

August Bulletin

Immaculate Conception

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MASS TIMES: August

Major Saturday 5 p.m.

Luseland Sunday 9 a.m.

Kerrobert Sunday 11 am

Doddsland Sunday 1 pm

Collection: \$2240 – July

Date	Reader	Offertory
Aug 1 – Sat. @ 5 pm	Aimée	J & M Baier
Aug 9 – Sun @ 9 am	Darren	L & C Baier
Aug 15 – Sat. @ 5 pm	Blanche	J & M Bardick
Aug 22 – Sat. @ 4 pm	Vicki	D & J Bazylnski
Aug 30 – Sat. @ 5 pm	Ray	D & C Chotowetz

PLEASE NOTE THE MASS TIMES FOR MAJOR IN AUGUST!

TIMES HAVE BEEN CHANGED TO ALLOW FOR CELEBRATIONS IN OUR PARISH!

AUGUST 9 – SUNDAY AT 9 AM

AUGUST 15 – SATURDAY AT 5 PM

AUGUST 22 – SATURDAY AT 4 PM

AUGUST 30 – SATURDAY AT 5 PM

MASS AT REWARD

Weekend Mass will also be celebrated at Holy Rosary Church at Reward at 7 p.m. on the following Saturdays: Aug. 8, Aug. 22, and Sept. 5. (Note: there is no evening Mass at St. Peter Church in Unity, SK on those dates.)

THE 81ST RAMA PILGRIMAGE

This pilgrimage will be held Aug. 14-15 at Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine at St. Anthony Church, Rama, SK. Schedule: Vigil of Mary's Assumption Friday, Aug. 14 begins 3 p.m. with Chaplet of Divine Mercy, 4:30 p.m. supper (book by Aug. 1 at 306-593-6120), 6 p.m. Marian hymns and confessions, 8 p.m. Mass, living rosary, candlelight procession, exposition and adoration; Feast of Mary's Assumption Saturday, Aug. 15 includes 8:30 a.m. morning prayers in Polish; 9 a.m. Mass in Polish; 10 a.m. Divine Liturgy in the Byzantine Rite; 11:30 a.m. Mass (English), anointing of the sick, blessing for plenary indulgence, blessing of religious articles; lunch (book by Aug. 1 at 306-593-6120). More information:

<https://www.ramashrine.ca/>.

What is Purgatory? IN EXILE – Fr. Ron Rolheiser July 27, 2026

Most Christian denominations do not believe in purgatory. This is specifically a Roman Catholic belief. And in the popular Catholic mind, purgatory is too often mistakenly conceived of as a place distinct from heaven, a place where you are purified and made ready for heaven.

But purgatory is not a place distinct from heaven and hell. Protestants and Evangelicals are right in pointing out that scripture attests that there are only two states after death, heaven and hell. So how can Roman Catholics postulate a third state, purgatory?

Because purgatory is not a geography, a place distinct from heaven, it's *the pain of being purified by love and the pain of giving up the illusion of self-sufficiency.*

Here's an example of each.

Several years ago, I was counselling a young man who was experiencing an intense pain which was new to him. He had fallen in love with a wonderful young woman and was preparing to marry her. Prior to meeting her, he had been living irresponsibly, been sexually promiscuous, and had been comfortably smug and insensitive in that state. The woman he had fallen in love with was aware of his past but was not throwing this into his face. The opposite. She was loving and forgiving him unconditionally.

But there was the rub! Being in love with this wonderfully good, generous, and moral person made him see himself in a clearer way. Her love was a prism through which he began to see his own immaturity (which is what unconditional love always does). Her love was a light that gave him new eyesight and what he saw inside himself (his selfishness, his irresponsibility, his smugness) caused him a lot of pain. To his credit, he sought help – confession, spiritual direction, psychological counselling.

Her loving him, purely and unconditionally, caused him the deepest pains he had ever endured. It was his first taste of purgatory.

Here's a second example: A number of years ago, I attended the funeral of a man who died at the age of ninety. From every indication, he had been a good man, solidly religious, the father of a large family, a man respected in the community, and a man with a generous heart. However, he had also been a strong man, a gifted man, a natural leader, someone to whom a group would naturally look to take the reins and lead. Hence, he held a number of prominent positions in the community. He was a man very much in charge.

One of his sons, a Catholic priest, gave the homily at his funeral. He began with these words: Scripture tells us that the sum of a man's life is seventy years, eighty for those who are strong. Now our dad lived for ninety years. Why the extra twenty years? Well, it's no mystery. He was too strong and too much in charge of things to die at seventy or eighty. It took God an extra twenty years to mellow him. And it worked. The last ten years of his life were years of massive diminishment. His wife died, and he never got over that. He had a stroke which put him into assisted living and that was a massive blow to him. Then he spent the last years of his life with others having to help him take care of his basic bodily needs. For a man like him, that was humbling. But it mellowed him.

In those last years, whenever you visited him, he would take your hand and say, "help me." He hadn't been able to say those words since he was five years old and able to tie his own shoelaces. By the time he died, he was ready. When he met Jesus and Saint Peter on the other side, I'm sure he simply reached for a hand and said, "help me."

That's a parable that speaks deeply and directly about a place we must all eventually come to, either through proactive choice or by submission to circumstance. We all must eventually come to a place where we accept that we are not self-sufficient, that we need help, that we need others, that we need community, that we need grace, that we need God – and the pain we experience in giving up our illusion of self-sufficiency is the pain of purgatory. Purgatory is not a place, a geography separate from heaven. It's the pain, metaphorically, of having the grain of wheat fall into the ground and die to come to a new fruitfulness. And it's the lot of everyone and everything that's mortal, not just of Roman Catholics.

When we die, unless we have so totally hardened our hearts to reject the embrace of unconditional love itself, God embraces us – fully, affectionately, passionately, and unconditionally. Inside that embrace, to the extent that we are not yet fully saints, we will, like the two men whose story I shared, experience some purgative pain.

Paradoxically, in the ecstasy of embrace comes the agony of purification.