

I AM THE  
RESURRECTION  
*and the*  
LIFE.

*John 11:25*

Immaculate Conception Church  
Stony Point, New York



“Exult, let them exult the hosts of heaven, exult, let Angel ministers of God exult, let the trumpet of salvation sound loud our mighty King’s triumph!” Those words began the most glorious the Easter Proclamation from the Vigil Service live streamed last night. Christ indeed has risen, the gift of eternal life, not death, is ours. The darkness of sin has been broken by the light of glory. The cross which we worship as our sign of faith, is now glorified, no longer a symbol of death but one of hope. This is why we have fasted, prayed and reconciled for this Lent.

Like Mary Magdalene in the gospel today, we too want to shout out ‘HE HAS RISEN!’ It is the joy of Christ’s resurrection that fills our hearts today. The empty, barren feeling many of us had because of our Lenten journey of fasting and self-sacrifice has been rewarded. Especially the emptiness we are all feeling during this time of dealing the best we can with this Covid-19 pandemic. At the Easter Vigil Service, the candle was blessed and lit from the new fire. The Fire represents Christ’s resurrection. The lit candle is the Light of Christ that shines in the darkness. The five grains of incense that were inserted at the vigil, represent the five wounds of Christ.

Every year at this time, I share with you a description and explanation of our Paschal Candle. This year’s candle is called *‘The Resurrection and the Life’*. It is based on John’s Gospel, the encounter with Martha at the tomb of Lazarus, her brother. In that encounter, Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” The design of the candle features a cross. The cross features a fleur-de-lis, or lily flower, a symbol of the Trinity. Metallic gold represents majesty, joy and celebration, white signifies Christ’s purity and red for the enormous suffering and death Jesus endured for us.

The theme of our Paschal Candle this year, especially at this time of self-distancing and remaining at home, I pray, gives us strength. Although we are not together this Easter Sunday, our faith is still strong like that of Martha. Even in her sadness and mourning over the death of her brother Lazarus, she still believes! We are indeed Martha today! We to believe that Christ is the Resurrection and Life. We also believe that through our faith and discipleship we will never die. That is what we celebrate today, the conquering of sin and death and the promise of life eternal.

The decorated church is open, the doors themselves are open this Easter Sunday, like the tomb was open that first Easter Sunday. As people have been stopping by each Sunday for private prayer, I invite you to do the same today. Outside the church you will see a table with small containers of Easter Holy Water that was blessed last night. Please feel free to take a bottle home to use in blessing yourselves and your families this Easter day. The Holy Water bottles are spread out enough that you will only be touching the bottle you take. There are 120 bottles, (if none remain at your visit, we will have more available inside the secondary doors of the church. Remember, Easter is not just one day, as we celebrate the Octave Week of Easter, that means each day this week, mass is celebrated as if it is Easter Sunday again). If you come to the church Sunday, you may look in, even enter the church to see the beautiful decorations, bring the children, dressed in their Easter suits and dresses, take pictures! ... please use social distancing if other parishioners are in the church as well during your visit. The church will be open Easter Sunday from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm. Easter Mass will be live streamed on our parish Facebook page at 9:00 am. The Cardinal’s mass will be televised at 10:00 am on channel 11. I will live stream again after the Cardinal’s mass as past Sunday’s to primarily talk to the children, but of course all are welcome!

Thank you all for your continuing support to Immaculate. Palm Sunday’s collection totaled \$5,144.00. This generous amount came from parishioners who mailed or dropped off their envelopes to the rectory. Another \$260.00 was received by way of the electronic program of WeShare. If you are able to send your donations during this stressed financial time, it is greatly appreciated. If you drop your envelope at the rectory, to the right of the outside door, in the interior closure, there is a white box you may leave it in. Again, thank you all.

May the Glory of Easter strengthen us during this time of separation. May this Easter Season we now being, allow us to truly be an Easter People. Soon, we will be together again, and like the joy of this Easter Day, indeed we will all celebrate with prayer, joy and song. On behalf of Deacons Phil Marino, John Sadowski, Ughetta Jilleba, our Coordinator of Religious Study and Margie Celenza, our Parish Secretary, I send to you our prayer and love this Easter Sunday. As we as a family of faith remain strong in faith, may we continue to pray for one another at our homes until we are united in person once again!

- Fr. Herbert T DeGaris

**FROM THE DEACON'S BENCH**  
**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK**

**He will swallow up death in victory and the Lord  
God will wipe away tears from all our faces.**

**Isaiah 25-8**

**A Blessed Easter to everyone** – The month of April is traditionally dedicated to devotion to Jesus in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist – The Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus – received into our souls every time we receive Holy Communion. The Eucharist is Jesus' love for us. While we cannot, at this time, attend Holy Mass and Holy Communion, we know that Jesus is with us always.

**Excerpts from Pope Francis' April 2017 "I am with you always..."**: "God will be with us, every day, until the end of the world. Jesus will walk with us, every day, ... the Christian never feels abandoned, because Jesus assures us that He does not await us only at the end of our long journey, but also accompanies us in all of our days... There will be no day in our life in which we will cease to be a concern for the heart of God... because He loves us... He will not abandon us in the time of trial and darkness... If He has guaranteed to us that He will never abandon us, that the beginning of every vocation is a "Follow me", with which He assures us -- He will always stay in front of us, then why fear? ... Jesus' promise that "I am with you" lets us stand up with hope, trusting that the good God is already working to accomplish what feels humanly impossible... they know that God's love precedes them: there is no part of the world that is excluded from the victory of the Risen Christ... The victory of love."

**St. Paul tells us** "I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:38-39).

**Parents teach your children to:** Follow Jesus and trust Him – For Jesus is with us always and will always dwell in the hearts of the faithful.

May every person today and forever bow on bended knees to "Our Lord, and Our God" who is with us always.

**FOOD PANTRY NEWS**

**UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE,**

**THE FOOD PANTRY WILL BE CLOSED.**

We are asking at this present time that No perishable items be donated. At this immediate time, there will not be the annual collection of hams for Easter.

**REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS**

All those who are ill at home, in the hospital and in nursing homes, especially: John Capria, Billy Keenan, Michael Fay, Ruth Ann Melia , and Nora Malloy.

**Our recently deceased:** Eugene Kerr.

We will announce at the Mass on Sunday for a period of one month the intentions of those who are sick and then we will print them for one month. After that we ask that you please contact us to make sure that they are placed on the list again for another cycle. It is the only way we know if someone has recovered. We thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

**MASSES FOR THE WEEK**

**HOLY SATURDAY, APRIL 11<sup>TH</sup>**

8:00 Albert J. Kaiser, Sr. - Easter Vigil Service

**EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 12<sup>TH</sup>**

7:30 Virginia Schindele (req. by family)

9:30 Vincent Lyons (req. by family)

11:30 *For the People of the Parish*

**MONDAY, APRIL 13<sup>TH</sup>**

7:30 James Faherty (req. by family)

**TUESDAY, APRIL 14<sup>TH</sup>**

7:30 Geraldine Geary (req. by family)

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15<sup>TH</sup>**

7:30 Daniel Cirruzzo (req. by Linda Levirne)

**THURSDAY, APRIL 16<sup>TH</sup>**

7:30 Anthony Dimino

(req. by Pat & Angela Amatulle)

**FRIDAY, APRIL 17<sup>TH</sup>**

7:30 Anna Sutherland (req. by husband)

**SATURDAY, APRIL 18<sup>TH</sup>**

8:30 Virginia Schindele (req. by family)

5:30 Vigil John G. Griffin (req. by family)

**SUNDAY, APRIL 19<sup>TH</sup>**

7:30 *For the People of the Parish*

9:30 Mary Eugene Martin (req. by family)

11:30 Joseph Hanlon (req. by family)

**CALENDAR RAFFLE WINNERS**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Prize</u>	<u>Ticket</u>	<u>Winner</u>
4/6	\$ 50	1452	Brent Hobbs
4/7	\$ 25	1631	Meghan Goggin
4/8	\$ 25	110	Franklin Bosques
4/9	\$ 25	1604	Kitty Donovan
4/10	\$ 50	670	Desiree/Carolle Stoll
4/11	\$ 25	2120	Peter/Gia McCarron
4/12	\$ 50	2057	Anthony Spataro

**Congratulations to all the winners. Once the Parish Office reopens, your prizes will be mailed to you.**

***In Loving Memory***  
of  
***Albert J. Kaiser, Sr.***  
***donated by***  
***the family***  
***and***

***In Loving Memory***  
of  
***The Freeman Family***  
***donated by***  
***the family***  
***and***

***In Loving Memory***  
of  
***Patricia Montagne Lopez***  
***donated by***  
***the family***

**NEWS OF INTEREST**

Please keep informed of the latest information from the Archdiocese by joining our Parish Facebook page at *Immaculate Conception Roman Catholic Church*, our website at *immaculatesp.org* or through our text message system known as *Flocknote*. Simple instructions to join *Flocknote* is available on the Home Page of our website.

As we continue to struggle through this time of COVID-19, as a people of faith we know God is indeed watching over us. Please make an act of Spiritual Communion reception to keep that faith strong and on the forefront of our minds and hearts. That prayer, a prayer in time of need and a beautiful prayer by our Holy Father to the Virgin Mary of Protection are listed below.

**An Act of Spiritual Communion**

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

**A Prayer in Time of Need**

Loving Father, our life and our hope, come to our aid in this difficult and uncertain time. Look with mercy on all who suffer from the coronavirus. Bless them and their families with Your healing, consolation and peace. Guide and be with all who care for them. Give wisdom and insight to those working to stop the spread of this disease, and help them find a way to cure it. Console our anxious hearts, strengthen our faith, and give us the grace to trust in Your goodness. Restore communities affected by the virus to wholeness and health, and in Your loving mercy, give Your help and protection to all. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Prayer to the Virgin Mary for Protection (from Pope Francis and adjusted for our use)**

O Mary, you shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick. At the foot of the Cross you participated in Jesus' pain, with steadfast faith. You, Our Lady of New York, know what we need. We are certain that you will provide, so that, as you did at Cana of Galilee, joy and feasting might return after this moment of trial. Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform ourselves to the Father's will and to do what Jesus tells us: He who took our sufferings upon Himself, and bore our sorrows to bring us, through the Cross, to the joy of the Resurrection. We seek refuge under your protection, O Holy Mother of God. Do not despise our pleas – we who are put to the test – and deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin. Amen.

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