paige Everett, Allen Ross

Lector: Susan Moseley

Ministers: Deacon, Sara Reese

Altar Server: Chris Gallegly, Tom Michaels

Ushers: Bob Nicholas, Jay Benson

SUNDAY MASS

2/6/2022 8:30 AM

Greeters: Anna Emerick, F&S Poteracki

Lectors: Alexis Allor, Meagan Price

Ministers: Deacon, Carly Sadler

Altar Server:

Ushers: Philip & Bit Thomaston,
Henry Cardenas, Robert Paulitzky

2/6/2022 11:15 AM

Greeters: The Bluhm Family

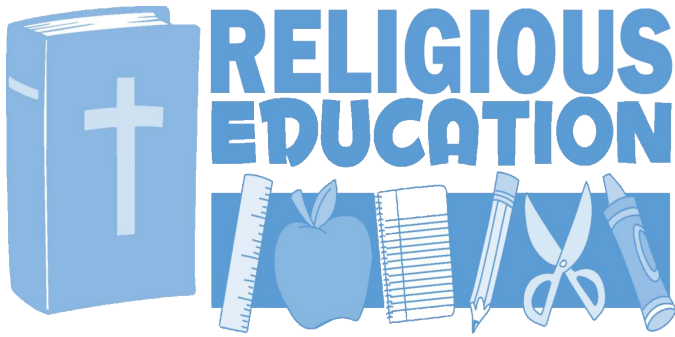
Lectors: Gloria Raynor, Miranda Bryant

Ministers: Deacon, James Raynor

Altar Servers: Logan & Caleb Bluhm

Ushers: Andy Payant, Jerrold Bluhm
Emily Bluhm

**If you are unable to keep your
assignment, please find a substitute.**



New Ministry Opportunities!

Our senior youth group has continued to meet on Wednesdays and we have had a great time fellowshiping and reflecting on the Lord's Word and our lives as Catholics. But we'd love to share the fun with everyone in the parish!

With that being said, we are re-introducing our Junior Youth Group for grades K-5! Junior Youth will also meet at 6PM on Wednesday nights and will be located in the R.E. building.

Finally, thanks to the Atchinsons, we are able to host an Adult Religious Study group for any adult and/or parent that wishes to join! This group will ALSO meet at 6PM on Wednesdays and is the perfect opportunity for parents and adults in the parish to fellowship and prayerfully gather.

It is our hope that offering these ministries at the same time and locations will enable more families to join us on Wednesday nights. We'd love to have you!

FORMED
FAITH AT HOME

Parish Code: **JRQNH8**

Looking Ahead:

**January 30th - Religious Education
9:45AM-11AM.**

**February 6th - Religious Education
9:45AM-11AM.**

**February 13th - Religious Education
9:45AM-11AM.**



Check out our new youth and adult ministries! Join us on Wednesdays at 6PM for food, fellowship, and reflection on His Word! ALL ages are welcome!

Contact Jim Mathis for more information:

jimmathis.oll@gmail.com

"Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous hand."

- Isaiah 41:10



It is Baby Bottle Time! The Baby Bottle Drive to benefit Ann's New Life Center began last weekend. If you did not get a baby bottle, there are empty ones in the foyers. Take one when you leave Mass and fill it with change for the next few weeks.

The date of the Shower of Blessings has yet to be determined pending the scheduling of a speaker.

Ann's New Life Center has been blessed with all items that go into a diaper bag, but have no diaper bags. A special request this year from the Director, Gabby Martin is for diaper bags and diaper backpacks. In addition, there is a need for copy paper, stamps and baby wipes.

BOTTLED WATER COLLECTION

Because of Covid, local children are not able to use water fountains in their schools. Our parish will be collecting bottled water to donate to the local schools. Just leave the donations in the foyers of the church or in the parish hall when they are open.

Thank you.

Sunday January 30

Knights of Columbus Mass 8:30

Mass 11:15 am

RE-9:45 am

Monday– January 31

Mass 9:00 am

Tuesday– February 1

Mass 9:00 am

RCIA– 7:00 pm

Wednesday–February 2

Mass 7:00 pm

Youth Group– 6:00 pm

Adult Religious Study Group– 6:00 pm

Thursday– February 3

Mass 9:00 am

Friday– February 4

Mass 9:00 am

First Friday Adoration-9:30-10:30 am 

Saturday– February 5

Confessions 4:00-4:45 pm

Mass 5:00 pm

Blessing of Throats-after Mass

Sunday February 6

Mass 8:30 & 11:15 am

RE-9:45 am

Blessing of Throats after each Mass

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UPDATE

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JANUARY 2022

The Science of Religion

PRESENCE AND POWER IN THE SACRAMENTS

ROBERT E. JUSTUS, MD



A belief that is commonly held today goes something like this: doctrine or orthodoxy is synonymous with religion, which is based on faith, and in turn rejects science. There is a natural proclivity to see science and faith in diametric opposition. One might conclude this is a function of the

ever-elucidating nature of science and the lack of reason in faith or religion (two words I'll use interchangeably). Some believe science and religion should be held in separate realms, where science deals with the physical world and religion governs questions surrounding ultimate meaning and moral value.

Since life cannot be so easily compartmentalized, perhaps breaking down the artificial wall between science and religion would help resolve this apparent conflict. Rather than explore the philosophy of science as it peers ever further into the horizon of knowledge or the role of logical reason in faith, this edition of *Catholic Update* focuses on the science that can be reliably referred to about religion. Its aim is to answer:

- How does religion affect people's lives?
- Is religion related to happiness?
- Does religion contribute to human flourishing?

The Suffering

Our salvation through Christ's suffering asks us to consider those who suffer today. Among college undergraduates, those bright lights of humanity's future who tend to have intellectual advantages and superior socioeconomic prospects, the rates of depression, anxiety, self-injury, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempts have doubled in these last ten years. So says a study published by psychologists in the *Journal of Adolescent Health* involving more than 700,000 students.

In addition, loneliness is at epidemic levels, according to a study with more than 20,000 US adult participants by Cigna, a health insurance provider. Nearly half of Americans report feeling alone or left out. Generation Z (adults ages 18 to 22) is the loneliest generation, claiming to be in worse mental health than prior generations. While individuals who live with others are less likely to be lonely, single parents/guardians living with children are among the loneliest. Evidence consistently links social isolation and loneliness to worse cardiovascular and mental health outcomes and an increase in mortality of 29 percent over the general population. Medical science recognizes these expressions of suffering in our current culture and has sought remedies by exploring what gives human beings strength.

The Science on Religion

Tyler J. VanderWeele, PhD, of the Harvard School of Public Health reviewed decades of high-quality, peer-reviewed medical literature on a broad definition of health that was derived from the field of positive psychology called "human flourishing." The summary of his findings, published in 2017, includes several measures of human flourishing centering on a person's mental state and how one feels about various aspects of life. Dr. VanderWeele's review took modern and historical arguments into account. For instance, he cited Aristotle's belief that sustained happiness is an end in itself and is attained by action in accord with virtue.

The classic cardinal virtues—practical wisdom, justice, fortitude, and temperance—will be addressed later. Dr. VanderWeele's review of many studies over time indicate there are five domains of human life associated with thriving: happiness and life satisfaction; physical and mental health; meaning and purpose; character and virtue; and close social relationships. Through his findings, Dr. VanderWeele was able to reason that all five domains, at least in part, pertain to flourishing. All fulfill two key criteria: each domain is generally viewed as an end in itself and each is desired nearly universally. He explored four major pathways toward those ends suggested by decades of study. While Dr. VanderWeele didn't propose the paths as

an exhaustive list, they are widely applicable and have been explored in medical literature. The pathways are family, work, education, and religious community.

In focusing on scientific studies about religion's role as a route to flourishing, analysts must understand that science has its limits, and precision is sought in the social sciences through proper study design and rigorous statistical analysis with thoughtful review. Most individuals in these studies are Christians. We will not be proving the existence of God here by worldly, empirical means. However, we will see his fingerprints.

The Positive Effects of Religion

Key medical literature affirms regular devotion and participation in religion to be tied closely to health benefits. When studying large groups of individuals, longitudinal studies have the potential to provide the most accurate data, since they enable researchers to examine the potential effect of certain conditions entering into, and then possibly departing from, people's lives over a period of time.

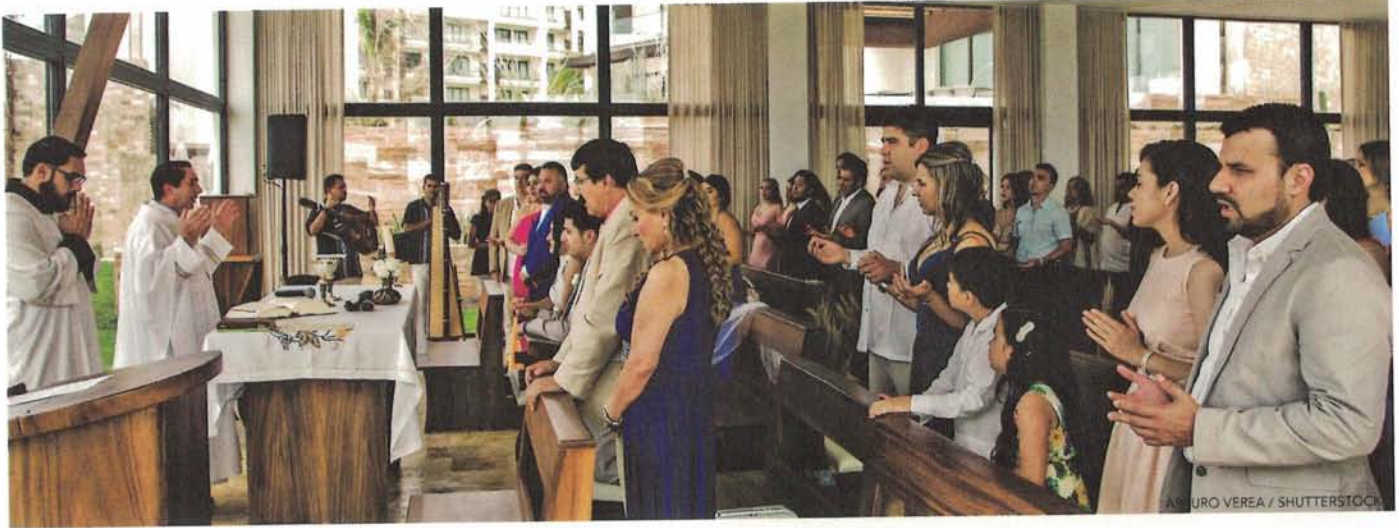
The Nurses' Health Study, done every four years since 1976, is such a resource of data—and it is indeed convincing. Individuals regularly attending religious services lived longer. Specifically, 74,534 women, who were free of cardiovascular disease and cancer at the onset, were followed from 1996 to 2012. Attending religious services more than once a week was linked to a 33 percent drop in all causes of death, compared with women who had never attended religious services.

It's reasonable to wonder if the results were skewed based on presumptions that individuals who attend religious services are less likely to have unhealthy habits like smoking or alcohol abuse. We might also suspect that those who attend services are more optimistic, less likely to experience depression, and have better social support. Interestingly, when analyzed, none of these factors accounted for more than one-fourth of the beneficial effect. Religious attendance had advantageous results equivalent to regular physical activity and proper body-mass index (BMI)—both major factors in achieving longevity.

With respect to specific causes of death, frequent attendance was associated with a significantly lower risk of mortality from breast and colon cancer. Also, results were comparable regardless of race. When compared against other aspects of social integration, the decreased rate of death was strongest for religious attendance. Regular religious-service attendance also attested to a 30 percent lower incidence of depression. Some of the studies cited included both males and females, with similar benefits (slightly enhanced benefits noted for females).

Depression is a major determinant in the tragedy of suicide. In another analysis of the Nurses' Health Study, an examination of 89,708 women from 1996 to 2010 showed that women going to religious services at least once a week had a fivefold lower rate of suicide than those who never attended services. This study explored the possibility that service attendance was just another form of the benefits of any communal integration. When compared with other practices of social integration—including marriage, group participation, and the number of close friends and/or relatives seen at least once per month—service attendance itself seemed most efficacious in countering suicide.

Important predictors of general health and suicide risk



Studies show an association between attending religious services and overall happiness, lasting marriages, and lower incidences of depression.

include depression, the use of antidepressants, a history of cancer, or a cardiovascular condition. It has been noted that individuals who regularly attend services might be less likely to suffer from these risk factors. In order to make a more meaningful comparison between attendees and nonattendees, individuals with these conditions were excluded from an additional analysis. The degree of suicide protection in attendees versus nonattendees remained the same. Also notable, the protective effect of regular service attendance against suicide was more pronounced for Catholics than for Protestants. Catholics had a 95 percent risk reduction of suicide when attending at least once a week over those with lower attendance. Protestants had a 66 percent risk reduction of suicide, a sevenfold difference.

Relative Benefits of Attending Religious Services

Many studies have indicated an association between attending religious services and overall happiness/life satisfaction. Also, longitudinal evidence suggests that those attending religious services are subsequently more generous and are more engaged in civic activities. Experimental evidence shows that prayer increases forgiveness, gratitude, and trust. Religious-service attendance is also linked to decreases in the likelihood of divorce and increases in the probability of lasting marriages, the building of lasting friendships, and the securing of social support. Interestingly, the factor that is most predictive of health benefits is attending religious services, not private spiritual practices or self-assessed spirituality/religiosity. Specifically, it is the communal aspect of religious practice that is associated with better health outcomes.

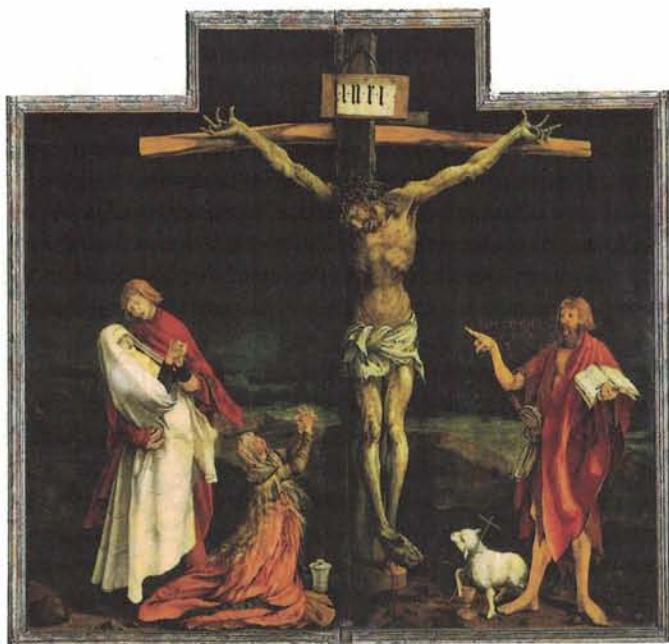
There is much to consider here. Science is appropriately cautious about claiming causality. A direct cause-and-effect relation typically requires rigorous experimental conditions with recognition and control of relevant confounding variables.

The social sciences concern the human condition, which is nuanced, complicated, and often resistant to such experimental control. However, the results reported here reflect thoughtful longitudinal design and statistical analysis that indicates a meaningful association between religious-service attendance and health benefits consistent with human flourishing.

The Virtues as Guides

What, then, of virtues, those moral guides to behavior responsible for building a strong character felt to be the source of an enduring joy even in the face of suffering? Aristotle's four virtues of prudence (practical wisdom), justice, fortitude (courage), and temperance (moderation)—while important—seem to omit a critical element. In *Summa Theologica*, St. Thomas Aquinas (1225–74) contemplates the hierarchy and argues that "...charity is the mother of all virtues..." Peter Kreeft, an author of more than fifty books on Christian philosophy and theology, offers further insight in *A Summa of the Summa*. Kreeft explains that St. Thomas is referring to the primacy of compassion. Charity instructs practical wisdom to not only make good choices but to leave the world a better place. Charity sees in justice the means to elevate all human beings and protect our dignity. Charity bolsters courage to ensure that justice is done fairly. Finally, charity informs reason to find moderation, balance, and excellence between absurd extremes. History is important in understanding the context of ideas. Aristotle, while brilliant and helpful to humanity, did not live in a time when all human life was valued. He can't be blamed for not understanding what was later revealed.

"God is love," states 1 John 4:8. Compassion leads to the act of love in charity. As St. Thomas describes, this love is willing the good of the other for the sake of the other. It is a vibrant paradox, then, that in the act of love, moved by compassion, we are giving of ourselves and thus loving while experiencing the love that is God. Poet Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822) discerned this unifying factor of guiding principles in "A



The Isenheim Altarpiece by Matthias Grünewald (circa 1516) / WIKIPEDIA

Defence of Poetry” (1821). Shelley states, “The great secret of morals is love; or a going out of our own nature, and an identification of ourselves with the beautiful which exists in thought, action, or person, not our own.” Shelley perceived the fact that love involves a deep respect and connection with fellow human beings. His recognition of “the beautiful” in the other couldn’t be closer in keeping with the doctrine of the Catholic Church and its focus on the precious value, given by God, of each human being.

Power in the Sacraments

Now to the compelling findings noted in the science already presented. In viewing the science through the lens of Catholicism, the Church states that the “Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1324). Thus it is concerning that a recent Pew Research Center survey, which some Catholics deem controversial, shows 69 percent of self-identified Catholics in the US and 37 percent of those attending Mass at least weekly do not believe in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

The doctrine of the Catholic Church teaches that it is through participation in the seven sacraments that the Church expresses its life and that people benefit from the power and presence of Jesus Christ. The fundamental sacrament is the Church itself. The Church, the mystical body of Christ, draws its nourishment from the vine of the triune God and sends its branches of disciples, supporting one another and those with whom they have contact, in the practice of Christ’s will of love: “I am the vine, and you are the branches” (John 15:5).

Saint Augustine defined *sacrament* as “the visible sign of an invisible grace” or gift from God. Science may be revealing

previously unrecognized ways the sacraments and our life in the Church directly affect our well-being and give us strength. It is through the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, that we experience the love of the Father and Son, shared with us in ways we may continue to appreciate more fully, here through science: “The sacraments express and realize an effective and profound communion among us, for in them we encounter Christ the Savior and, through him, our brothers and sisters in faith. The sacraments are...the power of Christ; Jesus Christ is present in the sacraments,” said Pope Francis (general audience, November 6, 2013).

Science seeks causes and effects. Love is not another conditional cause among many. It is the first, unconditional cause. God expressed love in the act of creation. God’s presence is noted in our acts of charity compelled by love. It is the act of love that we should allow to inform our intuition or first thoughts in any circumstance. In our chaotic world, love inspires the hope that gives strength to our heroes and saints in self-sacrifice. Love articulates the reason that girds our faith. *Ite, missa est*, the Latin closing of the classic Roman Mass, has been traditionally translated: “Go forth, you are dismissed.” In the Sacrament of Charity (*Sacramentum Caritatis*, 2007), Pope Benedict XVI provides a deeper interpretation. Without making an etymological claim, as the word *missa* in antiquity meant “dismissal,” the Pope recognizes Church members are dismissed to a “mission.” That mission is clearly defined and demonstrably supported by the Church.

In removing the artificial wall between our faith and science, Catholics may wish to consider that science suggests benefits that are a means rather than ends in themselves. Through the sacraments and more, the Church provides strength that we might rightly worship and praise God in imitation of Jesus Christ. Science indicates that faith strengthens us for the journey ahead. Pope Francis speaks to what we gain in the sacraments as a tool to be used to achieve our mission: “The Eucharist makes us strong in order to produce fruit in good works to live as Christians” (general audience, March 21, 2018). We are called to express God’s love for all people, and scientific research shows faith can benefit our mental and physical health, thus helping enable us to act on the mission that lies before us with renewed conviction.

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