

# FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

From the Pastor's Desk

It is hard to imagine that today we celebrate Mother's Day. This year Mother's Day will be long remembered: the times we live in! A day in which we gather around our mothers as family we find ourselves distancing from each other. Today should be a day for gathering of families, celebrating and giving thanks to our mothers. We focus on and honor our moms for their love and dedication as we express our appreciation and love.

We all have a mom. For many of us we have a sad emptiness in our heart if our mom is no longer with us. Our sadness is a reflection of our love for our moms. However, there is one good thing here: our mothers are always with us. They are in our hearts and I am confident that in their great love they continue to intercede for us.

One thing I do miss was my regular Sunday night phone calls. I'd call and she talked. With the advancement of the cell phone those calls became more frequent. While in my last parish, which was located two hours away from Columbus, I would call her as I left Columbus on that dreaded two-hour trip. To say the least, those two hours went by quickly. Two tedious hours on the road turned into two wonderful hours of conversations. I would never trade those times for anything. We all have good stories. Our moms are still with us; in our memories, our hearts and in the *communion of saints*. We ask God's continued blessings upon them, as we should do every day, yet today we honor them in a special way as we celebrate Mother's Day.

As we celebrate Mother's Day it should be noted that we do so during the month of May. May in our Catholic Tradition is dedicated to the Blessed Mother of Jesus: Mary. The Blessed Mother is truly the model for all Christian Mothers as well as all Christian Disciples in general. As a model, Mary presents to all Christians the faithful wholehearted response to the grace of God. The title of "Blessed Mother" is no mere platitude or sentimental pious devotion. The Blessed Virgin Mary places before us the reality and seriousness of Christian discipleship.

In working with the RCIA over most of my priesthood, there is a recurrent theme from many who come to the program: they are put off by our devotion to the Blessed Mother. There is the claim that we worship Mary: a mere human being. They have a very difficult time with the Catholic Doctrines concerning Mary: from the very first moment of her existence: The Immaculate Conception (free from Original Sin) and she lived a sinless life. At the end the end of her life on earth, she was brought up to heaven without experiencing death (the Assumption). Many would presume that such teachings are humanly unrealistic. (The erroneous belief that Divine things must be judged by human standards.) Thus, Catholics have elevated Mary above humanity where she enjoyed a life of privilege and ease. Then there is that title *Mother of God!*

However, we know the reality is quite the opposite. In a sinful world (a world that Mary's Son came to redeem and save) *holiness is not welcomed*. Holiness is mocked and rejected. We know this to be true; we only have to look to her son, Jesus. Jesus, the Son of God, is the one who perfectly revealed the holiness of God. He was also rejected, tortured and put to death. This was true of Jesus. It is also true of his Blessed Mother. In this flawed world holiness will always be challenged, tested and rejected. This is not a life of privilege in the worldly sense. Mary suffered in union with her Son. She teaches us that it is ironically a privilege to suffer for holiness. We can only see this with the eyes of faith.

In our prayers that we offer to Mary, we ask her to help us see this reality. We pray to the one who loved Jesus the most in this life to teach us to see, know and love her Son in ways that may

not be obvious to us because of our limited and flawed life touched by sin.

This very point was something that I was thinking about lately. I was once talking to a structural engineer about buildings, bridges and the like. He gave me examples about how he is able to spot structural problems. Because of his education and training he was able to see things that ordinary people do not see. There are times when an engineer sees something that is a major flaw that will cause a major structural collapse. The average person on the street would never see it because they do not have the education and the trained eye to spot it. I found his observations to be inspiring and practical.

When I thought about this, I could see a practical application for moms. I remember times growing up when we were children, there were seven of us, and we were at odds with each other. We had a number of fights. There were times when we would not speak to each other and if we did speak, it wasn't complimentary. Looking back, those battles were mostly over unimportant and petty. Like most children we were myopic and selfish. We only saw things from our personal point of view. We all wanted things my way! As a result, we couldn't see anything good or likeable in each other. This is nothing to be proud of; it is just the way it was.

That's when mom steps in calling us to order. She loved us and saw things from a different point of view. She saw what was good in all her children and was hurt that we didn't share her view. She knew each of us with our good and pettiness. With her knowledge and trained eye, she saw the good and bad when we did not see it in each other as well as in ourselves. The knowledge and keen eye of mom was able to sort it all out and challenge us to see things through the eyes of the one who loved each of us. This is the wit and wisdom of moms. Thankfully as we grew up and at times were in disagreements, she usually had an insight or a bit of knowledge that we all needed to hear and put it in perspective. If anyone knew and loved her children well, it was mom.

When we hold up Mary for our devotion, we also seek her inspiration. We turn to the Blessed Mother as a mother who is most wise. The Blessed Mother has a wisdom that finds its depths in faithful love that she has for her son, Jesus. Her wisdom and love were challenged and found to be true through her suffering with her Son. Motherhood is about faithful love. We are not talking about the sentimental, romantic feel-good kind of love. We are talking about love that is the *act of the will*. It is the love that mothers are called to live for their children. The virtue of Love is courageous: willing to sacrifice and suffer with and for the beloved. This is the love that is most instructive and redemptive. Again, we live in a sinful world and all love (most notably the virtue of love) requires a price: a sacrifice. Thus, the virtue of love must be willed.

The Blessed Mother is the model for all Christians and most especially all Christian Mothers. As a loving mother she is approachable and inspiring. The perception of the sinner fears approaching Mary: much like a child who knows he is being selfish and is wrong tries to avoid mom because he knows what she might say. Just the same, Mary is the Blessed Mother, a model as well as a gracious intercessor for us. When we turn to Mary she sees and gives guidance to her children which flows from her faithful love for her Son. In love she will lead us to her Son: Jesus Christ.

We often forget that we need models of perfection that place before us the genuine beauty of holiness. Mary is placed before us as this beautiful model. As a loving mother she will help us to be honest about ourselves and on the right path to her Son. Mary faithfully loved our Blessed Lord, Jesus Christ throughout his earthly life. His sufferings were her sufferings. His

agony was her agony. His joy was her joy. His glory is her glory. His mission is her mission. This is to be for all Christians. This is true for all Christian mothers. This is something that mothers know deep in their hearts and need to share with their children. It is the school of Christian love found in the Christian home.

Have a great week.  
Father Ralko

We are looking to return to Sunday Masses over the last weekend of May (30-31). We will need to use our common sense as we prepare to return to church. Firstly, if you are not comfortable about attending mass that weekend, you are not obligated to attend. This is especially important if you have weakened medical condition. More about this will be forthcoming. Stay well.

**ELECTRONIC CONTRIBUTIONS**

St. Nicholas Church has a convenient way to make your regular offerings. With our electronic giving program, you can easily set up a recurring giving schedule. We encourage you to set up a schedule of recurring contributions. It's convenient for you and provides much-needed consistency for our church. If you are currently giving on a weekly basis, you will no longer need to write out 52 checks a year or prepare 52 envelopes. Even when travel, illness or other circumstances prevent you from attending services, our church will continue to receive your contributions on an uninterrupted basis. To become an electronic giver, call or visit the church office for a brief form to fill out.

**The Most Important Person on earth is a mother. She cannot claim the honor of having built Notre Dame Cathedral. She need not.**

**She has built something more magnificent than any cathedral—a dwelling for an immortal soul, the tiny perfection of her baby's body...**

**The angels have not been blessed with such a grace. They cannot share in God's creative miracle to bring new saints to Heaven. Only a human mother can. Mothers are closer to God the Creator than any other creature; God joins forces with mothers in performing this act of creation...**

**What on God's good earth is more glorious than this: to be a mother?**

—Joseph Cardinal Mindszenty

The American Red Cross is looking for local volunteers throughout Ohio that would be willing to help at blood drives and local disasters. In addition, we are also looking for 'HELP FROM HOME' volunteers to help with volunteer support. All required training and resources will be provided. For more info, send an email to [volunteerohio@redcross.org](mailto:volunteerohio@redcross.org) or visit our volunteer website at [www.redcross.org/volunteer](http://www.redcross.org/volunteer) .... Blood Donors are also needed in every area - visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) to find the closest donation site near you to schedule an appointment! Thanks in advance for your consideration.

**This week we pray Week I of the Liturgy of the hours.**

*We pray for those who have died recently:  
Lillian Collopy*

**Daily Mass Online**

[www.ewtn.com](http://www.ewtn.com) Holy Mass from the EWTN Chapel



Casa Santa Marta

[www.vaticannews.va/en/pope-francis/masscasa-santa-marta.pagelist.html](http://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope-francis/masscasa-santa-marta.pagelist.html)  
Holy Mass with Pope Francis from

**Laudato Si' Activity Packet is available for families, schools, and PSR programs. During this challenging time of observing social distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Catholics can still grow deeper in their faith and care for our common home, the earth, and our brothers and sisters in need. As this year marks the 5th anniversary of Pope Francis' encyclical letter Laudato Si' On Care for Our Common Home and the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, the diocesan Creation Care Team has developed suggested activities to express care for God's creation. To download the packet, visit [www.columbuscatholic.org/care-for-creation](http://www.columbuscatholic.org/care-for-creation).**

**BISHOP ROSECRANS HIGH SCHOOL/  
BISHOP FENWICK SCHOOL SCRIP PROGRAM**

Gift cards in our SCRIP program at Bishop Rosecrans High School and Bishop Fenwick Schools can still be purchased. As of now, any special SCRIP orders will be ordered on Monday's. SCRIP is still being sold from inventory. If you would like to purchase SCRIP at any time or need information about our program, please email Julie Wagner or call the school office at (740) 452-7504. A time will be arranged for the gift cards to be picked up. If you have not joined our SCRIP program, now is a great time to get started!! This is a great opportunity for families to earn credit towards their tuition. Even if you don't currently have students at either school, you can still purchase the gift cards and the percentage earned from the gift cards can go to the schools to assist in our tuition assistance scholarship fund, technology or classroom needs. This is another great way to help support our schools!! You don't even have to purchase the physical cards!! Go to [shopwithscrip.com](http://shopwithscrip.com) and set up an account to purchase ecards that will automatically be downloaded to my wallet in your account where the gift cards can be used from your phone or can be printed for future use. If you have already purchased a physical card from our SCRIP program, you can reload the card as many times online and still earn the percentage towards tuition.

**Coronavirus Response. For an updated listing of resources to get help, opportunities to provide help, and ways for families to strengthen their faith amid the COVID-19 pandemic, visit [www.columbuscatholic.org/coronavirus-response](http://www.columbuscatholic.org/coronavirus-response).**

# FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

## APRIL BOOSTER MANIA WINNERS

\$25- Fr. Ralko, Jared Besser, Caiden Hogue, Al Burns, John Biedenbach, Larry Burkhart, Lori Goody, Ron Koverman and Barb Callahan  
\$50-Kathy Schmid



The month of May ([Overview](#) - [Calendar](#)) is the "month which the piety of the faithful has especially dedicated to Our Blessed Lady," and it is the occasion for a "moving tribute of faith and love which Catholics in every part of the world [pay] to the Queen of Heaven. During this month Christians, both in church and in the privacy of the home, offer up to Mary from their hearts an especially fervent and loving homage of prayer and veneration. In this month, too, the benefits of God's mercy come down to us from her throne in greater abundance" (Paul VI: Encyclical on the [Month of May](#), no. 1).

This Christian custom of dedicating the month of May to the Blessed Virgin arose at the end of the 13th century. In this way, the Church was able to Christianize the secular feasts which were wont to take place at that time. In the 16th century, books appeared and fostered this devotion.

The practice became especially popular among the members of the Jesuit Order — by 1700 it took hold among their students at the Roman College and a bit later it was publicly practiced in the Gesu Church in Rome. From there it spread to the whole Church.

The practice was granted a partial indulgence by Pius VII in 1815 and a plenary indulgence by Pius IX in 1859. With the complete revision of indulgences in 1966 and the decreased emphasis on specific indulgences, it no longer carries an indulgence; however, it certainly falls within the category of the First General Grant of Indulgences. (A *partial indulgence* is granted to the faithful who, in the performance of their duties and in bearing the trials of life, raise their mind with humble confidence to God, adding — even if only mentally — some pious invocation.

Excerpted from *Enchiridion of Indulgences*.

## Readings for Week of May 11

Mon. . . . .	Acts 14:5-18	Jn 14:21-26
Tues. . . . .	Acts 14:19-28	Jn 14:27-31a
Wed . . . . .	Acts 15:1-6	Jn 15:1-8
Thurs. . . . .	Acts 1:15-17, 20-26	Jn 15:9-17
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Fri. . . . .	Acts 15:22-31	Jn 15:12-17
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Sat. . . . .	Acts 16:1-10	Jn 15:18-21
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Sun . . . . .	Acts 8:5-8, 14-17	Jn 14:15-21

## Daily Mass Intentions

### MONDAY, May 11

*Bertha Haren*

### TUESDAY, May 12, SS. Nereus and Achilleus

*Patrick Lyon, anniversary*

### WEDNESDAY, May 13, Our of Fatima

*Bill Fleer*

### THURSDAY, May 14, St. Matthias

*Pastor's Intention*

### FRIDAY, May 15, St. Isadore

*Reg Gear, birthday*

### SATURDAY, May 16

*Alfred and Florence Schoeppner*

### SUNDAY, May 17

*St. Nicholas Parishioners*

*Wayne Dozer*

*Our thoughts and prayers remain with those serving our country currently and with their loved ones at home. We pray for a safe homecoming and that the world may one day be at peace.*

**PLEASE REMEMBER ST. NICHOLAS PARISH IN YOUR WILL. CALL THE PARISH OFFICE AT 453-0597 FOR MORE DETAILS.**