

Monday in 23rd Week in Ordinary Time (II) – 7th September 2026

Ancient Corinth, being a port town, has an awful reputation for immoral behaviour, which made it very difficult to live out an authentic Christian life. Paul says something that would shock the modern Christian, he says that those who persist in manifest grave sin should be excommunicated from the community. Our baptism has removed us from the world and set us apart for the glory of God; and so, our behaviour matters and we should be standing up to the wider community which often glorifies in lust, of the eyes and of the flesh. In most cases of serious sin, we can accuse ourselves in the Sacrament of Reconciliation and be restored to the life of grace. However, as we cannot keep our faith private, those Catholics who live public lives should be aware that if their actions cause great scandal to other Christians, it may, after a private warning by the bishops of the Church, be necessary to enact a public excommunication. However, there are one or two actions that are so grave, that any Christian would find themselves automatically excommunicated by the act itself.

The Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary – Tuesday 8th September 2026:

The Church only celebrates three Nativities: Our Lord's, Our Lady's, and St John the Baptist. All other saints must wait for their death, it being common to celebrate the feast day of their heavenly birthday instead. Nine months previously on 8th December, we celebrate Our Lady's Immaculate Conception and conceived without original sin, she is already '*full of grace*' at the time of her birth. Our Lady appears on the horizon of salvation history before the birth of Christ. In fact, she has been in the mind of God for eternity, for he has planned the remedy for humanity's fall from grace even before we freely chose disobedience. In France, this is the day of the grape harvest, and the produce is blessed, and so this Feast is also known as '*Our Lady of the Grapes*'.

The Opt. mem of St Peter Claver – Wednesday 9th September 2026:

Peter Claver was a Jesuit missionary, born of impoverished parents but with links to a distinguished Spanish heritage. While studying philosophy at Majorca, Peter was influenced by St. Alphonsus Rodriguez to go to the Indies and save 'millions of perishing souls.' He landed at Cartagena (Colombia), the principal slave market of the New World, where a thousand slaves were landed every month. Peter made a special vow to be of service to Negro slaves at work there, a ministry lasting thirty-three years. He laboured for the salvation of the African slaves and the abolition of the slave trade.

Thursday in 23rd Week in Ordinary Time (II) – 10th September 2026:

One task of Christians is to retrieve the radical nature of the gospel. As Jesus says in the gospel, *'love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who treat you badly'*. Tomorrow is the 25th anniversary of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre (the Twin Towers). It's one of those *'days that shook the world'* and we will always remember where we were on that day. It is very hard (*almost impossible*) to love someone who flies a plane into a building, indiscriminately killing civilians, a deliberate plan to annihilate non-combatants. And yet, somehow, through God's grace, we are called to offer forgiveness and avoid retaliation, and in doing so, may the Church continue to shock the world through love.

Friday in 23rd Week in Ordinary Time (II) – 11th September 2026:

'Woe to me', says the Lord, *'if I do not preach the gospel!'* All parish priests before taking up their office make a Profession of Faith (the Creed) and Oath of Fidelity in which they declare: *'in fulfilling the charge entrusted to me in the name of the Church, I shall hold fast to the deposit of faith in its entirety, I shall faithfully hand it on and explain it, and I shall avoid any teachings contrary to it... so help me God, and God's Holy Gospels on which I place my hand'*. I have now made this oath six times before my various appointments, and at my installation in Bexhill, Bishop Richard said to the people in the homily, the profession of faith and oath of fidelity is your guarantee that Fr. Simon will preach the gospel of Christ and hand on the Catholic and Apostolic Faith and not his own warped interpretation of it, to make him more popular or the message more palatable, for they are already *'good news'* and the *'words of eternal life'*.

Opt. mem of the Most Holy Name of Mary – Saturday 12th September 2026:

When Gabriel greets Our Lady, he calls her by name: *'Hail Mary!'* That we know her name is significant for we do not know the name of the woman at the well, or of the widow in the Temple, or the name of the Widow of Nain, or of the adulterous woman; and yet we know the name of Mary! Her name means *'Star of the Sea'*, for she guides us to a safe harbour, our heavenly home. The name of Mary scares hell to hell; the invocation of her Holy Name sends the devil running for fear! Mary's holy name rescues us from the abyss of namelessness. Lord, *'You have called us by our name, we belong to you. You have called us by our name and we are yours'*. In the Mass we bow our heads at the Holy Names of Jesus, Mary and for the Saint of the Day.