

# SAINT PETER'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

## APRIL 26, 2020



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104 WEST FIRST STREET • MANSFIELD, OHIO 44902  
419.524.2572 | MANSFIELDSTPETERS.ORG

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### Mass Schedule:

There will be no Masses offered at this time. Mass will be available on WMFD TV on Sunday at 10:00 A.M. and on the St. Peter's YouTube channel, website and Facebook page.

### Spanish Mass:

*Resurrection Parish, Lexington*

All Masses are cancelled until further notice.

### Parish Office Hours:

All offices are closed until at least May 1, 2020

### Pastoral Care Contacts:

Ms. Kristi Reindl 419.524.2572  
*Hospital & Follow-up  
Nursing Homes/Assisted Living &  
Prayer Pipeline*

Deacon John Reef 419.529.3694  
*Shut-ins/Homebound*

### Sacrament of Baptism:

Please contact the Parish Center to begin plans for the baptism of your baby or child.

### Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Saturday: 3:00 - 4:30 P.M.  
Other times by appointment.

### Sacrament of Marriage:

Arrangements should always be made at the **Parish Center office at least eight months** in advance of the ceremony. A wedding date is confirmed after the initial meeting with a priest.

### Bulletin Deadline:

Friday, 12:00 noon. All requests must be submitted in writing or email and must receive prior approval.

### Parish Administrative Assistant:

Ms. Kristi Reindl 419.524.2572 ext.2122

### Pastoral Staff:

Fr. Gregory R. Hite, *Pastor*  
Fr. Austin Ammanniti, *Parochial Vicar*  
Mr. Bill Johnson,  
*Director of Music & Liturgy*  
Ms. Lynne Lukach, *Pastoral Associate*  
Mrs. Elizabeth Wurm, *Director of  
Religious Ed. & Youth Minister*

### Deacon:

Mr. John Reef

### St. Peter's School:

Mr. Jonathan Cuttitta  
*High School, Jr. High School*  
Mrs. Ashley Rastorfer  
*Elementary School and Montessori*

### Parish Business Manager:

Mr. Evan Mumea

### Director of Development:

Mr. Jason Crundwell

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A PARISH OF THE SAINT JUAN DIEGO DEANERY, DIOCESE OF TOLEDO

## POPE SAINT JOHN PAUL II

**GENERAL AUDIENCE***Wednesday 18 April 2001****Contemplating the face of the risen Lord***

1. Today, the customary Wednesday General Audience is flooded with the luminous joy of Easter. At this time, the Church celebrates the great mystery of the Resurrection with exultation. It is a deep and inextinguishable joy based on the risen Christ's gift of the new and everlasting Covenant, which endures because now he dies no more. A joy that continues not only during the Easter Octave, which the liturgy considers a single day, but is extended for 50 days until Pentecost. Indeed, it now embraces all times and all places.

During this period, the Christian community is invited to a new and deeper experience of the risen Christ, living and active in the Church and in the world.

2. In this splendid setting of light and joy that belongs to the Easter season, let us now pause to contemplate together the face of the *Risen One*, taking up and carrying out what I have not hesitated to call the "core" of the great legacy left to us by the Jubilee of the Year 2000. In fact, as I stressed in my Apostolic Letter *Novo millennio ineunte*, "if we ask what is the core of the great legacy it leaves us, I would not hesitate to describe it as the *contemplation of the face of Christ* ... known through his manifold presence in the Church and in the world, and confessed as the meaning of history and the light of life's journey" (n. 15).

Just as on Good Friday and Holy Saturday we contemplated the sorrowful face of Christ, we now turn our gaze full of faith and grateful love to the *face of the Risen One*. The Church looks at him in these days, following in the footsteps of Peter, who professes his love to Christ (cf. Jn 21: 15-17), and in the footsteps of Paul, who was overwhelmed by the risen Jesus on the road to Damascus (cf. Acts 9: 3-5).

The Easter liturgy presents to us the *various encounters with the risen Christ*, which are an invitation to reflect on his message and encourage us to imitate the faith journey of those who recognized him in those first hours after the Resurrection. Thus the devout women and Mary Magdalen spur us to bring the news of the Risen One (cf. Lk 24: 8-10; Jn 20: 18). The beloved Apostle bears an exceptional witness that it is precisely love which sees the reality symbolized by the signs of the Resurrection; the empty tomb, the absence of the body, the folded burial cloths. Love sees and believes, and urges us to walk towards the One who in himself contains the full meaning of all things: Jesus, living for ever and ever.

3. In today's liturgy the Church contemplates the face of the Risen One, who shares the journey of the two disciples of Emmaus. At the beginning of our meeting, we listened to a passage from this well-known text of the Evangelist Luke.

However tiring, the road to Emmaus leads from a sense of discouragement and bewilderment to the fullness of Easter faith. In retracing this journey, we too are joined by the mysterious traveling Companion. Jesus approaches us on the road, meeting us where we are and asking us the essential questions that open the heart to hope. He has many things to explain about his and our destiny. In particular, he reveals that every human life must pass through his Cross to enter into glory. But Christ does something more: he breaks the bread of sharing for us, offering that Eucharistic Table in which the Scriptures acquire their full meaning and reveal the unique and shining features of the Redeemer's face.

4. After recognizing and contemplating the face of the risen Christ, we too, like the two disciples, are asked to run to our brothers and sisters to bring everyone the great news: "We have seen the Lord!" (Jn 20: 25).

"His Resurrection is our rising to life" (*Easter Preface II*): this is the good news that Christ's disciples do not tire of bringing to the world, especially through the witness of their own lives. This is the most beautiful gift that our brothers and sisters expect of us in this Easter season.

Let us be captivated, then, by the fascination of Christ's Resurrection. May the Virgin Mary help us to experience in full the joy of Easter: a joy which, as the Risen One promised, no one can ever take from us and which will never end (cf. Jn 16: 22).

## POPE BENEDICT XVI

## REGINA CÆLI

Third Sunday of Easter, 6 April 2008

*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

The Gospel of this Sunday - the Third of Easter - is the famous account of the disciples of Emmaus (cf. Lk 24: 13-35). It tells the tale of two followers of Christ who, on the day after the Sabbath or the third day after his death, were leaving Jerusalem sad and dejected, bound for a village that was not far off called, precisely, Emmaus. They were joined on their way by the Risen Jesus but did not recognize him. Realizing that they were downhearted, he explained, drawing on the Scriptures, that the Messiah had to suffer and die in order to enter into his glory. Then entering the house with them, he sat down to eat, blessed the bread and broke it; and at that instant they recognized him but he vanished from their sight, leaving them marvelling before that broken bread, a new sign of his presence. And they both immediately headed back to Jerusalem to tell the other disciples of the event.

The locality of Emmaus has not been identified with certainty. There are various hypotheses and this one is not without an evocativeness of its own for it allows us to think that Emmaus actually represents every place: the road that leads there is the road every Christian, every person, takes. The Risen Jesus makes himself our travelling companion as we go on our way, to rekindle the warmth of faith and hope in our hearts and to break the bread of eternal life. In the disciples' conversation with the unknown wayfarer the words the evangelist Luke puts in the mouth of one of them are striking: "We had hoped..." (Lk 24: 21). This verb in the past tense tells all: we believed, we followed, we hoped..., but now everything is over. Even Jesus of Nazareth, who had shown himself in his words and actions to be a powerful prophet, has failed, and we are left disappointed.

This drama of the disciples of Emmaus appears like a reflection of the situation of many Christians of our time: it seems that the hope of faith has failed. Faith itself enters a crisis because of negative experiences that make us feel abandoned and betrayed even by the Lord. But this road to Emmaus on which we walk can become the way of a purification and maturation of our belief in God. Also today we can enter into dialogue with Jesus, listening to his Word. Today too he breaks bread for us and gives himself as our Bread. And so the meeting with the Risen Christ that is possible even today gives us a deeper and more authentic faith tempered, so to speak, by the fire of the Paschal Event; a faith that is robust because it is nourished not by human ideas but by the Word of God and by his Real Presence in the Eucharist.

This marvellous Gospel text already contains the structure of Holy Mass: in the first part, listening to the Word through the Sacred Scriptures; in the second part, the Eucharistic liturgy and communion with Christ present in the Sacrament of his Body and his Blood. In nourishing herself at this two-fold table, the Church is constantly built up and renewed from day to day in faith, hope and charity. Through the intercession of Mary Most Holy, let us pray that in reliving the experience of the disciples of Emmaus every Christian and every community may rediscover the grace of the transforming encounter with the Risen Lord.



Dear Friend(s) in Christ,

We are well into one month (if not longer) of the 2020 COVID19 Pandemic. Historic for sure. I and Fr. Austin both continue to offer our daily private Mass, always remembering our faithful who unite themselves so close to the suffering and Risen Christ. It also continues to be so surreal that, every time I walk into church throughout the day, it is empty – with no public liturgies being celebrated. Like you, I look forward to the day when we can celebrate and gather at the Lord's Table to share the Holy Eucharist.

This week's column is a "potpourri" of sorts of things that have been running through my mind over the past few weeks.

- I wish to thank all of our parishioners who have responded to our parish request to continue to support our ministries. I have said many times we have a lean budget, but we are being good stewards with the gifts that are entrusted to us. Recognizing that many of our faithful parishioners are sacrificing due to layoffs, limited businesses, needs for family, those taking care of elderly parents – I am especially grateful for both your prayers and continued sacrifice.
- I also wish to thank those who continue to offer their service to our parish – our maintenance department who provide essential supervision; our pastoral staff who are working from home; those employees who have been coordinating the Mass we see on WMFD weekly at 10 am (Jason Crundwell, Bill Johnson, Kristi Reindl, Fran Leitenberger, Bob Sliney and Dianne Bessemer).
- While they will go unnamed because I suspect they would not like the credit, I also wish to thank those who have continued to clean our church – the Lord's House. They take great pride, and their time is a prayer acceptable to the Lord. Bless them. Church continues to be open from 9 am to 4 pm daily for your personal prayer.
- By now you have heard that Fr. Austin will become a pastor, beginning July 1. While I am happy for him, I shall miss his presence in our home. He has been a great "associate." His many kindnesses, spiritual example, responsibility and humor will be sorely missed. I wish him well. We will have a reception for him before he leaves, to be sure. No word yet on his replacement.
- As Dean of our area parishes, I have the responsibility of serving on the Priests' Council and currently also serve on the Bishop's College of Consultors. I feel it's important to share with you that, as a group, we have had weekly phone conferences with the Bishop. He is making every effort, through consultation, to "steer the ship" during this pandemic. He has a pastoral heart, and is untiring in his support to his priests and the faithful of our diocese. Pray for our Bishop – he, too, has a lot on his plate right now!
- Recently, Governor DeWine has decided that students will not return to our buildings this school year. We are monitoring closely the mandates from the State of Ohio. Both principals have regularly communicated with students' families. They, too, are working responsibly to make the best decisions for our school family. Check the website for updates from our principals.
- Flowers are coming up. Warmer temps are on the way. As Ohioans, we will make it through this ordeal. From a spiritual perspective, St. John Henry Newman wrote of a "Second Spring." It was a homily he gave in 1852. An optimistic reflection to end my column this week: "Arise, make haste. For the winter is now past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers have appeared in our land [Cant. 2: 10-12]." May we soon resume our best way of life – with and for each other! Pray for our hospital personnel, our first responders, and our state and national leaders, too!

*Father Gregory Hite, Pastor*





The picture above was taken in the newly completed St. Peter's Catholic Church here in Mansfield in 1917 or 1918. Note the absence of stained glass windows (which did not arrive until 1920), as well as the visible differences in sanctuary furnishings and décor. The picture comes from the collection of the late Helen Keating Ott, who went on to establish the Children's Department of the Mansfield Richland County Public Library. Mrs. Ott would have been 13 or 14 years old when she took the picture. Though she herself was a Presbyterian, she was evidently inspired by the interior of our church. Note the sanctuary presence lamp suspended from the center of the ceiling in the apse. Forced perspective makes it look as though the lamp was hung to the right, however. **If anyone in our parish can remember when the lamp was removed and what might have become of it, we would love to know about it. Please contact the Parish Liturgy Office at 419-524-2572, ext. 2113 if you can shed any light on this question.** The lamp was removed prior to 1944 when the church was redecorated for the Parish Centenary. (Photo courtesy of Timothy Brian McKee.)

**PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK OF OUR PARISH**

Bill Ruhl, Jeannie Burkhalter, Aaron Blank, Cindy Lassen, Dina Riley, Eliana Nelson, MaKaya Butler, Sharon Valdry, Maria Loschinkohl, John Ziegler, Marlene Ziegler, Kim Rucker, Dorothy Trinter, Marti Selby, JoAnn Marbaugh, Baby Greyden Jack, Gwen Yockey, Mary Ann and Mel Switzer, Louise Steggall, Tammy Dudley, Keith Combs, Mady Ziegler, Elaine Johnson, Cindy Jasnek Cartier, Jeannine Klotz, Marilyn B. Williamson, Tom Powell, Chief Master Sergeant Joseph Basting, Peggy Basting Taylor, Kathy Carcione, Carol Pittenger, Charlie Henrich, Jill McMillen, Gary Caldwell, Jeffrey Davis, Willie "Frank" Williams, Catherine R. Liston, Pius Schell, Krista Marshall, Maggie Caldwell, Michael Davis, Michael Krempel, Marilyn Miller, Annette Togliatti, Rose Saul, Charlene Arthur, Alan Gallaway, Marty Moritz, Logan Page, Maxine Shannon, Gracie Shannon.

Names will only be listed for 4 weeks. If you wish to have additional time, contact the Parish Center at 419.524.2572.

**IN GOD'S ARMS...**

Daniel Drouhard      Jim Bernbeck  
Mike Sumergrad      Janet Rall



*ETERNAL REST GRANT UNTO THEM, O LORD.*

**FOR ALL OF THE CURRENT IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT ST. PETERS PARISH OPERATIONS DURING THESE TROUBLED TIMES, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:**

**[WWW.MANSFIELDSTPETERS.ORG](http://WWW.MANSFIELDSTPETERS.ORG)**

**THERE YOU WILL ALSO FIND DEVOTIONAL MATERIALS FOR USE AT HOME FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.**

**THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S CLUB MEETING FOR MAY 13, 2020 HAS BEEN CANCELLED.**

**ADULT FAITH ENRICHMENT**

ALL ADULT FAITH CLASSES ARE ON HOLD UNTIL "NORMAL" PARISH CENTER HOURS AND OPERATIONS RESUME.



**RECYCLING—NEXT DATE: MAY 8, 2020**

**FOOD COLLECTION: May 9 & 10**

**PRISON MINISTRY CORNER**

All Catholic services and programming at ManCI and RiCI are suspended for now. Please keep our brothers in prayer. Fortunately, many of them are able to watch Mass on WMFD, just as we are. They expressed their gratitude and greatly enjoyed being able to see the interior of our beautiful church.

**SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL - ST. PETER'S CONFERENCE**

Our Conference members pray this finds you safe and well during these challenging times. We are committed with our ongoing mission in serving individuals and families during this pandemic. We continue to receive calls from our community of those in need and we invite you to pray for our Conference that we may assist our brothers and sisters, to offer some relief in financial emergencies, as well as offer comfort and hope through our love through HIM. We anticipate having a significant increase in requests for help in the upcoming months and our Conference members are prayerfully working to contemplate how we can adapt to meet this demand. We invite you to consider, if able, to support our Conference with a financial donation to assist in our mission. If you receive Parish Envelopes, donations can be made on the green bordered "My Special Gift" envelope with delegating donation to St Vincent de Paul and/or mailed to our Conference to St. Peter's Parish. We are a 501(c)3 recognized charitable organization. Thank you so very much for your ongoing support of our ministry which was established in this Parish in 1932 and remains committed in our vision to serve our fellow brothers and sisters.

**MASS INTENTIONS:**

During this time, our priests are offering daily, private Masses for the intentions we have. Please know that your intentions are being honored. We have attempted to make a few calls for re-scheduling; however, if you have not responded, they will be honored in a timely manner. God bless and keep you!

**SUNDAY OFFERING**

*Year to Date  
March 31, 2020*

**Sunday and Holy Day Collections**

Sunday Collection & Holy Day Collection:	\$624,002
Total Budgeted Sunday Collection To Date:	\$639,451

<b>Sunday Collection Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(\$15,449)</b>
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**School Collection**

Total School Collection To Date:	\$110,083
Total Budgeted School Collection To Date:	\$108,000

<b>School Collection Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>\$2,083</b>
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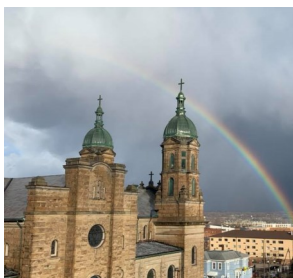


## TV MASS SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY

**You may know that we are broadcasting our Sunday Mass on WMFD TV in Mansfield, as well as on our Facebook, YouTube and Parish Web pages. While there is no cost associated with the internet transmissions, the cost of broadcasting on television is \$135.00 per half hour.**

**Many parishioners and area businesses have stepped up to underwrite the cost of these broadcasts. In these uncertain days that need may continue for quite some time to come.**

**If you or your business would like to underwrite a TV Mass, please contact Jason Crundwell or Bill Johnson at the Parish Center at 419.524.2572 ext. 2125 or ext. 2113 for more information.**



**PLEASE REMEMBER TO SUPPORT THE MINISTRIES OF ST. PETER'S PARISH BY MAILING IN YOUR OFFERING ENVELOPES OR VISITING THE WEBSITE, [WWW.MANSFIELDSTPETERS.ORG](http://WWW.MANSFIELDSTPETERS.ORG), TO LEARN ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR ELECTRONIC GIVING. WE GREATLY APPRECIATE YOUR GENEROSITY AND SUPPORT DURING THESE DIFFICULT DAYS!**

## ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL UPDATE

The 2020 Annual Catholic Appeal Campaign is underway with a campaign goal of \$3 million. We can assure the continued existence of many important programs that help tens of thousands in our Diocese each year; education of our seminary students, care of the sick and needy are among them. We ask you once again for your help; we have to work together. Please respond generously when you are asked to make your pledge. Thank you for your attention and thank you for being my parish family. For more information, visit the Diocesan website at [Toledodiocese.org/ACA](http://Toledodiocese.org/ACA).

Our parish goal is \$55,000, so far we are at \$26,334.35 with pledges from 201 households or 47.88%. Thank you for your support of our diocesan ministries and the help you provide to our seminarians and deacons who are in formation to serve our parish's future.

## SAVE THE DATE! VBS 2020!

We hope that you can join us for VBS this year with "God's Wild Adventure!" VBS will be taking place July 6- 9 (provided circumstances permit) at St. Peter's and 3-10 year olds are welcome to join us! It will be taking place from 9:00-11:30 A.M. daily! We are also looking for adult volunteers to help with this week!

We do have a wish list again this year and appreciate any donations that are given. Our wish list helps us keep the cost down for all of our participants! Although we ask for a \$5 donation from those participating, it is our hope that all can participate regardless of their ability to pay.

If you could prayerfully consider donating one of the items below it would be much appreciated!

- 320 Juice boxes (any flavor)
- Three large boxes of goldfish crackers
- Four large bags of animal crackers
- 5 bags of apples
- Tubes from packages of aluminum foil (or any cardboard tube that is thicker)
- 2 large packages of pipe cleaners
- Four large boxes of minute rice
- Two large packages of clothes pins (with the springs)
- Black and Blue permanent markers (we would need ten of each)
- One package of coffee filters
- One package of brown lunch bags (50 count)
- One large bag of rubber bands
- 12 pool noodles (can be purchased at the dollar store)
- 1 package of Popsicle sticks (the thinner variety not the jumbo)

If you are able to provide any of these items, it would be appreciated if they could be dropped off to the parish office once the pandemic has subsided. Monetary donations are always accepted and welcome to sponsor children who are unable to pay to attend. We thank you for your help as we prepare to go on "God's Wild Adventures!" If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Elizabeth Wurm at the parish office or at [wurm.elizabeth@myspartans.org](mailto:wurm.elizabeth@myspartans.org). Thank you in advance for your kindness!

## MAY BIRTHDAYS



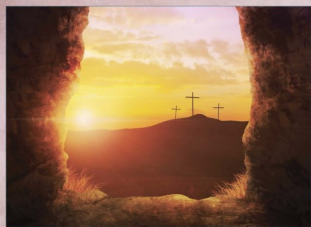
We want to recognize and say a special prayer for the parishioners celebrating birthdays in May, especially those who are 85 years of age and above:

Andrew Schweitzer, Jenny Wala, Harold Wagner, Aileen McFarland, Marianne Cappadonna, Thomas Miller, Jennie Petrella, Mary Deklyn, Mary Ann Mathews, Marilyn Romano, Richard Kulka, Mel Switzer, Mary Givens, Betty Connolly, Stephanie Klopfenstein, and Dale Knowlton.

# Why Does the Resurrection Matter?







The resurrection of Jesus has always stood at the center of Christian faith and proclamation. But why is it so important, and what does it mean for us?

## The Center of the Message

When the early Christians first spread the gospel—literally the “good news”—all over the known world, there was one fact that stood as the foundation of their message: Jesus Christ is risen from the dead!

*For I handed on to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures; that he was buried; that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures.*

—1 Corinthians 15:3-4

The resurrection of Jesus remains the core reality and central tenet of the Christian faith. It is the ultimate expression of God's love that has transformed everything. As St. Paul put it, “If Christ has not been raised, your faith is vain” (1 Corinthians 15:17).

A crucified Messiah  
is no Messiah at all.  
Or so it seemed.



## Love wins—often in surprising ways.

God spoke through the prophets of old that one day, God's victory over darkness and oppression would come. Just as God rescued the Israelites from the slavery of the Egyptians by parting the Red Sea, so God would rescue all people from oppression through the coming of the Messiah.

Now, the Jewish understanding of this promised Messiah had long been that of a warrior king who, like David, would achieve peace with the sword. While

many started to believe that Jesus was the Messiah during his lifetime, those hopes were dashed when he was killed. A crucified Messiah is no Messiah at all. Or so it seemed.

Jesus' resurrection shows us a new kind of victory and strength—one that runs deeper than physical strength and worldly power. In a word, it shows us the unshakable victory of love. For

“God is love” (1 John 4:8), and Jesus is God. When Jesus rose from the dead, the undeniable message went forth: love is stronger than death, sin, and evil. As the disciples proclaimed the gospel, they did not lead with Jesus' teaching. They could have taught from his Sermon

on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) or from his discourse at the Last Supper (John 14-16). Instead, they proclaimed his death and resurrection. Calling upon the power of the resurrection, Peter told the immobilized beggar, “In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean, [rise and] walk” (Acts 3:6), and instantly the beggar jumped up and began “walking and jumping and praising God” (3:8).

The next day, with the healed beggar alongside him, Peter made this statement before the high priests and elders: “It was in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead; in his name this man stands before you healed” (Acts 4:10).

## Jesus really is the way, the truth, and the life.

The resurrection validates everything Jesus said about himself. Jesus not only taught people and healed them, but he claimed to be the Messiah—the divine Savior for humanity's failings, who alone accomplishes the forgiveness of sin and reveals the Father to the world.

When he would announce to someone, “Your sins are forgiven” (Mark 2:5), religious leaders understandably objected, “Who but God alone can forgive sins?” (2:7). When questioned about his authority and identity,

Jesus used the one name reserved only for God himself: “Amen, amen, I say to you, before Abraham came to be, I AM” (John 8:58).

If Jesus' wonderful, inspiring, and powerful life simply ended with his crucifixion—the Romans' brutal public punishment for major criminals—then the hope that people placed in Jesus as the divine Savior, Messiah, and Son of God would have been dashed.

But he *has* been raised! As Christians, we don't proclaim that “Jesus was risen.” We declare that “*Jesus is risen.*” He truly is our one and only God who visited the earth, died under the weight of the world's sins, and overcame the power of sin, death, and evil by rising victoriously. He is, as he told us, “the way and the truth and the life” (John 14:6) who “came so that [we] might have life and have it more abundantly” (10:10).

We can put all our trust and hope in Jesus, who leads us into the abundant life of God's kingdom.

Love is stronger  
than death, sin,  
and evil.



## There's more to life.

When Jesus rose, he was not merely resuscitated. He rose to a glorified body in which he “dies no more; death no longer has power over him” (Romans 6:9). This is good news for us all. When Jesus talked about his impending death, he made a promise: “I go and prepare a place for you, . . . so that where I am you also may be” (John 14:3). We too are promised resurrection in a glorified body—in, with, and through Christ Jesus!

Our hope, then, is not merely found in life in the here and now, with all the good as well as the trials we experience. What Jesus has done affects our lives now and forever.

## Eternal life begins here and now.

God's great promise of new life that endures forever is not something we enter into only after death. The kingdom of God is not only *far away* and *later*. Jesus came to announce that “the kingdom of God is at hand” (Mark 1:15). “At hand” means in the here and now. For our time on earth, Jesus made a promise that was fulfilled after his resurrection:

*“I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. . . .”*

*The Advocate, the holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name—he will teach you everything and remind you of all that [I] told you.”*  
(John 14:18, 26)

We too are promised  
resurrection in a  
glorified body.

At Baptism, we receive a share in Christ's resurrected life as the Holy Spirit comes to us and makes us sons and daughters of God. As St. Paul says, “If any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come” (2 Corinthians 5:17, RSVCE). *This is good news!*

Bit by bit, as we say yes to Jesus in our hearts and receive him in the sacraments, we become more like him. For we “are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another” (2 Corinthians 3:18, RSVCE).

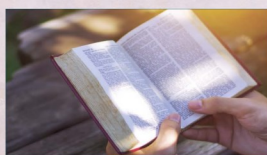
*The experience of eternal life and our vibrant sharing in Christ's resurrection are only a word away. Jesus comes to us with his desire to fill us with his new life. Our task is to simply ask him for it and to receive it.*

For eternal life begins now.

This world is not all there is.

Love will always win in the end, often in surprising ways.

Through Jesus, who remains forever the way, the truth, and the life.



*Jesus, I choose you as my way, my truth, and my life. Help me to know you more and to experience the power of your resurrection. Holy Spirit, come and fill me with faith, hope, and love. Let me be a light to those who also need the heavenly help you offer. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## Take the next step.



ChristLife presents *Why Is the Resurrection Important?*, a free video on the basis of our new life and hope for life everlasting, available at [christlife.org/res](http://christlife.org/res).



Grow in your faith through daily devotions and articles from *The Word Among Us*. Read free daily meditations at [wau.org](http://wau.org).



Enjoy a personal retreat with Scripture, commentary, and prayer exercises with *Getting More Out of Prayer*, for individuals and small groups, available at [bookstore.wau.org](http://bookstore.wau.org).

Nihil obstat: The Reverend Michael Morgan, J.D., J.C.L.  
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December 11, 2019

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## SO, WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS?







### What is the Good News that ...

... motivated figures as different and as great as Mother Teresa and Vince Lombardi?

... propels missionaries all over the world to leave the comforts of home to share its message with strangers?

... leads some to give up family life in heroic service to the Church, while empowering others to commit to the generous, heroic love demanded by family life?

### THE GAP

A profound gap exists in our lives and in our world. No matter what our religion, race, or location on the planet and whether we are rich, poor, or something in between, we all know this tension from experience: **there's a gap between what the world is and what we wish, hope, or believe it could be.**

And if we're honest, we likely feel the same tension deep within ourselves. On the one hand, I believe I am good and I have some things to offer this world. And yet I wish, or hope, or believe I could somehow become ... better, happier, healthier, more peaceful, more loving, more effective.

More. Or less: less selfish, angry, anxious, busy, fearful, doubtful.

**The gap between what we desire and what we experience is real.**

In our efforts to confront the gap, we squelch our desire for a "better world" or a "better life." We lower our expectations, numb our pain, distract ourselves, or simply look the other way.



### BROKEN BY SIN

**Of all the Catholic teachings, the doctrine of original sin is probably the easiest to build a case for.** Just look around; it's pretty clear that something is not right.

For Christians, "sin" is the broadest name we give this something that is not right. Sin causes many of the gaps in our lives and in our world. Sometimes, it is our own sins causing gaps in our lives and in the lives of others. Sometimes the sins of other people harm us.

**One thing is certain: we all contribute, in some way, not only to what is good in this world, but also to what is broken, what is sinful.** For "all have sinned and are deprived of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

All people experience the urge to put themselves, another person, or something else in the center of their lives, instead of God. This can wound our lives. While sin leads to wounds, wounds can also lead to sins. When we are hurting from wounds like abandonment, fear, shame, or hopelessness, we often turn to sin (rather than God) for comfort.

We may eat too much, drink too much, watch too much TV, binge on social media, escape into erotic or emotional fantasies, gossip about the wrongdoings of others, or strive desperately to prove our worth by attaining success or riches.

**False comforts can distract us from our pain or bring quick relief, but they don't bridge the gap.** They only numb the pain for a bit.



### RESCUED BY GOD

**While God has always aided those who seek him with a sincere heart, the ultimate help came when he sent Jesus to the world.**

It is the most unimaginable, shocking claim: the Creator of all, the perfect, loving, and good God, became a man, lived in our broken world, and experienced the weight of our sin, while never sinning. He felt the gap of this world in his hunger, loneliness, weariness, disappointment, and pain.

Jesus could have remained in heaven with the Father, but he chose freely to surrender to the discomfort and pain of the gap out of love for us—in order to be completely united with us in our suffering and sin.



Eventually, the world's sin, your sin and my sin, killed Jesus, but in his rising from the dead, Jesus won the victory over sin. **He completely overcame the gap that separates the world from God.** In Jesus, God bridged the gap.

### THE BRIDGED GAP

**God has given us a remedy for all of our brokenness.** It is called grace. The grace of God, which we find in a relationship with Jesus, can heal every wound, cleanse every stain, break every chain, and triumph over every darkness the world has ever known.

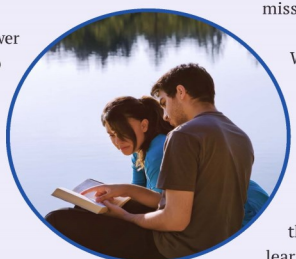
Grace is not a mere "thing" or "substance." It is not magic. Nor is it quantifiable. Grace is not so much an "it" or a "what" as a "Who." Grace is God's gift of his very self to his creation.

Grace is the gift of God's love poured out for us in big and small ways: from the ultimate gift of salvation to God the Father's quiet ready response to our daily needs. **Grace is God himself walking with us through it all.**

When you are selfish and irritable, Jesus offers you his victory over this gap within yourself. **Though you may feel too weak to fix yourself, Jesus offers his life and his grace to you.**

This truth explains how St. Paul can proclaim in Ephesians 3:20-21:

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, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.



### FREE TO RESPOND

**We follow a God whose very nature is love.** And love cannot be forced. It cannot be demanded, coerced, or cajoled. Love requires a free response. This reality helps us understand that God will not force us to love him or others. He also does not simply zap us with grace, clean up the mess of the world in one fell swoop, or demand conformity to his will.

God moves first. He comes to us in a thousand ways—in every sacrament, in every page of Scripture, in every grace-filled moment with loved ones, in the cry of the poor, in each glorious sunset. All of these God moments of our lives are signs of God's love and his mission for us.

**What an amazing mystery: God longs to partner with us to bring more of his life into the world!**

God's "yes" to us is perfect; our "yes" to him is not yet perfect. But as we say "yes"—again and again—we are changed, and the gap is bridged through both grace and effort, over a lifetime of learning to say "yes."

### TAKE THE NEXT STEP



#### Learn about Discipleship

We hear a lot about being a disciple of Jesus, but what does that mean? **NextStep** takes you on a journey toward a deeper, more intimate connection to Christ.



#### Grow in Your Faith through Prayer and Scripture

Your daily devotional on the Mass readings, **The Word Among Us** will bring the daily Scriptures from Mass alive for you.

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**GOD'S PLAN**

Saint Peter speaks to us twice today. In the first reading, we hear an excerpt from his sermon on Pentecost; in the second, part of his first letter. Once a frightened, uneducated fisherman who often said just the wrong thing, now Peter is speaking what he knows to be true. Everything Jesus had said now makes sense. His death and rising were all part of God's plan, and our faith and hope can be centered on God.

Today's Gospel tells the story of Jesus' walk to Emmaus with two of the disciples. Frightened, sad, and confused, the two of them don't recognize Jesus, who tells them what we heard Peter say above: All this had to happen as part of God's plan. In the end, these disciples recognize Jesus as we are to recognize him—in the breaking of the bread.

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**SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA (1347-1380)****April 29**

Imagine the pope receiving a young woman still in her twenties who addresses him as "my sweet Christ on earth," then orders: "Get back to Rome where you belong!" Amazingly, Gregory XI complied! Yet this was but one astonishing incident in the extraordinary life of Catherine of Siena, a truly unique medieval woman. Youngest of twenty-five children, Catherine refused marriage and became a Dominican Tertiary at sixteen, cloistering herself at home in contemplative prayer, austere penances, and mystical experiences, culminating in "spiritual espousal" to Christ. Then, incarnating the Dominican ideal of "passing on to others the fruits of contemplation," Catherine left her solitude to care for the poor, nurse the sick, comfort the dying, and bury the dead. Increasingly renowned for converting souls and healing bodies, she was sought after to broker peace during civil wars and Church schisms. All this, and like Jesus, whom she called "my Divine Spouse," she died at thirty-three! Four hundred letters and her spiritual classic *The Dialogue* inspired Paul VI to name her, together with Teresa of Ávila, the first women Doctors of the Church.

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**TODAY'S READINGS**

**First Reading** — God has raised the crucified Jesus, who now pours forth the Holy Spirit upon us (Acts 2:14, 22-33)

**Psalm** — Lord, you will show us the path of life (Psalm 16).

**Second Reading** — Our faith and hope are in God, who raised Jesus from the dead (1 Peter 1:17-21).

**Gospel** — Through his words and in the breaking of the bread, the risen Christ made himself known to two disciples on their way to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35).

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**READINGS FOR THE WEEK**

Monday: Acts 6:8-15; Ps 119:23-24, 26-27, 29-30; Jn 6:22-29

Tuesday: Acts 7:51 — 8:1a; Ps 31:3cd-4, 6, 7b, 8a, 17, 21ab;  
Jn 6:30-35

Wednesday: Acts 8:1b-8; Ps 66:1-3a, 4-7a; Jn 6:35-40

Thursday: Acts 8:26-40; Ps 66:8-9, 16-17, 20; Jn 6:44-51

Friday: Acts 9:1-20; Ps 117:1bc, 2; Jn 6:52-59, or, for the memorial,  
Gn 1:26 — 2:3 or Col 3:14-15, 17, 23-24;  
Ps 90:2-4, 12-14, 16; Mt 13:54-58

Saturday: Acts 9:31-42; Ps 116:12-17; Jn 6:60-69

Sunday: Acts 2:14a, 36-41; Ps 23:1-6; 1 Pt 2:20b-25; Jn 10:1-10

**This Week's Cover Art:** *Apparition du Christ aux pèlerins d'Emmaüs (1656)* by Laurent de La Hyre. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons