

COVID-19 IS STILL AROUND!

The obligation to attend Sunday Liturgy remains suspended in the Diocese of Manchester for all who are health compromised. No person who has been ill or exposed to someone who is ill should be attending Liturgy.

Anyone who has had recent symptoms of fever, any respiratory symptoms (runny nose, nasal congestion, sore throat, cough, shortness of breath), chills, severe fatigue or changes in sense of smell or taste may have been exposed to COVID-19. Testing is encouraged. Please refrain from attending any liturgical service.

Liturgy online or on TV...

Boston Catholic Television catholicstv.org
 Sunday Mass from Notre Dame
catholicstv.org/masses/notre-dame-mass
 Salt & Light TV saltandlighttv.org
 Eternal Word Television ewtn.com

✠ PARISH TITHING ✠

Our Parish needs to take in \$9700.00 each week in order to make ends meet. This amount represents an adjusted budget offertory of \$8500.00 per week plus the combination of budgeted Property and Fuel second collections (\$4800.00 per month divided into 4 weeks or \$1200.00 weekly). 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. Consider signing up for electronic giving (see below). Especially in these trying times, your Parish depends on your responsible stewardship and support!

April 25, 2021

Offertory \$5,613.99

COVID VACCINE CONCERNS

Beware of fake news! There are reports that call into question the moral and ethical validity of Covid-19 vaccines. Do not be misled. **Right click** on the following tab and **open** the hyperlink to read what the Bishops of the United States are saying about the moral permissibility of the current Covid-19 vaccines:

[Click Here for the Memo](#)

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 offered in memory or honor of a loved one. The suggested offering for each is \$10.00.



Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish uses **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. 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

May 2 Catholic Charities
 May 9 Property Management
 May 13 Ascension



Out of respect for the Lord and in consideration of fellow parishioners, please remember to silence or turn off your cell phones during Mass. Thank you!

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

If you would like an "end of year" financial statement of your contribution to the parish for 2020, please call **Jackie** at the Parish Office at 382-8324. **Financial Statements are issued on a request only basis.**

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 ✠

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 603-382-8324 or by email at jtremlay@stluketheevangelist.net. 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>.



BLESSING OF MOTHERS

A special blessing of mothers will be given at all Masses on the weekend of **Mother's Day, May 9, 2021.**

THANK YOU!

Thank you to Jeanne Sullivan who made a donation to the Parish toward the cost of this year's Paschal Candles.

Thank you, too, to all who made donations toward the cost of our Easter Flowers this year. Both churches are beautiful!

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS!

We appreciate the gracious support of our bulletin by our Advertisers! Please be sure to support our advertisers by calling them first. If you have a business and would like to place an ad, call 1-800-333-3166, ext. 161.

CREMATION & THE CHURCH

On October 25, 2016, the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith published a new instruction on the burial of the dead and on the conservation of the ashes in cases of cremation. The instruction reiterated the long held view that the Church is not opposed to the practice of cremation, though it continues to recommend that the bodies of the deceased be buried in cemeteries or other sacred places. **However, the new document insists that ashes should not be kept in private homes and that the scattering of ashes in the air, on land, or at sea is not permitted.** The instruction also insisted that cremains may not be divided among various family members, nor may they be preserved in mementos, pieces of jewelry, or other objects. Please contact Father Albert in the Parish Office with any questions. Brochures about the Rite of Christian Funerals are available at the Church entrances.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

A Men's AA Step Meeting is being held on Sunday mornings from 7:00 to 8:00 AM at the St. Luke the Evangelist Parish Hall (Holy Angels). Masks are required. Bring your own coffee. For more information, call Joe at 617-921-9899.

SUPPORT CATHOLIC CHARITIES NH

On the weekend of May 2, we will hold our Annual Appeal for Catholic Charities NH. Father Albert will speak about how your support allows Catholic Charities NH to continue to help hundreds of New Hampshire residents and families overcome hardship and create better paths forward. In a year unlike any other, every gift matters. To bring more positive, lasting change to your New Hampshire neighbors in need, visit www.cc-nh.org/everything. Catholic Charities NH thanks you in advance for your prayerful gifts!

EVICTED & EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE

If you or someone you know are facing eviction or need emergency rental assistance, help is available. Please call Catholic Charities at 603-889-9431.

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.

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.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

✠ WEEKLY CALENDAR ✠

Monday, May 3
7:00 PM Knights of Columbus *Plaistow*

Wednesday, May 5
Holy Angels Church Plaistow open for private prayer all day

Thursday, May 6
8:30 AM – 8:30 PM Eucharistic Adoration *Newton*

Saturday, May 8
3:00 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *Plaistow*

Because of COVID restrictions, many Parish events and groups are currently cancelled. We will begin more Parish programs, with all precautions, as restrictions ease.

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!

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.



FEED THE HUNGRY

ST. LUKE THE EVANGELIST FOOD PANTRY

Thank you for your generosity towards the hungry of our area!

Non-perishable food or personal 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. **Call the Pantry at 819-4949 for more information.**

✠ MASS INTENTIONS ✠

Saturday, May 1 ~ Fifth Sunday of Easter
Acts 9:26-31; 1 Jn 3:18-24; Jn 15:1-8

4:00 PM Nancy Raymond by Pat Zakiewicz
Plaistow

Sunday, May 2 ~ Fifth Sunday of Easter
Acts 9:26-31; 1 Jn 3:18-24; Jn 15:1-8

8:00 AM Beryl Wright and Dolly Green by the Madore family
Newton

10:00 AM Carl Jesionowski by his family
Plaistow

Monday, May 3 ~ Philip and James, Apostles
1 Cor 15:1-8; Jn 14:6-14

8:00 AM Mary Kate Morrill by Tim and Peggy Morrill
Newton

Tuesday, May 4 ~ Easter Weekday
Acts 14:19-28; Jn 14:27-31a

8:00 AM Maurice "Jake" Collins (Month's Mind)
Plaistow

Wednesday, May 5 ~ Easter Weekday
Acts 15:1-6; Jn 15:1-8

6:30 PM Martin & Florence Fogel and Frank Kelcourse by Elaine Kelcourse
Plaistow

Thursday, May 6 ~ Easter Weekday
Acts 15:7-21; Jn 15:9-11

8:00 AM People of the Parish
Newton

Friday, May 7 ~ Easter Weekday
Acts 15:22-31; Jn 15:12-17
No Mass

Saturday, May 8 ~ Easter Weekday
Acts 16:1-10; Jn 15:18-21 (Day)

Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48; 1 Jn 4:7-10; Jn 15:9-17 (Vigil)
4:00 PM Chucky Kondrat by Pat Zakiewicz
Plaistow

Sunday, May 9 ~ Sixth Sunday of Easter
Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48; 1 Jn 4:7-10; Jn 15:9-17

8:00 AM Joan Burge and Angelina Antczak by the Burge family
Newton

10:00 AM Jesselyn Driscoll by her family
Plaistow



✠ FAITH FORMATION & PARISH INFORMATION ✠



We're looking for new members! Have you ever wondered what the St. Vincent de Paul Society is all about? Our meetings are held on the **3rd Wednesday at 7 PM of each month**. New members are always welcome. We look forward

any questions you may have. **Please contact SVdP Secretary, Jim Edwards, at (603) 642-5236 or jimmy69180@hotmail.com to find out if our meeting is live at the church hall or virtual on ZOOM.** If you seek assistance or need information about the Society, call (603) 382-8324, ext.315. Visit us on our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/pg/SVDPSL>

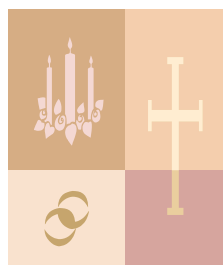


The **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults** is the process by which people become members of the Roman Catholic Church. Be a good agent of welcome and evangelization! If you or someone you know is interested in inquiring about becoming a member of the Roman Catholic Church, contact Cathy Smith in the Parish Office.

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 call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305 or email her at

csmith@stluketheevangelist.net.



MARRIAGE IN THE CHURCH

Did you know that all Catholics are required to be married in the Church as a condition of the validity of their marriage?

Any Catholic married in a civil ceremony (JP) or in any religious ceremony other than a Catholic one (unless specifically excepted by the Bishop) is not living out the Sacrament of Marriage in its fullness according to the teaching of the Church. Contact Father Albert in the Parish Office for more information and assistance – there are ways in which your situation might be resolved!



St. Luke the Evangelist is now on Facebook! Go to www.facebook.com/stlukenh.org/ or **St. Luke the Evangelist Parish – Newton/Plaistow** and give us a Like! Please invite fellow parishioners & friends to do the same.

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.

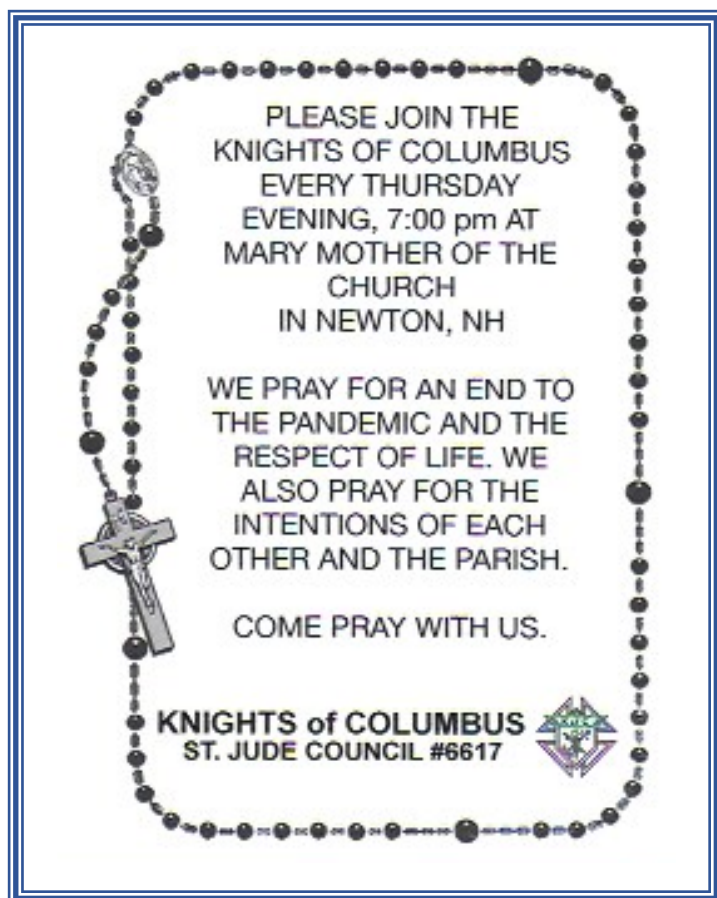
The Church in Plaistow is open all day on Wednesdays for people to stop by and pray before the presence of Jesus in the tabernacle.

✠ PARISH DIRECTORY ✠

Parish Office	603-382-8324
Parish Prayer Line	603-382-8324 x 314
St. Vincent de Paul Society	603-382-8324 x 315
St. Luke's Food Pantry	603-819-4949
Preschool	603-382-9783
Presentation of Mary Convent	603-382-2744

Fr. Albert Tremblay	fr.albert@stluketheevangelist.net
Cathy Smith	csmith@stluketheevangelist.net
Joyce Szapa	jszczapa@stluketheevangelist.net
Jackie Tremblay	jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net
Val Barczak	mvmbarczak@comcast.net
Parish Council	parishcouncil@stluketheevangelist.net

✠ Parish News ~ Youth News ~ Around The Diocese ✠



CATHOLIC CHARITIES NH OFFERS SUPPORT PROGRAMS IN SPITE OF THE PANDEMIC...

Here are some resources:

Catholic Charities continues to offer Adoption and Maternity Services (669-3030), Immigration Legal Services (889-9431), and Mental Health Counseling (some on-line - 669-3030). Our Healthcare Service facilities are located throughout the state (call 669-3030 or see our website for a facility close to you). *Our Place* continues parent education services from pregnancy through the first three years of a child's life (647-2244). *St Charles School* continues to provide academic, social, emotional and behavioral services to children in grades K-8 (332-4768). And *The Food Bank* continues to provide food supplies to most food pantries throughout the state.

You may not be aware that *Liberty House* supports vulnerable veterans with recovery, job placement and wellness programs (669-0761). *Monadnock at Home* supports seniors in the Monadnock area allowing them to stay independent and remain in their homes (371-0809). Our *Caregivers program* lends support to homebound seniors and the disabled in the greater Manchester and Nashua areas (622-4948).



DIOCESAN EASTER SERIES

The Diocese of Manchester invites all to join in an Easter Series, "The Resurrection and the Church's Mission in the Public Square." This series is offered to help New Hampshire Catholics reflect more deeply on the Easter message and its meaning today for our state, our country, and the whole world. The full series is available in a free-eBook at catholicnh.org/Easter that contains brief written offerings and short excerpts from various church writings on the topics that are covered for each week of the Easter Season.

CATHOLIC WOMEN

The New Hampshire Diocesan Council of Catholic Women invite you to join them on **Saturday, May 15, 2021** to honor Mary, our Blessed Mother. Join us for Mass at 8:00 AM followed by the Rosary. To participate on May 15, come to St. Joseph Cathedral in person or visit the Cathedral website for the livestream at <https://www.stjosephcathedralnh.org>.

SUMMER FUN AND ST. JOE'S

St. Joseph Regional Catholic School is offering "Summer Fun at St. Joe's", a six-week program open to children ages 4 to 8, beginning **June 21, 2021 through August 6, 2021 (not available week of July, 5 2021)**. Each themed week is filled with fun, enriching activities including active time in our beautiful playground. Half day, full day, and before/after care options available. To register, and for more information, email Mrs. Farren: summer@sjrcs.com.

NEW ONLINE SUPPORT GROUP FROM CATHOLIC CHARITIES NH

Divorce / separation can be an uncomfortable and often misunderstood topic, and for those directly impacted, a painful process with many questions often left unanswered. Catholic Charities NH will be hosting its next online support group, "*Divorce/Separation: Why me? What can I do?*" for those navigating the divorce process or trying to find their way afterward. Participants will learn more about the dynamics of divorce, better understand their options, learn helpful coping strategies, and support others on the same journey. The program will be held via Zoom for six consecutive Wednesdays (at 12:00 Noon) starting **April 21**. To register, visit www.cc-nh.org/supportgroup or call 603-752-1325.

The Gospel at Home

This Sunday's Gospel: John 15:1-8

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus compares himself to a vine and his followers to the branches on that vine. Branches get their nourishment from the vine. From this Gospel, we understand that we are all one family and that we need and depend on one another. We the branches never want to be separated from the vine that is Jesus Christ.

Exploring the Gospel Message

Seeds (Preschool): This week, your child learned that we are all connected to Jesus much like branches are connected to a vine. The children also explored how various people, such as doctors and teachers, help other people. Feeling a sense of belonging is important to children of this age. Remind one another that you are all part of the Body of Christ—the Church.

Promise (Grades K-1): This week, your child's class shared about being welcoming of others and about how important it is to belong. One of the most important lessons for children is learning that they are welcome in church. Talk about ways your parish makes your family feel welcome. Be sure your child shares the Mass booklet he or she made.

Good News (Grades 2-3): As part of the discussion of Jesus' image of the vine and the branches, your child's class explored ways that people are connected—ways in which they are like others. One of those ways is that we are all part of the Body of Christ, that is the Church. Discuss how we share in the life of Christ. In class, the children also started family trees. See how much more you can add to the family tree and pray for those who have gone before us.

Venture (Grades 4-6): In class this week, your child saw how all the members of the Church are connected like branches to the vine that is Jesus Christ. The class read about how Sister Stephanie Baliga's joked about, then did run a marathon on a treadmill because the Chicago Marathon was canceled during the pandemic. Talk about how your family has had to adapt during the pandemic. Also ask your youngster to tell you about what makes Cardinal Wilton Gregory special.

Visions (Grades 7-9): The class this week explored the Gospel reading about how Jesus nourishes our faith. Your young person learned about Father Eusebio Kino, who took the Good News of Christ, our true vine, to the people of Mexico, California, and Arizona after becoming a priest in 1677. Have your young person tell you about this Cowboy Priest and servant of God. Jesus makes us one, and ecumenism works to unite Christians who all belong to Jesus. Ask your young person to describe how Pope Francis has worked to unite people of faith. Be sure your young person follows up with an interview of a Protestant or Orthodox Christian as described in the lesson.

Pray Together

Each day this week, pray the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, and the Glory Be to the Father together. Members of the Church throughout the world share these three prayers. Praying them together as a family can help you grow in awareness of just how many branches spring from Christ the Vine.



✠ AROUND THE DIOCESE ✠



MARRIAGE IN THE CHURCH Did you know that ALL Catholics are required to be married in the Church as a condition of the validity of their marriage?

Any Catholic married in a civil ceremony (JP) or in any religious ceremony other than a Catholic one (unless specifically excepted by the Bishop) is not living out the Sacrament of Marriage in its fullness according to the teaching of the Church. Contact Father Albert at the parish office for more information.



STAY INFORMED WITH FAITHFUL CITIZENSHIP NEWS

The Diocese of Manchester wants to inform Catholics about important public policy matters facing our elected officials. Faithful Citizenship News provides briefs on legislation as well as information about Catholic social teaching on some of today's pressing issues. To read the current issue of Faithful Citizenship News and to subscribe, visit www.catholicnh.org/fcnews.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES COUNSELING

New Hampshire Catholic Charities provides individual, marital, family, and couples' counseling, helping people with a variety of personal difficulties, including: Depression, Stress, Family Conflicts, Relationship Problems, Anxiety, Substance Abuse, Life Adjustment Issues, Grief and Loss. Counseling also helps individuals and families strengthen communication skills in order to build and sustain healthy relationships and live more satisfying lives. A sliding scale fee is offered. Contact Arlene Dody, LCMHC in Salem at 603-893-1971 for more information.

HOW TO MAKE A REPORT OF SEXUAL ABUSE

Child sexual abuse is a crime in the State of New Hampshire and the Church. New Hampshire law requires that anyone who has reason to suspect that a child is being or has been abused or neglected must make a report to the Division for Children, Youth & Families ("DCYF") of the State of New Hampshire, 1-800-894-5533. Any person who suspects or alleges child abuse on the part of a priest, deacon, employee, or volunteer of a parish, school, or institution of the diocese of Manchester is also encouraged to make a report to the Office for Ministerial Conduct, 603-669-3100. Church personnel – clergy, paid employees, and volunteers – have additional reporting requirements if they believe that Church personnel have sexually abused a child. You can learn more about these reporting requirements on the diocesan website at www.catholicnh.org or by speaking with our Parish Safe Environment Coordinator, Cathy Smith at 382-8324.

The Pregnancy Care Center

The Pregnancy Care Center is a non-profit organization that offers its confidential services at no cost to its clients. We are committed to promoting the culture of life by assisting expectant parents in the birth and subsequent development of their child during his or her first year of life. We are also committed to helping young people embrace the virtues of chastity and continence as a sign of their Christian dignity.

Main Center

496 Main St., Haverhill, MA (978-373-5700)

www.pccnortheast.org

Helpline: 866-254-4440



MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

Don't you and your spouse deserve a beautiful, romantic weekend away together? Get away from all those worldly anxieties and take time to just focus on each other by making a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend. Deepen your communication, strengthen your relationship, rekindle your romance, and renew your sacrament by attending the next Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend in New England. For more information, call Ralph & Jane Becker at 1-800-710-9963 or visit www.wwme.org.

NH COUPLE ENRICHMENT CIRCLE

Have you attended a Marriage Encounter Weekend? If your answer is yes, you are invited to participate in the NH Couple Enrichment Circle to continue to strengthen your marriage relationship. For more information, contact David and Karen Demers at 617-480-9989 or ddemers@aviconpartners.com.

RETRouvaille...A Lifeline

Rediscover a loving marriage with a Retrouvaille weekend. If your marriage is tearing the two of you apart, if there is little or no meaningful communication, if you are considering separation or divorce, we believe Retrouvaille can help you. For more information, call 1-800-470-2230 or visit www.HelpOurMarriage.com.



SUPPORT FOR DIVORCED AND SEPARATED

Divorce and separation can be painful experiences. Support groups are available to those who are seeking healing, comfort, and empowerment. Visit www.catholicnh.org/support for a listing of groups.





Bringing Home the Word +

Fifth Sunday of Easter (B)

May 2, 2021

The Vine and the Branches Become One

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

Jesus himself picked the image of the vine to describe the reality of our being united to him and the Father. And this was not lost on early Christians. One of the first images they used to mark their graves was the vine and the branches.

An amazing thing about a vine and its branches is that you can't tell the difference between them. Look at a grapevine and try to determine which is the branch and which is the vine or trunk. You can't, since it appears as one seamless reality. Jesus invites us to be so

close to him that we appear to be just like him—"other Christs," as our name Christian suggests!

Second, the sap that springs from the vine, runs through the branches, and matures in the fruit is all the same. The life in Jesus and the life in us as Christians are the same. He has given us the same Spirit that animated him, the Holy Spirit.

This is why Jesus can guarantee that, if we remain in him by listening to his word and following his Spirit, we will definitely bear much fruit. His word and Spirit cannot remain sterile in us.

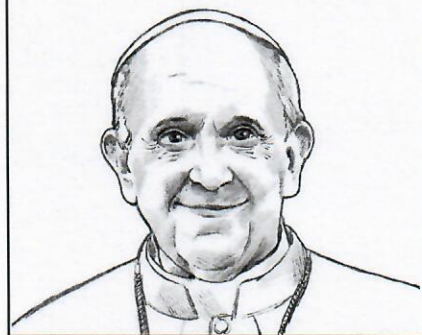
The most important result of being united to Jesus and bearing fruit is that not only will we be united to him in this life, but this friendship will last for all eternity. That's why early Christians put vines on their tombs. +

Jesus guarantees that, if we remain in him by listening to his word and following his Spirit, we will bear much fruit.

A Word from Pope Francis

Let us not forget that the Our Father is the prayer of the poor. Our asking for bread expresses our entrustment to God for our basic needs in life. Everything that Jesus taught us in this prayer expresses and brings together the cry of all who suffer from life's uncertainties.

—First World Day of the Poor, November 19, 2017



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- Do I find ways to regularly read and hear the word of God?
- What symbols would sincerely represent the way I live my life?

Sunday Readings

Acts 9:26–31

The Church...was being built up and walked in the fear of the Lord, and with the consolation of the Holy Spirit it grew in numbers.

1 John 3:18–24

Children, let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth.

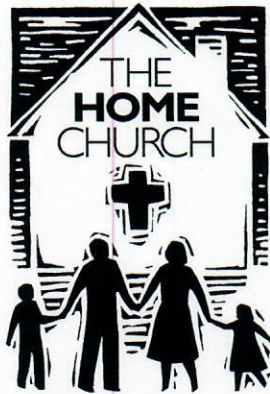
John 15:1–8

[Jesus said,] "I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit."

Beyond Gun Control

By Fr. Bruce Lewandowski, CSsR

Michael couldn't wait to tell his second-grade friend what had happened to him. "A policeman pointed a gun at my head this morning!" Michael's friend was scared, so he told the teacher, who told the principal, who called Michael's parents. His parents explained that their home had



been raided at 6:00 AM by federal agents, guns drawn. One had pointed a gun at Michael. An uncle living with the family had been arrested and charged with illegal sale of semiautomatic weapons.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops called for gun control in their document *Community and Crime: A Statement of the Committee on Social Development and World Peace*. That document was followed by *Responsibility, Rehabilitation, and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Crime and Criminal Justice*. It reiterated their support for legislative efforts to protect society from the violence associated with easy access to deadly weapons. Since then, the bishops affirmed their hope that any government action on gun-violence prevention would lead to greater respect for human life.

Like it or not, violence is part of our lives. Violent TV programs, video games, and movies are a source of entertainment

for many. War, insurrection, and mob scenes are reported on the news, in newspapers, and across the internet. Veterans are haunted daily by the trauma of battles fought decades ago, and thousands of soldiers continue to fight in conflicts around the world. Domestic violence is a reality for

many, and the tragedies of Littleton, Aurora, Columbine, Newtown, and Las Vegas have left an indelible mark on the American soul.

Even the Word of God is filled with violence—it can be found throughout the Hebrew and Christian Testaments. Prophets, priests, and kings are guilty of it; innocent and God-fearing men, women, and children are victims of it—and it's often attributed to God. Even our salvation was won through a horrific and violent act. We can't escape or explain violence away. It's a reality.

Our society encourages and celebrates overindulgence. People overeat, overspend, overwork, overachieve, overcommit, overdose, and overreact. It seems a bit like overkill to say this—but if you can name it, you can indulge in it.

Many turn to gun control as a remedy, and maybe there should be stricter government oversight of the availability and use of firearms. But a

deeper problem exists, one much greater than uncontrolled access to weapons. The inability to manage powerful emotions and urges—the absence of self-control—can have life-threatening and life-ending consequences. Self-discipline and self-restraint are more than indicators of healthy and mature growth and development; they are imperative to saving lives and building and maintaining true and lasting peace.

As a nation, we've got a gun to our head—it's time to get control of ourselves. +

*Even the Word of God
is filled with violence—
it can be found
throughout the Hebrew
and Christian Testaments.*



*Risen Jesus, your abiding
presence gives us hope.
Help me to be a loving
presence to others.*

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

WEEKDAY READINGS

May 3–8

Monday, Sts. Philip and James:
1 Cor 15:1–8 / Jn 14:6–14

Tuesday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 14:19–28 / Jn 14:27–31a

Wednesday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 15:1–6 / Jn 15:1–8

Thursday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 15:7–21 / Jn 15:9–11

Friday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 15:22–31 / Jn 15:12–17

Saturday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 16:1–10 / Jn 15:18–21

Bringing Home
the Word 
May 2, 2021

© 2021 Liguori Publications, a ministry of the Redemptorists. One Liguori Drive, Liguori, MO 63057. Scripture quotations in this publication are from the *New American Bible*, revised edition, © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, DC. The Pope Francis quotation is used with permission and copyright © 2020 *Libreria Editrice Vaticana*. All rights reserved. 1-800-325-9521. Liguori.org.