



# *The Ascension of the Lord*



**WEEK OF JUNE 1, 2025**



## *A Joyful Day of Sacraments*

One May 10<sup>th</sup>, our parish was blessed with a beautiful day of celebration! In the morning, our children received Jesus in the Eucharist for the first time at First Communion. That evening, Bishop Frank Schuster joined us to preside over the Confirmation Mass, sealing our youth with the Holy Spirit. Family and friends filled the sanctuary for both joyful liturgies, surrounding our young people with love, support, and prayer. May the grace of these sacraments continue to grow in their hearts and lives!

(Photos by Rose McAvoy)





## Our Mission

United in the Holy Spirit, we are a multicultural community celebrating Mass in four languages as we strive to live humility, gentleness, patience, bearing one another through love, striving to preserve unity of the spirit through the bond of peace: one body, one spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God.  
-Ephesians 4:1-6

Stewardship is a way of life, and the diversity of our gifts is used to answer Christ's call to proclaim and live the Gospel.

Gather in God's Name!  
Grow in God's Time!  
Go in God's Spirit!

## Mass Times & Confessions

**Vigil:** Saturday at 5:00p | Spanish 7:00p

### **Sunday Masses**

8:30a | 10:30a | 12:30p Spanish  
2:30p Swahili | 6:00p Chuukese (1st Sunday)  
8:00p Spanish

### **Weekday Masses** (in chapel):

Monday 9:00a  
Wednesday thru Friday 9:00a  
(Spanish Mass on Wednesday at 7:00p)

### **Confessions:**

Saturday 3:00p to 4:30p (Main church)  
Wednesday 6:00p to 6:45p (chapel)

**Vigil:** Saturday at 5:30p

### **Sunday Masses:**

9:00a | 11:30a | 5:30p

### **Weekday Masses:**

Monday & Wednesday at 9:00a  
Thursday at 6:30p  
1st Friday Spanish 7:30p

### **Word & Communion:**

Tuesday & Friday at 9:00a

### **Confessions:**

Saturday 4:00p to 5:00p

## Office Hours

Monday to Friday 8:00a to 5:00p  
Wednesday, Saturday & Sunday - Closed

Tuesday to Friday 9:00a to 4:00p  
Saturday from 10:00a to 3:00p  
Sunday & Monday - Closed

## CONTACT US | PARISH STAFF

310 3rd Ave. S.  
Kent, WA 98032  
253-859-0444



25810 - 156th Ave. SE  
Covington, WA 98042  
253-630-0701



**Fr Carlos Orozco**  
**Pastor**

[frcarlos@holyspiritkent.org](mailto:frcarlos@holyspiritkent.org)  
[frcarlos@stjtbcc.org](mailto:frcarlos@stjtbcc.org)



**Fr. Crispin Okoth**  
**Vicar**

[frcrispin@holyspiritkent.org](mailto:frcrispin@holyspiritkent.org)  
[crispino@stjtbcc.org](mailto:crispino@stjtbcc.org)



**Fr Gilberto Mora**  
**Vicar**

[frgilberto@holyspiritkent.org](mailto:frgilberto@holyspiritkent.org)



**Juan Carlos**  
Facilities Steward



**Brenda Fincher**  
Outreach

[bfincher@holyspiritkent.org](mailto:bfincher@holyspiritkent.org) | x214



**Cynthia Hernandez**  
Administrative Assistant



**Veronica Nava Jimenez**

Youth Ministry  
[VNavajimenez@holyspiritkent.org](mailto:VNavajimenez@holyspiritkent.org) | x216



**Guadalupe Madrid**

Faith Formation - Spanish  
[gmadrid@holyspiritkent.org](mailto:gmadrid@holyspiritkent.org) | x229



**Mary Molina**

Communications  
[Communications@holyspiritkent.org](mailto:Communications@holyspiritkent.org) x225



**Nancy Ortiz**

Assistant to the Pastor  
[nortiz@holyspiritkent.org](mailto:nortiz@holyspiritkent.org) | x212



**Holly Renz**

Liturgy, Music, RCIA, Infant Baptism  
[hrenz@holyspiritkent.org](mailto:hrenz@holyspiritkent.org) | x215



**Kristi Vasquez**

Administration & Finance  
[kvasquez@holyspiritkent.org](mailto:kvasquez@holyspiritkent.org) | 221



**Evelia Torres-Lopez**  
Clean Environment



**David Aldous**

Facilities Steward  
[davida@stjtbcc.org](mailto:davida@stjtbcc.org) | x114



**Luis Diaz de Leon**

Music  
[luisd@stjtbcc.org](mailto:luisd@stjtbcc.org) | x108



**Peter Guthrie**

Youth Ministry  
[peterg@stjtbcc.org](mailto:peterg@stjtbcc.org) | x 110



**Rose McAvoy**

Scheduling & Communications  
[rosem@stjtbcc.org](mailto:rosem@stjtbcc.org) | x103



**Laurie Moloney**

Liturgy & Pastoral Care  
[lauriem@stjtbcc.org](mailto:lauriem@stjtbcc.org) | x111



**Nancy Moore**

Bookkeeping  
[nancym@stjtbcc.org](mailto:nancym@stjtbcc.org) x102



**Karen Remy-Anderson**

Elementary Faith Formation  
[karenr@stjtbcc.org](mailto:karenr@stjtbcc.org) x123



**Andrea Shimek**

Database Management  
[andreas@stjtbcc.org](mailto:andreas@stjtbcc.org) x115



**Kathy Wickward**

Stewardship & Outreach  
[kathyw@stjtbcc.org](mailto:kathyw@stjtbcc.org) x101



**Joan Williamson**

Faith Formation & Sacramental Preparation  
[joanw@stjtbcc.org](mailto:joanw@stjtbcc.org) | x109



@holyspiritkent



[holyspiritkent.org](http://holyspiritkent.org)



@stjtbccovington



[stjtbcc.org](http://stjtbcc.org)



## THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH FAMILY



### **Sunday, June 1**

Choir Rehearsal (Swahili)  
Youth Confirmation  
Rosary (Span)  
Centro Rendu Youth Workshops  
Choir Rehearsal (12:30)  
Adult Faith Formation/Bible Study

### **Monday, June 2**

Bible Study Groups (Span)  
Centro Rendu Youth Workshops  
Food Pantry  
Small Christian Communities  
Grupo de Oracion  
Grandparent Bible Study (Span)

### **Tuesday, June 3**

Adult Confirmation  
Small Christian Community  
Grupo de Oración  
Choir Rehearsal (12:30 Spanish)  
HS Youth Group  
Terrific Tuesday Meals

### **Wednesday, June 4**

Young Adult Group (Span)  
Rosary (Eng & Span)  
Bible Study (Span)  
Holy Spirit Consecration Group  
RCIA/OCIA  
Cursillos

### **Thursday, June 5**

Holy Hour for Vocations  
Apologetics Bible Study (Span)  
Adult Confirmation (Span)  
Small Christian Communities (Spanish)  
Bible Study Communities

### **Friday, June 6**

Grupo de Oración  
Kent All Men's Al Anon  
Bible Study Communities  
Free Community Dinner  
Baptism Prep (Spanish)  
Base Ecclesial Group (Spanish)

### **Saturday, June 7**

Choir Rehearsal (7pm Spanish)  
Swahili Community  
Young Adults (Spanish)



### **Sunday, June 1**

*Yard Sale Donations after Masses*  
**Mass - 9:00 am**  
**Fr. Jim Jubilee Mass - 11:30 am, Flores de Mayo**  
Fr. Jim Jubilee Reception - 12:30 pm  
**Mass - 5:30 pm**

### **Monday, June 2**

Mostly Yoga - 8:00 am  
**Mass - 9:00 am**  
Choir (9:00 am) Practice - 7:00 pm  
Knights of Columbus Council Meeting - 7:00 pm

### **Tuesday, June 3**

Word & Communion - 9:00 am  
Safe Car Team - 2:00 pm  
Life, Justice, Peace - 3:00 pm  
AF Oracion - 6:00 pm  
WICS - 6:00 pm  
Fil-Am Choir Practice - 7:00 pm  
AF Vida en el Espíritu Santo - 7:00 pm

### **Wednesday, June 4**

Mostly Yoga - 8:00 am  
**Mass - 9:00 am**  
Divine Mercy Prayer Group - 10:00 am  
Backpack Buddies Packing - 9:00 am  
Yard Sale Committee - 5:00 pm  
Choir (Truthful Reign) Practice - 7:00 pm

### **Thursday, June 5**

Mostly Yoga - 8:00 am  
Walking Group - 11:00 am  
Hora Santa - 5:00 pm  
**Mass - 6:30 pm**  
Choir (Sunday 11:30 am) Practice - 7:00 pm

### **Friday, June 6**

**First Friday Mass - 9:00 am**  
Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament - 9:45 am  
**La Misa en Español - 7:30 pm**

### **Saturday, June 7**

Confirmation Year 1 Retreat - 10:00 am  
Reconciliation - 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm  
**Mass - 5:30 pm**

## Sunday's Readings

### First Reading:

If you keep free of these,  
you will be doing what is right. (Acts 15:29)

### Psalm:

O God, let all the nations praise you! (Ps 67)  
Or: Alleluia.

### Second Reading:

The city had no need of sun or moon to shine on it,  
for the glory of God gave it light,  
and its lamp was the Lamb. (Rv 12:23)

### Gospel:

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.  
Not as the world gives do I give it to you." (Jn 14:27)

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.  
The English translation of Psalm Responses from Lectionary for Mass © 1969, 1981, 1997,  
International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.

## Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

Thomas needed proof to believe the amazing things that had happened. God, in His mercy, gave him that proof — but it was up to Thomas to accept it. Do we accept the proof we see of God's love every day?

## Observances for the week of May 25, 2025

- Sunday:** 6th Sunday of Easter  
**Monday:** St. Philip Neri, Priest; Memorial Day  
**Tuesday:** St. Augustine of Canterbury, Bishop  
**Thursday:** The Ascension of the Lord (holy day of obligation in some U.S. dioceses); St. Paul VI, Pope  
**Saturday:** The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary  
**Next Sunday:** The Ascension of the Lord; 7th Sunday of Easter; World Communications Day



## Devotions, *Explained!*

Our Lady of Perpetual Help is both a title of the Blessed Mother as well as a corresponding icon that dates to the late Middle Ages, both of which present Mary as a source of strength and comfort for Christ and his followers.

## Prayer for Peace

Fill us with Your peace, Lord, as you promised in Your word.  
 Peace in our comings and goings,  
 Peace that You are working and moving,  
 Peace for what has happened, the places we find ourselves today, and in the future to come.  
 Amen.

Send corrections and bulletin content to

**Pat Defiesta** at [communications@sjtbcc.org](mailto:communications@sjtbcc.org) (for St. John the Baptist bulletin) or  
**Mary Molina** at [communications@holyspiritkent.org](mailto:communications@holyspiritkent.org) (for Holy Spirit bulletin).

Please send us content at least two (2) weeks before publication.

For St. John the Baptist questions/comments, email **Pat** at [bulletin@sjtbcc.org](mailto:bulletin@sjtbcc.org)

**PLEASE SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS ON THE BACK OF THIS BULLETIN**



## Please Pray for

those who are **sick**:

*Vilma Famillaran, Vicky Eggum,  
Nancy Moore, Tina Schaffer*

those who have **died**:

*Norma Jean Michels* (mother of *Paul Michels*)



### Continue to bring donations after weekend Masses until June 15.

Bring your donations to the front of the McMullen Center. Donations are **only accepted while volunteers are present**. Do not drop off if volunteers are not there!

To keep things safe and manageable, we **cannot accept**:

- Large furniture (i.e., desks, dining tables, sofas, hutches) - call the office if you have questions about the size
- Mattresses
- Batteries (all kinds)
- Oil/Fuel/Paint
- Items containing fuel or oil (i.e., lawn mowers, camping stoves)
- Medications
- Medical equipment that can't be sanitized
- Electronics with missing cords or components
- Large appliances

Volunteers are the heart of our pop-up thrift store, and we can't do it without your help. Whether you're sorting treasures, pricing finds, welcoming shoppers, or cleaning up, there's a spot for everyone to pitch in and be part of the fun.

Sign up in the narthex or online at [sjtbcc.org/yard-sale-volunteers](http://sjtbcc.org/yard-sale-volunteers).

## Pancake Breakfast

*Knights of Columbus* are hosting a *Start of Summer Pancake Breakfast* on **Sunday, June 8**, from **10:00 to 11:30 am** in the McMullen Center.

Menu: pancakes, biscuits & gravy, and sausage.

**All donations will benefit our Faith Formation ministries** here at St. John the Baptist.  
*Come hungry and bring the whole family!*



## World Communications Day June 1, 2025

"Share with gentleness the hope  
that is in your hearts."  
*Pope Francis*

## Join Us For Father Jim's Party



Meet us at the McMullen Center **after the 11:30 am Mass this weekend**. We're honoring **Father Jim Coyne's 50 years of priesthood**.

**Father Jim** came to us in 2002, after our founding pastor, **Father Jack Walmesley**, moved to another parish. After years of witnessing weddings, baptisms, and funerals, **Father Jim** retired in 2021. He continues to celebrate Mass whenever the need arises and is always happy to come back to the parish he called his home for 19 years.

After the hugs and goodbyes, please stay and help with the cleanup.

Come and show *Father Jim* how much he appreciated what he's done for us during his 19 years as pastor of St. John the Baptist.

## Reimbursement Requests Are Due

Reminder for Commission and Committee Members: submit your **reimbursement requests** for ministry-related expenses **by June 15**, the deadline for this fiscal year.

**Please note:** per Archdiocesan policy, all reimbursements must be requested within three (3) months of the incurred expense.

Thank you for helping us close out the fiscal year smoothly!

## Missing Something?

Still looking for that pair of reading glasses? You might want to check our lost and found in the hallway leading to the offices. Take a moment to check if any items look familiar. Any unclaimed items remaining **after June 8** will either be donated or disposed of. You might find that pair of reading glasses in that pile!

## Lawsuit Filed Against State of Washington on Bill 5375

On May 29, 2025, the bishops of the state filed a lawsuit against the State of Washington regarding *Senate Bill 5375* that was signed into law earlier this month. It is anticipated that this will spark significant media coverage – all of which will be handled by *Washington State Catholic Conference (WSCC)* and their legal counsel teams. If you have questions, please direct them to [WSCC](http://WSCC).

For your background information, attached is a flyer with more details. You can find the feature story at [Northwest Catholic](http://NorthwestCatholic).



## One Church, Many Gifts

When you support the *Annual Catholic Appeal (ACA)*, you're joining Catholics across western Washington in something big. As of May 29, **\$61,860.20** has been pledged toward our parish goal of \$136,467.00 or **45% of our goal**, with 13% of parish households participating.

As we start the month of June, let us continue to serve in Christ's name through the ACA. Your gift supports ministries that care for those in need across the Archdiocese.

Thank you to all who have returned your pledges and one-time gifts, as well as those who are recurring monthly donors. All funds received over our goal will go to support *Catholic Relief Services* and the *Archdiocese Mission Essential Parish Family Fund*.

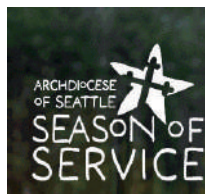
## Welcome to St. John the Baptist

If you are new here, we would love to meet you! Join us for a *Welcome Gathering* on **Sunday, June 15, after the 9 am and 11:30 am Masses**. We'll have coffee, pastries, and friendly faces ready to help you get to know the St. John the Baptist community. Bring your questions, and we'll be happy to answer them!



**Saturday | June 9, 2025 | 4:00-7:00 PM**  
**Holy Spirit Parish Hall | 18 3rd Ave S, Kent**  
**Mass at 7:00 pm | St. Anthony Chapel, Kent**

## Record Your Volunteer Hours



It's not too late to record your volunteer hours incurred **between March 1 and May 31, 2025**. Any hours spent in meetings, ministry, and acts of service in the parish or the wider community can be included.

As of last week, our parish has reported over 2100 hours of service on the green cards alone. This amount only scratches the surface of what our parish community is actually doing.

Turn in green cards in the offering baskets or at the office mail slot. You can also record your hours online at [archseattle.org/seasonofservice/](http://archseattle.org/seasonofservice/)



## Did You Complete Our Survey?

To begin the next phase of the *Partners in the Gospel* process, we are asking every parish household to take a short demographic survey. This is the first step in learning more about "who we are" as a unique parish community.

The survey is quick and doesn't ask for names or contact details. Your response helps us understand who is part of our community, so everyone is represented as we move forward.

Only one person in your family needs to complete it. You can fill out the paper form after Mass (helpers will be in the narthex to assist) or complete it online by scanning the QR code to the right.



Your presence matters! Everyone is part of the "WE" of our parish!

## Shhhh!

Did you know that you can silence your phone while you are attending Mass at St. John the Baptist (SJTb)? It's very simple, and you only have to **do it once**.

Check out this [YouTube video for iPhone users](#) and here for [Android users](#) on how to silence your phone. It will automatically silence it when you enter SJTB. Once you leave the building, it will revert back to your previous setting. Remember, you only have to do this once, and it will silence your phone whenever you attend Mass here at SJTB.

Let's be kind to one another, respect the quiet time to worship, and be in the moment at Mass!

## Be a Backpack Buddy



The *Backpack Buddies* program ends June 11. But we still need help to organize the donations and fill the bags. **With 5 people we can finish in an hour or two** This is a good task for a family with middle or high school kids. Email Kathy if you'd like more info: [kathyw@sjtbcc.org](mailto:kathyw@sjtbcc.org)

**June 6, 7:30 pm - First Friday Mass**  
**Mass in Spanish**  
**at St. John the Baptist**





**CEDAR DENTAL GROUP**  
General & Family Dentistry  
New Patients Welcome | Cash Discount Offered  
655 West Smith St. #206 Kent WA 98032  
**253-854-8306**



**800-626-3213**  
**Diesel, Gas,  
Heating Oil  
Lubricants,  
Grease, Racing  
Gas, Truck  
Sales & Repair**  
76

**John L. Scott**  
REAL ESTATE

**Rhonda Harris**  
Real Estate Broker  
**253-951-7046**  
rhondaharris@johnlscott.com



**CURRAN LAW FIRM**  
Serving Our Community Since 1948  
(253) 852-2345  
www.curranfirm.com  
**JOHN M. CASEY**  
Parishioner of St. Theresa Parish

**LET'S GROW YOUR BUSINESS**  
Place Your Ad Here  
and Support Our Parish!

**CONTACT ME  
Kelly Day**

**kday@4LPi.com**  
**(800) 950-9952 x2115**

**ADT-Monitored Home Security**

Get 24-Hour Protection From a Name You Can Trust

- Burglary
- Fire Safety
- Flood Detection
- Carbon Monoxide



ADT Authorized Provider

SafeStreets

**833-287-3502**

**MARLATT**

FUNERAL HOME & CREMATORY  
713 Central Ave N - Kent  
(253) 852-2620  
www.marlattfuneralhome.com  
Marlatt Family Owned and  
Operated Since 1957

**Garcia's Mexican Restaurant**  
**253-397-4329**  
321 Auburn Way N • Auburn  
**10% OFF food only**

**Pacific Northwest Home Care**  
24/7 Senior Care Facility  
Adult Family Home  
**253-334-3506**  
Des Moines, WA 98198

Auto Accidents • Slip & Fall  
Dog Bites • Criminal Law  
Family Law • Bankruptcy



**KENT**  
**253-859-2488**  
604 W. Meeker St. Suite 206

"It's too late to avoid the  
collision, there is still time  
to avoid the disaster"

**LYNWOOD**  
**425-771-3600**  
19303 44th Ave W.

www.feldmanlee.com

TAC172-0613



We offer home care services to help your  
loved one remain comfortable at home.  
**425.282.5505 | Serving King County**

Each Visiting Angels agency is independently owned and operated.  
©2008 Visiting Angels is a registered trademark of Visiting Angels Services, Inc.

EST. 2011  
**RS ROOFSMART**  
★ Nailed it! ★

www.GetRoofSmart.com

Catholic Owned  
Business



**FREE  
AD DESIGN**

with purchase  
of this space

**CALL  
800-950-9952**



Wills | Trusts | Power of Attorneys



25052 104th Ave SE,  
Suite B Kent, WA  
(253) 854-1244  
iddinslaw.com  
info@iddinslaw.com

We provide peace of mind.  
Call Us Today!



**Julissa Uribe, Parishioner**  
**10% OFF on food only**  
**TACO TUESDAY**  
**253-854-2699**  
**26220 116th Ave SE • Kent**



Independent & Assisted Living • Life is good, make it Stellar!

(253) 852-2737 | 516 Kenosia Ave S | Kent, WA  
www.stellarliving.com/farringtoncourt

**IF YOU LIVE ALONE**

**MDMedAlert!** STARTING AT **\$19<sup>95</sup>** /mo.

- ✓ Ambulance ✓ Police/Fire
- ✓ Family/Friends ✓ GPS & Fall Alert

**CALL NOW! 800.809.3570** md-medalert.com



**Physio+Health.Clinic**

319 Washington Ave. S. • Kent, WA 98032  
(253) 850-9780 • (253) 850-6445  
office@physiohealth.clinic • physiohealth.clinic

Work Injuries • Car Accident  
Multidisciplinary Clinic MD DC LMT PT  
Hablamos Español

**SHORT STAFFED?**

Place an ad here to find  
new local talent for  
your business.



**CALL 800-950-9952**

¿QUIERES PROTECCIÓN,  
**PERMISO Y PAPELES®?**

¡Yo quiero que el próximo  
**MILAGRO SEA EL TUYO!™**



**ESCANEA y AGENDA**  
tu consulta.

**LLAMA AHORA AL**  
**(509) 416 2147**

Abogada Alexandra  
Abogada de Inmigración

Los resultados varían. Se requiere una consulta para determinar si  
se puede ayudar. Este formulario no garantiza el resultado. El uso de la palabra milagro es puramente  
promocional, no pretende ser un milagro. Se requiere una consulta para determinar si  
se puede ayudar. Este formulario no garantiza el resultado. El uso de la palabra milagro es puramente  
promocional, no pretende ser un milagro.



For ad info. call 1-800-950-9952 • www.4lp.com

Parish Family 30, Kent, WA

A 4C 05-1336



# Your voice matters.



## Scan to complete the Parish Demographic Survey

Together, let's explore who we are as a parish family—so we can grow and serve with love.

Juntos, exploremos quiénes somos como familia parroquial—para poder crecer y servir con amor.



**From Washington bishops to the lay faithful**

Subject: Update on State Law

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

As you may know, Governor Ferguson signed into law a provision that seeks to require priests to violate the Seal of the Confessional in some circumstances. Priests are unable to violate the Seal under any circumstances. As the Vatican wrote on the topic in 2019,

The inviolable secrecy of Confession comes directly from the revealed divine right and is rooted in the very nature of the Sacrament, to the point of not admitting any exception in the ecclesial sphere, nor, least of all, in the civil one.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, the Church has said that “political action or legislative initiative[s] aimed at ‘breaching’ the inviolability of the seal” are “an unacceptable offense against *libertas Ecclesiae*, which does not receive its legitimacy from individual States, but from God.”<sup>2</sup>

Given this troubling development in state law, we are addressing this matter through litigation. While the details of this case are sensitive and will be handled with care, we want to assure you that this action is being taken to protect the mission and integrity of the Church.

The United States and Washington State Constitutions provide robust protection for our faith and we are confident in our legal position. Our attorneys have filed the case, and we will keep you informed as appropriate, while respecting the confidentiality required in such matters.

Thank you for your prayers and faithfulness. May God bless you, and may Our Lady keep you in her care.

In the Heart of Christ,

Most Rev. Paul D. Etienne  
Archbishop of Seattle

Most Rev. Joseph J. Tyson  
Bishop of Yakima

Most Rev. Thomas A. Daly  
Bishop of Spokane

Most Rev. Eusebio Elizondo, M.Sp.S.  
Auxiliary Bishop of Seattle

Most Rev. Frank Schuster  
Auxiliary Bishop of Seattle

<sup>1</sup>Note of the Apostolic Penitentiary on the Importance of the Internal Forum and the Inviolability of the Sacramental Seal (June 29, 2019).

<sup>2</sup>Id.



## De los obispos de Washington a los fieles laicos

En re.: Últimas noticias sobre ley estatal

Queridos hermanos y hermanas:

Como ustedes sabrán, el gobernador Ferguson promulgó una disposición que busca exigir a los sacerdotes violar el Secreto de la Confesión en algunas circunstancias. Los sacerdotes no pueden violar el secreto bajo ninguna circunstancia. Como escribió el Vaticano sobre el tema en 2019:

El secreto inviolable de la Confesión proviene directamente de la ley divina revelada y está arraigado en la naturaleza misma del sacramento, hasta el punto de no admitir excepción alguna en el ámbito eclesial ni, menos aún, en el ámbito civil.<sup>1</sup>

De hecho, la Iglesia ha dicho que “Cualquier acción política o iniciativa legislativa encaminada a 'forzar' la inviolabilidad del sigilo sacramental constituiría un delito inaceptable contra las *libertas Ecclesiae*, que no reciben la legitimidad de los Estados individuales, sino de Dios.”<sup>2</sup>

Debido al preocupante desarrollo de la ley estatal, estamos abordando este asunto a través de una demanda. Si bien los detalles de este caso son delicados y se manejarán con cuidado, deseamos asegurarles que esta acción se está tomando para proteger la misión y la integridad de la Iglesia.

Las Constituciones de los Estados Unidos y del Estado de Washington brindan una sólida protección a nuestra fe y confiamos en nuestra posición legal. Nuestros abogados han presentado el caso y los mantendremos informados según corresponda, respetando la debida confidencialidad.

Gracias por sus oraciones y fidelidad. Que Dios los bendiga y que la Virgen los tenga bajo su cuidado.

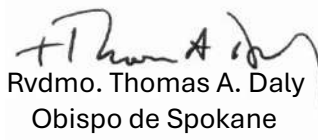
Suyos en el Corazón de Cristo,



Rvdmo. Paul D. Etienne  
Arzobispo de Seattle



Rvdmo. Joseph J. Tyson  
Obispo de Yakima



Rvdmo. Thomas A. Daly  
Obispo de Spokane



Rvdmo. Eusebio Elizondo, M.Sp.S.  
Obispo Auxiliar de Seattle



Rvdmo. Frank Schuster  
Obispo Auxiliar de Seattle

<sup>1</sup>Nota de la Penitenciaría Apostólica sobre la importancia del foro interno y la inviolabilidad del sigilo sacramental (29 de junio de 2019).

<sup>2</sup>Ídem anterior.

## The Sacrament of Confession and Washington law

### Q & A

Q: What is the new Washington law, and why have the bishops in Washington filed a lawsuit?

A: Washington State recently adopted a law targeting Catholic priests by requiring them to break the seal of the confessional by reporting to civil authorities suspected child abuse and neglect disclosed during the Sacrament of Confession, subject to imprisonment and fines for violation. This law goes into effect July 27, 2025. The bishops have filed a lawsuit because the law violates the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment.

Q: What is the seal of the confessional, and why is it important?

A: The seal of the confessional is the absolute obligation of a priest to maintain complete confidentiality regarding anything revealed during the Sacrament of Confession. This obligation, rooted in divine law and centuries of Catholic tradition, allows penitents to seek forgiveness and spiritual guidance in an atmosphere of trust and mercy. Canon law explicitly states that "the sacramental seal is inviolable" and that a priest who violates it faces automatic excommunication. The seal protects the sacred encounter between the penitent and God, mediated by the priest, as instituted by Christ. Throughout history, priests have been martyred rather than violate this sacred duty.

Q: Why can't priests comply with the law and report certain confessions?

A: The seal of the confessional is a divine mandate, not a human rule. Priests are bound to uphold the seal, even at personal cost, as a matter of fidelity to their sacred duty. Breaking it would betray the penitent's trust and violate the sanctity of the sacrament, which is a means of grace and reconciliation. The Church holds that forcing priests to report confessions undermines the freedom to practice faith and could deter penitents from seeking forgiveness, harming their spiritual lives, which must be seen in the view of eternity.

Q: Doesn't this law aim to protect people, like victims of abuse?

A: The intention to protect individuals, most especially children, is praiseworthy, but the law's targeting of the priest-penitent relationship in the confessional is misguided. The Church has robust measures to address abuse, including mandatory reporting by clergy in non-confessional settings and cooperation with civil authorities where the seal is not involved. In fact, each diocese in Washington has safe environment and mandatory reporting policies that go beyond what is required in state law. The confessional is a unique, sacred space where penitents seek God's mercy. Compelling Catholic priests to breach its confidentiality does not guarantee better outcomes but risks deterring penitents from seeking reconciliation, which could prevent voluntary disclosures outside the sacrament that lead to justice and healing.

Q: How does this law violate religious freedom?



A: The law violates religious liberty by compelling priests to act against a core Catholic doctrine, forcing the Church to conform to state demands over divine law. It seeks to make the Sacrament of Confession an instrument of the state rather than a place of encounter with God's mercy. The First Amendment protects the free exercise of religion, which includes the Church's right to uphold its sacraments without the government seeking to redefine aspects of those sacraments. The Church's mission to offer forgiveness through the sacraments is rooted in Christ's command, and courts have historically recognized confessional privilege as essential to religious practice. The law also specifically targets the priest-penitent relationship while permitting other recognized, secular privileges to remain, such as the attorney-client privilege, some counselor privileges, and spousal privilege.

Q: What are the bishops hoping to achieve with this lawsuit?

A: The bishops seek to have the offending provisions of the law declared unconstitutional, ensuring priests can remain faithful to their sacred duty of upholding the seal of the confessional, and the mediation of God's mercy to the penitent, without legal penalty. The lawsuit aims to protect the Church's right to practice its faith freely and safeguard the confidentiality that encourages penitents to seek reconciliation. A favorable ruling would affirm religious freedom and preserve the integrity of the Sacrament of Confession for all Catholics.

#### Additional Resources

- *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, paragraphs 1440 – 1470.
- *Code of Canon Law*, c. 983, 1386.
- [\*Note of the Apostolic Penitentiary on the Importance of the Internal Forum and the Inviolability of the Sacramental Seal\*](#) (Approved by Pope Francis, June 21, 2019).