

St. Mary, Mother of God Church

Roman Catholic Church
608 High Street ~ Freeport, PA 16229
A Parish of the Diocese of Greensburg
A Pennsylvania Charitable Trust



Established 1826



APRIL
12
2020



Easter
Sunday



He has been raised from the dead,
and he is going before you to Galilee.

MATTHEW 28:7

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Please Note

During this time when all weekday and weekend public masses have been suspended until further notice, please know that Fr. Ron is privately celebrating mass and fulfilling all of your requested intentions.

Easter Sunday

If Christmas is the “most wonderful time of the year,” then Easter is the most joyous, glorious, awesome time of the year! Really? Today’s readings don’t exactly brim over with the kind of holiday cheer we find at Christmas—except for the responsorial psalm, which admittedly rings with gleeful joy. But otherwise, not so much. In the first reading from the Acts of the Apostles, Peter gives a dry, condensed rendering of the story of Jesus to a group of Gentiles in Caesarea. The Colossians reading actually does have us looking forward to glory. Most underwhelming, though, is the Gospel proclamation of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. When we want to hear about angels and earthquakes and trumpets and glory, we hear about a dark, silent, empty tomb. This Easter Sunday story from John’s Gospel is startling in its emptiness. Like Peter in the story, we must enter into this mystery.

Mass Intentions FOR THE WEEK

†=(in memory of) ♥=(IHO/special intention/parishioners)

MASSES FOR EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD

- SATURDAY:** April 11th
♥St. Mary Parishioners
- SUNDAY:** April 12th
♥St. Mary Parishioners
- MONDAY:** April 13th
♥Mary Kristine (Beth Macurdy)
- TUESDAY:** April 14th
†John “Banjo” DeMeno
(John & Brenda DeMeno)
- WEDNESDAY:** April 15th
†Charles Huth (Family)
- THURSDAY:** April 16th
†Joseph Klaput, Sr. & Jr. (Family)
- FRIDAY:** April 17th
†Sue Lepkowski (Nannie Klaput)

MASSES FOR THE 2ND SUNDAY OF EASTER (OR SUNDAY OF DIVINE MERCY)

- SATURDAY:** April 18th
†Bill Davis (Wife—Pat)
- SUNDAY:** April 19th
†Rinaldo Policicchio (The Policicchio’s)
♥St. Mary Parishioners

SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

- Sunday:** Easter Sunday: Resurrection of the Lord; Julian Calendar Palm Sunday
- Monday:** Monday within the Octave of Easter
- Tuesday:** Tuesday within the Octave of Easter
- Wednesday:** Wednesday within the Octave of Easter; Income Tax Day
- Thursday:** Thursday within the Octave of Easter
- Friday:** Friday within the Octave of Easter; Julian Calendar Good Friday
- Saturday:** Saturday within the Octave of Easter

Sunday's Readings



- First Reading** — *Peter is an eyewitness: The Lord is risen (Acts 10:34a, 37-43).*
- Psalm** — *This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad (Psalm 118).*
- (1) Second Reading** — *All who are baptized, set your hearts in heaven (Colossians 3:1-4) or*
- (2) Second Reading** — *Christ our Passover is sacrificed; therefore let us celebrate (1 Corinthians 5:6b-8).*
- Gospel** — *Three witnesses, Mary, Peter, and John; each responds to the empty tomb (John 20:1-9) or Matthew 28:1-10 (or, at an afternoon or evening Mass, Luke 24:13-35).*



Readings for the Week

- Monday:** Acts 2:14, 22-33; Ps 16:1-2a, 5, 7-11; Mt 28:8-15
- Tuesday:** Acts 2:36-41; Ps 33:4-5, 18-20, 22; Jn 20:11-18
- Wednesday:** Acts 3:1-10; Ps 105:1-4, 6-9; Lk 24:13-35
- Thursday:** Acts 3:11-26; Ps 8:2ab, 5-9; Lk 24:35-48
- Friday:** Acts 4:1-12; Ps 118:1-2, 4, 22-27a; Jn 21:1-14
- Saturday:** Acts 4:13-21; Ps 118:1, 14-21; Mk 16:9-15
- Sunday:** Acts 2:42-47; Ps 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24; 1 Pt 1:3-9; Jn 20:19-31



From the Pastor's Desk

This is probably the first time in the history of our existence that we are not in the church for the celebration of Easter because of the corona virus (COVID-19). It is hard and sad for all of us but we need to accept this challenging time with faith and trust, believing that someday it will go back to normalcy. As Pope Francis said, in his recent address and blessing Urbi et Orbi (To the city and to the world), "The pandemic is not a judgment from God, but a time for us to judge, to choose what matters and what passes away. It is a time to get our lives back on track".

Indeed, what we are experiencing now and in other parts of the world cannot be attributed as judgment from God. Rather it should be seen as a way to call our attention and take this opportunity to reassess our lives. How do I live my life? Am I living my life to what God wants me to be? Is there anything that I should change so as not to miss the essential and value what I take for granted most of the time?

Yes, we may have money, friends and family. Living a life of comfort and able to follow whatever we desire but what would be the worth of having them if we miss the essential thing, our relationship with God and the fidelity He expects us to live in our daily lives. Yes, we recognize that with the COVID-19, everyone is susceptible. It can even drive us to fear and paranoia. However, it should lead us more to God and draw us closer to Him because in situations like this, only God can give us hope and strength.

Easter gave hope and strength to Jesus' disciples, especially when they were so scared and downcast. They thought that there was no more meaning into their lives as disciples of Him after they witnessed the cruelty of His suffering and death. They thought that the Master they followed was defeated and could no longer give them protection and guidance. We could see their grief and sadness as they went through the Good Friday and Black Saturday, especially with Mary of Magdala. She was deeply affected. However, what joy she experienced on Easter Sunday morning when she saw the empty tomb. Jesus was no longer there. She ran in haste to Peter and John to share what she witnessed. There was great rejoicing when they went back together and saw the burial cloths there. They believed although they did not understand yet the Scripture that He had to rise from the dead.

In the same way, we may not understand why we have this COVID-19 that has brought so much pain, suffering and death to us and around the world, but as we continue to show our faith in God and be faithful to Him, Jesus can also lead us to an experience of Easter like His disciples.

Through this great event, Our Lord calls on us to transform our lives, to keep trying to do better, to persevere in our attempts to be faithful to Him as He is faithful and good to us. **Happy Easter!**



SEEDS OF FAITH

There is a brevity, a certain terseness, in the scripture readings for Easter Sunday. Peter's speech in Acts is built of direct, pointed sentences. Paul's letters are based on straightforward creed-like statements. Even the Gospel story only briefly recounts what will turn out to be one of the most remarkable events in human history—the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Advertising agents call these encapsulated points of information "**bullet points**". Scripture scholars call them **kerygmata**, or "**kernels**" of our faith. Actually, "**kernels**" or "**seeds**" are good terms for these statements, since throughout the Easter season, we will hear in the Acts of the Apostles, the Letters of Paul, and the Gospel accounts of the days following the Resurrection exactly how these **kerygmata** began to flower, how they continued to grow through the life of the early church. May these Easter "**seeds**" of faith serve a similar purpose for us, too, so that the life of the Risen Christ will flourish in us and through our witness in the coming days. †

TV and Online Mass Options:
<https://www.heartofthenation.org/where-to-watch>
<https://mass-online.org/daily-holy-mass-live-online/>; <http://www.catholicstv.org/masses/catholicstv-mass>

Calendar of Events/Meetings

Weekday and Weekend Masses—Suspended
Religious Education—Suspended
Choir Practice—Suspended; Resurrection Choir Practice—Suspended
Teen Ministry Meetings—Suspended
The Bible Timeline—Cancelled and will be postponed to a later date
First Friday Adoration—Suspended
Christian Mother's Meeting—Suspended
Men's Group Mass/Meeting—Suspended

Cancelled.
Suspended.
Postponed.

We will Live Stream our Easter Vigil Mass at 9:00 P.M. and our Easter Sunday Mass at 8:30 A.M. Also, we will now begin to Live Stream our Sunday Mass at 8:30 A.M. on Facebook. *If you utilize Facebook and are not a member of St. Mary, Mother of God, Freeport, please join or like our page in order to pull up the page for Sunday Mass and the latest happenings.*



Parish Information/Events

The Administrative Office is open Monday through Friday, 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. so that we cannot only conduct the business that is required, but also be able to meet your needs the best we can. Also, the church is open for your private prayer and reflection everyday from 9:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. During these times, we still have the operations of the parish to run and maintain. We thank those of you who have continued to use your weekly offertory envelopes.

In the past few weeks, some of you may have logged onto the Diocesan website to watch Bishop Malesic celebrate Sunday Mass. Please be advised that if you click the icon to "Donate to your parish", fees are assessed by the credit card company and not 100% of your donation arrives at our parish. The best way to continue to support the parish, if you are able to do so after prayerful consideration, would be one of the following options:

- Mail your envelope in directly
- Drop your envelope off at the Administrative Office or the parish mailbox outside the glass entrance doors
- Set up on-line bill paying with your financial institution by going to their secure website and setting up as a vendor, St. Mary, Mother of God Church, 608 High Street, Freeport, PA 16229. Under the memo line, enter your envelope number and the amount you wish to contribute. Most banks will provide you the opportunity to set up this payment/ withdrawal on a weekly or monthly basis, whichever you prefer.

Please know that we continue to pray for you and your family for your safety and health during this pandemic. We also ask that you continue to keep Father Ron and the parish staff in your daily prayers. †



Diocesan Target - \$37,826.00

Parish Target - \$55,000.00

Pledges to Date - \$80,160.00

Paid to Date - \$53,649.00

Number of Donors - 178

Diocesan Target has been Achieved!!!

Thank you!

ALL future gifts and/or pledges will now stay directly here at St. Mary's in order that we may complete this year's DLA major projects!

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Courtesy of J.S. Paluch Company, Inc.

Our dedicated parishioners continue with the High Altar Project in hopes of completing it by Easter Sunday. We ask God to continue to pray for the safety and good health of all our parishioners.

Sanders — Ernie Bragiel and Bill Heinrich



Thank you!
Angels are a gift from
Bob & Judy Bergstrom
and were painted by
Cindi Harbison

One of the side
altars that will
house these
beautiful angels



The artistic painting of Cindy Harbison



Carl Barr
inserting
the base
where
the
tabernacle
will be
placed



News/Activities from Our Ministries/Organizations

Evangelization FORMED PICK OF THE WEEK



Presence The Story of the Eucharist

God authors His great love story not only with words, but with deeds. All of God's mighty deeds throughout history make up one beautiful narrative of salvation, which culminates in the Paschal Mystery.

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Alleluia/Hallelujah—There are three words in scripture that are so powerful that even today we use them untranslated from their original Hebrew: *amen*, *hosanna* and *hallelujah*. *Amen* is best translated as "I believe" or "let it be so" depending on the context of the passage. *Hosanna*, we discovered last week, is a cry that means to save, deliver, preserve or defend us. *Hallelujah*, however, is actually two Hebrew words put together as one that simply translated as "Praise God!" *Hallelujah* is found over twenty times in the Psalms of the Old Testament, especially the ones used during great feasts such as the Passover. In the New Testament, its only use comes in the book of Revelation when it is sung by the angels in the presence of God in chapter 19. We more commonly use the word Alleluia which is the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew. During the time of Lent, we omit the Alleluia's from our Liturgy not because we don't want to praise God, but so that when Easter morning dawns, we may sing it as if it was the first time it has crossed our lips. It will rise up within us and burst forth from our very being anew. We will be thanking our great and good Father for the saving power of the cross and resurrection. In the Easter season of 1742, George Frederick Handel composed and released the magnificent choral piece, *The Messiah* in Dublin, Ireland, as a fundraiser for a hospital and debtors' prison. The monies raised helped care for the sick and obtained the release of 127 prisoners. We typically hear this work performed at Christmas time because of the first one-third of the piece is about the coming and birth of the Messiah. But the remainder is about the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the famous *Hallelujah* Chorus, Handel's pen calls us to remember that the risen Lord is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords and He shall reign forever and ever! **Hallelujah!** In fact, Handel manages to squeeze in over fifty *Hallelujahs* in four stanzas. After finishing the composition, Handel told a dear friend, "I did think I did see all Heaven before me, and the great God Himself seated on His throne, with His company of Angels". On this glorious Easter Sunday, even though circumstances prevent us from being together in one location, let our voices ring out in our homes singing "Alleluia!", for we know how the story ends. Jesus is victorious over sin and death. We are made for more than just this earthly world. Heaven is our home and we are just travelers on the great pilgrimage. We don't need to sing or proclaim alleluias during the next fifty days of the Easter season. Instead, let our lives be an alleluia and our actions cry out even though our tongues may be silenced in the confines of our homes. Over thirty years ago, Saint John Paul II gave us some prophetic words for our times. "Do not abandon yourself to despair. We are an Easter people...and Hallelujah is our song!" †

Pray for our country and the entire world as we fight the coronavirus pandemic. Pray especially for medical researchers, doctors, and nurses as they are on the front line fighting for us; for the elderly and those most susceptible; and for the leaders around the world to make wise decisions for slowing down and containing the spread of this virus.

News from Our Diocese

Matters of Sexual Misconduct Information

If you have any suspicion about the sexual abuse (or any other type of abuse) of a minor child by anyone - please contact PA ChildLine immediately at 1-800-932-0313. If the alleged abuser is functioning in a parish, school or diocesan position as clergy, religious, paid staff or volunteer, you are also requested to contact the Bishop's Delegate for Matters of Sexual Misconduct after you have called the ChildLine number and made the report. The Bishop's Delegate may be reached at 724-837-0901, Ext. 1221. †

Altar Bread and Wine

The Altar Bread and Wine were donated
for this week in
loving memory of



John & Mary Lucovich
By
Dan & Karen Lucovich

Sanctuary Lamp

In acknowledging the Real Presence of Christ,
The Sanctuary Lamp (Candle) will burn
this week



in loving memory of
Cindy Kulikowski
By
Shipe Family

Collections

Offertory Collection for March 29th, 2020

No. of Envelopes Mailed Out: 600
No. of Envelopes Received: 32
Collection: Offertory - \$1,815.00
Electronic Payments (8) - \$320.00
Total Collection - \$2,135.00

THANK YOU!

*Due to the early deadline for the submission of the
April 12th bulletin, the weekly contribution report for
April 5th was not available. It will be published in
next Sunday's bulletin.*

*Although we are unable to attend Mass at this time, we urge you
to please mail your weekly/monthly contribution or drop it off at
the Administrative office or the mail box outside the office doors.*



Something to think about—If you normally give in the offertory
basket, now might be the time to think about on-line giving.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF ST. MARY,
MOTHER OF GOD CHURCH. OUR PRAYERS ARE WITH YOU
AND YOUR FAMILY TO STAY HEALTHY AND SAFE!**



**Saturday
April 18th, 2020
NO CLEANING
ASSIGNMENTS
THIS WEEK**

*Please call the Administrative Office if you
would like to volunteer to be one of the
cleaning volunteers—724-295-2281.*

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