

## Pope Francis' General Audience, "We are People of Spring more than Autumn"

Rome, August 23, 2017. Zenit.org

Dear Brothers and Sisters, good morning!

We listened to the Word of God in the Book of Revelation, and it says thus: "Behold, I make all things new" (21:5). Christian hope is based on faith in God, who always creates novelties in man's life, He creates novelties in history and He creates novelties in the cosmos. Our God is the God that creates novelties, because He is the God of surprises.

It's not Christian to walk looking down — as pigs do: they always go like this — without raising our eyes to the horizon, as if all our journey ended here, in the span of a few meters of travel; as if there were no aim in our life and no landing, and we were constrained to an eternal wandering, without any reason for our many toils. This isn't Christian.

The last pages of the Bible show us the ultimate horizon of the believer's journey: the Jerusalem of Heaven, the celestial Jerusalem. It is imagined first of all as an immense tent, where God will receive all men to dwell definitively with them (*Revelation* 21:3). And this is our hope. And what will God do, when we are finally with Him? He will use an infinite tenderness towards us, as a father that welcomes his children who have worked hard and suffered. In *Revelation* John prophesies: "Behold, the dwelling of God is with men! . . . He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away. . . . Behold, I make all things new!" (21:3-5) — the God of novelty!

Try to meditate on this passage of Sacred Scripture, not in an abstract way, but after having read a chronicle of our days, after having seen the television news or the front page of newspapers, where there are so many tragedies, where sad news is reported to which we all risk growing inured. And I have greeted some <of you> from Barcelona: how much sad news from there! I have greeted some <of you> from the Congo, and how much sad news from there! And how many others! To name only two countries of <those of> you who are here . . . Try to think of the faces of children afraid of war, of the cry of mothers, of the broken dreams of so many young people, of refugees that face terrible voyages, and are exploited so many times . . . Unfortunately, life is also this, sometimes one should say that it is especially this.

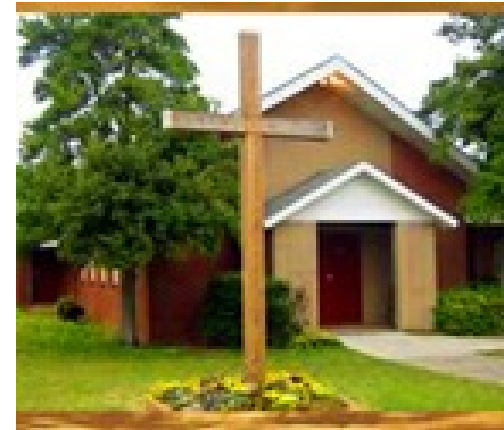
It can happen, but there is a Father who weeps with us; there is a Father who cries tears of infinite compassion for His children. We have a Father who is able to cry, who weeps with us, a Father who waits for us to console us, because He knows our sufferings and has prepared a different future for us. This is the great vision of Christian hope, which dilates itself on all the days of our existence, and intends to uplift us.

God did not will our lives by mistake, constraining Himself and us to hard nights of anguish. Instead, He created us because He wants us happy. He is our Father and if we here, now, experience a life that is not that which He wished for us, Jesus guarantees us that God Himself is operating His rescue. He works to rescue us.

We believe and know that death and hatred are not the last words pronounced in the parable of human existence. To be Christians implies a new perspective: a look full of hope. Some believe that life retains all their happiness in youth and in the past, and that living is a slow decay. Others even hold that our joys are only episodic and passing, and that non sense is inscribed in men's life, those that in face of so many calamities say: "But life has no meaning, our journey is non-sense.: But we Christians don't believe this. Instead we believe that in man's horizon there is a sun that illumines for ever. We believe that our most beautiful days are yet to come. We are people of spring more than autumn. I would like to ask now — each one answer in his heart, in silence, but answer —: Am I a man, a woman, a boy, a girl of spring or of autumn? Is my soul in spring or in autumn?" Each one answers himself. We see the sprouts of a new world rather than the yellowing leaves on branches. We do not delude ourselves in nostalgias, regrets and laments: we know that God wants us to be heirs of a promise and tireless cultivators of dreams. Don't forget that question: "Am I a person of spring or of autumn?" Of spring, that waits for the flower, that waits for the fruit, that waits for the sun that is Jesus, or of autumn, which is always with a face looking down, embittered and, as I've said sometimes, with the face of vinegar peppers.

The Christian knows that the Kingdom of God, His Lordship of love is growing as a great field of wheat, even if in the midst of darnel. There are always problems, there is gossip, there are wars, there are sicknesses . . . there are problems! But the wheat grows and, in the end, evil will be eliminated. The future doesn't belong to us, but we know that Jesus Christ is the greatest grace of life: it's God's embrace that awaits us at the end, but which already now accompanies and consoles us on the way. He leads us to God's great "tent" with men (Cf. *Revelation* 21:3), with so many other brothers and sisters, and we will bring to God the memory of days lived down here. And it will be beautiful to discover in that instant that nothing was lost, no smile and no tear. Although our life might have been long, it will seem to us that we lived it in a breath. And that Creation was not arrested on the sixth day of Genesis but has continued tirelessly, because God has always been concerned about us. Until the day that everything will be fulfilled, in the morning that tears will be extinguished, in the very instant in which God will pronounce His last word of blessing: "Behold — says the Lord — I make all things new!" (v. 5) Yes, our Father is the God of novelties and surprises. And that day we will be truly happy, and we'll weep. Yes, but we'll weep with joy.

# St. Gerard Catholic Church



640 Edrie St. NE, Aiken, SC 29801  
803 649-3203

**Fr. Emmanuel O. Andinam: Administrator**  
**Joseph A. Dennis: Deacon**

### SUNDAY READINGS

#### First Reading:

*Isaiah 22:19-23(121A)*

#### Responsorial Psalm:

*Psalm 138:1-2,2-3,6,8*

#### Second Reading:

*Romans 11:33-36*

#### Gospel:

*Matthew 16:13-20*

#### Today's Missal

#### Lectionary Readings for Week of August 27, 2017

**Monday:** *1 Thessalonians 1:1-5,8b-10;*  
*Matthew 23:13-22*

**Tuesday:** *1 Thessalonians 2:1-8;*  
*Mark 6:17-29*

**Wednesday:** *1 Thessalonians 2:9-13;*  
*Matthew 23:27-32*

**Thursday:** *1 Thessalonians 3:7-13;*  
*Matthew 24:42-51*

**Friday:** *1 Thessalonians 4:1-8;*  
*Matthew 25:1-3*

**Saturday:** *1 Thessalonians 4:9-11;*  
*Matthew 25:14-30*

## The Twenty First Sunday in Ordinary Time August 27, 2017

### Mission Statement

Called to be a People for Others

### Vision 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.

*So I now say to you: You are Peter and on this rock I will build my community. And the gates of the underworld can never overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of Heaven: whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.' Then he gave the disciples strict orders not to say to anyone that he was the Christ.* **Matthew 16:18-20**



**Mass Times:** Weekdays Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 8:15 AM,  
First Friday Benediction after Mass  
Weekend Saturday Vigil 4:00 PM, Sunday 7:00 AM and 11:00 AM

**Confessions:** after weekday Masses and by Appointment

**Office Hours:** 9:00 AM till 3:00 PM Tuesday - Thursday

**Bible Study:** Fridays 10:00 AM , **CCD:** No Class at this time

**RCIA:** Contact Deacon Joe 843 743-8779

**Baptisms, Confirmations, Marriages and Funerals:** By Appointment, Contact the office.

**Contact Us:** Phone 803 649-3203, **E-Mail** stgerardscatholi@atlanticbbn.net

**Facebook** @stgerardaiken, **Emergency number for Father 803 341-5933**



**Pray for our sick:**

Marge Glauser  
Leonard Saunders  
Shirley Paige  
William and Jackie Cobbs  
Woody Alexander  
Rosa Johnson  
Brenda Ligons  
Joe Fulmer  
Jean Schodowski  
Dick Smoot

**Weekend Offering**  
**August 20, 2017**

Collected \$2,044.00  
Needed \$2,612.00  
**Under \$568.00**  
Attendance 137

*Stewardship a way of life*

Stewards of God's gifts are not passive beneficiaries. We cooperate with God in our own redemption and in the redemption of others. We are also obliged to be stewards of the Church. USCCB



**Mass Intentions:**

4:00 PM, 7:00 & 11:00 AM Masses are said for your own personal intentions.

*The Gathering Hymn 412 BB*  
*The Church's One Foundation*  
*The Offertory Hymn 342 BB*  
*One Bread, One Body*  
*The Communion Hymn is CHOIR 621 H*  
*Where He Leads Me*  
*Our Song of Praise is 195 BB*  
*Holy God, We Praise Thy Name*



**Pastoral Council:**

Marge Glauser,  
Chairperson  
Janet Menefee,  
Vice Chair  
Payson Borst  
Jacqueline Brown  
Fredrick Cadek  
Joan Hesik  
Gregory Wright  
Patricia Hayes  
Matt Fitzpatrick

**Finance Council:**

Clyde Hall,  
Chairman  
Anna Marie Key,  
Auditor  
Agnes Beckert  
Art Wagner  
**Vacant**

**Lay Ministers**

<u>Saturday September 2</u>	<u>Sunday September 3</u>	<u>Sunday September 3</u>
4:00 PM Vigil Mass	7:00 AM Mass	11:00 AM Mass
Lector: Tami Schaeffer	Denise Gelinas	Janet Menefee
E E Ministers: Diane Begic	Roger Gelinas	Wayman Johnson
<u>Saturday September 9</u>	<u>Sunday September 10</u>	<u>Sunday September 10</u>
4:00 PM Vigil Mass	7:00 AM Mass	11:00 AM Mass
Lector: Diane Begic	Mary Kay L'Esperance	Sheila Wagner
E E Ministers: Barbara Dixon	Gerard L'Esperance	Jackie Brown
Refreshments August 27 <b>Open</b>	Refreshments September 3 Matt Fitzpatrick/Rosa DiStefano	Refreshments September 10 Sheila Wagner/Patricia Hayes



Lector: Diane Begic  
E E Ministers: Barbara Dixon

Refreshments August 27

Refreshments September 3

Refreshments September 10

**Open**

Matt Fitzpatrick/Rosa DiStefano

Sheila Wagner/Patricia Hayes

The Legion of Mary is meeting at 1:30 on Fridays.  
Please consider joining. Call Paula Thurston at 803 226-1120

*Perpetual Novena in honor of Our Lady of the  
Miraculous Medal Tuesdays at the 8:15 Mass*

*Next weeks Second Collection for  
Catholic University*



**Bible study resumes on  
September 8 at 10:00 AM**

Fall festival meeting Wednesday  
September 6, at 7:00 PM

**Finance Council Budget Meeting 6:00 PM Tuesday the 29<sup>th</sup>.  
We are still in need of one more finance council member**

**BINGO Columbus Club Hall Every Monday at 7:10 PM till 9:00 PM 5 Cards \$ 10.00.  
Each Additional Card \$2.00 15 Regular Games \$20 Payout  
1 Coverall Jackpot \$150 Payout**



**Volunteer Corner:**

**We still need volunteers for  
Finance council and fall festival.  
Sign up after Mass**

If you know of someone that needs  
The Blessed Sacrament brought to their home  
or hospital please call the office.

The Saint Gerard Religious Education program is in need of teachers or assistants for the following classes: Preschool, Second/Third Grade, Post Confirmation. We have students signed up for these classes, it is imperative that we have teachers for them. Your church is growing, please respond to the Holy Spirit and assist how you can. Teaching materials will be provided. Please contact the church office to help.

Registration has begun for the Saint Gerard Religious Education program 2017-2018 school year. Classes will be available for ages 3/4 through those recently confirmed. It is the diocese's policy that each child be enrolled in a religious education program two years prior to first Eucharist and two years prior to Confirmation. Please see the representative after each Mass to sign up or contact the church office at 803-649-3203 or Dottie Dennis at 843-743-8676.

Registration forms are also available in the church hall lobby. Classes will begin in September and will be held on Sundays at 10 AM in the church hall. Please contact the Dottie Dennis if you wish to assist with Religious Education this year, either teaching or as an assistant. 843-743-8676 or [o2readmore@yahoo.com](mailto:o2readmore@yahoo.com)

**Handyman or 2 (or 3) Needed!**

We are happy to announce that Lowe's has graciously donated all the materials needed to build the children's games for the Fall Festival. Now, we need volunteers to build the games. If you have tools, space and skills please contact Dot Dennis at [o2readmore@yahoo.com](mailto:o2readmore@yahoo.com) or call/text 843-743-8676 Please contact Dot Dennis at [o2readmore@yahoo.com](mailto:o2readmore@yahoo.com) or call/text 843-743-8676 if you have an empty aquarium that we can borrow for the Fall Festival on Oct. 14

BLACK CATHOLIC MEN'S CONFERENCE  
OCTOBER 5-7, 2017 MIAMI, FLORIDA  
Fr. Chester Smith FOR BROCHURE: Click link below.  
[http://www.bowmanfrancisministry.com/men\\_s\\_conference](http://www.bowmanfrancisministry.com/men_s_conference)

*Planning continues for the Saint Gerard annual Fall Festival. Although it is scheduled for October, there is much work to be done. Our parish's health and growth are contingent on the success of the festival. You have been very responsive to Fathers request for assistance in the past with this event and parish needs and this year is no exception. To be blunt, now is not the time for resting and the success of this event and the parish depends on the participation of all in whatever way you can. There are many aspects of the event, all of which need volunteers and people to take the lead. Please consider participating or leading one of the following ways: Raffle, Bake Sale, Youth Activities, Set Up, Clean Up, Food Service, Registration, Cash Handling, Vendor Coordinator, Signs, Artwork, as well as may more opportunities. The next meeting is scheduled for 6 September at 7:00 PM at the parish. Contact the church office or Deacon Joe at [josephadennis@yahoo.com](mailto:josephadennis@yahoo.com) or 843-743-8779. We need your help, your time, and your talents in order to be a*

**Your Spiritual Guide to the  
HOLY LAND & Holy Sites**

Our Vision is to assist Catholics/Christians have a truly spiritual and meaningful pilgrimage experience while touring the Holy Land and other major religious sites in Europe, call us at **1-844-400-9559**

In Harms' Way: Please remember in your prayers our Nation and loved ones of our parishioners currently serving in harms' way: James Ligons, Robert McHugh and Chris Solenberger. Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need. I ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

**Hospital Visits:** If you or a loved one is in Aiken Regional Hospital (ARMC) please let St Gerards know. Remember - ARMC does not inform us of Catholic patients, even if you register as a Catholic; it is up to the patient or family to do so. You can: ask the ARMC Chaplain to call the Catholic church, ask your nurse to inform the Catholic church (name & room number), call-St.Gerard at 649-3203 and leave a message or email St Gerard at: [stgerardscatholi@atlanticbnn.net](mailto:stgerardscatholi@atlanticbnn.net). You should follow this advice for Nursing homes and rehabilitation facilities also.

If you are on the Eucharistic Minister, Lector of refreshment schedule and have a conflict please switch with someone so we have someone serving.