

Father Joseph's Corner

"Saints Cornelius and Cyprian"

Nothing is known about Cornelius's upbringing and early life. In 251, he was elected as the 21st pope—a position he held until his death two years later. Cyprian, born Thascius Caecilius Cyprianus, was the son of wealthy pagan parents in North Africa. Educated in Greco-Roman literature and rhetoric, he had a successful career as a lawyer and teacher.

Around the age of 46, he converted to Christianity and gave much of his wealth away, devoting himself to prayer and asceticism. Within three years, he was ordained deacon, priest, and, finally, Bishop of Carthage in modern-day Tunisia, North Africa, around the year 249.

In 250, Roman Emperor Decius initiated the first empire-wide, systematic persecution of Christians. He required all citizens to offer sacrifices to the Roman gods before Roman officials. Those who refused faced threats of property confiscation, torture, imprisonment, and even death. Emperor Decius died in battle the following year, bringing an abrupt, albeit temporary, end to the persecution.

During the Decian persecutions, Pope Fabian had refused to offer sacrifices to the Roman gods and was martyred. Various priests in Rome, including Novatian, helped govern the Church. After 14 months, once Emperor Decius died and the persecutions ended, a group of bishops gathered in Rome and elected Cornelius as the new pope. Novatian was displeased with this development and had himself ordained as a second bishop of Rome, positioning himself as the first anti-pope.

By 251, the Church faced internal conflict regarding what should be done with those who had complied with the sacrifices. These individuals were referred to as *lapsi* for lapsing in their faith. Some bishops supported reconciliation of the *lapsi*, while others did not. Among the supporters of mercy were Pope Cornelius and Bishop Cyprian.

The rival Bishop of Rome, Novatian, believed that the Church lacked the authority to forgive those who had offered



sacrilegious sacrifices to the Roman gods. Pope Cornelius firmly disagreed, maintaining that after repentance and a period of public penance, the *lapsi* could be welcomed back into communion with the Church.

After Novatian became anti-pope, Pope Cornelius convened a synod of 60 bishops in Rome who supported him and jointly excommunicated Novatian. From there, bishops across the Roman Empire were invited to show their support for the legitimate pope and for the pastoral approach of reconciling the *lapsi*.

One of the most fervent supporters of Pope Cornelius was Bishop Cyprian, who was among the 60 bishops who attended the synod in Rome. Following the synod, he wrote extensively to gain others' support.

After Emperor Decius died, Gallus became emperor of Rome. Though Gallus did not continue the empire-wide persecution of Christians, he did support the restoration of pagan Roman religious practices. Within a year of becoming emperor, he had Pope Cornelius exiled to Centumcellae (modern-day Civitavecchia), a city just outside Rome, on the Mediterranean coast. A year later, due to harsh conditions, Pope Cornelius died in exile and is considered a martyr.

In 253, Emperor Gallus died in battle, and Valerian became the Roman emperor. In 257, he initiated his own empire-wide persecution. He first decreed that the clergy had to participate in Roman pagan rituals. A year later, he ordered the death of bishops, priests, and deacons who refused to renounce their faith. Laypeople were stripped of their titles, and their property was confiscated. Bishop Cyprian was among those arrested in 257. In 258, he was put on trial in Carthage, and when he refused to renounce his faith, he was beheaded. When the sentence was pronounced, he exclaimed, "Thanks be to God!" In gratitude, he even gave his executioner a gold coin.

Their Feast Day is September 16th.

—Prayerful Wishes, Father Joseph

PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE ON OUR PRAYER LIST:

David Leonard ♦ Steve Forrester ♦ Carl Johnson ♦ Dolores Koivisto ♦ Anita Marquez ♦ Ben Guyger
Georgia Fitzgerald ♦ Chuck Renwick ♦ John Huthmacher ♦ Ed McNamara ♦ Brittany ♦ Duncan Osgood ♦ Julie Bither
Mary Bither ♦ Lyn Rodgers ♦ Fred Vandehey ♦ Ralph Lee ♦ Mary Lee ♦ Peggy Holtz Michael Kuenzi ♦ Barbara Hopla
Sam LeFevre and the LeFevre family ♦ Joanie Holland ♦ Tara Lamb Mary Ellen Schiedler ♦ Carolyn Ausborn
Kerry Loving ♦ Robert Marquez ♦ Perla Marquez ♦ Douglas Booster ♦ Emily Ruiz ♦ Cookie Benton

St. Joseph Catholic Church

150 E First St., P.O. Box 1315, Prineville OR 97754
September 13, 2026 † 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Vigil Mass Saturday	5:00	p.m.
Sunday Mass (English)*	9:00	a.m.
Sunday Mass (Spanish)	12:00	p.m.
Holy Days	8:00 a.m. & 6:00	p.m.
Mondays • Tuesdays • Thursdays	8:00	a.m.
Wednesdays • Fridays	12:00	p.m.
*Coffee and fellowship are served after the 9 a.m. Mass.		

Pastor ♦ Very Rev. Fr. Joseph Kunnelaya T.
Secretary ♦ Darlene Counts
Parish Office Hours ♦ Monday – Thursday ♦ 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Parish Office Telephone: (541) 447-6475
Fr. Joseph: 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. ♦ (541) 420-4458
Parish Website: <https://stjosephsprineville.org>
Email: stjosephparish@bendbroadband.com
Pastor: fatherjoseph@bendbroadband.com / joekunel55@gmail.com
Facebook: St. Joseph Parish / Instagram: st._josephparish
Director of Religious Education ♦ Barbara Dalton
OCIA ♦ Jim Friese / OCIA (Spanish) ♦ Yurizet Villasana
Parish Bulletin Designer / Editor ♦ Tina Hill



Confessions

Wednesdays: 11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Saturdays: 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.
(other times by appointment)

Anointing of the Sick

Contact Fr. Joseph for this Sacrament

- ♦ ADORATION—First Tuesday of Every Month 6 p.m.
- ♦ FRIDAY ROSARY at 11:30 a.m., MASS at 12:00 p.m., EXPOSITION of the Blessed Sacrament immediately following Mass, EUCHARISTIC ADORATION 1–2 p.m., BENEDICTION AND REPOSITION



Baptisms

Baptisms will be held on Saturdays.
Parents of children to be baptized must be registered members of the parish 6 months prior to baptism.
A Baptismal Preparation Class is mandatory for both parents and godparents.
For more information, call the Parish Office.

Marriages

Couples need to make an appointment with Fr. Joseph 6 months before the proposed date.
A Marriage Preparation Course is mandatory.

MASS INTENTIONS / READINGS FOR THE WEEK

The practice of requesting a Mass to be offered for loved ones, living or deceased, is a beautiful and wonderful part of our Catholic tradition.

Please Call the Parish Office to Have a Mass Intention Reserved

Monday	09/14/2026	8:00 a.m.	Doris Thompson (D)	Nm 21:4b-9; Phil 2:6-11; Jn 3:13-17
Tuesday	09/15/2026	8:00 a.m.	Victoria Maska (L)	1 Cor 12:12-14, 27-31a; Jn 19:25-27
Wednesday	09/16/2026	12:00 p.m.	Ken Dalton (L)	1 Cor 12:31-13:13; Lk 7:31-35
Thursday	09/17/2026	8:00 a.m.	Joannie Holland (L)	1 Cor 15:1-11; Lk 7:36-50
Friday	09/18/2026	12:00 p.m.	Gary Thompson (L)	1 Cor 15:12-20; Lk 8:1-3
Saturday	09/19/2026	5:00 p.m.	Brett & Cheyenne Edgerly (A)	Is 55:6-9; Phil 1:20c-24, 27a; Mt 20:1-6a
Sunday	09/20/2026	9:00 a.m.	St. Joseph Parishioners (L)	Is 55:6-9; Phil 1:20c-24, 27a; Mt 20:1-6a
Sunday	09/20/2026	12:00 p.m.	Maria Guadalupe Ramirez (D)	Is 55:6-9; Phil 1:20c-24, 27a; Mt 20:1-6a

(L) = Living ♦ (D) = Deceased

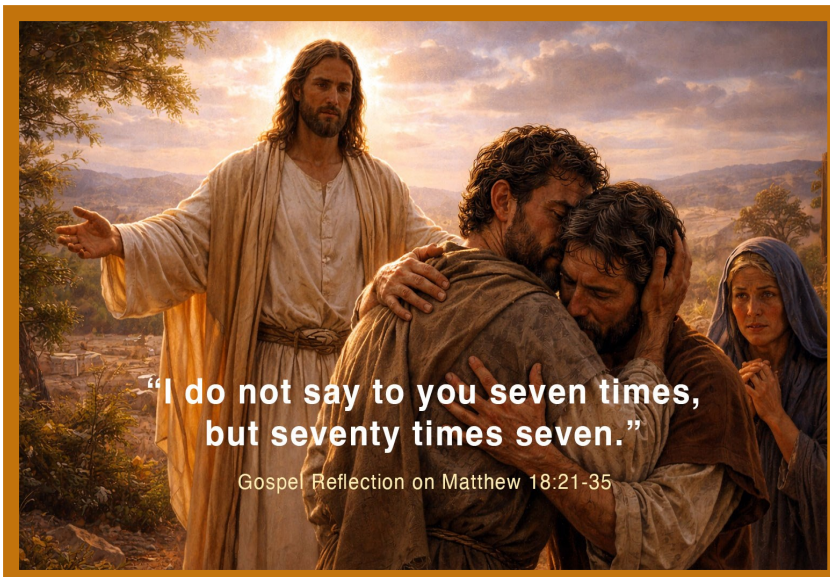
Today's Homily

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE is a communal life, not a solitary one. Thus, it entails times of being reconciled to God and with one another.

St. Paul explains why it is necessary for us to be reconciled with each other if we ever have hope of being reconciled with God. We are the Lord's, we belong to Christ, and we are to conform ourselves to him: None of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. We are a community of believers. We are all sinners and need to give and receive from each other what we need from the Lord—Mercy. We are meant to treat others the way God has treated us in Christ, sharing with them the life-giving and forgiving love of Jesus.

“What does that look like, exactly?” we might ask. This is at the heart of Peter's question in today's Gospel. “What does forgiveness look like, Lord, forgiving my brother seven times?” That seems like a reasonable number, does it not? Especially if it is for the same thing? Except Jesus said seventy-seven times was the answer. And lest we get stuck on the exact numbers rather than the larger point, Jesus tells the parable of the unforgiving servant. This parable illustrates the unlimited mercy of God. “All is forgiven”, announces the king. All is forgiven,” God says to us. No matter how great the sin—no matter how often we sin, this is God's response to our plea of mercy. It is free—and, at the same time, costly—because the forgiveness of our sins was purchased by the blood of Christ.

His debt is miraculously forgiven. Yet instead of changing his heart, reforming his life, and extending the mercy he has received, the servant imprisons a man who owes him far less. In response, the master hands him over to the torturers until he repays the entire debt.



Jesus suggests that He owes us nothing, but He has given us everything. He has forgiven the worst things we have ever done. He would forgive the worst things we could ever imagine. And yet, with all that mercy to draw from—free for the taking—He still finds us holding grudges over much

smaller wrongs done to us by the hands of another, as we heard from today's parable.

The message of today's Gospel is clear. God forgives all our sins. Jesus' death on the cross accomplished this. He forgives not because we deserve forgiveness, but because He is God, who is Love and mercy. However, if we—having been the beneficiaries of so great a mercy—do not forgive one another from the heart, neither will God extend His mercy and forgiveness to us. Like all of God's gifts, His mercy and forgiveness must be shared with others to be truly efficacious in my own life.

At each and every Mass we pray in the words that our Lord Himself taught us: “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.” Those are awesome words, and we must take them seriously. It is only in the measure that we forgive others that God will forgive us. And we are to forgive as God forgives. Not because my neighbor is “worthy” or “deserving.” Not because I happen to be in a particularly “good mood.” I forgive my neighbor “. . . seven times seventy times” because I treasure the unmerited mercy that God has shown me. This is enough to share that forgiveness with others.

As we anticipate the moment of our reception of the Body and Blood of the Lord, we say, “Lord, I am not worthy . . .” How true! It is God who makes us worthy by forgiving our neighbor from our hearts.

September—The Month of the Sorrows of Mary

Religious Education News

There will be an **Open House** for parents and students at 3:30 p.m. on **Wednesday, September 16th**. **Classes will begin on Wednesday, September 23rd**. There will be no registration during the classes.

Please continue to refer to this bulletin for updates or call **Barb Dalton**, Director of Religious Education, at (541) 410-3720 for information.



OCIA

OCIA will begin on **Wednesday, September 16th**, at 6 p.m. in **Room #4**.



Retreat at St. Benedict Lodge

The **Men's Retreat** is from **Friday, September 18th, to Sunday, September 20th**. The theme is “But I chose you” (John 15:16). Jesus speaks to us at Mass, chooses to stay with us, and also gives us a model to follow. And we know that Jesus remains with us always in the Mass. Our retreat will focus on reflections on the Mass, both how Jesus remains in us and how we follow Jesus.

Our retreat will include meditations on the Mass, helping us reflect on the life of Jesus as we follow it. We will also talk about how to prepare for Mass, how to pray during the Mass, how to deal with distractions, and how to offer thanksgiving after Mass.

The Retreat is led by **Fr. Augustine Hilander**, Retreat Director at St. Benedict's Lodge. The cost is \$250 per person for the weekend and includes food.

REGISTER NOW AT: stbenedictretreat@gmail.com.



USCCB Regional Bilingual Workshop

Everyone serving or ministering with young people in any capacity is invited to attend this interactive workshop on **Saturday, September 19th**, to unpack ***Listen, Teach, Send: A National Pastoral Framework for Ministries with Youth and Young Adults*** together in collaboration with one another at **Our Lady of Angels Church in Hermiston** from **9 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.**

For more information, or to register, please go to the diocese website at: dioceseofbaker.org/listen-teach-send.

Hike with Bishop Hennen

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26TH AT WHYCHUS CREEK TRAIL, OREGON

Bishop Hennen invites young adults to join him for a hike on the Whychus Creek Trail on **Saturday, September 26th, from 9 a.m. to noon!**

Afterward (~noon), please join him for a no-host lunch at **The Bite** in Tumalo.

Visit dioceseofbaker.org/ya-events for information.



A Welcome Party!

Fr. Joseph's nephew, **FR. JOSH**, is coming to visit soon! We are looking forward to celebrating his visit with a **warm welcome party on Sunday, September 27th, at 1 p.m.** It will be a wonderful opportunity for everyone to gather, to welcome **FR. JOSH**—and for him to meet **Fr. Joseph's parish family**.



Sanctity of Life Conference

Join **Bishop Hennen** for the Annual Diocese of Baker **Sanctity of Life Conference, *Cultivating Life***, on **Saturday, October 24th, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., at Our Lady of Angels in Hermiston**. Bring the whole family! Lunch and childcare will be provided at no charge. Presentations will be offered in English and Spanish. For more information and to register, go to: dioceseofbaker.org/pro-life.



Worldwide Marriage Encounter

“Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.” Take time for your marriage and learn how to be the best spouse you can be by attending a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Experience on Friday, November 6th, in Beaverton, Oregon.

To apply for your WWME Experience or to search for other dates, please go to rediscoverthespark.org.

For information, call (503) 704-0836 or send an email to: reservations@rediscoverthespark.org.