

The Second Sunday of Easter

April 7, 2024

John 20:29

Blessed are those
who have not seen
and yet believe.



Divine Mercy

Jesus,
I Trust
in You



Transfiguration of the Lord Parish

Saint Mary 14 Park Street + Sacred Heart 58 Church Street + Saint Mark 105 Stanley Street
North Attleborough, Massachusetts

Transfiguration of the Lord Parish

Rev. David A. Costa, Pastor
Rev. Deacon Joseph E. Regali, Parish Deacon
Sister Kathleen A. Corrigan, S.U.S.C., Pastoral Associate
Rev. Kenneth R. Sicard, O.P. & Rev. R. Gabriel Pivarnik, O.P., Weekend Assistants
Mrs. Martha O'Neill, Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Jean Howard, Business Manager
Mrs. Elaine Corvese, Director of Religious Education
Mrs. Lisa Serak, Principal, Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School
Mr. Adam Turcotte, Director of Music
Mr. Miguel Peixoto, Buildings Supervisor
Mr. James Kitsock, Building Maintenance

Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School

Mrs. Lisa Serak, Principal
57 Richards Avenue,
North Attleborough, Massachusetts 02760
(508) 695-3072 FAX (508) 695-9074
smsh@smsh.dfrcs.org www.smhschool.com

Saint Mary Cemetery

Mr. Jarrod Ward, Superintendent
Towne Street
North Attleborough, Massachusetts 02760
(508) 695-1173 or email ripco@comcast.net

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saint Mary Church • Saturday 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Sacrament of Baptism

Baptisms are celebrated on designated Sunday afternoons at 12:30 pm, with a limit of four families at each baptism. Please contact the office at stmaryna@noozi.com for more information and available dates/locations.

Sacrament of Marriage

Marriage is usually celebrated on Saturday morning and afternoon. Please contact the Parish Office at least nine months in advance to begin preparation.

Sacrament of the Sick

Pastoral care to those in need of the sacrament of the sick is arranged through the parish office. Please call to arrange a visit.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is offered on the first Friday of each month in **Saint Mark Church** beginning at 9:00 am and ending at 6:00 pm with Benediction.

Parish Offering

If you are attending in person, you may drop your contribution in the collection basket. You are welcome to mail your budget envelope to the parish office, at 14 Park Street, North Attleborough, MA 02760. You may also leave your envelope in the drop box located outside the parish office door, to the right on the landing. Thank you for your ongoing support!

Weekend Masses

Saturday 4:00 pm **Saint Mary Church**
Sunday 8:00 am **Saint Mark Church**
Sunday 9:30 am **Saint Mary Church**
Sunday 11:00 am **Sacred Heart Church**

Weekday Masses

Monday 8:00 am **Saint Mark Church**
Tuesday 4:30 pm **Saint Mark Church**
Wednesday 8:00 am **Saint Mark Church**
Thursday 8:00 am Communion Service
Saint Mark Church

Links to: Transfiguration of the Lord Facebook page
<https://www.facebook.com/Transfiguration-of-the-Lord-Parish-North-Attleborough-106529317647894/>

YouTube at <https://tinyurl.com/ysfaxaty>

Parish Office

14 Park Street,
North Attleborough, Massachusetts 02760

Parish e-mail • stmaryna@noozi.com
Parish website • www.saintmaryna.com
Phone 508-695-6161 Fax 508-695-5248

Faith Formation • TransfigurationRelEd@gmail.com
Faith Formation • 508-695-3823

Music Ministry • transfiguration.na.music@gmail.com



Divine Mercy Sunday

April 6/7 – The 2nd Sunday of Easter

Saturday 4:00 pm **April 6 – Vigil (St. Mary)**
Joseph Maione
Joshua Ferns
Erick Eaton

Sunday 8:00 am **April 7 (St. Mark)**
People of the Parish

Sunday 9:30 am **April 7 (St. Mary)**
Stephanie Nason
Emma Zimmer Fitzpatrick
Beverly Laliberte

Sunday 11:00 am **April 7 (Sacred Heart)**
Leo J. Wagner
Dorothy Simon
Sister Denise Pinsonnault



Monday 8:00 am **April 8 (St. Mark)**
All deceased Holy Union
Sisters and Associates

Tuesday 4:30 pm **April 9 (St. Mark)**
Arthur Harris

Wednesday 8:00 am **April 10 (St. Mark)**
People of the Parish

Thursday 8:00 am **April 11 (St. Mark)**
People of the Parish



April 13/14 – The 3rd Sunday of Easter

Saturday 4:00 pm **April 13 – Vigil (St. Mary)**
Matthew McGowan

Sunday 8:00 am **April 14 (St. Mark)**
Marjorie Morrissey
Raymond Gauthier

Sunday 9:30 am **April 14 (St. Mary)**
Teresita Cadena

Sunday 11:00 am **April 14 (Sacred Heart)**
Mike Bruno
Arthur Desrosiers

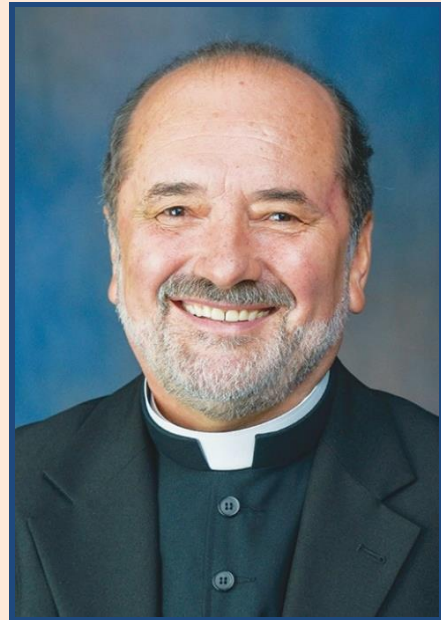


Parish Contributions

Collection for March 23/24: \$12,569.30
Easter Flowers: \$3,911.00
Good Friday Holy Land Collection: \$2,506.50
Collection for March 30/31: \$33,318.80
Collection for Retired Priests: \$7,320.50



Welcome Bishop da Cunha!



Today, April 7, as we conclude the Easter Octave, we are pleased to welcome Bishop Edgar M. da Cunha, bishop of the Diocese of Fall River, who will celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation with our young people. Welcome back to North Attleborough, Bishop Edgar!

Welcome & Congratulations!

On Saturday evening, March 30, during the solemn Easter Vigil, eight adults were initiated into our Catholic Church. After months (and years) of prayer and discernment, discussion and study, these men and women celebrated Baptism (or made a profession of faith, having been baptized at an earlier time in a Christian church), Confirmation, and received Eucharist for the first time. We thank our newly initiated for their wonderful witness and pledge our prayerful support and encouragement as they join us in living our Catholic Faith!



Pictured left to right with their sponsors during the Rite of Confirmation at the Vigil are:

Donald Dearie, Michaela Harris, Ted Welsh, Joshua Williams, Jack Charnley, Jaycie Jordan, Brianna Revellese, and Rolinda Ward.

Many thanks to the members of our R.C.I.A team: Arlene Hall, Ann Allen, Karen Smith, and Erik Morris for their generous sharing of time and faith, helping to form, encourage, and nurture these adults on their Faith journey. Special thanks to the sponsors of our newly initiated for their support and witness.

Confirmation Congratulations

This Sunday, April 7, Bishop da Cunha will complete the initiation of 88 of our young people in the Sacrament of Confirmation. Our prayerful best wishes are extended to these youth and their parents, families and sponsors.

Mason Alger, Evan Augusta, Tyler Brayley, Ryan Burdette, Noah Callahan, Ryan Carella, Stella Cassidy, Ashli Cavalieri, Tyler Chouinard, Neve Constantine, Isabel Cox, Bridget Cronin, Brooklyn Crump, Ella Cuoco, Addison Curran, Andrew Custodio, Gracyn Cuzzi, Serena DaRosa, Zachary Deck, Francesca DeGuilio, Nicholas DiFonzo, Matthew Doyon, Collin Duperron, Gregory Eugene, Alexander Falzone, Luke Farias, Hailey Fleming, Ava Furtado, Zachary Goulart, Halina Gould, Megan Grintchenko, Nathan Gustafson, Ryan Gustafson, Ava Haffner, William Haviland, Brady Holzman, Connor Jacobs, Sofia Jivoain, Adelle Kenney, Russell Avery Kenney, William Kilroy, Ava Kraskouskas, Raegan Langille, Abigail Latham, Michael LaVoie, Audrey Leahy, Emily Leco, Grace Leung, Thomas Manning, Zachary McCarthy, Bridget McKenna, Charlotte Mello, McKenzie Messier, Ryan Mosca, Leyah Mourad, Jesse Nesbit, Emily O'Donnell, Shamus O'Donnell, Emma O'Leary, Eva O'Leary, Morgan Parkinson, Reagan Peters, Michaela Poidomani, Nathan Poisson, Rebecca Poisson, Aaron Pratt, Jack Rader, Lorenzo Rivas, Jake Ronci, Nico Siravo, Isabella Sousa, Will Souza, Theresa Stigliano, Meghan Tamul, Nathan Tillett, Liam Tynan, Cameron Vaughn, Maya Velazquez, Aubrey Violet, Charlotte Way, Natalie Weishaar, Anthony White, Makayla White, Abigail Wholey, Kyle Wilfert, Conor Wright, Mia Zammiello, and Ava Zibuda

Women Guild Team Trivia Night:

April 9, 2024 at 6:00 pm, St. Mary Church Hall

Please join us on **Tuesday, April 9th** for a fun evening of socializing over a game of team trivia. Teams will be set up that evening. Prizes will be awarded to the top three teams.



Sounds interesting but you don't want to compete? You can come and enjoy watching the competition and cheering on the teams. All women of the parish are welcome.



Please Remember our Deceased Parishioners:

Dawn Elizabeth (Gaboury) Ryan

Lori Ann (Nolin) Read

H. William "Bill" Donnelly

Mary L. (Tally) Curran

Thomas Mournighan



*Eternal rest grant unto our beloved dead, O Lord.
Let perpetual light shine upon them.*

New Website & New Online Giving Platform



Please note that we are in the process of redesigning our parish website and plan to roll out our new online presence within a few weeks. As part of this process (and it is a lengthy process, for sure!), our online giving platform will also change.

At present, our parish uses two distinct online giving companies. These were both used before the merging of the parishes into the new Transfiguration Parish. The new website company has an online component which ties directly into our parish census allowing for more streamlined financial recording and tracking. There are many threads that need to be woven together before this process is up and running.

When all of these moving parts are in place and ready to work for us, we will be doing a full roll-out of the new website and the new online giving platform. Your patience is GREATLY appreciated!

2024 Mass Intention Book

The 2024 Mass Intention Book is open. The current Mass schedule provides for fewer opportunities for parishioners to remember their beloved dead at weekend Masses. For this reason, we will schedule, when necessary, multiple intentions for weekend Masses. There is no limit on the number of daily Mass intentions. Please contact the office via email, phone, or in writing with your requests.



2024 Lenten Parish Charity

As announced previously in this bulletin, we are currently gratefully receiving your donations for our 2024 Lenten charity: the Holy Union Sisters ministering in Tanzania, Africa. The Sisters are currently celebrating 50 years of presence and work among the people in this developing nation. To mark this significant anniversary, they are focusing on three projects: a new autism center at their school for physically challenged children & youth; a new formation house for the Congregation; and a health center for a growing, rural village. Our donations will help make these projects a reality.

You may use the donation envelopes found at the doors of each of our church buildings or use your own envelope. If doing this, please mark it "Lenten Charity." If writing a check, please write it out to "Transfiguration Parish." The parish will send one combined check to the Holy Union Sisters. Your donations may be sent directly to the parish office or dropped in the collection basket at weekend Mass. Many thanks for your generosity!

On behalf of the Sisters and those they serve throughout Tanzania:

Mungu awabariki sana!
(May God bless you abundantly!)

Transfiguration of the Lord Respect Life Group

April 8 – Solemnity of the Annunciation:

The Respect Life Group invites you to attend Mass on Monday, April 8th at 8 AM at Saint Mark Church to celebrate the Solemnity of the Annunciation.



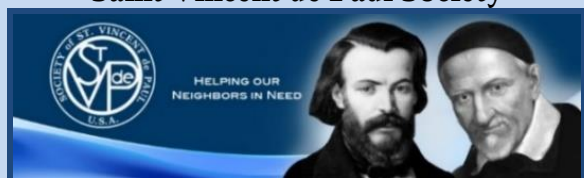
This feast, while not a day of obligation, is of great significance because it celebrates the Incarnation of our Savior, the Word made flesh in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. All are welcome to come to honor Mary's choice, and God's plan, enacted through her response to the Angel Gabriel.

Support Janet's Mafia in the Pan Mass Challenge!

Help support the Pan Mass Challenge team of Janet's Mafia and get a chance to win a MacBook Air 13" with M2 Chip. Raffle tickets will be sold after all Masses *this* weekend of **April 6/7.** Tickets are **\$10** each, with 100% of sales supporting funding for research to change breast cancer protocols to include brain MRI's as part of the initial screening diagnosis. Janet's Mafia team thanks you for your support. John, Matt and Ed Kent, Michael, Maura, Maddy and James Thursby and Kelsey Rode.



Transfiguration of the Lord Parish Saint Vincent de Paul Society



Inspired by Gospel values, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, a Catholic lay organization, leads women and men to join to grow spiritually by offering person-to-person service to those who are in need or are suffering, in the tradition of its founder, Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, and patron, St. Vincent de Paul. The Society meets on the 2nd Thursday of the month in the parish hall in Saint Mary Church. Please join us!

Call for Assistance:

If you need assistance, please call the help line for our parish Saint Vincent de Paul Society. They can offer information about the types of assistance available. Please call 508-212-4755 for help or more information.

SMSH SkyDome: Open to the Public

On Wednesday, April 10th from 9:15-10:00, the public is invited to Sacred Heart church hall to attend a free presentation of **SkyDome Planetarium-See the Stars.** SkyDome is a portable inflatable planetarium system. This program is for elementary aged children and will begin promptly at 9:15am. Sacred Heart church hall entrance is located on the right side of the church at 58 Church North Attleboro, MA.

Knights of Columbus Council #330



Monthly Meeting:

Council #330 of the Knights of Columbus has been serving the Catholic Community of North Attleborough for 125 years. The Knights meet on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7pm, in the St. Mary Church Hall. Please drop by on meeting nights if you'd like to learn more about the Knights. Council #330 is committed to assisting local charities that align with the values of our Faith such as the Parish, the Parish school, and Abundant Hope. Please contact Jim Schromm via email with any questions: jim.schromm@verizon.net.

Knights of Columbus Diaper Drive:

The Knights of Columbus are organizing a Diaper Drive to benefit Abundant Hope Pregnancy Resource Center. We are requesting donations of diapers in all sizes, but Abundant Hope is in dire need of larger size diapers, (sizes 5 and 6). We are also requesting donations of diaper wipes. We will have containers at each of the three North Attleborough churches, starting the weekend of April 14, and continuing into the month of May. Thank you very much for your support of Abundant Hope and the Knights!

Friends of SMSH Outing

As announced, the Friends of SMSH is offering various one-day and multi-day outings. Join us on Wednesday, May 22 for the "Ricky Nelson Remembered" show, at Lake Pearl in Wrentham, MA. Price per person is **\$89.00** and includes luncheon, tax and gratuity, and show ticket. Information flyers are available at the doors of the church or you may contact Nancy Chapman or May Courbron at 508-243-2904 or by email: friendsofsmsh@gmail.com for more information. Please note that tickets are NOT sold at the door.



Please join us at **Saint Mark Church** on Friday, **May 3rd**, beginning at 9:00 a.m. and ending at 6:00 p.m. with Benediction. Remember, as we share in the work of Redemption, so will we be rewarded with our own redemption. For more information call Joanne Regali (508-643-3821) or Arlene Hall (508-801-2243). Please leave a message if the call is not answered immediately.

Faith Formation Program 2023-2024

Director of Religious Education ~ Mrs. Elaine Corvese
508-695-3823; transfigurationled@gmail.com

Faith Formation Office hours:
Monday – Thursday: 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Dates of First Communion:



HOLY EUCHARIST

May 4, 2024: 10:00 a.m. Saint Mary Church
May 4, 2024: 1:00 p.m. Saint Mary Church
May 11, 2024: 10:00 a.m. Saint Mary Church

From the Diocesan Office of Child Protection:

Did you know... All members of the clergy, Directors of Religious Education and teachers in our schools are Mandated Reporters in Massachusetts and required by law to report any suspected child abuse. Many children will not tell anyone they are being abused. Because the Diocese believes in our moral obligation to protect children, we extend the safe environment training to all who minister, work or volunteer. Watch for signs of abuse and, if you are concerned about a child, share those concerns with a mandated reporter at your parish or school. Let us all be a voice for children who may not be able to speak for themselves.

Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School: SSMH is a Family!



SMSH is a close-knit family where every student feels welcomed and loved as brothers and sisters. This special school is noted for forming friendships that last a lifetime. Our Saints are engaged with each other, their teachers and their classwork. They learn to authentically love by helping other members of their school and caring for needs above their own, just as in a family. One of our shining examples of this family feeling is our buddy program. This is where upper grade students are “buddied up” with lower grade students. These paired grades work on projects together all while growing in friendship and as family. Our buddy program teaches older students about the responsibility of caring for someone younger and gives the younger student a sense of comfort knowing that another student is looking out for them. And if you were to ask any SMSH alum, what makes SMSH SMSH - they would all respond - SMSH is a family! We invite you to learn more about our Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School students and programs by visiting our school’s website at: www.smshschool.com.

SAINTS

SAINT MARY-SACRED HEART

Experience a Day as a SSMH SAINT:
Shadowing Opportunity for Middle School Students



Prospective middle school students are invited to join our vibrant SSMH community as they shadow and embody the spirit of being a SSMH Saint for a Day!

During this special day, your student will immerse themselves in the SSMH community by making new friends among our SSMH Saints, attending classes, sharing lunch and engaging with our amazing faculty and staff. Your student will have the opportunity to ask questions of all kinds, or simply observe and absorb the unique atmosphere of SSMH.

Participating in this program provides a firsthand experience of community life at SSMH and a chance to see what it’s like to be a part of our Saints community.

Middle Schoolers interested in taking part in the SSMH Saint for a Day shadow experience can easily sign up by contacting Mrs. O’Heir in the main office at 508-695-3072. Schedule your day now!



Did you know that by being a Saint you can reserve your spot at the premier Catholic high school - Bishop Feehan?



The 5th, 6th, and 7th students of Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School are offered the opportunity to apply for admission to Bishop Feehan High School through the Early Action Program. This is just one of the many ways our Saints are authentically connected to the Feehan community. SSMH is also so fortunate to have a Feehan experience each week as Senior Shamrocks mentor our Saints right on our campus. How “Lucky” are these Saints! We invite you to explore the Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School website www.smshschool.com. You will learn how the SSMH teachers and staff truly prepare the Saints to shine as they march their way on over to the home of the Shamrocks.

Saint of the Week: Saint Julie Billiard

Born in Cuvilly, France, into a family of well-to-do farmers, young Marie Rose Julie Billiard showed an early interest in religion and in helping the sick and poor. Though the first years of her life were relatively peaceful and uncomplicated, Julie had to take up manual work as a young teen when her family lost its money. However, she spent her spare time teaching catechism to young people and to the farm laborers.

A mysterious illness overtook her when she was about 30. Witnessing an attempt to wound or even kill her father, Julie was paralyzed and became a complete invalid. For the next two decades, she continued to teach catechism lessons from her bed, offered spiritual advice, and attracted visitors who had heard of her holiness.

When the French Revolution broke out in 1789, revolutionary forces became aware of her allegiance to fugitive priests. With the help of friends, she was smuggled out of Cuvilly in a haycart. She then spent several years hiding in Compiègne, being moved from house to house despite her growing physical pain. She even lost the power of speech for a time.

But this period also proved to be a fruitful spiritual time for Julie. It was at this time she had a vision in which she saw Calvary surrounded by women in religious habits and heard a voice saying, "Behold these spiritual daughters whom I give you in an institute marked by the cross."

As time passed and Julie continued her mobile life, she made the acquaintance of an aristocratic woman, Françoise Blin de Bourdon, who shared Julie's interest in teaching the faith. In 1803, the two women began the Institute of Notre Dame, which was dedicated to the education of the poor, young Christian girls, and the training of catechists. The following year the first Sisters of Notre Dame made their vows. That was the same year that Julie recovered from the illness: She was able to walk for the first time in 22 years.

Though Julie had always been attentive to the special needs of the poor and that always remained her priority, she also became aware that other classes in society needed Christian instruction. From the founding of the Sisters of Notre Dame until her death, Julie was on the road, opening a variety of schools in France and Belgium that served the poor and the wealthy, vocational groups, teachers. Ultimately, Julie and Françoise moved the motherhouse to Namur, Belgium. Julie died there in 1816 and was canonized in 1969.



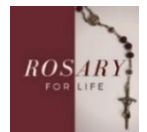
The Feast Day of Saint Julie Billiard: April 8th



Julie Billiard would often say: "*Ah! How good is the good God!*" She founded the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur to make known God's goodness, especially among the most impoverished and abandoned people in the world. Today, Sisters of Notre Dame work with refugees in London, street children in Nairobi, immigrant farm workers in Florida, AIDS orphans in Zimbabwe, the homeless in Haiti... and always, with women and children, who are among the most vulnerable.

Rosary for Life

The Respect Life Committee of Transfiguration of the Lord Parish is pleased to announce that we will lead a Rosary for Life at 4:00 pm, prior to the 4:30 pm daily Mass in **Saint Mark Church** on the *first, second, fourth, and fifth Tuesday* of each month. The communal Rosary is also livestreamed for any participants who wish to join us remotely.



Tuesday Communal Rosary Schedule



Tuesday, April 9, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)
Tuesday, April 16, 2024: Prayer & Pizza (5PM)
Tuesday, April 23, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)
Tuesday, April 30, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)

2023 Donation Statements Are Now Available

The 2023 year-end tax reports are available, **PER YOUR REQUEST, for those parishioners using the budget envelope system. Loose checks mailed or placed in the collection are not recorded by the budget company.** Please contact Martha in the office at stmaryna@noozi.com or call 508-695-6161 and leave a message with your name and address if you would like your statement. Contribution letters will be mailed. Thank you for your support of our parish community.



The 2nd Sunday of Easter - April 7, 2024

READINGS FOR THE WEEK



Excerpts from the *Lectionary for Mass for Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America, second typical edition* © 2001, 1998, 1997, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Inc., Washington, DC. Used with permission. All rights reserved. No portion of this text may be reproduced by any means without permission in writing from the copyright owner.

First Reading

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common. With great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great favor was accorded them all. There was no needy person among them, for those who owned property or houses would sell them, bring the proceeds of the sale, and put them at the feet of the apostles, and they were distributed to each according to need.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



Easter Responsorial Psalm

R. This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad.

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,
his mercy endures forever.
Let the house of Israel say,
"His mercy endures forever."

R. This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad.

The LORD's right hand has struck with pow'r;
the LORD's right hand is exalted.
I shall not die, but live, and
declare the works of the LORD.

R. This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad.

The stone which the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.
By the LORD has this been done;
it is wonderful in our eyes.

R. This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad.

Second Reading

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Colossians

Beloved: Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is begotten by God, and everyone who loves the Father loves also the one begotten by him. In this way we know that we love the children of God when we love God and obey his commandments. For the love of God is this, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, for whoever is begotten by God conquers the world. And the victory that conquers the world is our faith. Who indeed is the victor over the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

This is the one who came through water and blood, Jesus Christ, not by water alone, but by water and blood. The Spirit is the one that testifies, and the Spirit is truth.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

R. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

You believe in me, Thomas, because you have seen me, says the Lord; Blessed are those who have not seen me, but still believe!

R. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

† A reading from the holy Gospel according to John
Glory to you, O Lord.

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."

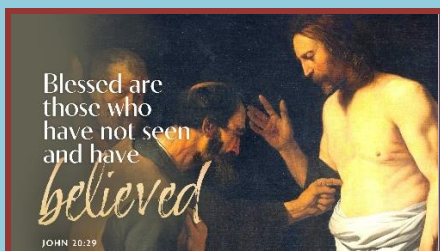
Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nailmarks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

When daffodils and crocuses crowd the garden walk, when the sun breaks over a clear spring morn, when all around is blossoming or in bloom, it's almost too easy to believe in the goodness of life, in the resurrection of the world. But when a child dies at the hands of an abuser, a family suffers the loss of a farm it has long tended, or a whole people become victims of human greed and cruelty, we wonder. How can this happen? How can God allow this to happen? How can we believe in resurrection with all these "deaths" around us? Resurrection faith demands such belief. Resurrection faith calls our attention to the fact that life comes out of death. There, in the passage from death to life, we encounter the risen Lord. The sign of Easter and its abiding joy is not the lily, not the newborn babe, but the empty tomb. A sign of meaninglessness, death, and contradiction, yes. But clearly, the most powerful sign of life.

Comment:

In today's first reading, Luke paints an all-but-idyllic picture of the earliest Christian community. The passage is one of Luke's famous "summaries" and describes the Spirit-inspired unity—the "one heart and mind"—of the first followers of Christ. Luke wants us to understand that unity is an effect, a sign of resurrection, here and now. Where there is union, there is life. In the second reading, John instructs us that we are children of God, united in faith, part of one, unified family in Christ risen from death. John goes to some pains in order to specify what our faith in Christ entails, namely, accepting and living God's commandments. Such acceptance and living will give us the ability to overcome the corrupt powers of the world. Our belief grants us a share in the victory Christ has already achieved by virtue of his death and resurrection. John insists that our faith is powerful because we have received the Spirit, who will never deceive us or fail us, for "the Spirit is truth." Today's Gospel is an account of one of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances to the apostles and includes the story of "doubting Thomas." It is important to understand that this last chapter of the Gospel according to John is regarded by many scholars as the last of the evangelist's writings. In it, John is telling the Christian community that Jesus is present to them, although not present in the flesh. John is urging the post-resurrection community (and that includes us) to acquire a broader faith. The Gospel ends with John telling us that he has carefully chosen the "signs" he has recorded in order to help the young Church flourish. John also reminds us to watch carefully for the signs of resurrection in our own lives. In them, Jesus Christ is present.

Reflection:

Any artist who has ever painted a picture or created a sculpture of the risen Lord owes a debt to "doubting Thomas." Thomas wanted an absolutely clear image of the risen Lord; he wanted to see and touch the wounds of Christ. Ever since, artists have been in sync with Thomas' visual and tactile demands and have provided us with such images. The image of the "wounded" Lord is not simply a matter of artistic representation or taste. It is, rather, a matter of faith. Lacking those wounds, the risen Lord is not the crucified Lord. Thomas has helped artists and all the rest of us recognize that before a resurrection, there comes a death. Thomas has helped us feel in our bones that our God is a God who takes human suffering seriously and out of it—even out of its seeming meaninglessness—can bring wondrous significance and new life. The risen Lord whom Thomas demanded to behold and examine is the only Lord whom Thomas believing in. That Lord wears the wounds of death yet promises the healing of life. That Lord assures us that our faith in him is not misplaced, that hope in him will be fulfilled, and that loving him even in suffering is what resurrected life is all about.

Copyright © 2002, World Library Publications. All rights reserved.



Invest time each week to expand your vocabulary and deepen your faith.

07 April 2024

WORD OF THE WEEK

Annunciation \ə-,nen-sē-ā-shən\

From Latin, "to bring news," the angelic proclamation to Mary of Nazareth that she would be the mother of Jesus. Mary's submission to this divine plan is simply given: "Let it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38). Her "yes" is often referred to as Mary's *fiat* (Latin for "let it be done").

Pronunciation: <https://tinyurl.com/Take5-annunciation>

CONTEXT

The mystery of the **Annunciation** reveals the depth of God's love for us, and his desire to be in relationship with us.
—Henri Nouwen

The **Annunciation** is the revelation of the mystery of the Incarnation at the very beginning of its fulfillment.
—Pope John Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater*

The importance of the **Annunciation** is underscored by the fact that this is the first mystery of the Rosary and is celebrated by the Angelus as well.
—David Bryan

WHY IT MATTERS

Unlike many saving acts that are unilaterally achieved by the divine will, in the **Annunciation** a woman is invited to participate in the saving event that has consequences for all people and all time. Mary's yes is universal and limitless. At the **Annunciation**, Mary perfectly consents to God's will, then bears the Son, and is filled with the Spirit, which, as theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar notes, is wholly trinitarian.

From Pope Paul VI's *Marialis Cultus* ("Devotion to Mary"): [The **Annunciation** observance] was and is a joint one of Christ and of the Blessed Virgin: of the Word, who becomes Son of Mary, and of the Virgin, who becomes Mother of God.

RELATED WORDS

Hyperdulia | Assumption | Immaculate Conception

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

What do I need to know about Mary?

There is the biblical Mary of Nazareth, who fulfills Isaiah's Emmanuel prophecy by giving birth to a child who is "God with us." Her Magnificat canticle foreshadows Jesus' proclamation that the mighty will be brought down while the poor are lifted up. Mary plays other noteworthy roles: advocating for a miracle at Cana, being present at the cross, and participating in the Spirit's reception at Pentecost. Finally, as Mary is the first disciple of her son, she is the ideal model for all of us.

The church teaches four doctrines about Mary. Two declarations declare her a virgin as well as the Mother of God. Two later doctrines teach that Mary was conceived immaculately (sinless) and that, at the point of death, was assumed body and soul to heaven.

Devotionally, Mary plays a large role in popular piety. Her icon has been venerated since the early centuries in the East. By means of the Rosary, litanies, and pilgrimage, people of many lands feel a special closeness to the mother of Jesus who is mother to all.

—Alice Camille, from *Questions Catholics Ask* <http://tinyurl.com/QCA-about-Mary>

REFLECTION OF THE WEEK

SOLEMNITY OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD (APRIL 8)

The three best words

Mary is the mother of the church and the model of all Christians. At the message of an angel, she believed beyond all reason and offered her life in service of God's plan. Her response, "let it be," is the answer of every disciple who trusts in God's word to make all things new. In the season of Lent, God invites us to believe that we, too, are called to that service.

READINGS: Isaiah 7:10-14; 8:10; Hebrews 10:4-10; Luke 1:26-38 (545 <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/040824.cfm>). "May it be done to me according to your word."

FAITH IN ACTION

Though we are sinners, we must live in hope of God's forgiveness and trust that God will work through us to bring about the fulfillment of an eternal plan to save the world.

