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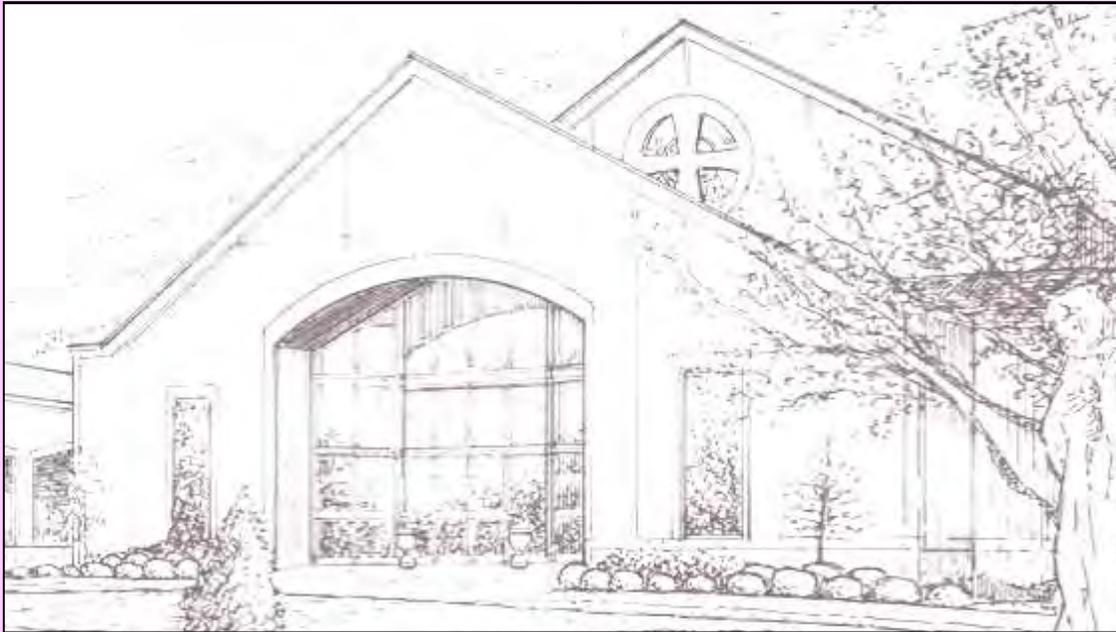


# THE ASCENT

A Quarterly Publication of Church of the Ascension



CELEBRATE THE FULL 50 DAYS OF THE EASTER SEASON



## **IN THIS ISSUE:**

<b>LETTER FROM FATHER TOM</b>	<b>PAGE 3</b>
<b>THE OCTAVE OF EASTER</b>	<b>PAGE 4</b>
<b>ENFLAME OUR HEARTS FOR THE EUCHARIST IN EASTER SEASON</b>	<b>PAGE 5</b>
<b>THE EUCHARIST: NOT MERELY A SYMBOL</b>	<b>PAGE 6</b>
<b>EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE AND CONFESSION</b>	<b>PAGE 7</b>
<b>STAY</b>	<b>PAGE 8</b>
<b>FATHERS OF ST. JOSEPH</b>	<b>PAGE 9</b>
<b>RESPECT LIFE</b>	<b>PAGE 10-11</b>
<b>DIVINE MERCY</b>	<b>PAGE 12-13</b>
<b>VOCATIONS</b>	<b>PAGE 14-15</b>
<b>THE POWER OF THE EUCHARIST</b>	<b>PAGE 16-17</b>
<b>DRAW CLOSER TO OUR LORD</b>	<b>PAGE 18-19</b>
<b>UPCOMING ADULT FAITH CLASSES</b>	<b>PAGE 20-22</b>
<b>EACH DAY OF THE EASTER SEASON</b>	<b>PAGE 23-26</b>

# EASTER GREETINGS!

BY FATHER TOM TANK



Dear Fellow Parishioners,

Each year we renew the celebration of the Paschal Mystery of Christ's death and resurrection. We recall His passion and death and celebrate His resurrection. Easter is always a beautiful time of the year with Spring springing forth and nature renewing itself. All the Easter treats do not hurt a bit as well! The easing of Covid restrictions is always welcome! Truly this is a joyful time!

The passion and death of Jesus are an historical fact. Jesus died a painful death as a common criminal on the barren hill of Calvary outside the walls of Jerusalem. This event really took place at a particular time and place.

The resurrection of Jesus three days later is also an historical event. It took place on a particular day and time in history, but Jesus' resurrection is an on-going reality transcending space and time and extending into our own time and place. Jesus is truly risen today! He is alive this day in an even greater way than when He walked this earth and suffered His passion and death.

Unfortunately too many of us approach the resurrection in the same way we do any event in history...as a past reality rather than an historical event that spiritually impacts us today. When we say that Jesus is risen from the dead, we unequivocally mean that in His risen body He lives in the glory of heaven, but is also present with us right here and now. That means that Christ is alive and well; it means He is a person whom we are called to encounter as alive and present as the person right next to us right now.

Faith is not so much belief that Jesus died and rose as it is that He is risen today and invites us into a personal encounter with Him. It is belief not just in a fact of history but in the person of Christ alive and with us today. While abiding in the glory of heaven, he also is present among us especially in His Word, His Eucharistic presence and the gift of others particularly those in need. How am I encountering Jesus today in my life? Hopefully it is as a Person who has overcome the power of death and lives in glory, a glory that He wishes to share with each of us through personal relationship.

I particularly invite you to encounter and to embrace the risen Christ in the Eucharist. It is the risen Lord Jesus who continues His act of worship at every Mass we celebrate. It is the risen Lord Jesus who comes to us personally in Holy Communion. It is the risen Lord Jesus who abides in the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle and our adoration chapel inviting each of us to personal relationship with Him.

As we celebrate the 50 days of Easter, but also throughout the whole year, we are invited to encounter the presence of the Risen Christ Jesus and to enter into an ever deeper, more intimate personal relationship with Him as our Risen Lord, our Savior, and our Brother. His Risen Presence is with us today and always. This Easter season and daily throughout our lives may we experience the living, loving Christ our Risen Lord! For Christ is truly Risen, Alleluia!

Easter Blessings!  
Father Tom

# THE OCTAVE OF EASTER

BY DEACON JOHN STANLEY

After 40 days of Lent, of holy silence of the word, on Easter we again sing ‘Alleluia,’ (in Hebrew: ‘God be praised.’). Easter is the Church’s greatest feast, not just one feast among others, but the feast of feasts, the solemnity of solemnities. Without the Resurrection, the Church would not exist. If the Resurrection had not happened, there would be no Christianity. As St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians: “If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.”

In the Christmas issue of *The Ascent* I wrote about the Octave of Christmas. Even more so than the Christmas Octave, we cannot contain our joy in limiting the celebration of Easter to a single day. The celebration of Our Lord’s Resurrection continues in the Church for eight days, called the Octave of Easter. Each day of the Octave is a solemnity, the highest ranking of liturgical feasts. At Masses during the Octave of Easter, as on Sundays, the *Gloria*, is recited or sung. And at the end of each Mass of the Octave, the double *Alleluia* is sung at the dismissal.



The idea of an Octave of a great feast has its roots in the Old Testament. There are Jewish feasts that lasted for eight days, such as the feast of Passover and the feast of Tabernacles. In the third and fourth centuries of celebrating an Easter Octave (and other Octaves) it became a fixture in the Church’s liturgy.

The Gospel readings at Masses during the Octave of Easter include passages from the Gospels that relate various appearances of the Risen Jesus. Reflecting on these Gospel texts is a wonderful way to prolong the celebration of Easter. Each day during the Octave, we proclaim in the Gospel Acclamation: *This is the day the Lord has made; let us be glad and rejoice in it.*

Canon law requires that all Catholics make a Friday sacrifice in remembrance of Jesus’ passion and death on the cross. Before Vatican II, all Catholics abstained from eating meat on all Fridays during the year. After Vatican II abstinence from meat was encouraged but not required, but something else could be chosen to offer sacrifice. The Octave of Easter is all about celebrating (except during Lent) and feasting and all days of the Octave, Easter Friday included, is a day not of fasting or sacrifice but of feasting and celebrating. It might even be a venial sin to not celebrate the days of the Easter Octave!

The Octave of Easter ends on the Second Sunday of Easter, the Sunday of Divine Mercy. In the Jubilee Year 2000, at the Mass in which he canonized the humble religious Sister Faustina Kowalska, Pope St. John Paul II declared that from then on throughout the Church the Second Sunday of Easter would also be called the *Sunday of Divine Mercy*. This is entirely appropriate since, as Blessed John Paul II reminded us, Divine Mercy is “the Easter gift that the Church receives from the risen Christ and offers to humanity...”

But the Easter *season* does not end there. The holy season of Lent lasts for 40 days. The joyous celebration of the Easter season continues for 50 days, ending on Pentecost Sunday. Let us celebrate this Easter season and beyond, because “...if Christ had not been raised....our faith is in vain”.

***This is the day the Lord has made; let us be glad and rejoice in it!***

# ENFLAME OUR HEARTS FOR THE EUCHARIST IN EASTER SEASON

BY WILLIAM O'LEARY

Happy Easter! He is Risen! Alleluia!!!

The Eucharist is a participation into the very essence of the mystery of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In an article written by Kevin Dowd, he said:



If we think the Eucharist is a memorial meal, we are right. But it is more. If we think it is nourishment for the journey, we are right. But it is more. If we think it is Christ's presence among us for all time, we are right. But it is more. If we think it is Christ's way of dwelling in us and, through us, in the world, we are right. But it is still more. If we think it is Christ's way of working through us for the salvation of the world, we are right. But it is still more. If we think it is the sacrifice that washes us free from sin, we are right. But it is still even more. If we think it is the promise of eternal life, we are right. But it is still even more than that. The Eucharist is the consummation of God's love for humanity! It is our participation in the Easter Mystery! It is already our being swept up into the heart of the Trinity, where our every desire to love and to be loved is satisfied without being satiated! Like the burning bush, we are on fire with an ecstasy that does not burn out! We forget about ourselves and we fall, and keep falling, deeper and deeper into an infinite Heart that continues to give and receive Love, revealing mysteries of Its infinite Self to us without end; and with each beautiful revelation, a deeper falling into Love. We are caught up in the dynamism of Divine Romance. We can think of nothing except our Beloved, and time ceases to exist. We are in eternity. In Communion, Love has defeated death forever! Christ is Risen!

What a profound reality that exists between the Easter Season and the Holy Eucharist!



### **How Do I Enflame my Heart for the Eucharist in this Easter Season?**

Live like those who gave testimony in the Scriptures: The two disciples on the Road to Emmaus recognized the Risen Lord not when He literally walked with them, but "they recognized Him in the breaking of the bread" (Luke 24:35), the Holy Eucharist. Or Mary Magdalene who on Easter morning met the Risen Jesus (John 20:16) in the flesh just as we who receive Jesus actually encounter Him in the Holy Eucharist. There is no other time we encounter Him more completely than when we receive Jesus in Holy Communion. Allow your heart to be enflamed each time you receive our Eucharistic Lord.

### **How Do I Live More Fully Who I'm Becoming this Easter?**

It is the Eucharist that gives us the power, strength, joy and grace to live in our flesh Him whom we have received in the flesh at Mass. Our mission is to go out and proclaim Christ with our words and deeds. Our mission is to bring Jesus who we have received to the world around us and to show through our very lives the hope we have in Him. This is the reality of a Eucharistic Amazement that we can possess and the world longs for. Ephesians 3:20 says: "Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine". Let us trust that God will do far more than we can ask or imagine so long as we intentionally live our lives in conformity to the will of God and be transformed by His grace in the Holy Eucharist.



# THE EUCHARIST: NOT MERELY A SYMBOL

BY DEACON KEN BILLINGER



Many of our Protestant brothers and sisters participate in a communion as part of their Sunday service. They receive a small cup of grape juice and a piece of bread to consume. What they are experiencing is simply a *symbolic* communion. Many faiths see this symbolism as a reminder of the bread and wine that Jesus shared with so many.

We as Catholics know it is something much deeper. At the sacrifice on the altar when the priest says the words of consecration during the Eucharistic prayer, it truly means something! Transubstantiation occurs when the priest says, “This is my body, which will be given up for you”, then elevates the Body of Christ. Although the appearance of the wafer and the wine are the same, the priest calls down the Holy Spirit so that the gifts of bread and wine truly do become the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ. After all, the Eucharist is the Source and Summit of our faith!

So how do we prepare ourselves to receive Jesus in the Eucharist? We must be in a state of grace, hence, we must prepare to receive the Body of Christ in a most worthy manner. A priest once stated in his homily that we should be like Mary, even if only for a few moments. Mary is the unstained Ark of the New Covenant, she carried Jesus after being overshadowed by the Holy Spirit until his birth in Bethlehem. When we approach the altar to receive Christ, are we in a state of grace, prepared to be that Ark of the New Covenant, even if only for a few moments? When you receive the consecrated host, you are the living tabernacle. Are you worthy?

In John’s gospel, Jesus sees many people turn away because they cannot believe he is telling them to eat his flesh and drink his blood. But Jesus never apologizes for his words, he never says, “I am speaking only symbolically.” Jesus continues to speak of the importance of eating his flesh in order to have eternal life. It also begs the question as to why Paul urges the Church at Corinth not to partake unworthily if it is only a symbol. Paul states, “Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will have to answer for the body and the blood of the Lord. A person should examine himself, and so eat the bread and drink the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgement on himself.” (1Corinthians 11:27)

In its wisdom, the Church offers us the opportunity to purify our souls through the sacrament of Reconciliation (confession). Confession provides the opportunity for us to prepare ourselves to receive our Lord in the Eucharist. It is perhaps, the best way for us to prepare ourselves to partake in the reception of Jesus’ Body and Blood at the altar. Reconciliation is a beautiful sacrament, which can naturally lead us to receiving the Eucharist in a complete state of grace.

Every time we attend the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, we should be encouraged to first prepare ourselves to receive Christ in Holy Communion. We should always approach the altar with wonder and anticipation, making certain that we are ready to receive our Risen Lord with complete and total reverence (Am I dressed appropriately to receive Jesus? Is my heart and soul disposed properly to receive?). Let us always treasure the amazing gift of the Eucharist!

# EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE AND CONFESSION

BY DEACON KRIS KUCKELMAN

We all want to be holy and allow our relationship with God to be strengthened. For centuries, two essential tools for this goal have been the daily examination of conscience and frequent confession.

Each day we should examine the events of the day when we acted with virtue and those occurrences when we fell short by sin or voluntary imperfection. This can be done at the end of the day or early the next day. It only takes a few minutes. This examination of conscience should always be done in silence so that there are fewer external distractions. We should first recognize God's presence so that the examination is a dialogue with God. For this reason, the examination can naturally become part of the daily prayer routine. For our virtuous acts, we should express gratitude to God because the origin of those is the unmerited gift of grace. More critically, we should discern why we sinned. Typically, this allows us to identify those circumstances that make us susceptible to sin and to identify our specific weaknesses that cause us to sin. By doing this, we can be on our toes when those circumstances occur in the future and to work on the virtues opposing our specific weaknesses. When we have trouble identifying our sins, sometimes it is helpful to think of the times during the day that we were not at peace because these can be instances when we have sinned. There are many guides for examining our conscience on the internet. A few such guides can be found at [usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments-and-sacramentals](http://usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments-and-sacramentals).

Confession is perhaps the most underappreciated sacrament. It is called a sacrament of healing because it heals our relationship with God. Frequent confession increases our self knowledge, allows our humility to grow, assists in correcting bad habits, aids in resisting spiritual neglect and tepidity, purifies our conscience, strengthens our will, helps us attain self-control, and increases grace. For most of us, confessing our sins monthly would be a healthy practice. Like virtually all elements of our spiritual journey, the more we put into our confession, the more we will receive. We should always make a list of our sins beforehand and take the list into the confession. This list should be made deliberately and in the silence. If we have developed a habit of the daily examination of conscience, this list can be a summary of what we have discerned on a daily basis. When we make a list and a heartfelt confession, we benefit emotionally and spiritually. Nobody relishes the idea of going to confession because it bruises our ego to acknowledge our sins to another person. However, that bruising of our ego helps us develop humility and is emotionally and spiritually therapeutic. This makes sense because Jesus, who is infinitely merciful, established the sacrament to be administered by his priests (Matt 18:18; John 20:23). If it has been a long time since your last confession, please accept this free gift of reconciliation offered by Jesus.



“I know the answer!”

After 17 years of mothering, these were the words that escaped my lips in a conversation with a dear friend. We were discussing a trip our teenage sons were about to take together the upcoming weekend. We were nervous. We were unsure what to expect. We were afraid to let go. That’s when suddenly it hit me and I blurted out, “I know the answer! I know what this is all about! These children are making US holy!”

All the praying and fasting and sacrificing I had been doing and was planning to continue throughout the weekend wasn’t for my son and his friend. It was, but it wasn’t.

All of it was making ME more holy. It was bringing ME closer to my Father. It was helping ME to trust Him, even though I didn’t want and was afraid to. It was bringing ME closer to Heaven.

The same could be said of our Lenten journey. What a forty days it has been! All of this praying. All of this giving. All of this sacrificing. Perhaps it wasn’t solely for those we have been praying, giving, and sacrificing for. Perhaps it has been for us too. For our own growth in holiness. SO many times throughout this Lent, this pandemic, this season of mothering, I have found myself defeated and ready to throw in the towel. I’ve said too many times to count, “I’m done” and “I’m over this.”

Every single time I find myself wallowing, overwhelmed, and exhausted I am immediately reminded of the words a friend spoke to me about a year ago, just as we all found ourselves in a lockdown. She said, “In these times when we feel engulfed and uttering, “I’m done” or “I’m over this,” think of Mary. Surely, if there is anyone who could have said, ‘This is too much,’ it was her.”

Mary watched her Son when He was arrested. She witnessed hatred spewed at Him. She was there as He was wrongly convicted; she was there when He was unjustly beaten; she was there when He was cruelly hung on a cross to die the most painful and mortifying death ever conceived.

But, she didn’t leave. Never once did she declare, “I’m done.” She stayed.

We too are called to stay. To continue with the hard. Not only that, Mary shows us how to trust, love, and have faith through it! Imagine how glorious it was for her on that first Easter morning! All the tears, agony, fear, and unbearable were made sweet as her Son was Resurrected. If she would have “thrown in the towel” when things were too heavy to bear, the Glory would not have been as wonderful or profound.

We’ve made it through our Lenten journey. Those forty hard days are behind us. We rejoice in the sweetness and Glory of Jesus rising from the dead! Alleluia!

Of course, our journey in motherhood is not over. The difficult and trying times are still upon us- no matter what season of motherhood you find yourself in. Each season brings different challenges, but even though they look different, they are all challenges.

Our journey through this pandemic isn’t over. Surely, we’re getting closer every day to being through, but we’re still in it. Still longing for the light at the end of the tunnel when life resumes as “normal”.

As our journey continues, let us remember our Perfect Mother’s example. Let her teach us to stay. So that when the “Resurrections” we’re longing for come, we’ll fully experience the sweetness and look back at these heavy times able to exclaim, “I know the answer! These were the times that made me holy!”



# FATHERS OF ST. JOSEPH

BY GORDON LAVILLE

Think for a moment of St. Joseph, husband of Mary the mother of God, earthly father of Jesus, Son of the Father. He had a vocation, and he knew what it was. From the time he heard his calling he risked embarrassment, poverty, and death. And he did this for the sake of protecting and sustaining the only Son of the Father and His mother. Safe to say, he was all in. There are no recorded words of those spoken by Joseph. Pretty safe to assume the man did speak, but also a pretty good assumption that if he ever took issue with his calling, we would know about it. Tradition has delivered St. Joseph to us as a man silent and humble. We know him as a man who completely gave himself to the Holy Family. That would mean that when there were things he didn't feel like doing, but knew they were necessary, he did them without complaining, and without hesitation. When the angel told him to flee to Egypt with his young family, he didn't hesitate to consider the cost of losing his belongings or the risk of being robbed along the way. He just went.

Could there have been any selfish motive for such obedience? Was there a cash bonus involved? Hardly. Joseph would spend the rest of his life as a hard-working tekton (craftsman). He would use the craft to support his family, and to teach his Son how to make an honest living. There were no earthly accolades. Tradition holds that he died with Mary and Jesus at his side.



If you are a husband and father, have you considered that this is your vocation? Have you considered that God endows you with your vocation at Baptism, and that this is the most important role you'll have in your time on Earth? If that's so, wouldn't it be a good idea to do the best dang job of it you can? Kind of like your life depended on it? And like the lives of your wife and children depend on it? If husbands and dads were not necessary, would God have bothered to call Joseph to this vocation? Could Mary have managed just fine on her own?

Truth be told, our culture wants you to believe such lies. Can you find a TV show that depicts fathers as honorable, revered, respected, and valued? In recent decades, hardly. Without getting into how we arrived where we are, I'd rather talk about how we get to where God is calling us to be. He's calling us to be in a place that transcends the culture, and he gave us the most perfect role model in one St. Joseph. There is a way, and it's not the easy route. But hey, "Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few." Matt 7:13-14

Good news! There are some others like you who are working to get through that narrow gate! We meet weekly, and St. Joseph is our role model! Our discussion isn't random, because a guy named Devin Schadt has created a program called Fathers of St. Joseph, and we actually use it! But it's not all academic either! We enjoy fellowship, whiskey, and hors d'oeuvres as we dig into the challenges that will make us better husbands and fathers. Can't say we're stuffy, although we often leave full. :) And we work to fill each other up with the brotherly encouragement needed to change our lives for the better. Seriously, this is one of the most challenging things I've done, and it's one of the things I most look forward to in my week. Come be a part. Call me, Gordon, at 913-553-8290, or get in touch with Phil Hernandez. He's kind of the ring leader. He's at [phernandez@trinitykc.com](mailto:phernandez@trinitykc.com). NO DUES! NO COMMITMENT (at least not to us anyway)! Sure, guys contribute food and drink from time to time, but if you can't, that's OK too! Phil says he's got you covered!



## TRUST: It's Become My Word of the Year for 2021

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by Debra Niesen, Archdiocesan Consultant for Pro-Life Office

For a few years now, my daughter and I have been choosing a “word of the year” to inspire and guide our actions.

After prayer and reflection, it became clear that my 2021 word needed to be “Trust.” Just a few weeks into 2021, I can already see why.

As we look at 2020 through a pro-life lens, there are clear highs and lows.

We witnessed our country take unprecedented measures to protect and save lives from Covid-19. The collective protection and concern for our elderly and most vulnerable are incredible pro-life efforts!

In addition, national conversations and demonstrations on racism and social justice elevated awareness of the dignity of the human person and the evil of violence.

In spite of this good, we saw increased isolation, suicides and violence. And, the destruction of unborn lives raged on, and possibly increased. Abortion providers were deemed “essential” to end life, not protect it.

The abortion industry continued its attack on the dignity of women’s lives by misleading or coercing them into thinking abortion was not only their only choice, but the responsible thing to do in times like these.

Seventy-three percent of post-abortive women say they felt pressured — from a person, the abortion provider or a situation — to abort their child.

This year too many women suffered the trauma of an at-home chemical abortion alone, and, if they don’t know about God’s mercy, may suffer a lifetime of pain.

As people of life, we see the hypocrisy that many refuse to see — taking extreme actions to elevate and save some lives, while tolerating or ignoring the destruction of others.

We mourn the over 375,000 lives lost to Covid-19 and the loss of over 1,000,000 preborn Americans.

Further, we prepare for the consequences of electing the most pro-abortion administration in our history.

This reality can lead to despair if we let it. Instead, we have an opportunity to trust. We trust that these trying and confusing times are part of God's much greater plan. We know that God can and will bring good out of difficult situations; we simply need to trust and be open to his divine plan.

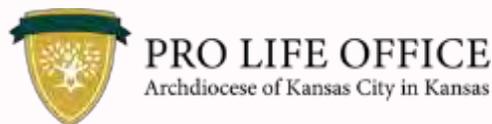
So we continue on. We will pray and stand for the legal protection of unborn children and the healing of all who have been affected by abortion.

We will pass the Kansas "Value Them Both" amendment. We will walk with mothers in need to show that a child never has to die to solve a problem.

The Holy Family provides us with the ultimate example of trust, and the ultimate pro-life story. Faced with an "unplanned pregnancy," Mary no doubt was overwhelmed and frightened. Yet she said "yes." Then, she went in haste to support another expectant mother, Elizabeth.

Joseph also faced a difficult situation in learning his betrothed was pregnant. He trusted the message of an angel and stayed to protect his wife and become the foster father of Jesus.

Their trust resulted in the greatest blessing to the world.



Niesen, Debra. "Trust: It's Become My Word of the Year for 2021."  
The Leaven, 22, January 2021

# DIVINE MERCY

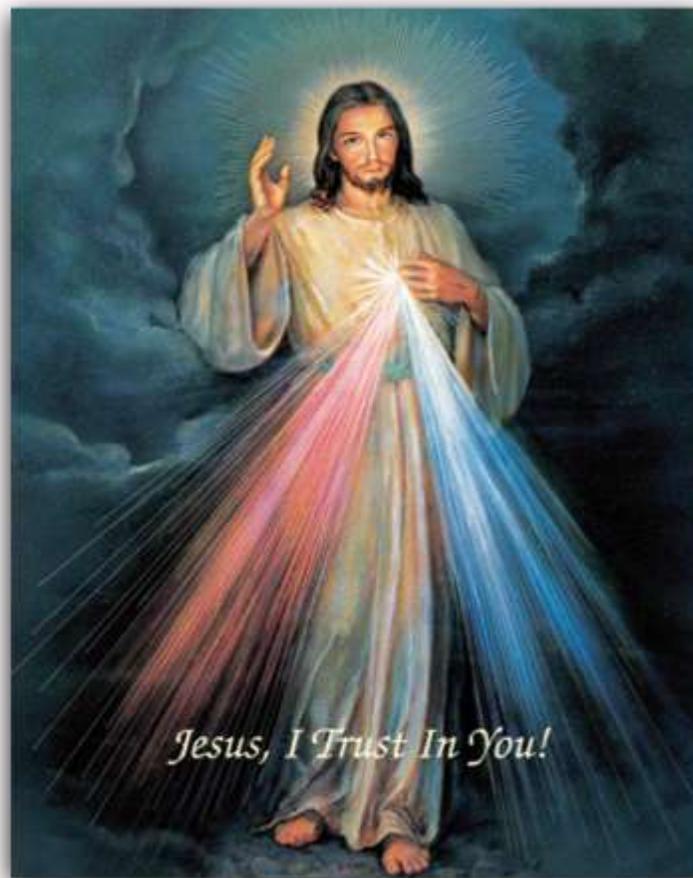
BY AN ASCENSION PARISHIONER

On April 30, 2000, St. John Paul II canonized St. Faustina in what he was widely reported as saying was “the happiest day of my life.” It was also on this day, the Sunday after Easter, that Pope John Paul II instituted the Feast of Divine Mercy, which Jesus had asked for in his messages to Sister Faustina.

“Today my joy is truly great in presenting the life and witness of Sr. Faustina Kowalska to the whole Church as a gift of God for our time. By divine Providence, the life of this humble daughter of Poland was completely linked with the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century...it was between the First and Second World Wars that Christ entrusted his message of Mercy to her,” the Pope said in his homily that day.

St. Maria Faustina Kowalska lived just 33 years in Poland in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Through her, our Lord Jesus communicates to the world the great message of God’s mercy and reveals the pattern of Christian perfection based on trust in God and on the attitude of mercy toward one’s neighbors.

St. Faustina’s Diary has been called the second most important book in the world, after The Bible. This Diary contains the actual words of Jesus spoken to St. Faustina regarding His Mercy and the new devotion to His Divine Mercy, which He willed to be established in His Church. Jesus constantly refers to St. Faustina as the ‘secretary’ of His Mercy. It is clear that He greatly desired that she write as much as possible about His Mercy, so that every soul would have access to His Words and therefore, the limitless bounds of His Mercy.



When I first learned of The Message of Divine Mercy, I regarded this as a devotion only for the nine days leading up to the Feast of Divine Mercy each year, and as a prayer to be prayed for those near death or those who had just passed. That the Mercy that God spoke of through St. Faustina was really in respect to the end of one's life here on earth.

It has only been through coming to know more of The Diary and Jesus' Words to St. Faustina, that I have realized the power of Divine Mercy for each day of our lives here on earth – for each moment.

Throughout the Diary, Jesus repeatedly calls St. Faustina “My child” and “My daughter”, encouraging her, over and over to speak to Him, to share each moment of her life with Him. (Jesus' words to St. Faustina are bolded in The Diary.) **“You will not be alone, because I am with you always and everywhere. Near to My Heart, fear nothing. Know that My Eyes follow every move of your heart with great attention. Speak to Me about everything in a completely simple and human way; by this you will give Me great joy. Know, My daughter, that the simpler your speech is, the more you attract Me to yourself. And now, be at peace close to My Heart.”** (Diary, 797) Jesus asked St. Faustina to record His Words to her. Thus, we are called to hear Jesus speaking to us in the bolded words of The Diary. He calls us to fear nothing. To know that His Eyes follow each move of our hearts, and He greatly desires for each one of us to speak to Him, simply, about anything and everything that tempts us, that weighs us down.

**“My child, we should talk in more detail about the things that lie in your heart. Let us talk confidentially and frankly, as two hearts that love one another do.”** (Diary, 1489) The plea is from Jesus to each one of us. The abundance of His Messages to us, through St. Faustina, is stunning.

Spending time with Our Lord in The Diary, I cannot help but hear Him speaking directly to me, challenging me. **“You see, My child, what you are of yourself. The cause of your falls is that you rely too much upon yourself, and too little on Me.”** (Diary, 1488). How can He know me so well, and through the written records of His Secretary - a Sister living 100 years ago?

**“My child, know that the greatest obstacles to holiness are discouragement and an exaggerated anxiety. These will deprive you of the ability to practice virtue. All temptations united together ought not disturb your interior peace, not even momentarily. Sensitiveness and discouragement are the fruits of self-love. You should not become discouraged, but strive to make My Love reign in place of your self-love.”** (Diary 1488)

Jesus' revelations to St. Faustina are not only a Call to each one of us to trust and immerse ourselves in His Ocean of Mercy, they are a Call to surrender each moment of our life here on earth to Him and walk with Him. This is The Way to the Peace that He desires for each one of us. How blessed we are to be continually offered His Ocean of Merciful Love. All we need to do is lean into Him and surrender.

**“My child, make the resolution never to rely on people. Entrust yourself completely to My will saying, ‘Not as I want, but according to Your Will, O God, let it be done unto me.’ ”** (Diary, 1487)

## Jesus, I trust in You!

The following vocation story was delivered to us by Fr. Angelus Montgomery, CFR. Fr. Angelus's mother, LuAnne Montgomery, is the School Counselor at Ascension Catholic School. Fr. Innocent Montgomery, another son of Dick and LuAnne Montgomery, is also a friar with the CFR's. We hope to get his story soon.

Dear Friends  
May the Lord give you His peace!

Every time I share about my vocation story, I start a bit differently. In this moment, I would like to use a beautiful quote from Pope Francis about holiness. In his Apostolic Exhortation, "Rejoice and be Glad" he writes, "I like to contemplate the holiness present in the patience of God's people: in those parents who raise their children with immense love, in those men and women who work hard to support their families, in the sick, in elderly religious who never lose their smile. In their daily perseverance I see the holiness of the Church militant. Very often it is a holiness found in our next-door neighbors, those who, living in our midst, reflect God's presence. We might call them "the middle class of holiness."



This "middle class holiness" is very much at the heart of my story. My experience of God and the Church growing up was quite simple and ordinary. Going to Sunday Mass, attending Catholic schools, and youth group were very much commonplace for my siblings and me. It is in these places that we encountered the "middle class" of the Church, ordinary men and women who revealed to us the "everyday" presence of God's goodness. In our parents, teachers, coaches, friends, priests and the sisters who taught in school, we became beautifully aware of how God works in different ways and uses the gift of

each person to build up His Kingdom. Now as a priest and a religious in final vows, I look back with so much gratitude for the people who showed me the gentle and kind face of God along the way.



It is the “middle class” of the Church that gave me courage to say yes to God in my vocation journey. It was my parents who always provided their good example, strong work ethic, and a strong foundation of what is important in life. It was my siblings who offered healthy competition and faithful friendship. It was our youth minister and priests and sisters along the way who introduced us to the presence of Jesus alive in the scriptures and in the sacraments. It was also my high school music teacher who encouraged me to go to a Catholic College and stretch my heart away from home. In college my spiritual director was an

encouraging presence and when I needed a little nudge to start discerning the seminary. In all of these faces, it was God who was revealing himself and loving me along the way. It was these faces that gave me the courage to be “holy” and say yes to God in my vocation.

That brings me to St. Francis. He was a rich young man, but it was in the simple and poor that God called him and spoke to him. It was in the leper that God spoke boldly and loudly to come and follow Him. From that moment on his life changed. It wasn't about chasing dreams and seeking worldly success but about encountering God everywhere and in everyone. This is the grace of St. Francis and what it means to be Franciscan. And this grace was in my heart as I kept following the Lord on my vocational journey.

Now living in New York City, I am at home with God's presence in faces that continue to reveal his love to me. There is not a moment that goes by that I am not grateful for all the faces along the way that have loved and encouraged me in my “yes” to God and his Church.



# THE POWER OF THE EUCHARIST

BY JIM MCGILLIVARY

Like many in our parish I participated in the Christ Renews His Parish program. When it came time to discern speakers for various testimonial talks, my fellow Christ Renews brothers felt I was best suited to speak on the topic of Eucharist. At the time I felt unworthy of the task and wondered what I could bring to this most holy of topics that would be worthy of sharing. I prayed and reflected over the next few days. It was during this time the Holy Spirit enlightened me as to several extraordinary experiences I could share.

All these experiences occurred immediately after receiving Holy Communion. I bring these stories with the hope of instilling belief, wonder and thanksgiving for the incredible gift Our Lord has given us in the Eucharist. Praise to the Holy Spirit for His guidance in what I am about to share.



**Sorrow for Sin:** I had the chance to go on a pilgrimage to Medjugorje, a small village in Bosnia – Herzegovina, where the Blessed Mother has been appearing and giving messages to the world for nearly 40 years. (*The Catholic Church has not officially approved the apparitions occurring at Medjugorje as it has at Fatima and Lourdes.*) It was in Medjugorje I had my first extraordinary experience with the Eucharist. Our pilgrimage group was going to Mass daily. After receiving Communion one day, I was in deep, focused prayer to Our Lord when I experienced a profound sense of sorrow for the sins of my life. I began to weep and tremble, feeling such shame and sorrow for all that I had done wrong in my life. But then I felt an ocean of mercy washing over me. I left the local church that day knowing that the Lord both loved and had forgiven me.

**Ecstasy Upon Receiving Holy Communion:** Years later, I was at Mass in the Cathedral of Christ the King in Atlanta where I lived. I had just gone to Holy Communion and was in deep prayer giving thanks and praise to the Lord when I felt my heart fill with such joy, I thought it was literally going to explode. It was an ecstasy I had never felt before. The experience was and remains indescribable. I have never had that experience again and did not even know what to think of it until I read about it in the book “*Through the Eyes of Jesus*,” dictated to Alan Ames by Our Lord where Jesus gave Peter, the apostle, the same gift. (Alan an internationally known healer / visionary / evangelist held a healing service at Ascension in 2016.) I thank Jesus for this gift.

**Good Friday and the Death of Jesus:** My family and I were attending Good Friday services. We had venerated the cross and then participated in Holy Communion. I returned to my pew and was engaging in a visualization prayer technique I had been taught by Alan Ames that has allowed me to experience Our Lord’s presence more fully. After closing my eyes, I almost immediately experienced our crucified Lord lifted off the cross and His broken, bloodied body laid in my lap. As I held Our Lord and gazed at His horrendous wounds, tears flowed like rain knowing how my sins had contributed to His suffering and death. The experience was akin to your parent or child placed in your arms just after they died. My anguish was real. You may recall that the first sorrowful mystery of the rosary is “Agony in the Garden” and the fruit of its mystery is sorrow for sin. I tasted the fruit of this mystery that day – it is a bitter fruit.

**Gift of Tears:** There are times after receiving Holy Communion, I am overwhelmed with feelings of unworthiness and thankfulness for His Presence. It is common at such times for tears to stream down my face. It occurs in moments of extreme closeness with my Lord. I only recently learned that this is called the Gift of Tears. I thank God for this gift.

I share these experiences so all may know and believe in the True Presence of Our Lord in the Eucharist and the opportunity this sacrament presents to draw closer to Him and experience His love. To quote our former Associate Pastor, Fr. Nathan Haverland: “If Jesus can turn water into wine, walk on water, calm storms, cure the sick, raise the dead, and even create the entire universe out of nothing, turning the simple elements of bread and wine into His Body and Blood is not in any way beyond His power.”

Please see the Visualization prayer technique that follows on the next two pages to learn how you may deepen and enrich your own Eucharistic experience.

## DRAW CLOSER TO OUR LORD

### THE VISUALIZATION PRAYER TECHNIQUE

Select a favorite picture of Jesus Christ that you wish to picture in your mind. Choose a favorite setting in which you desire to picture a meeting with Our Lord. We encourage somewhere calm, peaceful, beautiful, and free of distractions. It may be inside or outside. A sandy beach or a meadow are settings you may find suitable. Maybe it is a place where Jesus walked, for example around the Sea of Galilee.



*Pastoral view overlooking the Sea of Galilee*

When you come back from Holy Communion - kneel and close your eyes. Closing your eyes helps you see the images in your mind more clearly. Put your head in your hands and cover your eyes if that helps to prevent distractions. Begin with a deep breath – first breathe in and then slowly let it out.

With your eyes closed, picture in your mind that calm, peaceful and beautiful place where you want to be with Our Lord. You are alone. It is sunny and warm – the temperature is exactly right; maybe there is a slight breeze stirring the air; you hear birds singing.

Now you see someone approaching you at a distance; enough of a distance that you cannot yet make out their face. The person appears to be wearing an all-white flowing robe. As they get closer, you recognize it is Jesus.

You are excited – you have been waiting so long to see him and embrace him. You start walking to him, then you break into a run. You are smiling and laughing - you are so excited. You see his face clearly now – He looks just like your favorite picture of Him. He is smiling, holding his arms outstretched towards you. You rush into His arms and wrap your arms around him. He folds his arms around you and hugs you. You instantly feel at peace and joyful – all your worries are gone, nothing else matters; you cannot think of anything but being in His arms and feeling His presence. He says he has been waiting for you.

You tell him how much you love Him and how you always want to be with Him and ask Him for the help you need in being the person He wants you to be. You hear Him say ‘Yes, He loves you too’ and He will help you in being a good servant. You feel him rest his head against yours.

You hold on to this moment staying in His arms – resting in His presence and enjoying being with him. He says, “Follow me” and he takes your hand and begins walking, holding your hand. You just walk with him – no words are spoken, but you still feel that same peace and joy from being in His presence. Then He turns to you and says, “I must go for now but know that I will always be with you and I will see you soon”. And then He is gone.

What you think, say or picture in your mind is ultimately your decision. The above can be changed to make it more meaningful for you. Your encounter with the Lord can be as long or short as you desire. It is your own personal encounter with the Lord so feel free to customize it towards your preferences.

After undertaking the Visualization prayer technique, questions you may want to consider include:

- Did you feel like you were there in that special place when you met Jesus?
- Did you see Jesus’ face in your mind’s eye?
- Did you feel His presence?
- Did you feel a sense of peace and happiness?
- Did Our Lord tell or show you anything?

Practice will improve results. It is a proven method of prayer leading to a deeper or more rewarding spiritual life. An image I use in the Visualization prayer technique is below but as previously cited, use your favorite images.



# APRIL 2021 CLASSES

## ADULT CONFIRMATION CLASS

*Are you an active, practicing Catholic who has received Baptism and First Holy Communion but has never been Confirmed? We will be offering an Adult Confirmation class this spring. This is open to any individual from juniors in high school on up. Call Liz Willman, Fr. Tom or Fr. Viet in the parish office to set up your appointment by April 12.*

**4 Week Course**  
**Sundays 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM**  
**Dates: April 18, April 25, May 2, May 16**  
**St. Mark Room**  
**Facilitated by Kim Sutton**  
**No Cost**



## LECTIO MARK

*This is Year B in the Church, and the Gospel of Mark will be read at the Sunday Masses between the seasons of Easter and Advent. So, what better time to immerse yourself in this action-packed Gospel that offers St. Peter's account of Christ's life and teachings? We will be combining the insights of Tim Gray on video and the masterful artistry of the Augustine Institute, with small and large group discussion-Bible study at its best! Come join us!*

*Going to be busy this summer? Not a problem—You are invited to come as your schedule allows because each week stands on its own.*

**Multi-Week Course (each week stands on its own)**  
**Sundays 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM**  
**Dates: April 25 - August 22**  
**St. Mark Room**  
**Facilitated by Joyce Grashoff**  
**Optional Workbook: \$9**



## REGISTRATION FORM (due April 12)

**REGISTER ONLINE at [www.kcascension.org](http://www.kcascension.org) or return this registration form to the box in the gathering space or parish office.** Please make check payable to: Church of the Ascension.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **If couple attending class, Spouse:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Total # Registering

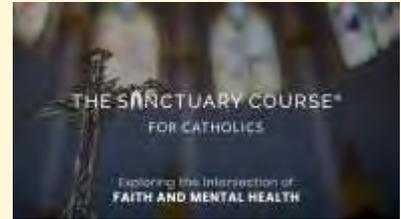
Adult Confirmation Class	Sundays, 1:00 PM	_____	<b># Workbooks for \$9 each (optional)</b>
Lectio Mark	Sundays, 9:30 AM	_____	

# MAY 2021 CLASSES

## SANCTUARY COURSE FOR CATHOLICS

*One in four people will be affected by a mental health problem at some point in their lives, yet the stigma surrounding mental illness silences many and prevents faith communities from responding compassionately and effectively. This eight-session course—designed for use in small groups—explores the realities of mental health and illness, as well as the vital need for faith-based community conversations about these topics. The sessions are accompanied by compelling films that feature the stories of Catholics living with mental health challenges, along with the insights of archbishops, theologians, and psychologists.*

**8 Week Course**  
**Wednesdays 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM**  
**Dates: May 12 - June 30**  
**St. Mark room**  
**Facilitated by Kim Sutton**  
**Optional Cost of Materials: \$5**



## INTRODUCTION TO THE CATECHISM

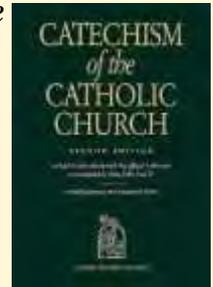
*Come learn how the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) is organized and how EASY it is to use. Learn not only what the Catholic Church teaches, but also connect that teaching with scripture and the writings of the earliest Christians. We will briefly cover:*

- \* divine revelation and how we got the bible
- \* sacraments
- \* how to tell if something is morally good (or not)
- \* the seven petitions in the Our Father

Please bring your own bible and catechism so you can follow along and make notes!

**Single Session:** Pick the date best for you!  
**Tuesday, May 18 7:00 PM - 8:15 PM**  
**Thursday, May 20 10:00 AM - 11:15 AM**  
**Thursday, May 27 7:00 PM - 8:15 PM**

**St. Mark room**  
**Facilitated by Greg Werkowitch**  
**No Cost**



## REGISTRATION FORM (due May 3)

**REGISTER ONLINE at [www.kcascension.org](http://www.kcascension.org) or return this registration form to the box in the gathering space or parish office.** Please make check payable to: Church of the Ascension.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **If couple attending class, Spouse:** \_\_\_\_\_

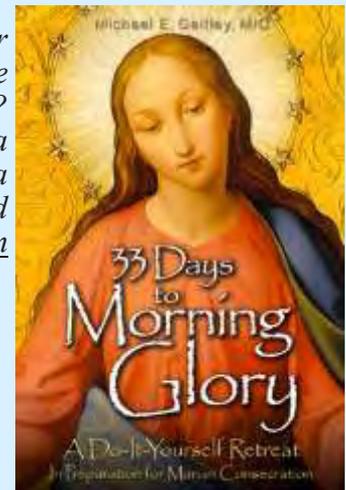
**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

		<b>Total # Registering</b>	<b># Books for \$5 each (optional)</b>
Sanctuary Course	Wednesdays, 5:30pm	_____	_____
Catechism Introduction	Tuesday, May 18, 7:00pm	_____	
Catechism Introduction	Thursday, May 20, 10:00am	_____	
Catechism Introduction	Thursday, May 27, 7:00pm	_____	

# UPCOMING CLASS IN JULY 2021

## 33 DAYS TO MORNING GLORY

*Want to grow in holiness, but too busy? Want to transform your work, your marriage, your family, and your life, but don't have time? Looking for the quickest, surest, and easiest way to holiness, but don't know where to begin? In our hectic day and time, Blessed John Paul II and Blessed Mother Teresa knew that the quickest way to be transformed into a saint is through a relationship with Our Blessed Mother, Mary. Mary leads us to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Starting with the book 33 Days to Morning Glory: A Retreat in Preparation for Marian Consecration, you can begin this journey.*



### 6 Week Course

**Tuesdays 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM**

**Start Date: July 6, 2021**

**Location: St. Mark Room**

**Facilitator: Dick Kane**

**Cost of Materials: \$15.00**

**OR**

**Tuesday 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM**

**Start Date: July 6, 2021**

**Location: St. Mark Room**

**Facilitator: Dick Kane**

**Cost of Materials: \$15.00**

REGISTRATION COMING SOON

## FORMED

Learn and enjoy your faith at home and on the go, from any device. Our parish is pleased to offer this free resource to our parishioners.

Dozens of new features - all to help you enjoy the best in Catholic content

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2. Enter your parish zip code or name to select your parish
3. Enter your name and email

Visit [FORMED.org](https://www.formed.org) or search for "Formed" on your favorite app store

# TURN YOUR FAMILY INTO...



## Easter-Egg-Heads

EACH DAY OF THE EASTER SEASON, YOU ARE INVITED TO CRACK OPEN AN EGG OF SCRIPTURE (A SHORT EGG-CERPT TAKEN FROM THE DAILY READINGS) AND READ IT ALOUD WITH YOUR FAMILY. CONSIDER AND SHARE RESPONSES TO THE DAILY QUESTIONS. BE AMAZED AS YOUR ENTIRE FAMILY IS TRANSFORMED INTO EASTER-EGG-HEADS!

### SUNDAY, APRIL 4<sup>TH</sup>

*Easter Sunday*

*If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above.*

—Col 3:1

What is something from “above” that you would like to seek during this Easter season?

### MONDAY, APRIL 5<sup>TH</sup>

*They went away quickly from the tomb, fearful yet overjoyed, and ran to announce the news to his disciples.*

—Mt 28:8

Why do you think that the two women felt “fearful yet overjoyed”? Have you ever felt fearful yet overjoyed? When?

### TUESDAY, APRIL 6<sup>TH</sup>

*The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.*

—Ps 33:5b

What is one “goodness of the Lord” (a simple, every-day blessing) for which you would like to be more mindful of appreciating this Easter season?

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 7<sup>TH</sup>

*I have neither silver nor gold, but what I do have I give you: in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean, rise and walk.*

—Act 3:6

In what way are you being invited to “rise and walk” during this Easter season?

### THURSDAY, APRIL 8<sup>TH</sup>

*Why do questions arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet. Touch me and see.*

—Lk 24:39a

Why does Jesus answer His disciples' questioning hearts with evidence of his humanity and suffering — the scars on his hands and feet?

THESE PAGES ARE PUUUR-FORATED SO THAT YOU CAN EASILY REMOVE THEM FOR ONGOING ACCESS.



AT LEAST IT WASN'T ANOTHER EGG PUN.

### FRIDAY, APRIL 9<sup>TH</sup>

*The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.*

—Ps 118:22

What is a cornerstone? (hint: you may want to google this!) What does it mean to make Christ the cornerstone of your life?

### SATURDAY, APRIL 10<sup>TH</sup>

*Go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature.*

—Mk 16:15

What does it mean to "proclaim the Gospel?" Do we proclaim the Gospel with our words? Actions? In other ways? How?

### SUNDAY, APRIL 11<sup>TH</sup>

*Divine Mercy Sunday*

Belief in God is not a one-time occurrence or an academic exercise, but an ongoing process, a friendship. St. Therese of Lisieux promoted a simple prayer of belief: Jesus I trust in You. How can we more actively trust Jesus in our daily lives?

### MONDAY, APRIL 12<sup>TH</sup>

*Unless one is born from above, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.*

—Jn 3:3

What does it mean to be "born from above?" Some Christian traditions heavily emphasize being "born again." Are Catholics born again? When? How?

### TUESDAY APRIL 13<sup>TH</sup>

*The community of believers was of one heart and mind.*

—Act 4:32

How can we be "of one heart and mind" with our family members? What are obstacles to Christian unity?

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14<sup>TH</sup>

*For God so loved the world that he gave...*

—Jn 3:16a

Is it possible to love without giving? How can we better love one another? Love God? In what ways does God continue to give to us?

### THURSDAY, APRIL 15<sup>TH</sup>

*The Lord hears the cry of the poor.*

—Ps 34:73

Who are "the poor?" Why does the God of the Universe draw near to the poor, troubled, and brokenhearted?

### FRIDAY, APRIL 16<sup>TH</sup>

*There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish; but what good are these for so many? —Jn 6:9*

In the miracle of the multiplication of loaves and fish, Jesus feeds infinite hunger with a child's small offering. What small talents or treasures can we offer to God?

### SATURDAY, APRIL 17<sup>TH</sup>

*Let your mercy be on us as we place our trust in you.*

—Ps 33:22

We actively trust God during the season of Lent — through prayer, fasting, and giving. How do we experience God's mercy in the season of Easter?

### SUNDAY, APRIL 18<sup>TH</sup>

*Third Sunday of Easter*

*Whoever keeps his word, the love of God is truly perfected in him.*

—1 Jn 2:5

Name three adjectives that you think would describe a person in whom "the love of God is truly perfected."

### MONDAY, APRIL 19<sup>TH</sup>

*This is the work of God, that you believe in the one he sent. —Jn 6:29*

This is one of many scripture passages that connects good works with faith. Think of someone you know who has deep Christian faith. What observable "works of God" does (s)he accomplish?

### TUESDAY, APRIL 20<sup>TH</sup>

*Whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.*

—Jn 6:35

What things might we "hunger and thirst" for that ultimately leave us unsatisfied? How is Jesus different?

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21<sup>ST</sup>

*Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.*

—Ps. 66:1

What makes you feel joyful? Is there a difference between joy and happiness?

### THURSDAY, APRIL 22<sup>ND</sup>

*I am the bread of life. —Jn 6:48*

Why does Jesus refer to himself as the "bread of life?" Why does Jesus give himself (total presence, not just spiritual presence) to us in the Eucharist? Did his disciples comprehend what he meant?

### FRIDAY, APRIL 23<sup>RD</sup>

*Here I am, Lord. —Act 9:10b*

When the Lord called, Ananias gave a simple yet profound response. Like Ananias, do we know where we are, or do we lose ourselves in busyness? What unnecessary task or worry can you eliminate this Easter season?

**SATURDAY, APRIL 24<sup>TH</sup>**

*Master, to whom shall we go?*  
—Jn 6:68

Some of Jesus's teachings were controversial. Some of his followers left, but the 12 Disciples were resolute, staying with Jesus. What are some differences of being a follower versus a disciple?

**SUNDAY, APRIL 25<sup>TH</sup>**

*Fourth Sunday of Easter*  
*I am the good shepherd.* —Jn 10:11

The parable of the Good Shepherd is preceded by a scriptural account of wicked shepherds. EGG-splore Ezk.34:1-6. What are contrasting qualities of the shepherds?

**MONDAY, APRIL 26<sup>TH</sup>**

*The sheep follow him, because they recognize his voice.*  
—Jn 10:4

Do you recognize the voice of Jesus in your life? What is one way that Jesus speaks to you? What is one way that you listen?

**TUESDAY, APRIL 27<sup>TH</sup>**

*Remain faithful to the Lord in firmness of heart.*  
—Act 11:23

It is fairly easy to remain faithful to God in seasons of blessing or consolation. How can we remain faithful to God in seasons of difficulty or desolation?

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 28<sup>TH</sup>**

*I came into the world as light, so that everyone who believes in me might not remain in darkness.* —Jn 12:46

Have you ever experienced complete darkness, without any light whatsoever? If so, what did that experience feel like? If not, how do you imagine it might feel?

**THURSDAY, APRIL 29<sup>TH</sup>**

*My kindness is established forever*  
—Ps 89:3

St. Catherine of Siena wrote, "Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire." Discuss the positive qualities of each family member that "set the world on fire."

**FRIDAY, APRIL 30<sup>TH</sup>**

*Do not let your hearts be troubled.*  
—Jn 14:1

How do we guard our hearts from unnecessary fears, anxieties, or troubles? (Hint: EGG-splore Philipians 4:4-7).

**SATURDAY, MAY 1<sup>ST</sup>**

*May Day*  
*Whoever believes in me will do the works that I do.* —Jn: 14:12

Invite others into the maternal beauty of Mary. Leave small bouquets of flowers on neighbors' porches or find other ways to share Mary's grace with others.

**SUNDAY, MAY 2<sup>ND</sup>**

*Fifth Sunday of Easter*  
*A branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine.*  
—Jn 15:4

Contrast a branch that is connected to its vine versus one that has been severed. What changes immediately? What changes occur over time?

**MONDAY, MAY 3<sup>RD</sup>**

*I am the way and the truth and the life.*  
—Jn 14:6

Reimagine this Bible verse, endeavoring to keep its meaning while updating its language (i.e. I am the journey and the destination). How does the new wording compel you toward Christ?

**TUESDAY, MAY 4<sup>TH</sup>**

*Let all your works give you thanks, O Lord.*  
—Ps 145:10a

What are three things for which you are thankful? (EGG-strata credit: name one person, one possession, and one blessing that cannot be seen or touched.)

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 5<sup>TH</sup>**

*Ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you.*  
—Jn 15:7b

Have you ever prayed for something that did not occur? How can you reconcile this verse with personal experience? (EGG-planation: all scripture is true — this isn't a typo!)

**THURSDAY, MAY 6<sup>TH</sup>**

*I have told you this so that my joy might be in you and your joy might be complete.*  
—Jn 15:11

During Lent we repented of sin and likely noticed our sin's negative effects. But, have you ever noticed the positive effects of your virtue? How do we spark joy in others?

**FRIDAY, MAY 7<sup>TH</sup>**

*This I command you: love one another.*  
—Jn 15:17

What is one concrete way that we can better love our family members? What is one way that we can love those outside of our family?

**SATURDAY, MAY 8<sup>TH</sup>**

*Serve the LORD with gladness.*  
—Ps 100:2

What is one way that you can demonstrate gladness amidst daily chores and challenges? Name one particular obstacle that might dampen your gladness. How can you transcend this obstacle?

**SUNDAY, MAY 9<sup>TH</sup>***Mother's Day*

In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us. — 1 Jn 4:10

One very practical way that God shares his love is through our mothers! Thank your mom; share specific ways that she makes you feel loved!

**MONDAY, MAY 10<sup>TH</sup>**

The Lord takes delight in his people. — Ps 149:4a

It is common to experience internal dissonance or guilt, particularly as a result of sin or personal failure. But, do you think it is as common to feel God's delight? Take a moment to enjoy God enjoying you. Describe your experience.

**TUESDAY, MAY 11<sup>TH</sup>**

For if I do not go, the Advocate will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. — Jn 16:7

We sometimes "undersell" the power of the Holy Spirit, who is our great Advocate! Lead your family in a prayer to the Holy Spirit, asking for help this week. Be specific!

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 12<sup>TH</sup>**

[God gives/creates] ...so that people might seek God, even perhaps grope for him and find him. — Act 17:27

The ongoing process of seeking God is not always linear. Sometimes we "grope for him" in darkness. Where is one place that you are seeking God during the Easter Season?

**THURSDAY, MAY 13<sup>TH</sup>**

Crispus came to believe in the Lord along with his entire household, and many of the Corinthians. — Act 18:8

The faith of Crispus effected his family and many people in Corinth. The faith of the 3 children at Fatima continues to effect hearts today. List qualities of efficacious faith.

**FRIDAY, MAY 14<sup>TH</sup>**

From the rising to the setting of the sun is the name of the Lord to be praised. — Ps 113:3

Praise the Lord for one of his qualities or characteristics. In what way have you personally been blessed by this attribute of God?

**SATURDAY, MAY 15<sup>TH</sup>**

Priscilla and Aquila ... took him aside and explained to him the Way of God more accurately. — Act 18:26

Apollos was an eloquent speaker and a man of deep faith, but his spiritual formation was incomplete. He needed the wisdom of two great women. Name a great woman who has helped form your faith.

**SUNDAY, MAY 16<sup>TH</sup>***Feast of the Ascension*

The Lord Jesus was taken up into heaven and took his seat at the right hand of God. — Mk 16:19

Jesus physically (not just spiritually) ascended into heaven. Recall stories of Jesus after his resurrection. What are some known characteristics of his resurrected body?

**MONDAY, MAY 17<sup>TH</sup>**

They replied, "We have never even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." — Act 19:2

In Ephesus St. Paul encounters a group that has never even heard of the Holy Spirit. Can you imagine living our faith without the Holy Spirit? What would change?

**TUESDAY, MAY 18<sup>TH</sup>**

And now I will no longer be in the world, but they are in the world. — Jn 17:11a

St. Teresa of Avila famous wrote, "Christ has no body on earth but yours. No hands but yours. No feet but yours." List one spiritual or corporal work of mercy to which you feel called.

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 19<sup>TH</sup>**

Consecrate them in the truth. Your word is truth. — Jn 17:17

List ways that you can (or already do!) "consecrate yourself in Truth." (Hint: following along with this daily devotional is one simple method!)

**THURSDAY, MAY 20<sup>TH</sup>**

That they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you. — Jn 17:21

Jesus prayed that our human unity would mirror his unity with the Father. Agree upon one practice to foster greater unity at home. (EGG-sample: replace gossip with prayer, or always assume kind motives of others)

**FRIDAY, MAY 21<sup>ST</sup>**

As far as the east is from the west, so far has he put our transgressions from us. — Ps 103:11

When is the last time that you went to confession? What did absolution feel like? How does forgiveness impact you on a practical, day-to-day level?

**SATURDAY, MAY 22<sup>ND</sup>**

Without hindrance he proclaimed the Kingdom of God. — Act 28:31

What hinders us from proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ? What are some differences between "virtue signaling" (vainly sharing faith to make ourselves look good) versus authentic evangelization?

**SUNDAY, MAY 23<sup>RD</sup>***Pentecost Sunday*

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. — Gal 5:22-23

Boldly ask the Holy Spirit for a specific gift or fruit and share it with your family (EGG-spert Advice: See CCC 1831—1832 for the full list!)