

**Sunday, April 19, 2020
Second Sunday Of Easter
Divine Mercy Sunday**

During these anxious and challenging days, I want to thank you for your prayers and ongoing support of the ministries of our Parish. Even though you are not physically present at the celebration of the Liturgy, you and your family are in our hearts as we pray for you and with you. I also thank you for your concern for the poor and forgotten through your support of our Saint Luke the Evangelist Food Pantry.

In the coming days and weeks, we will be severely challenged as a Parish community in terms of finances. We do not have any cash reserves on which to fall, and salaries, supplies and utilities continue to be a part of the operations of our Parish.

I have already consulted with members of our Finance Council and have put in place various cost saving strategies to help us ride out the Corona storm. I am deeply grateful for your continuing support of the work of our Parish, even in your absence. Your ongoing support will mean that the Parish can continue the work of ministry for the present and will help us look toward a future when we are all together again.

If you would like assistance in making electronic contributions, please see the Parish Giving section in the right-hand column of this page.

May God console us, heal us and bless us in the days to come.

Father Albert, obl. SB

RESTROOM BREAKS DURING MASS

Attention Parents

Please be sure to accompany your young children when they need to use the restroom during Mass. This is for their safety and your peace of mind. Thank you for your assistance.

✠ PARISH TITHING ✠

Our Parish needs to take in \$7,000.00 each week in order to make ends meet. Thank you for your generosity to our parish! Your weekly contribution helps ensure that the parish remains a vibrant community. Please remember to submit your weekly gift even if you will be away. We depend upon your support!

**MAILED AND ELECTRONIC DONATIONS
APRIL 5 and 12, 2020**

Offertory	\$12,355.66
Good Friday – Holy Land	\$ 418.30
Easter / Needs of Parish	\$ 2,141.85
Property Management	\$ 572.30

PARISH GIVING

Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish has engaged *Parish Giving* to provide parishioners with an opportunity to make your offertory and other contributions through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Parish Giving is a simple, secure, and convenient way to manage your stewardship without weekly envelopes and without worries. Parish Giving allows you to print out a report detailing your contributions for the year. This program is available to parishioners at no cost. Log on to the St. Luke the Evangelist Parish website at <http://stlukenh.org>, click on the Parish Giving logo, and follow the easy registration instructions.

UPCOMING SECOND & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

April 19, 2020	Fuel
April 26, 2020	No Second Collection
May 3, 2020	No Second Collection
May 10, 2020	Property Management
May 17, 2020	Fuel

**Out of respect, please remember to
silence or turn off
your cell phones during Mass.
Thank you!**



**Suggested Weekly Contribution
Based on Income**

Annual Income	5% Commitment annually/ weekly	3% Commitment annually/ weekly
\$100,000	\$5,000/ \$100	\$3,000/ \$60
\$75,000	\$3,750/ \$75	\$2,250/ \$45
\$60,000	\$3,000/ \$60	\$1,800/ \$36
\$50,000	\$2,500/ \$50	\$1,500/ \$30
\$40,000	\$2,000/ \$40	\$1,200/ \$24
\$30,000	\$1,500/ \$30	\$900/ \$18
\$25,000	\$1,250/ \$25	\$750/ \$15
\$15,000	\$750/ \$15	\$450/ \$9

**Suggested Weekly Contribution
Based on a Percentage Increase**

Your Current Offertory Contribution	25% Increase	30% Increase	40% Increase
\$75.00	\$93.75	\$97.50	\$105.00
\$50.00	\$62.50	\$65.00	\$70.00
\$40.00	\$50.00	\$52.00	\$56.00
\$35.00	\$43.75	\$45.50	\$49.00
\$30.00	\$37.50	\$39.00	\$42.00
\$25.00	\$31.25	\$32.50	\$35.00
\$20.00	\$25.00	\$26.00	\$28.00
\$15.00	\$18.75	\$19.50	\$21.00
\$10.00	\$12.50	\$13.00	\$14.00
\$5.00	\$6.25	\$6.50	\$7.00

✠ PARISH NEWS ✠

PAINT THE TOWN!

Our Parish community continues with our Capital Campaign. Our next projects include exterior painting for the church and Parish house in Newton. We'd also like to paint the interior sanctuary of the church in Newton and complete some electrical upgrades to the church.

Other possible projects include work on our Plaistow and Newton parking lots, and ramp access to the church in Plaistow.

Can you help?

Any contribution is welcome. Make checks payable to
Saint Luke the Evangelist – Capital Campaign.

SANCTUARY CANDLES

The Sanctuary Candles in both Newton and Plaistow may be offered in memory or honor of a loved one. The suggested offering for each is \$10.00. Please call the Parish Office at 382-8324.

VIGIL LIGHT

The Vigil Light in front of the Blessed Mother Icon in Newton may be also be offered in memory or honor of a loved one. The suggested offering for each is \$10.00.

FOR OUR RECORDS

We need your help to keep our records current. If there are any births, deaths, marriages, moves, or address changes in your family, please notify the Parish Office at jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net or call 603-382-8324. If you are new to our parish, registration forms are available at the entrances of both churches. You can also find a registration form on our website at <http://stlukenh.org>.

AMAZON SMILE

AmazonSmile.com is the same market platform as Amazon.com, but with the added benefit of allowing customers to donate 0.5% of the price of items purchased to a charitable organization. Please register today to start shopping and donating at www.amazonsmile.com. For questions, please call the Parish Office at 603-382-8324. Be sure to choose:

St Luke the Evangelist Parish, Plaistow.

THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FOR SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST PARISH

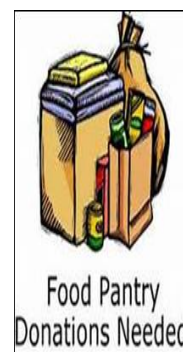
FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

If you would like an "end of year" financial statement of your contributions to the parish for 2019, **please call Jackie** at the Parish Office at 382-8324. **Financial Statements are issued on a request only basis.**

ST. LUKE'S WEBSITE! <http://stlukenh.org>

ST. LUKE THE EVANGELIST FOOD PANTRY

Food or care items are always needed – donations can be dropped off at Church or are welcome at the Parish Office during regular business hours. Cash donations for food are always welcome – make checks payable to **St. Luke the Evangelist Food Pantry**. All donations to the Food Pantry go toward helping the needy of our communities.



FOOD PANTRY HOURS

Wednesday from 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon

Thursday from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM

Friday from 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon

For more information, call the St. Luke Food Pantry at **603-819-4949**.

WHILE AWAY THIS SPRING...

We appreciate all of you who remember to send in your Parish Offertory during the Spring even when on vacation or visiting other parishes. Thank you for remembering that our expenses also continue through the Spring months. We invite others to consider doing the same before or even after you return home.

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER ~ DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

✠ WEEKLY CALENDAR ✠

Sunday, April 19
CHURCHES IN NEWTON AND PLAISTOW
OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER
UNTIL 12:00 NOON

Monday, April 20
HOLY ANGELS CHURCH OPEN FOR
PRIVATE PRAYER FROM
8:30 AM TO 4:00 PM

Tuesday, April 21
HOLY ANGELS CHURCH OPEN FOR
PRIVATE PRAYER FROM
8:30 AM TO 4:00 PM

Wednesday, April 22
HOLY ANGELS CHURCH OPEN FOR
PRIVATE PRAYER FROM
8:30 AM TO 4:00 PM

Thursday, April 23
HOLY ANGELS CHURCH OPEN FOR
PRIVATE PRAYER FROM
8:30 AM TO 4:00 PM

8:30 AM Adoration Begins Newton
8:30 PM Adoration Ends Newton

Friday, April 24
PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

3:00 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation Plaistow

Sunday, April 26
CHURCHES IN NEWTON AND PLAISTOW
OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER
UNTIL 12:00 NOON IF NO PUBLIC MASS IS ALLOWED

**St. Vincent
de Paul
Society**



We're looking for new members! Have you ever wondered just what the St. Vincent de Paul Society is all about? Plan to join us at our next scheduled meeting **Wednesday, May 20 at 7:00 PM** in the Holy Angels Church Hall for some light refreshments and information on how you can become a member of this vibrant, caring group of people. We look forward to meeting you and answering any questions you may have. See you on May 20!

If you seek assistance or need information about the St. Vincent de Paul Society, call 603-382-8324 x315.

**Hear, OH LORD, and answer me
for I am poor and needy.**

✠ MASS INTENTIONS ✠

Saturday, April 18 ~ Vigil / Second Sunday of Easter
Acts 2:42-47; 1 Pt 1:3-9; Jn 20:19-31
Jo Chudzicki by Pat Zakiewicz
No Public Mass

Sunday, April 19 ~ Second Sunday of Easter
Acts 2:42-47; 1 Pt 1:3-9; Jn 20:19-31
Joan Burge and Angelina Antczak
by the Burge family
No Public Mass
In Thanksgiving to St. Michael the Archangel
No Public Mass

Monday, April 20 ~ Easter Weekday
Acts 4:23-31; Jn 3:1-8
Micheline and Louis Inzero by the Stanley family
No Public Mass

Tuesday, April 21 ~ Anselm, Bishop and Doctor of the Church
Acts 4:32-37; Jn 3:7b-15
People of the Parish
No Public Mass

Wednesday, April 22 ~ Easter Weekday
Acts 5:17-26; Jn 3:16-21
For Michael and his recovery
No Public Mass

**Thursday, April 23 ~ Adalbert, Bishop and Martyr;
George, Martyr**
Acts 5:27-33; Jn 3:31-36
People of the Parish
No Public Mass

Friday April 24 ~ Fidelis of Sigmaringen, Priest & Martyr
Acts 5:34-42; Jn 6:1-15
No Mass

Saturday, April 25 ~ Mark, Evangelist
1 Pt 5:5b-14; Mk 16:15-20 (Day)
Acts 2:14, 22-33; 1 Pt 1:17-21; Lk 24:13-35 (Vigil)
4:00 PM Daniel Loureiro by Janice Bettencourt
Plaistow (IF public Mass allowed)

Sunday, April 26 ~ Third Sunday of Easter
Acts 2:14, 22-33; 1 Pt 1:17-21; Lk 24:13-35
8:00 AM John and Mary Madore by the Madore family
Newton (IF public Mass is allowed)
10:00 AM Roger Couture by the Knights of Columbus
Plaistow (IF public Mass is allowed)

PRAYER LINE

St. Luke's offers a prayer line as a resource for those seeking prayer assistance. To submit your prayer request please call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 314 or email her at csmith@stluketheevangelist.net.

APRIL 19, 2020

✠ FAITH FORMATION & PARISH INFORMATION ✠



BLESSING OF MOTHERS

Provided that we are allowed to celebrate Mass together again by Mother's Day, a special blessing of mothers will be given at all Masses on the weekend of **Mother's Day, May 10, 2019.**

RCIA

The **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults** is the process by which people become members of the Roman Catholic Church. If you or someone you know is interested in inquiring about becoming a member of the Roman Catholic Church, call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305 or email her at csmith@stluketheevangelist.net.

ADULT CONFIRMATION

Are you an adult who has been Baptized and received Eucharist, but has not celebrated the sacrament of Confirmation? The adult Confirmation process is an opportunity to complete the Sacraments of Initiation. If you would like to prepare for Confirmation, or if you have questions, call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305 or email her at csmith@stluketheevangelist.net.

PARENTS BAPTISM PREPARATION SESSION

The monthly preparation session for infant Baptism will be held after the 10:00 AM Liturgy on **Sunday, May 3, 2020** in the Parish Office living room. All parents planning to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism are welcome. Families wishing to celebrate Baptism in the Church must be registered (according to Church Canon Law) and practicing (attending Sunday Mass) for 3 full months before a Baptism can be scheduled. The use of the envelope system is always optional; however, it does guarantee a manner of accountability. For most families, the Pastor or staff can easily verify attendance during these three months. Church Canon Law also regulates baptismal sponsors (godparents). Sponsors must be at least 16, fully initiated (having received Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation), and be practicing Catholics living Christian lives consistent with the Church's teaching. Please see Fr. Albert with questions.

ST. ANDREW DINNERS

St. Andrew was the first of the Apostles to hear Jesus' call to follow him. We would like to invite men in our diocese who are considering a vocation to the priesthood or would simply like some help hearing the Lord's call for their life, to an evening of prayer, conversation with the Vocations Team, and dinner. These evenings will take place for different age groups on **Fridays from 6:00 to 8:00 PM** at the Joseph House (279 Cartier Street) in Manchester. Please RSVP to Becky Vinson at vinson@rcbm.org or 663-0153 if you would like to attend.

May 1: Young Men Ages 13-18

May 8: Men Ages 19-60



ADORATION

We are truly blessed to have times for Adoration of Our Lord in our Parish. This time of prayer and intercession is not only a source of great grace for the individual, but it is a great source of grace for us as a parish family, as well.

We have many who have made the commitment to spend an hour each week with our Eucharistic Lord, **but** we need more people so there will be at least two people at each hour. We are also looking for people who would be able to substitute.

**Newton – Thursday
8:30 AM – 8:30 PM**

If you can commit to one hour a week in Adoration of our Lord, or if you can be a substitute, please contact Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305 or email her at csmith@stluketheevangelist.net.

The Church in Plaistow is open all day on Wednesdays for people to stop by and pray before the presence of Jesus in the tabernacle.

✠ PARISH DIRECTORY ✠

Parish Office	382-8324
Parish Prayer Line	382-8324 x 314
St. Vincent de Paul Society	382-8324 x 315
St. Luke's Food Pantry	819-4949
Preschool	382-9783
Presentation of Mary Convent	382-2744

Fr. Albert Tremblay
Cathy Smith
Joyce Szapa
Jackie Tremblay
Thomas Kondel
Val Barczak
Parish Council

fr.albert@stluketheevangelist.net
csmith@stluketheevangelist.net
jszczapa@stluketheevangelist.net
jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net
tkondel@stluketheevangelist.net
mvmbarczak@comcast.net
parishcouncil@stluketheevangelist.net

✠ Parish News ~ Youth News ~ Around The Diocese ✠

**ALL ABOARD FOR FUN AT
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**

**Rocky Railway
Jesus' Power Pulls Us Through**

Make your Reservations early.

Sign up NOW.

The train will depart daily from 9:00 AM to Noon

June 22 to June 26

St. Luke the Evangelist Parish

Call 603-382-8324 x 305 for more information.

**CRAFTERS AND ARTISTS WANTED
FOR CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR**

If you – or someone you know – would like to be considered as a vendor for this year's St. Luke the Evangelist Annual Christmas Craft Fair, **applications need to be received by Monday, April 20.** We expect to be oversubscribed, so don't delay!

Work must be original and executed by the applicants, and may include food and/or beverages (no baked goods).

1st – Please save the date of our Parish Fair: **Saturday November 7 from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.**

2nd – To apply, please contact the Craft Fair at: stlukenhfair@gmail.com. Applications are also available at <http://stlukenh.org> under "News and Events."

Don't miss out on participating in this popular and well-attended event!

**SEACOAST VETERANS CONFERENCE
Saturday, May 9, 2020**

All Veterans are cordially invited to the 10th Annual Seacoast Veterans Conference on **Saturday, May 9, 2020 from 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM.** Guest speaker is Ginger Munson. There will be resource tables, alternative therapies information, VA HealthCare enrollment (bring DD214), and a shred truck. To register, visit www.SeacoastVeteransConference.com or call Jaime Yates at 603-430-6983.

HOSPITAL VISITATION

If you or someone you know is in the hospital and wants to receive a visit, please contact the Parish Office at 603-382-8324. If you or someone you know faces a hospital admission, make sure they know to inform the hospital that they are Catholic and are members of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish. If a person cannot make this information known at the time of admission, a family member may be able to make that information known to the hospital staff.

**IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT
CORONAVIRUS AND COVID-19**

There's a lot in the news lately about coronavirus and COVID-19. Here is some information you can use to help protect yourself and the people you care about.

What is coronavirus and COVID-19?

Coronavirus is a type of virus that causes respiratory illness – an infection of the airways and lungs. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus. It's part of the same family or coronaviruses that includes the common cold.

What are the symptoms?

The most common early symptoms appear between 2 and 14 days after infection. Symptoms can be mild to severe. They include fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

How does the virus spread?

Like many other viruses, coronavirus seems to spread from person-to-person through a cough, sneeze, or kiss.

How to protect yourself:

Frequent hand-washing is the most effective way to protect yourself from infection. Other good health habits to practice include covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough and sneeze, avoid touching your face, and cleaning frequently touched items such as phones, keyboards, and doorknobs to help remove germs.

Keep yourself informed by going to
www.cdc.gov/coronavirus.

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
ST JUDE COUNCIL # 6617
GIVE YOUR PARISH COMMUNITY
1 HOUR A MONTH**

The Knights of Columbus are a vital and vibrant part of the St Luke the Evangelist Parish. We welcome any practicing Catholic man 18 or older to join the Knights, whose main purpose is charitable works in support of our parish and community. Joining is simple – talk to a brother Knight or you can now join on-line. Go to www.kofc.org/joinus. Your Council is involved in many activities from collecting money for people with intellectual disabilities through the Tootsie Roll Drive to the annual St Jude Golf Open which raises money for parish families in need. The list is as long as you want it to be. Do you have a certain passion you would like to get involved in? Come join us and make it a reality!

We are Catholic men. We live by principles informed by faith. We are sons, fathers, husbands, and grandfathers. Join us on life's greatest adventure to discover the man God calls you to be. Feel free to call Dan Sullivan at 603-770-4803, email him at dans49@comcast.net, or catch him at the 8:00 AM Sunday Mass in Newton. For more information about the Knights, go to www.kofc.org/un/en/todays-knights/what-we-do.html

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER



Breath of Life

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
as you once breathed life into the first
human being,
so now the Risen Christ
breathes your living Spirit into us.
May this Spirit animate every part
of our lives.
May we listen and look for the Spirit,
and follow where the Spirit leads.

If our faith is shaken,
if our joy wavers,
if we long for signs and wonders,
breathe your Spirit into us anew
so that we will persevere in discipleship
and inspire others to follow where
the Spirit leads.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, April 19, 2020

Moving Forward

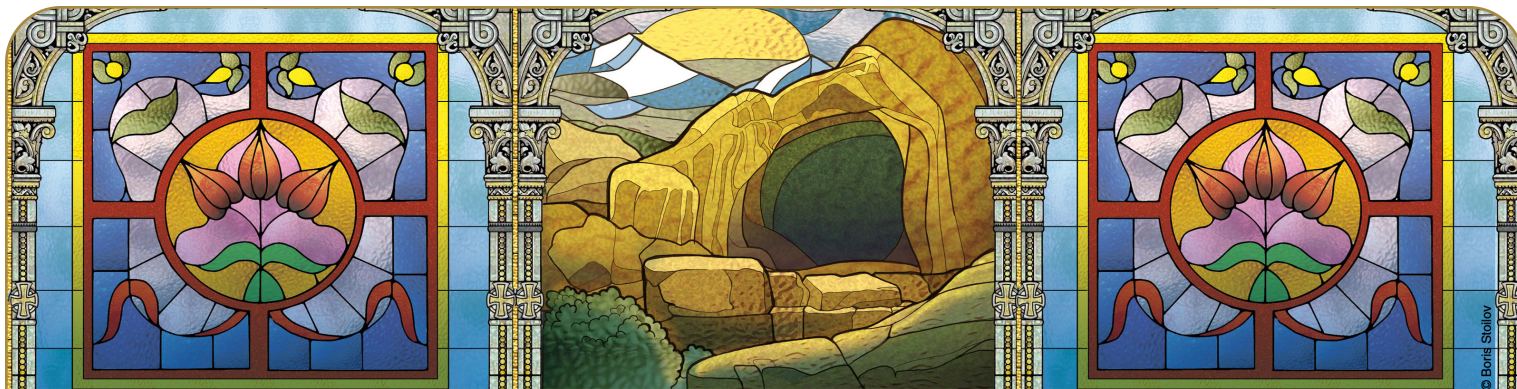


Today's Readings: Acts 2:42–47; Psalm 118:2–4, 13–15, 22–24; 1 Peter 1:3–9; John 20:19–31. Today's readings are permeated with joy. The disciples rejoice when Jesus appears, the early Church exults in her new life in the Spirit, and St. Peter writes of the “indescribable and glorious joy” that comes from knowing how deeply God loves us.

The readings also contain contradictions. The disciples believe in the Risen Lord because he appears to them, and in Acts we hear that the Apostles worked miracles, yet people are blessed for believing without seeing. The passage from Acts also portrays the Church as living in harmony, but other passages reveal that the Church faced internal conflicts and divisions.

St. Peter tells us that we rejoice in our salvation but will sometimes suffer because of our faith. Enduring persecution for the sake of Christ is difficult, but what about other forms of suffering? It's often difficult to integrate our experiences of pain and sorrow into our life of discipleship.

The readings celebrate the joy that arises from faith, but they remind us that faith must be strengthened. We need time in prayer for our encounter with the Risen Lord. We need time with the Scriptures, with the testimony of others who knew Jesus but who also struggled. We need a community to form and support us. Our faith will sometimes waver, but these people and practices will help us enter into the eternal joy of God's Kingdom.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, April 20 Reborn in the Spirit

Nicodemus doesn't understand that Jesus is bringing about the Kingdom of God. In response, Jesus speaks about the Spirit. Those who are "born from above," who receive the Spirit, become part of God's Kingdom. When the Apostles were reborn in the Spirit, they went forth to bring others into God's Kingdom. At Baptism and Confirmation, we celebrate God's gift of the Spirit, but how much do we let the Spirit work within us? Pray for the courage to live as someone who is reborn in the Spirit. *Today's Readings: Acts 4:23–31; Psalm 2:1–3, 4–7a, 7b–9; John 3:1–8.*

Tuesday, April 21 What We Possess

Nicodemus is a leader among his people, but Jesus has far greater authority because he has come from heaven. Jesus has shared his authority with the Apostles. In Acts, we hear how converts entrust their wealth to the Apostles for distribution among the community. By giving up their wealth, people show that they have submitted themselves to Christ and his Church. They are no longer attached to material things. How attached are you to the things you own? How much would you put at the feet of the Apostles? *Today's Readings: Acts 4:32–37; Psalm 93:1ab, 1cd–2, 5; John 3:7b–15.*

Wednesday, April 22 Faith to Share

The Acts of the Apostles reminds us that our Christian faith is not something to be kept private. We are instead to be like the Apostles and share the good news that God loves the world so much he became human. When the Apostles are imprisoned for sharing this good news, God sends an angel to free them. God goes to remarkable lengths to help us share his love with others. How can you help someone encounter God's love today? *Today's Readings: Acts 5:17–26; Psalm 34:2–3, 4–5, 6–7, 8–9; John 3:16–21.*

Thursday, April 23 Brave Witness

Jesus, the one "from above" who has received everything from his Father, speaks on God's behalf and freely shares the Spirit with those who believe. Having received the Spirit, Jesus' followers continue to teach and heal in his name, despite being imprisoned, interrogated, and ordered to stop. Without their brave witness, we would never have heard the Gospel. Pray for those who risk their lives for Christ. *Today's Readings: Acts 5:27–33; Psalm 34:2 and 9, 17–18, 19–20; John 3:31–36.*

Friday, April 24 Thy Will Be Done

Despite not having nearly enough food for the crowd, Jesus feeds everyone, and has baskets left over. It is God's will that people be fed, that they be nourished. In Acts, a Jewish leader intervenes on behalf of the Apostles, pointing out that if they are doing God's will, their work will succeed. What work are we trying to do? Does God support us, or are we acting for ourselves alone? *Today's Readings: Acts 5:34–42; Psalm 27:1, 4, 13–14; John 6:1–15.*

Saturday, April 25 St. Mark the Evangelist

St. Mark responded to the Lord's command to "proclaim the gospel" by writing down the story of Jesus. In Mark's Gospel account, the danger of the cross looms early in Jesus' ministry. Mark seems to have composed his work for Christians who were persecuted because of their faith in Christ. Like St. Peter in his letter, Mark encourages those who suffer to remain "steadfast in faith." Although we are in a season of rejoicing, we remember that being an Easter people means we must also be people of the cross. Read some or all of Mark's account of the Gospel today. *Today's Readings: 1 Peter 5:5b–14; Psalm 89:2–3, 6–7, 16–17; Mark 16:15–20.*





CHRIST IS RISEN! ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΝΕΣΤΗ

**A WARM WELCOME TO VISITORS
AND TRAVELERS**

GUIDELINES FOR THE RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

For Catholics: As Catholics, we fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist when we receive Holy Communion. We are encouraged to receive Communion devoutly and frequently. In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, participants should not be conscious of grave sin and normally should have fasted for one hour. A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord without prior sacramental confession except for a grave reason where there is no opportunity for confession. In this case, the person is to be mindful of the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition, including the intention of confessing as soon as possible (Canon 916). A frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance is encouraged for all.

For our fellow Christians: We welcome our fellow Christians to this celebration of the Eucharist as our brothers and sisters. We pray that our common baptism and the action of the Holy Spirit in this Eucharist will draw us closer to one another and begin to dispel the sad divisions that separate us. We pray that these will lessen and finally disappear, in keeping with Christ's prayer for us "that they may all be one" (JN 17:21).

Because Catholics believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is a sign of the reality of the oneness of faith, life, and worship, members of those churches with whom we are not yet fully united are ordinarily NOT admitted to Holy Communion. Eucharistic sharing in exceptional circumstances by other Christians requires permission according to the directives of the diocesan bishop and the provisions of canon law (canon 844 § 4). Members of the Orthodox Churches, the Assyrian Church of the East, and the Polish National Catholic Church are urged to respect the discipline of their own Churches. According to Roman Catholic discipline, the Code of Canon Law does not object to the reception of communion by Christians of these Churches (canon 844 § 3).

For those not receiving Holy Communion: All who are not receiving Holy Communion are encouraged to express in their hearts a prayerful desire for unity with the Lord Jesus and with one another.

For non-Christians: We also welcome to this celebration those who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ. While we cannot admit them to Holy Communion, we ask them to offer their prayers for the peace and the unity of the human family.

The Gospel at Home

This Week's Gospel: John 20:1-9 and John 20:19-31

This week's Gospel at Home covers two Sundays. The Gospel for Easter tells of Mary of Magdala's visit to the tomb and her discovery that Jesus was not there. The Gospel for the following Sunday describes Jesus' appearance to his disciples, his greeting of peace, and his gift of the Holy Spirit.

Exploring the Gospel Message

Seeds (Preschool): Easter celebrates new life. Children see new life in growing things in nature. Sometime during these two weeks take a walk in a park or in the country. Look for signs of new life and talk with your child about the gift of life.

Promise (Grades K-1): In class, your child made two story strips that tell the Gospel stories from Easter and the 2nd Sunday of Easter. Ask them to share the stories with the family and talk about the joy Mary Magdalene and the followers of Jesus had when they found Jesus was alive. How can your family share Easter joy with others?

Good News (Grades 2-3): Ask your child to tell you what Mary Magdalene found when she went to Jesus' tomb. Share the story of Jesus' visit to his followers. Follow the instructions in the last page of the Good News booklet to make an Easter candle for your family. Light your candle—with fire or your imagination—each evening during the season of Easter, and say or sing with your family: "Alleluia."

Venture (Grades 4-6): Your child experienced an Easter Vigil prayer and dramatized the Gospels for both Easter Sunday and the 2nd Sunday of Easter. The class also learned about the conversion of Saint Paul and about the early witnesses to the Resurrection and how those witnesses spread the Good News. If your family attended the Easter Vigil, talk about your favorite parts of the Mass. Say the prayer on the cover of this week's lesson book together and light a candle to signify the start of the Easter season. Talk about ways your family witnesses to Jesus' Resurrection.

Visions (Grades 7-8): Both Sunday Gospels that are a part of this lesson taught your child that Easter faith makes all things new. Part of that Easter faith is the call to be witnesses to Jesus' Resurrection. For the people in the Gospel stories, the great sorrow of their loss was turned to great joy when they realized that Jesus had been raised from the dead. Talk about losses your family has experienced. What did you feel? What did you do? Ask your son or daughter to share how he or she felt while reading the story about Toby. Commit as a family to take time to enjoy one another's company during the days of Easter.

Pray Together

One of the important parts of the Easter Vigil service is the celebration of Baptism and the renewal of your own baptismal promises. If you still have your family's baptismal candles and certificates, display them during the first two weeks of Easter. Say your morning or evening prayer in front of the display and renew your own baptismal vows.

TODAY IS PASCHA – EASTER IN THE ENTIRE CHURCH

Why one faith and two celebrations?

by Borgna Brunner

Easter is not only a movable holiday but a multiple one: in most years Western Christian churches and Eastern Orthodox churches celebrate Easter on different dates. By a chance of the calendar, today is Easter – Pascha - in the entire Christian world, east and west.

The theological inconsistency of two Easters has remained a thorny problem for the Christian Church. “It has long been recognized that to celebrate this fundamental aspect of the Christian faith on different dates,” states the World Council of Churches, “gives a divided witness and compromises the church’s credibility and effectiveness in bringing the Gospel to the world.”

A Simple Formula, Complicated Interpretations The formula for Easter—“The first Sunday after the first full moon on or after the vernal equinox”—is identical for both Western and Orthodox Easters, but the churches base the dates on different calendars: Western churches use the Gregorian calendar, the standard calendar for much of the world, and Orthodox churches use the older, Julian calendar. That much is straightforward. But actually calculating these dates involves a bewildering array of *ecclesiastical moons* and *paschal full moons*, the *astronomical equinox*, and the *fixed equinox*—in addition to the two different calendar systems.

When is A Full Moon Full? The two churches vary on the definition of the *vernal equinox* and the full moon. The Eastern Church sets the date of Easter according to the actual, astronomical full moon and the actual equinox as observed along the meridian of Jerusalem, site of the Crucifixion and Resurrection. The Eastern Orthodox Church also applies the formula so that Easter always falls after Passover, since the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ took place after he entered Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. In the Western Church, Easter sometimes precedes Passover by weeks.

Why One Faith and Two Easters? The Western church does not use the actual, or astronomically correct date for the vernal equinox, but a fixed date (March 21). And by full moon it does not mean the astronomical full moon but the “ecclesiastical moon,” which is based on tables created by the church. These constructs allow the date of Easter to be calculated in advance rather than determined by actual astronomical observances, which are naturally less predictable. This division between the Eastern and Western Churches has no strong theological basis, but neither is it simply a technical skirmish. As the World Council of Churches has noted, much of Orthodox Christianity is located in the Middle East, where it has frequently been the minority religion, and in Eastern Europe, where until recently it faced hostility from communist governments. The emphasis on honoring tradition and maintaining an intact religious identity was therefore crucial. Seen in this context, changing the rules governing its most important religious holiday chisels away at the foundations of an already beleaguered religious heritage.

Reconciling East and West A meeting organized by the Council of World Churches (in Aleppo, Syria, March 5–10, 1997) proposed a solution thought to be favorable to both East and West: both methods of calculating the equinox and the paschal full moon would be replaced with the most advanced astronomically accurate calculations available, using the meridian of Jerusalem as the point of measure. Since that meeting, however, no further progress has been made and the problem remains.

Pinning Down A Movable Holiday Since the beginning of the 20th century, a proposal to change Easter to a **fixed holiday** rather than a movable one has been widely circulated, and in 1963 the Second Vatican Council agreed, provided a consensus could be reached among Christian churches. The **second Sunday in April** has been suggested as the most likely date. Yet inertia on the part of all Churches has left us with two calendar dates for the Easter celebration.



Pascha (Greek: Πάσχα), also called **Easter**, is the feast of the **Resurrection of the Lord**. *Pascha* is a transliteration of the Greek word, which is itself a transliteration of the Hebrew *pesach*, both words meaning *Passover*. (A minority of English-speaking Orthodox prefer the English word “Pasch.”) It is the most intense and complex celebration of the Orthodox Church calendar and features distinct movements akin to the Latin celebration of the Paschal Triduum. Sometime before midnight, on Holy Saturday (the Blessed Sabbath) the Midnight Office service is chanted. The priest goes to an ornately decorated tomb and removes the *epitaphios* - the icon of Christ in the sepulcher, carries it through the Holy Doors of the sanctuary and places it on the altar table where it remains for forty days until the day of Ascension. In the Byzantine practice, the *epitaphios* has already been removed on Holy Friday evening. The Pascha service itself usually begins with a procession that starts around midnight. The people leave the dark church building singing, carrying banners, icons, candles, and the Gospel Book. The procession circles the outside of the church and returns to the closed front doors. In Greek practice, the Gospel which tells of the empty tomb is now read. In Syrian practice, following the Gospel reading, the priest beats on the door and takes part in a dialogue with an interlocutor inside the church doors, crying out with the words of Psalm 23 (24): “Lift up your heads, O gates! And be exalted, you everlasting doors, that the king of glory may enter in!” Next, the Paschal *troparion*—anthem hymn— is sung for the first time, together with the verses of Psalm 67 (68) which will begin all of the Church services during the Paschal season.

*Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered; let those who hate him flee from before his face!
As smoke vanishes, so let them vanish; as wax melts before the fire,
So the sinners will perish before the face of God; but let the righteous be glad.
This is the day which the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!
Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death,
and on those in the grave bestowing life.*

The doors are opened and the faithful re-enter. The church is brightly lit and adorned with flowers. It represents the heavenly bride, and the symbol of the empty tomb. The celebrants change into white vestments, the bright robes of the resurrection. The Easter icon stands in the center of the church, where the Tomb of Christ had been. The icon itself depicts Christ destroying the gates of hell and freeing Adam and Eve from the captivity of death. Through the Liturgy, the Priest proclaims “Christ is risen!” The faithful continually respond, “Indeed he is risen!” Following the entrance into the church, the Paschal hymn ascribed to St. John of Damascus is chanted with the *Paschal troparion* as the constantly recurring refrain. Matins ends with the Paschal *stichera* - ode:

O day of resurrection! Let us beam with God's own pride! Let everyone embrace in joy! Let us warmly greet those we meet and treat them all like brothers, even those who hate us! Let all the earth resound with this song: Christ is risen from the dead, conquering death by death, and on those in the grave bestowing life!

Next, the Paschal Divine Liturgy begins with the singing once more of the festal *troparion* with the verses of Psalm 67 (68). The antiphons of the liturgy are special psalm verses that praise and glorify the salvation of God. Again, the *troparion* is repeated over and over. The readings take the faithful back again to the beginning, and announces God’s creation and re-creation of the world through the living Word of God, his Son Jesus Christ. The epistle reading is the first nine verses of the Book of Acts. The gospel reading is the first seventeen verses of the Gospel of John. It is customary on this day to read the Gospel in several languages. The Liturgy of St John Chrysostom continues as usual. To Orthodox Christians, receiving communion on Easter Sunday is very important. Many parishes take the Paschal Sermon of St. John Chrysostom literally and welcome all Orthodox Christians who are in attendance to the Lord’s Table. To the Orthodox, the celebration of Pascha reveals the mystery of the eighth day. It is not merely an historical reenactment of the event of Christ’s Resurrection. It is a way to experience the new creation of the world a taste of the new and unending day of the Kingdom of God. This new day is conveyed to the faithful in the length of the paschal services, in the repetition of the paschal order for all the services of Easter or *Bright Week*, and in the special paschal features retained in the services for the forty days until Ascension. Forty days are, as it were, treated as one day.

During Pascha, foods from which the faithful have abstained during the Lenten journey are often brought in baskets and blessed by the priest. This may include eggs, cheese, meat, and a rich, cake-like bread. These are then eaten after the Divine Liturgy. In Greek practice there is a lamb soup that is shared after the Liturgy. In Slavic practice, foods which were blessed earlier are shared. Another tradition at the feast of the Pascha, is the blessing of a bread stamped with the image of the Cross, or of the Resurrection, named *artos*. This special Artos is blessed at the close of the Paschal Liturgy in memory of the Risen Christ, Who is “the Bread of Life Eternal descended from Heaven and nourishing us with the food of His divine mercies.” On the next Saturday, after the Liturgy, it is broken and distributed in the place of Antidoron – the unconsecrated bread passed out at the end of Divine Liturgy. In the Greek world, The faithful also sometimes exchange red-dyed egg. The egg symbolizes the renovated life, received through the Blood of Christ.



Bringing Home the Word

Second Sunday of Easter (Sunday of Divine Mercy) (A)

April 19, 2020

Touching Jesus' Mercy

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

The memory of the marks of our sufferings can lead us to lose our peace. For Christ, this is not so. He shows the disciples his wounds and says, "Peace be with you." It may seem contradictory, but it isn't. To touch Christ's wounded side is to touch his mercy, to touch a love that overcomes everything. In spite of my sins wounding him, he comes to me in loving mercy. Jesus' wounds bring peace.

When the apostles see his hands and side, they rejoice. His wounds are a sign

that it is really him. No one else has those marks. His wounds are his identification! His wounds bring joy.

Thomas misses Jesus' first apparition, returning and demanding proof before he will believe. Rather than becoming angry, Jesus shows him his wounds. He invites Thomas to touch the signs of his suffering, and Thomas believes. Jesus' wounds bring faith.

We also need to insert our hands and hearts into Christ's side, to come into contact with his love and mercy. Only then can we be healed. Only then can we experience real peace, joy, and faith.

That's why Jesus breathes on his disciples and says, "Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them" (John 20:22-23). He wants to heal their wounds and see them produce joy and peace in others. God's grace is to reach all generations through the power of forgiveness he entrusts to his Church. The sacrament of penance is exactly that. We acknowledge our sins, and Jesus responds with understanding, forgiveness, and counsel. +

***We need to insert our hands
and hearts into Christ's side,
to come into contact
with his love and mercy.***

A Word from Pope Francis

To us also, on this Sunday, which St. John Paul II wished to dedicate to divine mercy, the Lord shows us, through the Gospel, his wounds. They are wounds of mercy....Jesus invites us to...enter into the mystery of these wounds, which is the mystery of his merciful love.

—Homily, April 12, 2015



Sunday Readings

Acts 2:42-47

Awe came upon everyone, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

1 Peter 1:3-9

You may have to suffer through various trials, so...the genuineness of your faith...may prove to be for praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

John 20:19-31

These [signs] are written that you may [come to] believe that Jesus is the Messiah,...and that through this belief you may have life in his name.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS REFLECTION

- How often and how sincerely do you receive mercy through reconciliation?
- How often do you show and share the forgiveness and mercy you have been blessed with?

Why Community? Why Church? Why Catholic?

By Jim and Susan Vogt



People have many reasons for being Catholic. Most are good, yet some seem weak: “Sunday morning without Mass would seem empty.” “I was raised Catholic. It’s all I know.” “I’m not sure there’s a God, but I’d rather err by believing than be surprised when I die.”

These aren’t *bad* reasons, but they may not stand up to the challenges of modern life. They’re like the house built on sand. When the storm came, it collapsed (see Matthew 7:24–27).

The storms are many: anger at the clergy sex-abuse scandals; dissatisfaction with the limited role of women; judging the Church as too wishy-washy, politically involved, rich, or concerned about rules; and hurt from negative personal experiences (for example, “The Church wouldn’t bury my father”).

Once a young adult leaves home, the practice of the faith may be seen as only a cultural commitment with no roots. Sometimes people aren’t welcomed when they approach the Church for marriage or other sacraments. Our Church must walk a delicate balance between staking out an identity that sometimes upholds unpopular values while welcoming all with unconditional love as Jesus did.

Lately we’ve been listening to folks who have left the Church and to others who have remained or returned to active

Catholicism. These are some of the more significant reasons we’ve heard about why people stay:

- **The communion of saints:** Many in the Church have been inspired by Catholics, some deceased but others still alive, who’ve been powerful witnesses of lives lived for others—true followers of Jesus.
- **Crisis:** Sometimes a life crisis drives us to ask the ultimate questions about life’s meaning. God often touches us during difficult times, and we come to understand that life is about more than collecting stuff or even surrounding ourselves with loving people.
- **The sacraments:** The Catholic Church has a rich tradition of combining the Word with actions and symbols in its seven sacraments. This reflects an understanding of how ordinary things—water, bread, oil, rings, words of forgiveness or commitment, and human touch—help us experience God’s love.
- **Universality:** People have told us that they were attracted to the Catholic Church because its heritage goes back to Jesus and there’s a unity of belief around the world.
- **Service and social justice:** The Catholic Church has perhaps the most extensive social service network

in the world—tending to the poor, coordinating aid during crises, and challenging everyone to live simply and help their neighbors because that is what Jesus taught.

- **Community:** Living a Christian life isn’t about being a “lone ranger.” Being in community with other believers, we can pool our resources and support each other.

In the end, the reason that we—Jim and Susan—are Catholic is that it’s where God has called us and spoken to us. There are many routes to God, but Catholicism is where we have experienced God’s touch. There may be Church policies with which we disagree, but we would find human foibles and failings no matter what religion we followed.

Some of the best and worst things in human history were done in the name of church, God, and religion. We must align ourselves with the best and repudiate the worst. The challenge is to be humble enough to remember that we’re not in charge and that we’re all imperfect sinners, still loved by God. As a community inspired by the life of Jesus, faith calls us to devote ourselves to the good of others.

Bottom line? Love. +

PRAYER

*Risen Lord, you share with me
God’s gifts of peace and
forgiveness. Open my heart to
share your peace and forgiveness
with all people.*

—From *Hopeful Meditations for Every Day of
Easter Through Pentecost*, Rev. Warren J. Savage
and Mary Ann McSweeney

WEEKDAY READINGS

April 20–25

Monday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 4:23–31 / Jn 3:1–8

Tuesday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 4:32–37 / Jn 3:7b–15

Wednesday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 5:17–26 / Jn 3:16–21

Thursday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 5:27–33 / Jn 3:31–36

Friday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 5:34–42 / Jn 6:1–15

Saturday, St. Mark:
1 Pt 5:5b–14 / Mk 16:15–20