

April 11, 2021 DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

THE JOY OF BEING BACK!

Last Thursday, our church was packed for the celebration of the Lord's Last Supper: HOLY THURSDAY, the first day of the TRIDUUM of the HOLY WEEK. When I say packed, I mean that we reached the maximum number of people allowed by the current 6-foot distancing. It was great to see so many people back in church. It was music to my ears to hear so many people tell me: "*Father, I am so happy to be back*". THE JOY OF BEING BACK had begun on PALM SUNDAY. IT IS CONTINUING! PRAISE THE LORD! Let us pray that more and more people will come back to join us to celebrate the Eucharist together as an assembly in our church!

Over 200 people participated in Holy Thursday Mass of the last Supper. The Narthex was packed with about 30 people (maximum allowed currently) and the Father Martin Hall with 60 people. The Altar Guild had done a wonderful job decorating the Father Martin Hall to allow the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at the end of the Mass and until midnight. They had used their spiritual imagination and had decorated the Hall with Palm Trees and Flowers and had renamed the Hall: "*THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE*". The good surprise for all of us was when the procession with the Blessed Sacrament from the church entered the Father Martin Hall, we found out that all the chairs were already taken, and people welcomed the Blessed Sacrament and the Procession with great reverence and joy. They truly were ready to spend some time in prayer with the Lord as he went through a night of Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. What an amazing way to join Jesus at the beginning of His Passion. We encourage everyone to spend time in silent Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament during these 50 days of Easter Season. Make a resolution to come and spend at least One Holy Hour with the Lord in our new Adoration Chapel. You can sign up for one or two hours of weekly Adoration from 10 am till noon Monday through Friday.

The JOY OF BEING BACK in the church is truly "*contagious*". It can spread like a fire. The HOLY SPIRIT can use such renewed energy to make all of us more "*PASSIONATE*" Disciples of Christ, with the ZEAL to proclaim to everyone the Good News of Our Lord Jesus Christ: HE IS RISEN. HE IS TRULY RISEN. ALLELUIA! ALLELUIA! When Jesus rises from the dead the world is changed ONCE FOR ALL. With HIS Resurrection we have reached the top of the Easter Mountain we have been climbing for 40 days: after this, there are no more heights to climb. We are already with Our Lord Jesus Christ, HOPEFUL that as HE is risen, HE will also lift us up where HE HAS GONE: HEAVEN! At the end of the 50 DAYS of the Easter Season, we will celebrate the DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT at PENTECOST! We are no longer climbing! We are staying on this Spiritual PLATEAU of Easter Season, a SPIRITUAL HIGH for another 50 days of continuous JOY OF EASTER, but at the end of those 50 days, GOD WILL SEND DOWN HIS SPIRIT UPON US! A SPIRIT TO TRANSFORM US, a SPIRIT TO GUIDE ALL OUR STEPS ON EARTH AND LEAD US TO HEAVEN!!!

As we are entering this most JOYFUL SEASON OF EASTER, I invite each of you to meditate on the following inspiring verses of the Easter Sequence which was sung at each Mass on Easter Sunday:

*"Christians. To the Paschal Victim
Offer your THANKFUL PRAISES!
A Lamb, the sheep redeem;
CHRIST, who only is sinless,
RECONCILES SINNERS TO THE FATHER...
YES! CHRIST MY HOPE HAS ARISEN...
CHRIST INDEED FROM DEATH IS RISEN,
OUR NEW LIFE OBTAINING!
HAVE MERCY! VICTOR KING, EVER REIGNING!
AMEN. ALLELUIA!!!*

I encourage you to read again the above verses, and think about the SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION that Jesus instituted for us when HE breathed the HOLY SPIRIT upon His Disciples to give them and their successors, today's priests, this awesome POWER TO FORGIVE SINS in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit (John 20:22-23)! We ask JESUS to HAVE MERCY on us. THIS IS THE GREAT GIFT OF DIVINE MERCY POURED UPON EACH ONE OF US! It includes the GIFT OF THE SACRAMENTS of Baptism and Confession, through the cleansing power of the WATER FLOWING FROM THE PIERCED HEART OF JESUS ON THE CROSS, AND THE GREATEST GIFT OF ALL: THE EUCHARIST through the FLOW OF BLOOD from the same pierced Heart. This is the vision that St Faustina had of JESUS DIVINE MERCY last century. This is what we celebrate this weekend, DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY: JESUS, I TRUST IN YOU!!!

May our hearts remain open to receiving the Divine Mercy of God! May we trust in Jesus' Mercy and decide to go back to CONFESSION and confess sins that we have been so ashamed of, that we have never dared to mention them to a priest in the confessional.... or we have been thinking that God would never forgive such grave sins. Trust in Jesus! Trust in the MERCIFUL LOVE OF GOD!

I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt GRATITUDE to everyone who helped out to make this Holy Week so special, including the Musicians, the Altar Guild members, the Greeters, the Ushers, the Sanitizers, the Lectors, the volunteers that cleaned up and beautified the outside grounds, our Clergy and many more... Let us all THANK the Lord for the abundant blessings HE keeps pouring upon our parish and parishioners through such a large and dedicated group of volunteers.

May God keep sending His Holy Spirit upon every parishioner and may HE give Peace, courage and strength to those of us who desire to come back to the church! Let us all sing together: "*YES, CHRIST MY HOPE IS ARISEN!
CHRIST INDEED FROM DEATH IS ARISEN, OUR NEW LIFE OBTAINING!
HAVE MERCY, VICTOR KING!
AMEN. ALLELUIA!*"

One in Christ,
Fr. Alain

A Special Message from Fr. Alain

SUPPORTING OLHOC PANDEMIC RELIEF FUND

Several parishioners have inquired about how we can help parish families who are still struggling as a result of the pandemic. While it has been a full year hard on everyone in many ways, we would like to give some relief to those families most in need at this time, and we have decided to establish an OLHOC PANDEMIC RELIEF FUND. One of our priorities will be to assist families with children and youth, especially those who have lost income from reduced employment. While the recent stimulus checks are timely, they will be insufficient for most affected families.

We would like to invite all parishioners to consider contributing to this newly established OLHOC Pandemic Relief Fund. In the last 12 months, we have appreciated your continued generous Offertory donations despite the pandemic challenges. Your support is a blessing for our entire parish. Through the first 8 months of this fiscal year, (beginning July 2020), your generosity, coupled with a very cautious spending, has helped us to balance our reduced budget. We are now asking you to stretch your sacrificial support if possible, including those of you who can spare any of your stimulus funds.

In consultation with existing parish councils and committees, (including the Outreach Committee), we will channel your contribution to those parish families most in need. In particular, we like to support families with children attending our Religious Education Program, including partial payment of tuitions, books or special costs for those receiving the sacraments of First Communion and Confirmation in April/May. There is also a special need to support the families with youth attending the many activities of our Youth Ministry, in particular to enable some of our youth to attend our Summer Camp in Georgia this August. Any additional support will be most appreciated. Your contribution could help one of our youth have a special encounter with Christ this summer.

You can leave your contributions in a separate envelope labeled "OLHOC PANDEMIC RELIEF." For those of you giving online, via eCatholic, you can select "other category" and write "OLHOC Pandemic Relief". **For all online donations, you can click on our Donation Link page at OLHOC.org.**

Our Finance Council is reminding you that this year resumes the mandatory IRA distribution for those of retirement age. You can give to OLHOC any amount before tax contribution which leverages up your effective gift. For more details, please contact our Office Manager (Office@olhoc.org) or the Chair of our Finance Council (Potterra28@yahoo.com).

We welcome your comments and suggestions. Your feedback is much appreciated.

We thank God for your continued generosity to OLHOC activities.

May God keep protecting all of you! May you and your families have a most blessed EASTER SEASON!

One in Christ,

Fr. Alain

2nd Sunday of Easter

RCIA

Interested in joining and learning about the Catholic Church for the first time? Want to complete a Sacrament (Baptism, Eucharist, and/or Confirmation)? Classes meet on Wednesday, from 7 pm –9 pm. You may chose to come to the Father Martin Hall or virtually via Zoom. For more information, please contact Deacon Rich at deacon@olhoc.org or Diane and Mike Spurgeon at RCIA.olhoc@gmail.com

HELP KEEP OUR CHURCH CLEAN

Since last year, OLHOC cut back on many of the services we use to pay for. Due to financial restraints, the lawn maintenance is all done by volunteers, we no longer have a staff person to help out with the facilities, and we cut back on our cleaning services to once a week.

Please do your part in helping to keep our church clean.

The Case for Jesus

How do we **know** we can trust the Gospels? Who **really** wrote them and when?

Could they be fabricated fables or are they authentic truth? Who does Jesus profess to be?

To find out, come join The Catholic Faith Explorers in our next study - **The Case for Jesus**. Dr. Brant Petri draws evidence from early

Christian and non-Christian writings attesting to the authenticity, authorship, and dating of the Gospels, and gives an in-depth look at the Gospel accounts of Jesus's Crucifixion, Resurrection, and the proclamation of His divinity.

Class Dates/Time: 11 Apr - 6 Jun, Sundays at 8:00 am

Via Zoom Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94165603422?pwd=dlq2TjV0QldwOXhKRfJrQi9kQWc5QT09>

Community Outreach

“Sharing Sunday” continues for the collection of non-perishable foods for the Food Bank and Family Shelter. The need is as great as ever for families in Waldorf! Your donations can be left in the Fr. Martin Hall all week long.

Thank you OLHOC for all your support!

The next Outreach meeting is May 5, 2021 At 7 p. m. on Zoom. The next Shepherd's table is April 15, 2021

REMINDER

-Wash your hands before coming to Mass and sanitize before receiving Communion

-Wear a mask

-Watch your distance, at least a 6 ft distance from non family members

-If you feel ill, stay home and watch Mass on www.olhoc.com -10 am on Sundays

CCD Zoom Classes Schedule

Please ensure your child joins us for the following date/time:

3rd Grade– April 25th at 1 PM

4th Grade– April 26th at 7 PM

5th Grade– April 25th at 11:30 AM

6th Grade– April 25th at 2:30 PM

7th Grade– April 11th at 11 AM

YOUTH NEWS

Life Teen (High School) Youth Ministry will meet on Divine Mercy Sunday, April 11th from 1pm - 2:30 pm. Bring your friends and join us for some fun, faith and fellowship! For more Youth Ministry events please visit www.olhoc.org/ymevents or contact Marlen Coles marlen@olhoc.org

All Youth Night!

Join us on **Sunday, April 18th** for Mass at 2:30 pm followed by Youth Ministry for youth in EDGE (middle school) and Life Teen (high school) from 3:30 pm-5 pm. Invite some friends to join you for some faith, fun and fellowship. Unfortunately at this time, we will not be offering FIAT (elementary) after Mass, we will keep you posted when FIAT will resume. Please visit www.olhoc.org/ymevents and signup to join us.

Sacramental Preparation for Confirmation will continue on Sunday, April 18th. For Year 2, we will be offering the option to attend in person. The workshop will be from 1-2:30 pm followed by 2:30 pm Mass and All Youth Night activities from 3:30 - 5pm. Students in Year 1, please check your email for the instructions on how to join the virtual gathering at 1pm. For more details, or if you have any questions please visit www.olhoc.com/confirmation-1 or contact Marlen Coles marlen@olhoc.org

We are asked to pray for:

Brandon Mack
Nestor Ermelindo Molina
James Thompson
Rebecca (Tess) Franch
Joseph Albrittian
Sid and Suszanna Marcus
Aleli Puzon
Patricia Delgado
Ann Marie Hobart
Larry McGraw
Ilene Custer
Derrick Webster
Julie Davis
David DeMarr
Dunnie Proctor
Amelia Vinceguerra
Lorraine Celijewski
Cren Wolden
Tabitha Barton
Maria Townsend

Chrystal Beauregard
Sheryl Carter
Alex Leon
Sharketer Butler
Steven Bowling
Edna Yarngo
Kathly Grimes
Sheny Padilla
David Mesler
Victor Cordero
Georgiana Norgren
Marie Bottorf
Dorian Webster
Dionne Gause
Billy Dexter
Trenia Price
Erick M. Knapp
Norm Green
Sarah Dixon
Grace Albrittain
Elaine Moses

Yvonne Buford
Karen Zimmerman
Steve Wyloge
Terri Elizabeth McAllister Burnette
Joanne Johnson
Mike Spurgeon
Mary A. Dyson
Kevin Viel Sr.
Ligia Lam
David Stanley
Jim McMahan
Drew Shuda
Wilma Cruz

and all our military and civilians serving in harm's way.

Please pray for the soul of Joe Nikolai



Mass Intentions this Week

Saturday, April 10, 5:00 PM: Denis Jr.
Saturday, April 10, 8:00 PM: Albert Oudraogo (+)
Sunday, April 11, 8:30 AM: Fr. Robert Verrigni
Sunday, April 11, 10:00 AM: OLHOC Parishioners
Sunday, April 11, 11:30 AM: Elvira Guerrero (+)
Sunday, April 11, 1:00 PM: Fr. Kamana
Sunday, April 11, 7:00 PM: Christopher & Senu Mikovits
Monday, April 12, 9:00 AM: Barbara Baity (+)
Tuesday, April 13, 9:00 AM: Don Benedict (+)
Wednesday, April 14, 9:00 AM: Julie Toscano (+)
Wednesday, April 14, 7 PM: Olga Tabsoba
Thursday, April 15, 9:00 AM: Eduardo Sinense
Friday, April 16, 9:00 AM: Louis & Susan Baumgaertner (+)

Updated Mass cleaning

Airborne distribution is main source of spread and surface sanitation much less a factor per CDC. Hence we will STOP the after mass (or meeting) sanitizing of pews and chairs.

We will keep a spray bottle and paper towels at back of Nave for parishioners that still desire to wipe their own seat before mass. Please **DO NOT** bring your own alcohol based wipes as that damages our pew finish.

Tuesday Scripture Study- Join us on Tuesday mornings after the 9 am Mass to study the readings for the next Sunday.

Friday Scripture Study- The Friday night scripture study is now online. Please call the office for information on how to join us.

First Friday- The first Friday of each month the evening Mass is dedicated to promoting the Priesthood. Following evening Mass, devotion to the Alliance of the two Hearts.

First Saturday-Join members of the Marian Group on the first Saturday of the month after the 9 am Mass. Learn more about consecrating your life to Jesus through Mary.

Divine Mercy- Join us on the first Saturday of each month as we pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet as a community at 3 PM.

OLHOC Prayer Chain

If you have a prayer request, please call the parish office or send email to office@olhoc.org.

Mass Readings for April 18, 2021

3rd Sunday of Easter

***First Reading**

Acts of the Apostles 3:13-15, 17-19

***Second Reading**

1 John 2:1-5a

***Gospel**

Luke 24:35-48

www.usccb.org





The Divine Mercy Message and Devotion

The message of The Divine Mercy is simple. It is that God loves us – all of us. And, He wants us to recognize that His mercy is greater than our sins, so that we will call upon Him with trust, receive His mercy, and let it flow through us to others. Thus, all will come to share His joy.

The Divine Mercy message is one we can call to mind simply

by remembering ABC:

A - Ask for His Mercy. God wants us to approach Him in prayer constantly, repenting of our sins and asking Him to pour His mercy out upon us and upon the whole world.

B - Be merciful. God wants us to receive His mercy and let it flow through us to others. He wants us to extend love and forgiveness to others just as He does to us.

C - Completely trust in Jesus. God wants us to know that all the graces of His mercy can only be received by our trust. The more we open the door of our hearts and lives to Him with trust, the more we can receive.

This message and devotion to Jesus as The Divine Mercy is based on the writings of Saint Faustina Kowalska, an uneducated Polish nun who, in obedience to her spiritual director, wrote a diary of about 600 pages recording the revelations she received about God's mercy. Even before her death in 1938, the devotion to The Divine Mercy had begun to spread.

The message and devotional practices proposed in the *Diary of Saint Faustina* and set forth in this web site and other publications of the Marians of the Immaculate Conception are completely in accordance with the teachings of Church and are firmly rooted in the Gospel message of our Merciful Savior. Properly understood and implemented, they will help us grow as genuine followers of Christ.

Spend time to learn more about the mercy of God, learn to trust in Jesus, and live your life as merciful to others, as Christ is merciful to you.

(<https://www.thedivinemercy.org/message>, 2021)