



MONTHLY BULLETIN

July 2026

At Home with the Lord

Have you ever wondered what the Apostles did for fun as kids? Those who became fishermen and then “fishers of men” might have shouldered their fishing poles and headed to the Sea of Galilee. Sycamores offered enticing branches for tree climbing. Maybe they built blanket forts.

Why not? Kids in biblical times had blankets. They didn’t have flashlights, but we can envision young, doubting Thomas scoffing at chilling tales told in the darkness of a blanket fort.

Cowering in Fear

Leading up to the Gospel for the July 3 Feast of Saint Thomas, an increasingly frenzied crowd had demanded Jesus’ execution (scary!). His Disciples hunkered down in a locked room to avoid similar fates.

Meanwhile, guards assigned to Jesus’ burial

Blanketed in Faith

place became paralyzed with fear when the earth quaked and an angel as bright as lightning rolled away a heavy stone to reveal an empty tomb. Chief priests told the



Fr. Mark Payne
Chaplain

guards to say that they had fallen asleep, making way for grave robbing by Jesus’ Disciples (spooky!).

Thomas braved the danger of venturing out. Upon his return, the others could not convince him that the Risen Lord had appeared without anyone unbolting the door, greeted his friends, and breathed the Holy Spirit upon them.

He refused to believe unless he could see and probe Jesus’ wounds (gruesome!). When Jesus returned a week later, Thomas exclaimed, “My Lord and my God!”

Topping Things Off

At Mass on the Feast of Saint Thomas, a scriptural letter to the Church in Ephesus describes God’s household—a figurative house with Jesus as its capstone. As Church, the letter of Saint Paul affirms, believers provide a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit.

Now, anybody who has built a blanket fort knows that the walls will slide to the floor without something like books to anchor the top edge. In the Bible, we have a book that can fortify us. Because we sometimes find it hard to see what Scripture means, the Holy Spirit comes to shine light on the words for us.

Prayer & Worship Guide



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THANK YOU, Circle of the Heart members, for your monthly donations! Heart of the Nation gratefully includes members in perpetual prayers placed at the altar for every Sunday TV Mass. To join, please use the reply card mailed with your bulletin, or contact Heart of the Nation (see page 4).



“I was flipping through channels and came across this Mass. The sermon literally brought me to tears.”

– Lara



“I am a retired priest. I have just chanced upon your televised Mass and am so appreciative. Be assured of my prayers.”

– Fr. Michael

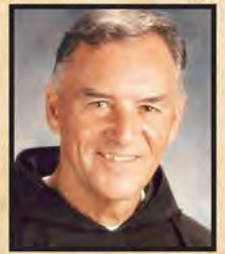


“Thank you much for everything you all do, especially for bringing the Mass into our home. We contribute what we can and pray.”

– Laurel

From the Ground Up

Merchants of old used pottery to transport foodstuffs ranging from wheat to wine. For home use, textured designs and colored glazes decorated clay dishes, oil lamps, and vases. More spectacularly, a first-century artist named Ennion developed a way to do glassblowing into engraved pottery molds. Opening a mold's sections enabled the artist to remove a glass creation.



**Fr. Tony Scannell
Chaplain**

God instructed the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah to meet Him at the local potter's house, promising to say more once Jeremiah got there. While he waited, Jeremiah saw the potter become dissatisfied with his work, squash it, and start over.

Then came the voice of the Lord, who compared Himself to a potter and people to clay in His hands. Jeremiah conveyed the message.

Tempered Clay

Hard-hearted people reacted angrily to Jeremiah, wrongly believing that the Lord wanted to squash them. God, our Creator, realizes

our potential, sees our flaws that need smoothing out, and knows the spiritual reworking we need.

Using clay from the ground, a potter adds “temper”—material to make the clay more porous and keep it from cracking when dried or fired.

Broken Pottery

Sand, crushed stone, organic matter, or even finely ground pieces of broken pottery served as temper added to natural clay. It takes expertise to judge how much grog (ground pottery) will lead to the formation of durable earthenware.

When events in our lives leave us feeling shattered, we pray for enduring faith that God, the Potter, will

help us pick up and use the pieces. By putting our temperaments and ourselves into His hands, we can become vessels for the outpouring of His love.

Fitting the Mold

Shining glassware made in molds became immensely popular. Engraving in the clay mold became a raised design in the glass.

In the Book of Genesis, God breathed human life into what He had formed out of the ground. For each of us, the heavenly Potter has a unique design. God sends the Spirit, like the breath of a glassblower, to form us so that what He engraved on our hearts becomes visible.

Brighter Days **FUND DRIVE**

No one wants it to rain on parades or picnics. Still, God gave the prophet Isaiah the image of rain watering the earth in the cycle of planting, harvesting, and feeding the hungry. Every word spoken by God has purpose.

Your fund drive donation or pledge will brighten the lives of the faithful who depend on Heart of the Nation for spiritual growth. If you cannot give now, please consider a legacy donation. Making Heart of the Nation a beneficiary of your will or trust, a life insurance policy, or a retirement account will fulfill ongoing purpose.

July 4 Prayer

Lord Jesus,

May the pursuit of
happiness go hand in hand
with being
ever faithful to Your Word
that gives life its meaning.

Thankful for liberty
to hope in accord with
treasured faith,
I ask You to bless with
strength anyone now afraid.

Longing for a world at
peace sought in truths
made evident,
I pray for those who make
known Your loving
Providence.

Amen.

Prayer in Summertime

Heavenly Father,

In these days of summer,
offering again the chance,
may I look for the glorious
and see in Your creation a
reflection of love's abundance.

Through these days of summer,
may planted seeds sprout and
grow;

where storm or drought
ravages dreams, may faith
stay rooted deeply and
renewal in hope soon follow.

While the days of summer
bring longing to be carefree,
please watch over children at
play, keep them safe, and hold
me, too, in Your loving and
dear company.

Amen.

Pick and Choose

Jesus popped in for a visit. Had Martha known in advance, she could have prepared food, set the table, and maybe even put together a centerpiece. If the Lord had the Twelve Apostles with Him, providing hospitality at the last minute meant a lot of work.

Florist Wendy Wurster chooses and arranges flowers placed around the Table of the Lord for Heart of the Nation's TV Masses. "I hope that viewers will see the flowers in a way that enhances the Mass," she said.

Flowers reflect the season, and Wendy also considers the symbolism of certain blooms—"white lilies on the feast of Saint Joseph, light blue and white for Marian observances," she explained by way of example. She enjoys making Easter flowers especially glorious.

When Wendy began as Heart of the Nation's florist, she watched the TV Mass to see which colors in her arrangements looked best on screen. It turns out that she also could have asked her stepmother, who had begun tuning in the Mass before realizing Wendy's connection with Heart of the Nation.

Describing her flower-lined career path, Wendy said it began in childhood. "My mom worked in a flower shop since I was in kindergarten," Wendy reminisced. She walked there after school and picked up some work hours in the shop when she got older. "When I moved away for college, I needed a job," she continued. Turning in an application to a local florist, she got "hired on the spot!" Wendy and her husband became owners of Flowers by Jan in 1997, and their four children have all worked in the family business.

On vacation getaways, Wendy revealed, "I make a point of going to flower shops." Like the comforting familiarity of Mass rituals used everywhere, Wendy has found that "the walk into a flower shop has the same fragrance all over the world."

Scripture on the July 29 Memorial of Saints Martha, Mary, and Lazarus depicts Martha in a huff. Jesus acknowledged her worry about serving as a good hostess, but He preferred the hospitality of Mary as she sat at His feet and listened to Him.

Florists often get requests that need quick fulfillment, without the time for detailed planning. "Working with flowers has changed me," Wendy said. "I will often just pick a variety of flowers and create the design." When recipients tell her that she chose the "right" flowers to make meaningful arrangements, she sees the wisdom of replacing worry with trust in the blessings of inspiration and God-given talents.



Independence Day Quiz

Questions:

1. Which Catholic wrote a letter in January 1776 that contains the first known use of “united states of America” in writing?
2. How many references to God appear in the Declaration of Independence?
3. Name the sole Catholic who signed the Declaration.
4. Which Founding Father called the words of Jesus “the most sublime and benevolent code of morals which has ever been offered to man”?

Answers:

1. Stephen Moylan, a mercantile shipping businessman, wartime aide serving directly under General George Washington in logistics and communications roles, and commander of a cavalry regiment.
2. Four (Creator, God, Supreme Judge of the world, and divine Providence).
3. Charles Carroll of Carrollton, a wealthy and influential agricultural estate owner elected to the Second Continental Congress too late to vote for the Declaration, although he signed the formal copy (the one in exquisite handwriting).
4. Thomas Jefferson, who conveyed his praise of the Lord’s teachings in an 1813 letter to John Adams.

MASS SCHEDULE

Sunday, July 5, 2026
Fourteenth Sunday
in Ordinary Time

Sunday, July 12, 2026
Fifteenth Sunday
in Ordinary Time

Sunday, July 19, 2026
Sixteenth Sunday
in Ordinary Time

Sunday, July 26, 2026
Seventeenth Sunday
in Ordinary Time

Online Mass on Sundays and
Holy Days:

Available all day at
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CATHOLIC MASS



PRAYER LINE: (414) 475-4700

I would like a Heart of the Nation prayer minister to call me.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

“Cast all your worries upon Him
because He cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:7)

Return this form in the envelope provided, or call to speak with a prayer minister from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Central Time. (At other times, please leave a message for a call back.)



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channel information,
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www.HeartoftheNation.org

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Contact Us:

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