

## Background on the Gospel Reading

It is important to read today's Gospel and next week's Gospel as two parts of a single story. These readings are a turning point in Matthew's Gospel. This week we hear Jesus name Simon Peter as the rock upon which he will build his Church. Next week we will hear Jesus call this same Simon Peter "Satan" when he reacts negatively to Jesus' prediction about his passion and death.

In today's Gospel, Jesus asks his disciples what people are saying about his identity. The disciples indicate that most people believe that Jesus is a prophet of Israel. Then Jesus asks his disciples who they believe that he is. Simon Peter answers, identifying Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God.

Jesus commends Simon Peter for this profession of faith, indicating that this insight has come from God. Because of Simon Peter's response, Jesus calls him the "rock" upon which Jesus will build the Church. This is a word play on the name Peter, which is the Greek word for "rock." Peter is then given special authority by Jesus, a symbolic key to the Kingdom of Heaven. Peter will play an important role in the early Christian community as a spokes person and a leader.

In today's Gospel, Peter's recognition of Jesus' identity is credited to a revelation by God. This will contrast sharply with Jesus' rebuke of Peter in next week's Gospel. When Peter rejects Jesus' prediction of his passion and death, Peter is said to no longer be thinking as God does but as humans do.

The use of the term *church* in today's Gospel is one of only three such occurrences in Matthew's Gospel. Peter in this Gospel is being credited as the foundation for the Church, a privilege granted to him because of his recognition of Jesus' identity. The Church continues to be grounded in the faith that Jesus Christ is Lord.

## Monthly Pro-Life Mass and Prayer Vigil

One of the fundamental answers to abortion is prayer. Please join your voice with ours as we pray on the first Saturday of each month at a different parish for a new culture of life. The next Mass will be on September 2, 9:00 a.m., at St. Andrew Kim Parish in Surrey. To learn more, please visit [beholdvancouver.org/events](http://beholdvancouver.org/events).

There is a plentiful multitude of words, but there is no profit from random and foolish talking.

—St Gregory of Neocaesarea



## ST. MONICA PARISH

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PASTOR: **Rev. Mark Bautista**  
DEACON: **Wilbur Victoria**

**PARISH OFFICE HOURS**  
Monday – Friday  
**9:30 am – 1 pm / 1:30 pm – 4:30 pm**

**MASS SCHEDULES**  
WEEKDAYS: **9:00 am**  
SATURDAYS: **9:00 am & 5:00 pm**  
SUNDAYS: **9:00 am, 11:00 am**  
& **4:00 pm (YVR)**

**CONFESSION SCHEDULES**  
SATURDAYS: **9:45 am—10:30 am**  
20 minutes before Daily Mass

**BAPTISM every Saturday @ 11am**  
**WEDDING** – Please call the Parish Office  
at least 6 months in advance.  
**FUNERAL, HOUSE BLESSING, SICK CALL**  
Please call the Parish Office.

WEDNESDAY: **Perpetual Help Novena**  
**after 9am Mass**  
FRIDAY: **Holy Hour after 9am Mass**  
1st SATURDAY: **Rosary for Vocation**  
**after 9am Mass**

*(above schedule effective September 1)*

August 27, 2023

**21st Sunday in Ordinary Time**

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**Liturgy of the Word**

*Rely on God for wisdom.*

In the first reading, Eliakim is given the tokens of the master of the palace and the Lord gives him authority over the palace to be a father to all Jerusalem. Saint Paul writes to the Romans that God's knowledge and wisdom are unfathomable. In the Gospel, when Jesus asks who the crowds say he is, the disciples give varied answers. Peter answers correctly and Jesus gives him the keys of the kingdom.

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**Today's Readings:**

*1st: Isaiah 22.15, 19-23*

*Psalm: 138*

*2nd: Romans 11.33-36*

*Gospel: Matthew 16.13-20*

WHO DO  
YOU SAY  
I AM?

JESUS  
TRUTH  
LIGHT  
LOVE  
WORD = GOD  
CORNERSTONE  
MANUEL

## Welcome Fr. Mark to St. Monica Parish

### A Stewardship Moment

“Or who has given the Lord anything that he may be repaid?” -Romans 11:35

St. Paul reminds us of a central fact of stewardship. We cannot give God anything - He already owns it all. God made everything, including us. Since we are made in His image, we too, are called to be generous. How we use our God-given gifts becomes our gift back to Him. Gratitude for all we have been given opens our hearts to joyful generosity! And, through our generosity, we just may be the answer to someone else’s prayer.

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#### PROJECT ADVANCE as of 14 August 2023

Parish Goal: \$75,000.00 | Donations: \$18,555.00 (25%)

Participation: 38 of 374 families (10%)

#### Mass Intentions | Aug 27 - Sep 2, 2023

Sun, Aug 27 - Lorraine/Tony (+)	Thu, Aug 31 - Helen/Manuel Manalo (+)
Mon, Aug 28 - Lourdes de Jesus (+)	Fri, Sep 1 - Orlando Calasan (+)
Tue, Aug 29 - Melinda Arrimado (+)	Sat, Sep 2 - Marlytel Decena (INT)
Wed, Aug 30 - Gella Paz Cruz (+)	

### Upper Room Conference 2023: Registration Now Open!

Proclaim’s Upper Room conference connects hundreds of Catholics in pursuit of transforming their parishes into missionary outposts. Be inspired by our roster of engaging speakers, make meaningful connections, and discover strategies and tools to equip yourself for mission!

Join us on Saturday, September 23, from 8:00 a.m. to 6: 00 p.m. at Pacific Academy in Surrey. Cost is \$75, inclusive of food and two breakout sessions. Parking is free. To qualify for a \$10-discount, simply gather a group of 8 or more people and register together with a parish coupon code. Learn more and register at [upperroomvancouver.com](http://upperroomvancouver.com).

ST MONICA, pray for us...



#### Saint Monica (c. 330 – 387)

[Saint Monica | Franciscan Media](#)

The circumstances of St. Monica’s life could have made her a nagging wife, a bitter daughter-in-law, and a despairing parent, yet she did not give way to any of these temptations. Although she was a Christian, her parents gave her in marriage to a pagan, Patricius, who lived in her hometown of Tagaste in North Africa. Patricius had some redeeming features, but he had a violent temper and was licentious. Monica also had to bear with a cantankerous mother-in-law who lived in her

home. Patricius criticized his wife because of her charity and piety, but always respected her. Monica’s prayers and example finally won her husband and mother-in-law to Christianity. Her husband died in 371, one year after his baptism.

Monica had at least three children who survived infancy. The oldest, Augustine, is the most famous. At the time of his father’s death, Augustine was 17 and a rhetoric student in Carthage. Monica was distressed to learn that her son had accepted the Manichean heresy—“all flesh is evil”—and was living an immoral life. For a while, she refused to let him eat or sleep in her house. Then one night she had a vision that assured her Augustine would return to the faith. From that time on, she stayed close to her son, praying and fasting for him. In fact she often stayed much closer than Augustine wanted.

When he was 29, Augustine decided to go to Rome to teach rhetoric. Monica was determined to go along. One night he told his mother that he was going to the dock to say goodbye to a friend. Instead he set sail for Rome. Monica was heartbroken when she learned of Augustine’s trick, but she still followed him. She arrived in Rome only to find that he had left for Milan. Although travel was difficult, Monica pursued him to Milan.

In Milan, Augustine came under the influence of the bishop, St. Ambrose, who also became Monica’s spiritual director. She accepted his advice in everything and had the humility to give up some practices that had become second nature to her. Monica became a leader of the devout women in Milan as she had been in Tagaste.

She continued her prayers for Augustine during his years of instruction. At Easter 387, St. Ambrose baptized Augustine and several of his friends. Soon after, his party left for Africa. Although no one else was aware of it, Monica knew her life was near the end. She told Augustine, “Son, nothing in this world now affords me delight. I do not know what there is now left for me to do or why I am still here, all my hopes in this world being now fulfilled.” She became ill shortly after and suffered severely for nine days before her death.

Almost all we know about St. Monica is in the writings of St. Augustine, especially his *Confessions*.

**Reflection :** Today, with Google searches, online shopping, text messages, tweets, and instant credit, we have little patience for things that take time. Likewise, we want instant answers to our prayers. Monica is a model of patience. Her long years of prayer, coupled with a strong, well-disciplined character, finally led to the conversion of her hot-tempered husband, her cantankerous mother-in-law and her brilliant but wayward son, Augustine.

Saint Monica is the Patron Saint of: *Alcoholics, Conversion, Mothers, Wives*