

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

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.



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!

✠ 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!

May 9, 2021

Offertory	\$6,472.29
Property Mgmt	\$1,189.00



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 16	Catholic Communications
May 23	Fuel
May 30	No Second Collection
June 6	Property Management
June 13	No Second Collection

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>.

PENTECOST VESPERS AND BENEDICTION

All are invited to join Fr. Albert for Vespers and Benediction at 6:00 PM in Newton on Pentecost Sunday, **May 23, 2021**.

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.



VIGIL LIGHT

The Vigil Light in front of the Blessed Mother Icon at Mary Mother of the Church will burn in loving memory of **Francis Antczak** by the Burge family



BLESSING OF FATHERS

A special blessing of Fathers will be given at all Masses on the weekend of **Father's Day, June 20, 2021**.

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.

SUPPORT CATHOLIC CHARITIES NH

Your support of Catholic Charities NH is a gift of hope and healing for our New Hampshire neighbors in crisis. This includes the hundreds of seniors that are served through the CareGivers and Monadnock at Home programs, many who are facing increased isolation, food insecurity, and financial distress in these challenging times. Your support helps fund food deliveries, rides to medical appointments, and invaluable emotional connections, helping them know they are loved, valued, and truly not alone. You can make a gift by going to www.cc-nh.org/everything.

EVICTON & 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.

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.

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.

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

✠ WEEKLY CALENDAR ✠

Tuesday, May 18
6:00 PM Finance Council Meeting *Plaistow*

Wednesday, May 19
Holy Angels Church Plaistow open for private prayer all day

Thursday, May 20
8:30 AM – 8:30 PM Eucharistic Adoration *Newton*

Saturday, May 22
3:00 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *Plaistow*

Sunday, May 23
12:00 PM Parish Pastoral Council Meeting *Plaistow*
6:00 PM Vespers and Benediction *Newton*

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.



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.

**FEED THE
HUNGRY**

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 15 ~ Seventh Sunday of Easter
Acts 1:15-17, 20a, 20c-26; 1 Jn 4:11-16; Jn 17:11b-19

4:00 PM Verna Carbone by Pat Zakiewicz
Plaistow

Sunday, May 16 ~ Seventh Sunday of Easter
Acts 1:15-17, 20a, 20c-26; 1 Jn 4:11-16; Jn 17:11b-19

8:00 AM Francis Antczak by the Burge family
Newton

10:00 AM Ellie Bauer by the Knights of Columbus
Plaistow

Monday, May 17 ~ Easter Weekday

Acts 19:1-8; Jn 16:29-33

8:00 AM Barry Cohen by Jeanne Sullivan
Newton

Tuesday, May 18 ~ John I. Pope and Martyr

Acts 20:17-27; Jn 17:1-11a

8:00 AM For Michael and his recovery
Plaistow

Wednesday, May 19 ~ Easter Weekday

Acts 20:28-38; Jn 17:11b-19

6:30 PM Mary Walsh by Joe and Ann Marie Sheehan
Plaistow

Thursday, May 20 ~ Bernadine of Siena, Priest

Acts 22:30, 23:6-11; Jn 17:20-26

8:00 AM Roy Lajoie (1st Anniversary) by his family
Newton

Friday, May 21 ~ Christopher Magallanes, Priest, and Companions, Martyrs

Acts 25:13b-21; Jn 21:15-19

No Mass

Saturday, May 22 ~ Rita of Cascia, Religious

Acts 28:16-20, 30-31; Jn 21:20-25 (Day)

Gn 11:1-9; Ex 19:3-8a, 16-20; Ez 37:1-4; Jl 3:1-5; Rom 8:22-27; Jn 7:37-39 (Vigil)

4:00 PM Beth Tebbetts by Pat Zakiewicz
Plaistow

Sunday, May 23 ~ Pentecost Sunday

Acts 2:1-11; 1 Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13; Jn 20:19-23

8:00 AM Mickey and Louis Inzero by the Stanley family
Newton

10:00 AM Kenny Jenkins
by the Jenkins and Statezni families
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>

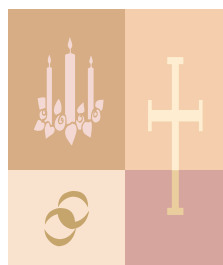


The **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults** is the process by which people become members of the Roman Catholic Church. Be a good agent of welcome and evangelization! If you or someone you know is interested in inquiring about becoming a member of the Roman Catholic Church, contact Cathy Smith in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

**THE KNIGHTS
OF COLUMBUS
COUNCIL #6617**



WE NEED YOUR HELP

The family that was assisted at last years St Jude Open Golf Tournament continues to face roadblocks and challenges with medical issues and treatments. Matt is a 40 year old husband and father who has had more traumatic medical issues, multiple surgeries, and treatments that most of us will ever experience in our lifetime. He travels to MGH weekly to receive treatments for his brain tumor. Recently the car he uses to get to those treatments blew its engine, leaving him and his family struggling to find ways to make his appointments.

The Knight of Columbus are asking our fellow parishioners if you or anyone you know is considering getting rid of a car, please consider donating it to the family. We ask that the car be in good running order and be able to pass NH inspection. If you can help, please call Dan Sullivan at 603-770-4803 or email him at dans49@comcast.net. On behalf of Matt and his family, we thank you for any assistance you can provide.

**THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
ST JUDE OPEN GOLF TOURNAMENT
WE ARE LOOKING FOR SPONSORS**

THE KNIGHTS again this year are sponsoring the St Jude Open Golf Tournament, **June 5, 2021** at the Apple Hill Golf Club in East Kingston, NH. The tournament has sold out in record time with 144 golfers registering to play. All proceeds raised will assist two local families in dire financial need.

How can you help??? You can become a sponsor, and/or let us know of a company or business that would like be a sponsor. Sponsorships range from \$100 to \$500, but any donation would be gratefully appreciated. For your \$100 sponsorship, your name, in memory of someone special or in the name of a cause important to you, will be displayed on a golfball sign and placed on one of the holes for the golfers to see.

To learn more about the SJO and sponsorships please visit: tinyurl.com/SJO2021

Sponsorship checks should be made out to *St Jude Open* and mailed to St Jude Open, PO Box 589, Plaistow, NH 03865.

**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).

SUMMER FUN AT 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.


Saint Luke the Evangelist


Religious Education 2021-22

The Parish is anticipating returning to our regular Religious Education Programs in the Fall of 2021. Currently enrolled families have been sent a mailing with Registration materials, Registration materials are available at the Church entrances.

All our programs may have to contend with a restrictions involving social distancing and the wearing of masks. Since we are always looking to protect each other, students will have to observe these practices if they continue to be mandated by our Diocese.

Students K – 8 should be registered for Religious Education on Sunday morning.

 **Beginning in the Fall we will resume our Religious Education program for students in K - 8 with Sunday dismissal at the 10:00 am Liturgy at Plaistow.** As in years past, students will be dismissed at the beginning of Liturgy for their own Liturgy of the Word downstairs in the Hall, then they will proceed to their group meetings in individual classrooms. They will return to church at the time of the recitation of the Creed for the rest of the Liturgy.

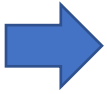
 Sacramental Preparation will also return in the Fall. Students in the second grade are eligible to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and students in the third grade are eligible to celebrate the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist.



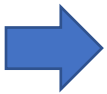
The Parish will sponsor a program ready for older students who may have “missed” Sacramental celebrations, and programs as needed for students with special needs. Contact Cathy Smith or Father Albert in the Parish Office for more information about these opportunities.



Beginning this Fall our Parish will also offer a resource session for all high school age students immediately following the 10:00 am Liturgy at Plaistow. This program is designed to offer high school age students an opportunity for learning and discussion about our Catholic tradition. In addition, these sessions may also lead to helping students who wish to receive the Sacraments of the Church, especially the Sacrament of Confirmation. Registration for the High School Resource Program is open to all high school students and can be found on the Religious Education Registration Form.



Our Parish program depends on volunteers who give of themselves and so witness by deeds of service to the Way of the Lord Jesus. We welcome adults to help the Religious Education Program as a Catechist, Aide, Hall Monitor or Substitute. All volunteers must complete a Diocesan Application, a mandated Diocesan Child Safety program and a background check.



Adults are welcome to consider any of our Adult Faith Formation programs offered in person or remotely, please consult the Bulletin or call Cathy Smith, our Pastoral Associate, for more information.

**Please contact the Parish Office at 603.382.8324
or visit stlukenh.org for more information**

Restore • Renew • Proclaim

the Hope that is Christ



The Diocese of Manchester continues to strengthen and renew faith formation in our parish, school and home school communities. Through this process we are being called anew to “Restore, Renew and Proclaim the Hope that is Christ.”

- Our Diocese has reimagined our sacrament preparation processes to include a return to celebrating the sacraments of initiation in their **restored order**: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist.

What is Lifelong Faith Formation?

Lifelong faith formation is a process of growing in the faith that begins with baptism. Immersed in the life of the Trinity, we are adopted sons and daughters of God our Father, brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ and temples of the Holy Spirit. Like all human relationships, developing and deepening our relationship with the Trinity happens gradually and over time. Consequently, lifelong faith formation provides opportunities and experiences throughout the entire life span to strengthen our relationship and knowledge of God, Jesus, and the Spirit; to enhance our understanding of Scripture, Tradition and doctrines of our faith; and to sustain us in living as disciples of Jesus Christ.

What does restored order of the Sacraments mean?

Restored order means returning the three sacraments of Christian initiation to the logical order in which they were designed to be celebrated: first Baptism, then Confirmation, then Eucharist. During the first five hundred years or so of the history of the Church, it was always the case that the sacraments of Christian initiation were celebrated in this sequence.

Why is the Diocese of Manchester changing the age of Confirmation?

By placing Confirmation at this age, the Diocese of Manchester follows the natural sequence of the sacraments of Christian initiation. In addition, by placing Confirmation **prior to the reception of First Eucharist** it makes it easier to view the Eucharist as the summit of Christian initiation.

How is the celebration of Confirmation changed in the Diocese of Manchester?

The standard age of Confirmation is third grade, and Confirmation will be celebrated at the same liturgy as First Communion. As a result, the preparation and reception of the sacraments of initiation throughout the Diocese of Manchester will be Baptism in infancy and Confirmation and Eucharist in third grade. Although not a sacrament of initiation, the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be received in the second grade.

What are the benefits of restored order?

First, it will highlight that the Eucharist, not Confirmation, is the culmination of Christian initiation. Secondly, with the reception of grace of the Holy Spirit at a younger age, it will give children greater courage and guidance in facing the increasing difficulties of living a Christian life. Finally, it will allow for more opportunities for parents to take greater responsibility in their role as the primary educators of their children.



CONFIRMATION AND EUCHARIST

What is “the Restored Order”?

An increasing number of dioceses in the United States are adopting a restored order policy for the celebration of the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist. This means, quite simply, that it becomes standard policy for Catholics who were baptized in infancy to receive Confirmation *before* First Communion, not *after*. Practically speaking, this means that the two sacraments are received at the First Communion Mass, with Confirmation being celebrated after the homily.



Why is it referred to as “the Restored Order”?

During the first 500 years or so of the history of the Roman Catholic Church (and still today in the Christian churches of the East), it was always the case that the sacraments of Christian initiation were celebrated in an invariable sequence: Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. And it was almost always the case that all three sacraments were celebrated together at the same time, even with infants. Following the lead of official documents that were issued by the Church after the Second Vatican Council, more and more dioceses are restoring this original order to the celebration of the sacraments of Christian initiation.

Isn't Confirmation a sacrament of maturity that should come after First Communion as a child grows older?

Not really. Confirmation is actually the completion of Baptism (by the full gift of the Holy Spirit). To celebrate Confirmation requires nothing more by way of age-appropriate maturity than to receive the Eucharist. Remember, there is a legitimate, parallel practice in Eastern churches of fully initiating even infants with all three sacraments. The maturity that is required for receiving any of the sacraments of Christian initiation is only what is age-appropriate. The Church expects interior dispositions of readiness, such as understanding freedom, that are realistic at any given age, nothing more.

When we are used to a different practice after more than a thousand years, why is the Church now going back to the original sequence?

Restored order is more than just a fascination with the way it used to be. In fact, there are some very significant theological and liturgical reasons for restoring the integrity of the three sacraments of Christian initiation—all celebrated in proper order, even at the same time. The RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) requires that children and adults in the catechumenate receive all three sacraments together, even if the children are younger than the age at which the Catholic children of the parish are routinely confirmed. Putting the celebration of Confirmation between Baptism and Eucharist better expresses its role as the completion of Baptism. As a matter of fact, the sacrament that is the culmination of a person's Christian initiation is the Eucharist, not Confirmation. Theologically, it is the gift of the Holy Spirit given in all its fullness at Confirmation that best prepares one to receive Eucharist, and thus to be most fully joined to the Body of Christ.

Is it wrong, then, to be Confirmed after receiving Eucharist?

Of course not. The Church has many ways of celebrating the mysteries of God's love in the sacraments. But because Rome so strongly encourages restoring the order of celebrating the sacraments of Christian initiation, don't be surprised if more and more communities restore the original sequence of the three sacraments of Christian initiation.



Bringing Home the Word +

Ascension of the Lord (B)

May 16, 2021

Sent to be Missionaries

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

The beginning of the Book of Acts presents a summary of the life of Christ and. How he called and taught the apostles in the Holy Spirit. After his resurrection, Christ kept the apostles in Jerusalem, where they prayed together with the Virgin and awaited the coming of the Holy Spirit which would give them power to witness to him beyond the city and into the outlying countries and regions, just as the Gospel reading commands.

This Spirit given to them by Christ is a spirit of mission and witness. When

Jesus was finished speaking, when his revelation had finished, he was taken to heaven. And the apostles were left standing there, looking up after him.

That looking up can be interpreted as a longing for Jesus' presence that was no longer in human form. Things had radically changed. Jesus' mission had finished, and now theirs was beginning. Their situation is the same as ours. We are sent on a mission!

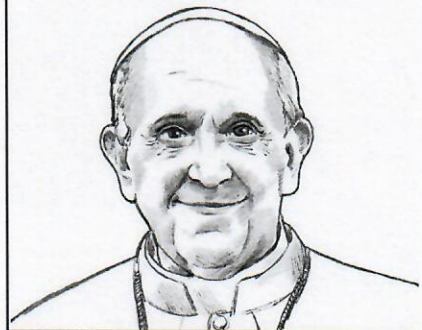
An essential element of being Christian is to understand that we are sent into the world to build Christ's kingdom. We are his missionaries, his representatives. He counts on us to go into the world and bring his message to all his beloved children just as he did—with preaching, testimony, and love. Jesus doesn't send us to be comfortable, professionally successful, and wealthy. He sends us to be missionaries! +

*Christ counts on us
to go into the world
and bring his message
to all his beloved children
just as he did.*

A Word from Pope Francis

The Ascension tells us that Jesus, although he ascended to heaven to dwell gloriously at the right hand of the Father, is still and is always among us: this is the source of our strength, our perseverance, and our joy, from the presence of Jesus among us with the strength of the Holy Spirit.

—Ascension Sunday, May 24, 2020



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- Do I live as if I am Christ's presence on earth, aware that I am his missionary?
- If Jesus were in my family, social, and professional situations, what would he do?

Sunday Readings

Acts 1:1–11

When he had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight.

Ephesians 1:17–23 or Ephesians 4:1–13 or 4:1–7, 11–13

I, then, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received, with all humility and gentleness.

Mark 16:15–20

[Jesus] said to them, "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature."

Not Right or Wrong—Just More

By Fr. Bruce Lewandowski, CSsR

When I was in the college seminary, a venerable old Redemptorist came for a visit and said, “I met the seminarians, and I am not impressed.” I heard other comments about “the seminarians” during my nine years in the seminary, but none as memorable as the one made by that aging Redemptorist concerned about the future of his beloved congregation.

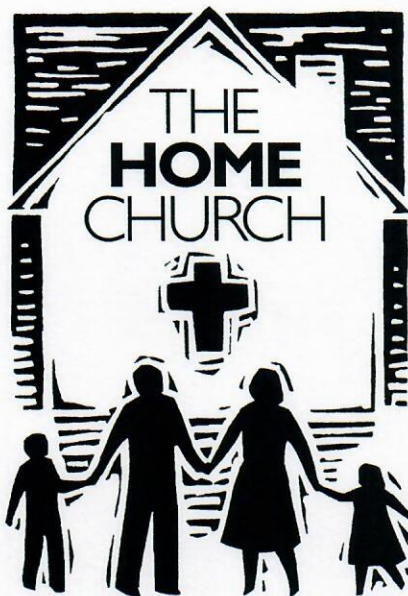
Maybe Pope Francis’ comment that some seminarians are like “little monsters” was born out of the same kind of feeling—concern for the future of the Church. Most, if not all, Catholics at some point find themselves worrying about the future of the Church. So, we look to the future leaders of the Church—seminarians—to get some indication of where the Church might be headed.

A sense of eagerness was evident in most of the men during my time in the seminary. We were eager to serve God and God’s people, to bring people closer to Christ in the Church.

I sense a different direction or emphasis in some seminarians today. Certainly, they are eager to bring people closer to Christ and the Church, but there’s something else: They feel called to reform the Church. I’ve heard them say things like, “Nothing good happened after Vatican II” and “Vatican II was a mistake.”

Maybe some *Bringing Home the Word*

Most, if not all, Catholics at some point find themselves worrying about the future of the Church.



readers feel the same way. Some of the criticism is focused on liturgical practice and the reform of the Mass, but there’s something else: the implication that there’s a right way—and a wrong way—to be Catholic.

Catholic is commonly understood to mean “universal.” *Universal* means “widely dispersed, present everywhere.”

Catholic also refers to a group of people set apart from others by their agreed-upon beliefs and practices.

I think most people, seminarians included, would agree with these two definitions and be content to stop here.

But there is still another definition: *Catholic* is how we live our faith in the world. *Catholic* means “elastic.” The Church stretches to welcome people of all kinds—and as many as possible. From the Church’s beginning, an inherent inclusivity enables saints and sinners, rich and poor, conservatives and liberals to be one in Jesus Christ. The Church by its very nature relates to everyone and everything. This is the Catholic Church described in the 1965 Vatican II document *Gaudium et Spes*, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World.

As for seminarians and the future of the Church, St. Paul gives some solid advice: “To the weak I became weak, to win over the weak. I have become all things to all, to save at least some” (1 Corinthians 9:22).

There is no right or wrong way to be Catholic. We’re all just called to be more Catholic. +

PRAYER

*Risen Lord, your death,
resurrection, and ascension
are good news for us.*

*Help me to share this message
of hope with all people.*

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

WEEKDAY READINGS

May 17–22

Monday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 19:1–8 / Jn 16:29–33


Tuesday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 20:17–27 / Jn 17:1–11a

Wednesday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 20:28–38 / Jn 17:11b–19

Thursday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 22:30; 23:6–11 / Jn 17:20–26

Friday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 25:13b–21 / Jn 21:15–19

Saturday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 28:16–20, 30–31 / Jn 21:20–25

Bringing Home
the Word 
May 16, 2021

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