

Pope's Discourse at Close of Synod

Dear Beatitudes, Eminences and Excellencies,
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I would like first of all to thank the Lord, who has guided our synodal process in these years by his Holy Spirit, whose support is never lacking to the Church. My heartfelt thanks go to Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri, Secretary General of the Synod, Bishop Fabio Fabene, its Under-Secretary, and, together with them, the Relator, Cardinal Peter Erdő, and the Special Secretary, Archbishop Bruno Forte, the Delegate Presidents, the writers, consultants and translators, and all those who have worked tirelessly and with total dedication to the Church: My deepest thanks! I likewise thank all of you, dear Synod Fathers, Fraternal Delegates, Auditors and Assessors, parish priests and families, for your active and fruitful participation. And I thank all those unnamed men and women who contributed generously to the labors of this Synod by quietly working behind the scenes. Be assured of my prayers, that the Lord will reward all of you with his abundant gifts of grace! As I followed the labors of the Synod, I asked myself: *What will it mean for the Church to conclude this Synod devoted to the family?* Certainly, the Synod was not about settling all the issues having to do with the family, but rather attempting to see them in the light of the Gospel and the Church's tradition and two-thousand-year history, bringing the joy of hope without falling into a facile repetition of what is obvious or has already been said. Surely it was not about finding exhaustive solutions for all the difficulties and uncertainties which challenge and threaten the family, but rather about seeing these difficulties and uncertainties in the light of the Faith, carefully studying them and confronting them fearlessly, without burying our heads in the sand. It was about urging everyone to appreciate the importance of the institution of the family and of marriage between a man and a woman, based on unity and indissolubility, and valuing it as the fundamental basis of society and human life.

It was about listening to and making heard the voices of the families and the Church's pastors, who came to Rome bearing on their shoulders the burdens and the hopes, the riches and the challenges of families throughout the world. It was about showing the vitality of the Catholic Church, which is not afraid to stir dulled consciences or to soil her hands with lively and frank discussions about the family. It was about trying to view and interpret realities, today's realities, through God's eyes, so as to kindle the flame of faith and enlighten people's hearts in times marked by discouragement, social, economic and moral crisis, and growing pessimism.

It was about bearing witness to everyone that, for the Church, the Gospel continues to be a vital source of eternal newness, against all those who would "indoctrinate" it in dead stones to be hurled at others. It was also about laying closed hearts, which bare the closed hearts which frequently hide even behind the Church's teachings or good intentions, in order to sit in the chair of Moses and judge, sometimes with superiority and superficiality, difficult cases and wounded families. It was about making clear that the Church is a Church of the poor in spirit and of sinners seeking forgiveness, not simply of the righteous and the holy, but rather of those who are righteous and holy precisely when they feel themselves poor sinners. It was about trying to open up broader horizons, rising above conspiracy theories and blinkered viewpoints, so as to defend and spread the freedom of the children of God, and to transmit the beauty of Christian Newness, at times encrusted in a language which is archaic or simply incomprehensible. In the course of this Synod, the different opinions which were freely expressed – and at times, unfortunately, not in entirely well-meaning ways – certainly led to a rich and lively dialogue; they offered a vivid image of a Church which does not simply "rubberstamp", but draws from the sources of her faith living waters to refresh parched hearts. ¹And – apart from dogmatic questions clearly defined by the Church's Magisterium – we have also seen that what seems normal for a bishop on one continent, is considered strange and almost scandalous for a bishop from another; what is considered a violation of a right in one society is an evident and inviolable rule in another; what for some is freedom of conscience is for others simply confusion. Cultures are in fact quite diverse, and each general principle needs to be inculturated, if it is to be respected and applied. ²The 1985 Synod, which celebrated the twentieth anniversary of the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council, spoke of *inculturation* as "the intimate transformation of authentic cultural values through their integration in Christianity, and the taking root of Christianity in the various human cultures". ³*Inculturation* does not weaken true values, but demonstrates their true strength and authenticity, since they adapt without changing; indeed they quietly and gradually transform the different cultures. ⁴We have seen, also by the richness of our diversity, that the same challenge is ever before us: that of proclaiming the Gospel to the men and women of today, and defending the family from all ideological and individualistic assaults. And without ever falling into the danger of *relativism* or of *demonizing* others, we sought to embrace, fully and courageously, the goodness and mercy of God who transcends our every human reckoning and desires only that "all be saved" (cf. *1 Tm*2:4). In this way we wished to experience this Synod in the context of the Extraordinary Year of Mercy which the Church is called to celebrate.

Dear Brothers,

The Synod experience also made us better realize that the true defenders of doctrine are not those who uphold its letter, but its spirit; not ideas but people; not formulae but the gratuitousness of God's love and forgiveness. This is in no way to detract from the importance of formulae, laws and divine commandments, but rather to exalt the greatness of the true God, who does not treat us according to our merits or even according to our works but *solely* according to the boundless generosity of his Mercy (cf. *Rom* 3:21-30; *Ps* 129; *Lk* 11:37-54). It does have to do with overcoming the recurring temptations of the elder brother (cf. *Lk* 15:25-32) and the jealous laborers (cf. *Mt* 20:1-16). Indeed, it means upholding all the more the laws and commandments which were made for man and not vice versa (cf. *Mk* 2:27). In this sense, the necessary human repentance, works and efforts take on a deeper meaning, not as the price of that salvation freely won for us by Christ on the cross, but as a response to the One who loved us first and saved us at the cost of his innocent blood, while we were still sinners (cf. *Rom* 5:6). The Church's first duty is not to hand down condemnations or anathemas, but to proclaim God's mercy, to call to conversion, and to lead all men and women to salvation in the Lord (cf. *Jn* 12:44-50). Blessed Paul VI expressed this eloquently: "We can imagine, then, that each of our sins, our attempts to turn our back on God, kindles in him a more intense flame of love, a desire to bring us back to himself and to his saving plan... God, in Christ, shows himself to be infinitely good... God is good. Not only in himself; God is – let us say it with tears – good for us. He loves us, he seeks us out, he thinks of us, he knows us, he touches our hearts and he waits for us. He will be – so to say – delighted on the day when we return and say: 'Lord, in your goodness, forgive me. Thus our repentance becomes God's joy'".⁵

Saint John Paul II also stated that: "the Church lives an authentic life when she professes and proclaims mercy... and when she brings people close to the sources of the Savior's mercy, of which she is the trustee and dispenser".⁶ Benedict XVI, too, said: "Mercy is indeed the central nucleus of the Gospel message; it is the very name of God... May all that the Church says and does manifest the mercy God feels for mankind. When the Church has to recall an unrecognized truth, or a betrayed good, she always does so impelled by merciful love, so that men may have life and have it abundantly (cf. *Jn*10:10)".⁷ In light of all this, and thanks to this time of grace which the Church has experienced in discussing the family, we feel mutually enriched. Many of us have felt the working of the Holy Spirit who is the real protagonist and guide of the Synod. For all of us, the word "family" has a new resonance, so much so that the word itself already evokes the richness of the family's vocation and the significance of the labors of the Synod.⁸ In effect, for the Church to *conclude* the Synod means to *return* to our true "journeying together" in bringing to every part of the world, to every diocese, to every community and every situation, the light of the Gospel, the embrace of the Church and the support of God's mercy!

Thank you!

Welcome back Father Emmanuel

St. Gerard Catholic Church



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

SUNDAY READINGS

First Reading:

Revelation 7:2-4,9-14 (667)

Responsorial:

Psalms 24:1bc-2,3-4ab,5-6

Second Reading:

1 John 3:1-3

Gospel:

Matthew 5:1-12a

Lectionary Readings for the week of
November 1

Monday: *Wisdom 3:1-9; Romans 5:5-11;*
John 6:37-40

Tuesday: *Romans 12:5-16b;*
Luke 14:15-24

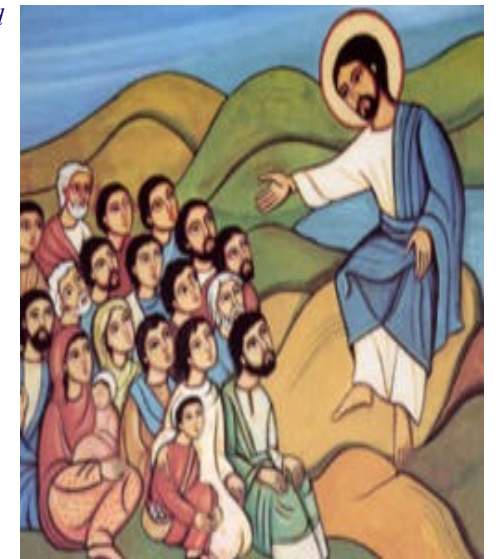
Wednesday: *Romans 13:8-10;*
Luke 14:25-33

Thursday: *Romans 14:7-12;*
Luke 15:1-10

Friday: *Romans 15:14-21;*
Luke 16:1-8

Today's Missal

Seeing the crowds, he went onto the mountain. And when he was seated his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them: How blessed are the poor in spirit: the kingdom of Heaven is theirs. Blessed are the gentle: they shall have the earth as inheritance. Blessed are those who mourn: they shall be comforted. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for uprightness: they shall have their fill. Blessed are the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them. Blessed are the pure in heart: they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: they shall be recognized as children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted in the cause of uprightness: the kingdom of Heaven is theirs. 'Blessed are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven; this is how they persecuted the prophets before you. Matthew 5:1-12a



Mass Times: Weekdays Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 8:15 AM, First Friday Benediction after Mass
Weekend Saturday 4:00 PM, Sunday 7:00 AM and 11:15 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 (Insight to the scriptures)

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

Contact Us: Phone 803 649-3203, [E-Mail stgerardscatholi@atlanticbbn.net](mailto:stgerardscatholi@atlanticbbn.net)

Facebook @stgerardaiken, Emergency number for Father 803 637-2027

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



Pray for our sick:
 Gary Gilbert
 Leonard Saunders
 Shirley Paige
 William and Jackie Cobbs
 Woody Alexander
 Lena Mickens
 Rosa Johnson
 Brenda Ligons
 Meg Schaeffer
 Joe Fulmer
 Patricia Bailey



Saints help give us direction on the path of discipleship. They inspire us to give freely and gratefully of our time, abilities and resources.

Mass Intentions 10/31-11/1
 4:00 PM Mass is said for your own personal intentions. 7:00 AM for The Lobo Family's Health, From: Bob and Brian 11:15 AM for Rick Luck
 Happy Birth Day From: A Lauer

Pastoral Council:
 Wayman Johnson, Chairman
 Payson Borst
 Jacqueline Brown
 Fredrick Cadek
 Nancy Durden
 Marge Glauser
 Janet Menefee
 Gregory Wright
 Joan Hesik

Finance Council:
 Robert Erikson, Chairman
 Leon Gagnon and Anna Marie Key, Auditors.
 Lisa Solenberger
 Vacant

Sunday Offering October 25th
 Collection \$2,030.00
 Needed \$2,612.00
Under \$582.00
 Attendance 129
Stewardship a way of life

The Gathering Hymn 729 H
When the Saints Go Marching In
The Offertory Hymn is 602 H
Blest Are They
The Communion Hymn is CHOIR 728 H
For All the Saints
Our Song of Praise is 552 H
Faith of Our Fathers



	<u>Lay Ministers</u>	
	Saturday November 7	Sunday November 8
	4:00 PM Vigil Mass	7:00 AM Mass
Lector:	Joan Hesik	Mary Kay L'Esperance
E E Ministers:	Barbara Dixon	Gerard L'Esperance
	Saturday November 14	Sunday November 15
	4:00 PM Vigil Mass	7:00 AM Mass
Lector:	Tami Schaeffer	Denise Gelinas
E E Minister:	Jerry Schaeffer	Roger Gelinas
	Refreshments November 8	Counters November 8
	Richardean Paige/Marilu Alarcon	Nancy Durden/Tony DiStefano



Silent Auction items will be available for bids to our parishioners from 2:00 PM till 5:00 PM on Friday the 6th in the parish hall. Very nice items come and beat the crowd.



St. Gerard will have a table for baked goods at the Fall Festival on Nov. 7. Since all monies collected will be pure profit for the church, we are asking everyone to contribute a baked item or two. Goodies may be dropped off the day before the festival from 2:00 - 4:00 or on the morning of the festival. If these times are not convenient, please call Judy Riley @ 642-2540 or Nancy Durden @ 215-8008 to make other arrangements.

Volunteer assignment sheets are in rear of the church and we need more help for the Bazaar on the 7th.

The Salvation Army needs help at the shelter on Park Ave. They are losing older people that have been helping with serving lunch. We already have at least one parishioner helping. Please if you have the time to help call Rose at 641-4149 or call Mary Welsh at 648-2140. Feed God's children.

Volunteer Corner

Thanks to all those that are on the bazaar committee and the folks helping with the rectory. Thanks to Tony Lobo

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

We need another member on the Finance Council. Please contact us if you are interested.

Need a Car? "05" PT Cruiser Call Richardean 803 648-0500

If you know of any one that needs a washer and dryer please call the office and let us know. We have someone that is willing to donate them.

Bible Study, Fridays at 10:00 AM

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Friday, November 6, 2015

Four Person Captain's Choice

9:00 am Registration ~ 10:00 am Shotgun Start

Pine Ridge Golf Club, Edgefield, SC

Lunch and Prizes

\$50.00 per person ~ Lunch only - \$12.00

For more information call St. Mary's C.C. -803-637-6248

Paula Ford - 803-442-3324

Rocco and Mary Benedetto - 803-637-6699

3rd Marian Eucharistic Conference

Our Featured speakers will focus on seeking to anchor ourselves to the two pillars of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Where: St. Joseph's Catholic School, Greenville, SC 29607

Schedule:

Saturday, Nov. 14

Doors open - 7:30 a.m.

Mass - 8:30 a.m.

Conference talks, lunch, Confessions

Meet & Greet the Speakers, Book Signing - 5:40 p.m.

For more information, call(864)354-7160 or go to www.meconferencesc.net

Sunday, Nov. 15

Doors open - 7:50 a.m.

Mass - 8:30 a.m.

Conference talks, lunch, Confessions

Meet & Greet the Speakers - 3:40 p.m.

The next parish council meeting is 3 November at 4:30 PM.

Black Catholics' Heritage Celebration, "An Advent Gathering of the Faithful"

December 12, 2015 Columbia, SC

9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Be sure to mark your calendars for the 2015 Diocese of Charleston Office of Black Catholics' Heritage Celebration. Our guest homilist and keynote speaker at this year's celebration will be the Most Reverend Joseph N. Perry, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

Other highlights of this special day will include a discussion on Bishop Edward Braxton's document "The Racial Divide in the United States: A Reflection for the World Day of Peace 2015" led by the Honorable Arthur C. McFarland, a panel discussion on the World Meeting of Families and the papal visit. There will also be a separate youth track. Follow this event and others on the

[web at.sccatholic.org/ethnic-ministries](http://web.at.sccatholic.org/ethnic-ministries)

We need two people from each Mass to be responsible for the care of the church lines and an individual to co-chair the linen schedule. There is too much responsibility on one or two persons to get the linens cared for. We must have these items cleaned and available for Mass.



Thank you

After the St. Gerard Bazaar Consider Dinner & Dance Fundraiser

The Knights of Columbus is hosting a steak dinner and dance on November 7/2015, from 6:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus home on 1003 Spaulding Drive in Aiken. The meal will consist of a ribeye steak, baked potato, salad, bread, and dessert. Music will be provided by a local DJ, and a silent auction will also be held at the dinner. The dinner and dance will cost \$20 per person. All money raised will go to the Columbus H.O.P.E. Foundation to support the Special Olympics in Aiken. Tickets can be bought from the following Knights: Randall Brown - 803-292-1353, Steve Graft - 803-640-2178, Greg Wright - 803-641-7354, Mark Krajc - 803-507-7521

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.

In Harms' Way: Please remember in your prayers our Nation and loved ones of our parishioners currently serving in harms' way: James Ligon, Robert McHugh, Jacob Hershey, and James Rossini. 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.