



## *St. Gerard Catholic Church*

640 Edrie Street, NE  
Aiken, SC 29801  
803 649-3203

**Rev. Emmanuel O. Andinam, Pastor**  
**Deacon Dr. Charles Cooper, Retired**

### **Mission Statement**

Anchored by faith, hope and love in Jesus Christ, we strive to be active disciples, serving each other and all God's people by welcoming and embracing the enriching diversity of our community of faith.

# *Twenty Third Sunday in Ordinary Time September 7, 2025*

### **Mass Schedule**

Tuesday, Thursday and Friday – 8:15 AM

Saturday Vigil - 4:00 PM

Sunday - 8:00 AM and 10:00 AM

**First Friday:** Benediction & Divine Mercy Chaplet following 8:15 AM Mass.

**Confessions:** Tuesday & Thursday after Mass and by appointment

**Baptisms, Marriages, Funerals:** By appointment

**Religious Education:** Contact office for information

**OCIA:** Contact office 803-649-3203

**Bible Study:** Fridays 10:00 AM in the church hall

**Website:** [www.stgerardinaiken.org](http://www.stgerardinaiken.org)

### **Readings for The Week**

#### **Sunday:**

Wis 9:13-18b; Ps 90:3-4,5-6,12-13,14,17; Phi 9-10,12-17; Lk 14:25-33

#### **Monday: The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

Mic 5:1-4a; Ps 13:6ab,6c; Mat 1:1-16,18-23

#### **Tuesday: St Peter Claver, Priest**

Col 2:6-15; Ps 145:1b-2,8-9,10-11; Lk 6:12-19

#### **Wednesday:**

Col 3:1-11; Ps 145:2-3,10-11,12-13ab; Lk 6:20-26

#### **Thursday:**

Col 3:12-17; Ps 150:1b-2,3-4,5-6; Lk 6:27-38

#### **Friday:**

1 Tim 1:1-2,12-14; Ps 16:1b-2a & 5,7-8,11; Lk 6:39-42

#### **Saturday: St John Chrysostom, Bishop and Doctor of the Church**

1 Tim 1:15-17; Ps 113:1b-2,3-4,5 & 6-7; Lk 6:43-49

### Mass Intentions

#### Saturday, September 6

4:00 PM - Joan Nutt (D)

#### Sunday, September 7

8:00 AM - For Our Parish

10:00 AM - For our parish

**Tuesday, September 9 - No Mass**

**Thursday, September 11 - No Mass**

**Friday, September 12 - No Mass**

### Ministers

<u>September 13</u>	<u>September 14</u>	<u>September 14</u>
4:00 PM Vigil	8:00 AM	10:00 AM
Linda Cooper	Denise Galinas	Janet Menefee
Joe Begic	Jack Kline	Wayman Johnson
Joan Hesik	Betsy Kenney	

### Pray for our sick

Rosa Johnson, Paula Thurston, Ellen Heim, Rich Borst, Betty Hyslop, Jeffrey Hesik, Angelo Perrino, John Burke, Krystal Ortiz, Mary Rose, Michell Novotny, Nancy Gardzina, Jean Schodowski, Joan Lacombe, Casey Bay, Dennis HooChung

### Anointing of the Sick

The Rite of Anointing tells us there is no need to wait until a person is at the point of death to receive the Sacrament. In this Sacrament, the Holy Spirit gives us peace and courage to deal with the difficulties that accompany serious illness and our frailty. To receive the Sacrament of Anointing, contact the church office.

### Communion for Hospital/Homebound

If you would like Holy Communion brought to someone in the hospital or confined to home, please contact the church office: 803-649-3203

### Legion of Mary

Active members meet Tuesdays at 2:00 PM in the church Conference Room. Auxiliary members can pray at home. If you are interested in becoming an active or auxiliary member of the Legion of Mary, contact the church office.

### Weekly Collection 8/30-8/31/25

Budget	\$3,162.00
Collected	\$3,153.00
Short/Over	-\$9.00
YTD+-	+\$2,809.40

### Second Collection September 14

The Catholic University of America

### Bible Study

Bible Study classes are held on Fridays at 10:00 AM in the church hall. If you are unable to attend in person, you can participate by teleconference. The phone number is: 1-978-990-5273 and the Access Code is 236101#.

### Tabernacle Candle

A special candle should be kept alight near the tabernacle to indicate and honor the presence of Christ. If you would like to donate in honor or in memory of a loved one, please call the church office. The donation is \$25. The candle offering is for one month. The candle for September is for Jack Holder birthday & Howard Hadlock-heavenly birthday, and the Lacombe & McColla Families.

### Monthly After Mass Social

The Monthly After Mass Social is the first Saturday of the month after the 4:00 p.m. Mass. The hosts for September 6 are the Beckert and Welsh families. If you would like to host a social, contact the office: 803-649-3203.

### Men's Prayer Group

Meetings are on Tuesdays in the parish social hall at 7:30 a.m. for prayer and discussion. Following the meeting, the group will attend the 8:15 a.m. Mass. For more information contact Bill Collins at 803-998-7191. All men of the parish are welcome to the meetings.

### Our Lady of the Valley Food Pantry

Our collection for the OLV food pantry is the third weekend of the month. Food donations are welcome at any time during the month; however, our focused collection is the third weekend of the month. The focus food for the weekend of September 20-21 is Fruit Cups or Canned Fruit.



## Deacon Chuck's Corner

### Reflection on The Cost of Discipleship Luke 14:25-33

In today's gospel reading, Jesus takes faith and commitment to a whole new level. He requires complete devotion from us, which means we cannot elevate ourselves or our immediate family above Him. This passage speaks to the importance of loyalty and allegiance to Jesus over all other competing loyalties, including family, self-interest, and possessions. We are called to do all in our power to seek Him first and all else will fall into place.

Today's passage invites us to examine and re-evaluate all aspects of our life carefully and decide if the reward of eternal life in God's presence is more important than anything else. Sometimes such challenging scripture is difficult for us to sit with, but I know that Jesus is personally speaking to each of us through His Word - hopefully we will glean some important reflections from His brutal honesty about what it means to follow Him.

- What are the things that I am holding on to that may hinder me from following Jesus?

- Am I willing to die to self?

- Am I willing to be uncomfortable with the new interior freedom that Jesus is calling me to?

- What possessions and comfort zones are being challenged by my following Jesus?

- What cross am I asked to bear as I follow Jesus?

#### Prayer:

Dear Jesus, show me what things I hold onto that might cause me to settle for comfort and give me the grace that I need to be able to let go. Help me to grow in freedom, to be more wise and discerning in my choices, and to be ready to follow and serve in new ways, loving God above all else. Amen.

## St. Peter Claver

Feast day: September 9

St. Peter Claver was born at Verdu, Catalonia, Spain, in 1580, of impoverished parents descended from ancient and distinguished families. He studied at the Jesuit college of Barcelona, entered the Jesuit novitiate at Tarragona in 1602 and took his final vows on August 8th, 1604. While studying philosophy at Majorca, the young religious was influenced by St. Alphonsus Rodriguez to go to the Indies and save "millions of perishing souls."



In 1610, he landed at Cartagena (modern Colombia), the principle slave market of the New World, where a thousand slaves were landed every month. After his ordination in 1616, he dedicated himself by special vow to the service of the Negro slaves—a work that was to last for thirty-three years. He labored unceasingly for the salvation of the African

slaves and the abolition of the Negro slave trade, and the love he lavished on them was something that transcended the natural order.

Boarding the slave ships as they entered the harbor, he would hurry to the revolting inferno of the hold, and offer whatever poor refreshments he could afford; he would care for the sick and dying, and instruct the slaves through Negro catechists before administering the Sacraments. Through his efforts three hundred thousand souls entered the Church. Furthermore, he did not lose sight of his converts when they left the ships, but followed them to the plantations to which they were sent, encouraged them to live as Christians, and prevailed on their masters to treat them humanely. He died in 1654.

### Pope's intention or September For our relationship with all of creation

Let us pray that, inspired by Saint Francis, we might experience our interdependence with all creatures who are loved by God and worthy of love and respect.



LEO XIV  
GENERAL AUDIENCE  
Wednesday, 3 September 2025  
Cycle of Catechesis – Jubilee 2025. Jesus Christ our Hope. III. The Passover of Jesus.  
5. The Crucifixion. «I thirst» (Jn 19:28)

*Dear brothers and sisters,*

At the heart of the account of the Passion, in the most luminous and at the same time darkest moment of Jesus' life, the Gospel of John gives us two words that contain an immense mystery: "I thirst", and immediately afterwards: "It is finished". These are his last words, but they are filled with a whole lifetime, revealing the meaning of the entire existence of the Son of God. On the cross, Jesus does not appear as a victorious hero, but as a suppliant for love. He does not proclaim, condemn, or defend himself. He humbly asks for what he, alone, cannot give to himself in any way.

The thirst of the Crucified Lord is not only the physiological need of a tortured body. It is also, and above all, the expression of a profound desire: that of love, of relationship, of communion. It is the silent cry of a God who, having wished to share everything of our human condition, also lets himself be overcome by this thirst. A God who is not ashamed to beg for a sip, because in that gesture, he tells us that love, to be true, must also learn to ask and not only to give.

*I thirst*, says Jesus, and in this way, he manifests his humanity and also ours. None of us can be self-sufficient. No one can save themselves. Life is "fulfilled" not when we are strong, but when we learn how to receive. It is precisely at that moment, after receiving a sponge soaked in vinegar from unknown hands, that Jesus proclaims, "It is finished." Love has made itself needy, and precisely for this reason, it has accomplished its work.

This is the Christian paradox: God saves not by doing, but by letting himself do, not by defeating evil with force, but by accepting the weakness of love to the very end. On the cross, Jesus teaches us that man does not realize himself in power, but in trustful openness to others, even when they are hostile and enemies. Salvation is not found in autonomy, but in humbly recognizing one's own need and in being able to express it freely.

The fulfillment of our humanity in God's plan is not an act of strength, but a gesture of trust. Jesus does not save with a dramatic twist, but by asking for something that he cannot give himself. And it is here that the door to true hope opens: if even the Son of God chose not to be self-sufficient, then our thirst too – for love, for meaning, for justice – is a sign not of failure, but of truth.

This truth, seemingly so simple, is difficult to accept. We live in a time that rewards self-sufficiency, efficiency, and performance. And yet the Gospel shows us that the measure of our humanity is not given by what we can achieve, but by our ability to let ourselves be loved and, when necessary, even helped.

Jesus saves us by showing us that asking is not unworthy, but liberating. It is the way out of the hiddenness of sin, to re-enter the space of communion. Ever since the beginning, sin has begotten shame. But forgiveness – real forgiveness – is born when we can face up to our need and no longer fear rejection.

Jesus' thirst on the cross is therefore ours too. It is the cry of a wounded humanity that seeks living water. And this thirst does not lead us away from God, but rather unites us with him. If we have the courage to acknowledge it, we can discover that even our fragility is a bridge towards heaven. It is precisely in asking – not in possessing – that a way of freedom opens, because we cease to pretend to be self-sufficient.

In fraternity, in the simple life, in the art of asking without shame and offering without ulterior motives, a joy is born that the world does not know. A joy that restores us to the original truth of our being: we are creatures made to give and receive love.

In Christ's thirst, we can recognize our own thirst. And to learn that there is nothing more human, nothing more divine, than being able to say: *I need*. Let us not be afraid to ask, especially when it seems to us that we do not deserve. Let us not be ashamed to reach out our hand. It is in that humble gesture, that salvation hides.