

**CLOSING PRAYER:**

**~ Prayer for the Earth ~**

All-powerful God,  
you are present in the whole universe  
and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love,  
that we may protect life and beauty.

Fill us with peace, that we may live  
as brothers and sisters,  
harming no one.

O God of the poor,  
help us to rescue  
the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,  
so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing into our lives,  
that we may protect the world  
and not prey on it,  
that we may sow beauty,  
not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain  
at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,  
to be filled with awe and contemplation,  
to recognize that we are profoundly united  
with every creature as we journey  
towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day.  
Encourage us, we pray,  
in our struggle  
for justice, love and peace.

~ Pope Francis

**CAMPUS MINISTRY OFFICE:**

The Campus Ministry Office is located in **Our Lady Chapel**.  
phone: [440] 473-3560. e-mail: [jbesc@ix.netcom.com](mailto:jbesc@ix.netcom.com)

# Our Lady Chapel



*Our Lady Chapel is a Roman Catholic community founded in the love of the Father, centered in Christ, and rooted in the Holy Cross tenets of building family and embracing diversity. We are united in our journey of faith through prayer and sacrament, and we seek growth through the wisdom of the Holy Spirit in liturgy and outreach, while responding to the needs of humanity.*

**DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY:**

On April 30, 2000, Pope John Paul II declared that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter was to be called **Divine Mercy Sunday**. The 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 of Divine Mercy is nothing new; it is a reminder of what the Church has always taught through scripture and tradition — that God is merciful and forgiving, and that we, too, must show mercy and forgiveness. But in the Divine Mercy devotion, the message takes on a powerful new focus. The message is a call to all to a deeper understanding that God's love is unlimited and available to everyone — especially to the greatest sinners.

**On Sunday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 11:30 AM** we will be **singing the Chaplet of Divine Mercy**. We hope that you will join us for this special devotion.

**EASTER FLOWERS:**

Our Easter flowers are in memory of the following people and families: **Brother Richard, Eleanor & Curtiss DeMarco, the Rasoletti Family, Don Lear, Barry Friedman, Helen & John Blazek, Antoinette & Frank Rezabek, John & Mary Blazek.** Thanks to those who so generously contributed to our Easter flowers and the flowers that will be planted outside surrounding the chapel. As we celebrate together the new life of Easter, we share also in the renewing of the world of nature. Please say a prayer for these loved ones and for their families. **If you would like to add your loved ones to this list of remembrances, please turn in your list of names to Father John.** We will publish this list throughout the Easter Season.

**SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR:**

For the past year, our teens have been volunteering at **Our Savior Lutheran Church Food Pantry** [located right across the street from the chapel]. The Pantry is open on the **third Saturday of every month from 11:00 AM – 1:30 or 2:00 PM.** Our Savior Lutheran's Food Pantry was formed to serve those in emergency situations and/or with on-going need in the cities of Mayfield Heights, Mayfield Village, Highland Heights and Gates Mills. The Food Pantry respects social and cultural diversity and upholds the worth and dignity of those it serves. All those in the area with need will be served equally, as supplies allow. The food pantry is a member of the Greater Cleveland Food Bank. During the course of the past year, the food pantry at Our Savior Lutheran Church served an average of 141 households each time. Our teens have loved this ministry and have been very faithful to it. **We would now like to open this ministry up to our entire Chapel Community. If you would like to help on any given third Saturday, please call Patty at the chapel office [440-473-3560] to let us know that you are going to volunteer, or email Elina Gurney at [gurney.oh@gmail.com](mailto:gurney.oh@gmail.com).** Come as a family or by yourself.

**FATHER-STUDENT MASS:**

On **Sunday, April 17<sup>th</sup>**, the Men's Club is sponsoring a "Student-Father" **Mass at 10:00 AM in Our Lady Chapel.** All Dads — along with their children and family — are invited to attend. This celebration of Mass is a great opportunity to share time with your Gilmour students and family. There will be refreshments served after Mass in the Commons. Everyone is welcome. **Please RSVP to Christina Hollis at [hollisc@gilmour.org](mailto:hollisc@gilmour.org) or call 440-473-8073.**

**IMPORTANT:**

You were born an individual; do not die as a copy.

—John Mason

**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

Jesus calls us to pray for one another. Please keep all these people in your prayers

**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:**

- For Brother Jarlath D'Souza, C.S.C., who is hospitalized with medical complications.
- For Nancy Collins who is under the care of hospice.
- For Heidi Herten, mother of Hope ['13] and James ['15] Herten, who is recovering from surgery.
- For Carmella DeJohn who is seriously ill.
- For Tony Stricker who is undergoing treatment for a brain condition.
- For Bonnie O'Leary, Middle School Teacher, who is undergoing rehab following surgery.
- For Eva Shea, aunt of lower school teacher, Theresa Stark, who is undergoing treatment for pancreatic cancer
- For Kathy Hronek who is recovering from cancer surgery.
- For Joseph Frantz ['75], brother of Mark ['65], David ['66], Roger ['69], and Peter ['78] Frantz, who is seriously ill.
- For Ann Ally, mother of former Gilmour teacher Deshia Joseph, who is under the care of hospice.
- For Richard Kopittke, friend of Judy Morgan, who is healing from injuries sustained in a fall and from surgery.
- For Kate Wilson, Niece of Brother Ken Kane, C.S.C., who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Justin Tarr who is critically ill with brain cancer.
- For Jim Spicer who is undergoing treatment for brain and lung cancer.
- For John O'Brian who has been diagnosed with a serious form of cancer.
- For Bill Slattery ['77] who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For John Burkey, uncle of religion instructor, Rachel Burkey, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Annie Trivassos who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Nicholas Zanella, who is undergoing medical treatment
- For Jan Botek, wife of Fred, mother of Fred ['85], grandmother of Matthew ['14], Jonathan ['17] and Daniel ['21] Botek, who is undergoing treatment for dementia.
- For Teddy Prusock, nephew of Lower School associate, Nina Prusock, who is undergoing neurological testing.

**EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS:**

We are currently discerning a new group of Eucharistic Ministers who would undergo training within the next month. If you feel that the Lord is calling you to this ministry, we would be delighted to include you in that ministry here at Our Lady Chapel. Both adults and teens [must be going into Senior year of High School] are welcome to participate in this very special ministry. We are need of ministers for both our Saturday evening and Sunday morning Masses. **Contact Father John or the chapel office [440-473-3560] if you feel called to this ministry.** We are always in need of Eucharistic Ministers.

**ALTAR SERVERS and LECTORS:**

We continue to be in need of servers and lectors. **Any student who is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> [and up] grade is invited to become an altar server; any student who is in the 5<sup>th</sup> [and up] grade is invited to become a lector.** These are both wonderful ministries — a great way to serve God and the faith community. If you would like to take advantage of these opportunities, **please give your name to Father John.** You do not have to attend Gilmour to be an altar server, lector, or to be involved in any other ministry at Our Lady Chapel. **Please call the chapel office [440-473-3560].**



**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

Jesus calls us to pray for one another. Please keep all these people in your prayers.

**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:**

- For Steven Ciuni, father of Joseph ['77], grandfather of Joseph ['03], Jane ['04], Thomas ['06] and Michael ['08] Ciuni, who is recovering from surgery resulting from a stroke.
- For Judy Morgan who is recovering medical treatment.
- For Candy McKinnon, mother of Gilmour instructor, Katy McKinnon, who is recovering from multiple surgeries as a result of a fall.
- For Joseph Morek ['14] who is recovering from surgery resulting from a military accident.
- For Brother Thomas Maddix, C.S.C., who is undergoing medical testing.
- For Rose Wedeward, grandmother of Cassie ['17], Frank ['18], and Mia ['19] Nannicola, who is recovering from surgery.
- For Elaine Willey, sister of Father John, who are undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Stephen Ungrady, father of Emily ['19], who is recovering from a stroke
- For Jim Virant, grandfather of Noah Virant ['20], who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Todd King ['87], brother of Christie ['91] King, who is undergoing treatment for mirocondra
- For John DiCillo, husband of long-time Gilmour teacher, Bonnie, father of John ['83], David ['84], Dawn ['86] and Daniel ['88] DiCillo, who is seriously ill with lymphoma.
- For Jenny Blender, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Dorothy Kazel, mother of Daniel ['86] and Gilmour counselor, Jamie, who is undergoing treatment for cancer..
- For Mark LaCasse, brother of Upper School Associate, Linda Wheeler, uncle of Molly ['06] Wheeler, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Sue Nyberg, godmother of Katie Leavitt, who is seriously ill with cancer.
- For Drew Franco, son of Brian ['90], nephew of Jeff ['88] and Kristin ['94] Kirkpatrick, who is struggling with a seizure disorder.
- For Michael Palumbo, father of Michael ['14], Marisa ['15], and former Gilmour student, Christian, who is undergoing medical treatment
- For Colleen Lowman, grandmother of Religion instructor, Rachel Burkey, who is seriously ill.
- For Dennis Kavran, father of Dennis ['86] and Jennifer ['95], grandfather of Adam ['14] and Madeleine ['16] Miller, who is undergoing further treatment for cancer.
- For Donna Farkas who is hospitalized with an infection.
- For Lexi Pappadakes, who is undergoing treatment for complications from surgery..
- For Rosemarie Lemieux who is ill.
- For Matt Barry ['13], brother of Tim ['12], who continues treatment for cancer.
- For Maria Ricci, friend of Linda McGraw, who is ill.
- For Jeff Warner, brother of Denise Calabrese, who is undergoing treatment resulting from a stroke and seizure.
- For Janice Feenstra, sister of Lisa Habe, aunt of Jack ['19] and Will ['20] Habe who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Karen Wanders, mother of upper school Head of School, Jonathan Wanders, who continues in treatment and rehabilitation
- For Betty Herten, aunt of Hope ['13] and James ['15] Herten, who is undergoing treatment for leukemia.



**FAITH EDUCATION — APRIL 10:**

Faith Education for this year continues. Our Sessions go from **8:45—9:45 AM**, with the hope that our children would then **participate in our 10:00 AM Family Mass. Register your family for classes by contacting Patty in the Chapel Office [[440-473-3560].** If you have any questions, please call Patty in the chapel office. Thank you for taking care of this important responsibility. **Dates for April and May: April 10-17-24. and May 1**



**SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:**

Sunday, April 3: <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Week in Easter</b>	<b>10:00 AM</b>
Monday, April 4: <b>Annunciation to Mary</b>	<b>5:30 PM</b> [Eucharistic Chapel]
Tuesday, April 5:	<b>5:30 PM</b> [Eucharistic Chapel]
Wednesday, April 6:	<b>5:30 PM</b> [Eucharistic Chapel]
Thursday, April 7: <b>St. John Baptist de la Salle</b>	<b>5:30 PM</b> [Eucharistic Chapel]
Friday, April 8:	<b>5:30 PM</b> [Eucharistic Chapel]
Saturday, April 9: <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Week in Easter</b>	<b>5:00 PM</b>
Sunday, April 10: <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Week in Easter</b>	<b>10:00 AM</b>

**UPCOMING CHAPEL ACTIVITIES:**

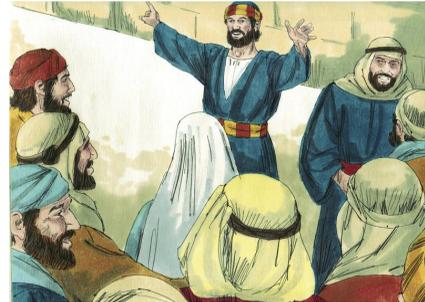
April 10 -----	Faith Education Session #21 EDGE Meeting	8:45 AM 11:30 AM—1:00 PM
April 12 -----	Cum Laude Assembly	8:00 AM
April 13 -----	Middle School Religion Mass Lisa Miller on Child Spirituality	12:15 PM 12 noon & 7:00 PM
April 14 -----	Middle School Religion Mass Middle School Religion Mass Middle School Religion Mass Sophomore College Night	8:15 AM 10:30 AM 2:00 PM 7:00 PM
April 15 -----	Junior Retreat	8:00 AM—3:30 PM
April 17 -----	Faith Education Session #22 Father-Student Mass LifeTeen Meeting	8:45 AM 10:00 AM 11:30 AM—1:00 PM

**REFLECTION ON THE THEME FOR THE WEEK:**

Speaking of the Resurrection, the famous poet and writer, Gerard Manly Hopkins, S.J., wrote: “Away grief’s grasping joyless days...” And so it is one week after we have renewed our own baptismal vows and have accepted new members into our communities. Perhaps some “joyless” moments have rained on our Easter Lilies and dampened our graceful-dancing spirits. In days past, those newly baptized wore their white garments through this second week in Easter — and perhaps those once-dazzlingly-white robes had some smudges and even stains. Living the lily-white life is not the Christian road. That path has as many potholes as the street outside my house after this long winter. Those robes are meant to be worn, and then re-whitened often in the sacramental baths of the Church.

I recall getting a brand new pair of basketball sneakers — and how they made me feel I could run faster, jump higher, and stop more quickly than ever I could do with the older sneakers. The feeling lasted but a short time, and I felt betrayed by the false promises of “athletic immortality”. The newness wore off quicker than the shine, and I was reduced to being who I was again with my limits of speed and endurance.

Belonging is so basic to us. Being chosen, invited, inducted, and embraced are experiences we long for. We fear their opposites as well — exclusion and rejection are equally fundamental to our humanity. In the early sixties everyone seemed to be having an “identity crisis”. I had one myself. When I related that to my Novice Director, he listened and asked me what I thought I was: “A blue bird?” I then came to the realization that I — and we — were all growing into our identities — and that was our identity.



In the Book of Acts of the Apostles, we hear of the excitement of the early Christian community [Acts 5:12-16]. Great signs and wonders were being worked among the people. These early days after Easter, it was like the excitement about the “new Sneakers” of faith and freedom which shod the souls of the early converts. But soon they found out that their life of holiness was reduced to the everyday playing out life’s ages.

A case in point would be an incident — a little scandal — to the excitement reflected upon by St. Luke. All the early Christians were selling their goods and putting everything in common for the betterment of all. Ananias and his wife, Sophira — kind of Adam and Eve all over again — pulled off a land deal. They decided to give some of the proceeds to Peter, but hold some back for themselves. Peter and the apostles found out, and both Ananias and Sophira were struck dead on the spot. This is a case of exclusion in the first degree — their sin was greed and self-preoccupation, not unlike Adam and Eve who were likewise excluded.

The believers gathered together and many wonders were worked, but though others were impressed, they did not want to join — perhaps because of the sudden-death event they had witnessed. They also might have not wanted to sell everything and invest in the common good.

As the sick were healed by the power of the Holy Spirit, many others did come to follow the Way of Jesus through the preaching of the Good News. The early Church grew even though there was and would be persecution, suspicion, and rejection — and other scandals — throughout its history.

John’s Gospel is extremely graphic [John 20:19-31]. It is the gathering of those who had betrayed Jesus in their own ways during His last hours — they are full of grasping joyless grief. They are frightened, lost and perhaps regretting they ever tried on His shoes and walked with Him. Into this chaos and alienation steps Jesus to give them peace, mission, and forgiveness.

There is a liturgical form to this scene — Jesus does a dramatic but quiet Entrance Rite, there is a

**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

Jesus calls us to pray for one another. Please keep all these people in your prayers

**FOR THE DECEASED:**

- For John Hetman
- For George Rogers.
- For Father Thaddeus Swirski, pastor emeritus of St. Sebastian [Akron]
- For Brother Richard Keller, C.S.C. [anniversary]
- For Paul Hughes
- For Barry Friedman
- For Don Lear
- For Ed Carrigan, uncle of LS teacher, Theresa Stark.
- For Eva Slattery, wife of Tim [‘74]
- For Father David Arthur, C.S.C.
- For Father Vincent Machozi, A.A.

**PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:**

- For Matt Hovde and Dennis Strach , who were ordained as Holy Cross priests .
- For the victims of the Brussels’ terrorist attacks and for those who perpetrated these events.
- For a person recovering from a stroke
- For an end to violence in our society.
- For the families who are grieving the loss of loved ones.
- For an end to human trafficking..
- For the unemployed.
- For those who struggle with family relationships.
- For a greater respect for human life, from the moment of conception until natural death.
- For all caregivers.
- For a special intention.
- For all service men and women serving our country, and for their families.

**PROVIDE A RIDE:**

Volunteers needed to provide rides “to and from” Mass for members of Our Lady Chapel — both Saturday Evening Mass at 5 PM and Sunday Mass at 10 AM. **This ministry will involve only providing rides to the Chapel for Mass.** Volunteers must be 21 or older. Please provide your name and phone number so that we can form a call list. We have a growing need in the chapel and would like to provide this service to our members. **Contact Tina Newton at 440-991-6670**

**GOD LOVES US AS WE ARE:**

God bless our contradictions — those parts of us which seem out of character. Let us be boldly and gladly out of character. Let us be creatures of paradox and variety — creatures of contrast; of light and shade, creatures of faith. God, be our constant. Let us step out of character into the unknown, to struggle and love and do what we will. Amen.

—Michael Leunig

**DO WE WORSHIP OR IMITATE JESUS?**

I frequently quote Fr. Ed Hays' insightful comment: "Jesus' original followers imitated him long before they worshiped him." It would seem many of his modern followers are content simply to worship him, and never think of imitating him. Yet as we know from the earliest biblical account of the Lord's Supper that St. Paul gives us in his letter to the Church at Corinth [see 1 Corinthians 11], taking from the cup at that meal originally committed the person to carrying on Jesus' ministry. The historical Jesus went to his death knowing at least a handful of his disciples would continue the work for which he was giving his life. They had bought into his value system.

We must always keep this in mind when we read the Christian Scriptures. They weren't composed for people mining for Scripture proofs. They were written to help people reflect on what actually happens when one tries to become another Christ.

That's why, for instance, the Book of Acts of the Apostles was composed. Though Luke is helping his community look more into the future than reflect on the past, he's also trying to point out that when they actually live their lives with Jesus' value system, they'll achieve some of the same things that the historical Jesus achieved — "Signs and wonders were done among the people" [Acts 5:12-16]. In this case, people were cured of demons which not only brought disorder in their lives and the lives of others, but also affected the environment in which they lived.



Of course, as Luke mentions, because of the effect they were having, some dared not join them. As Jesus quickly discovered during his earthly ministry, there will always be those who thrive on the evil which such disorder brings at the same time he and his followers are trying to eradicate it. Thus, we can appreciate why the persecutions which many in the early church were enduring forced some individuals to ignore the present and project themselves into a future revolving around visions, messages from heavenly creatures, and assurances that one day the risen Jesus will see to it that things get better and our persecutors will suffer the consequences of their actions [Revelation 1:9-20].

John's Gospel is proclaimed every year on the Second Week in Easter [John 20:19-31]. It leads us to reflect on what happens when we're open to Jesus' Spirit working in our forgiveness of all around us. Instead of being content to live in a world in which people labor under the guilt which comes from the sins we've retained, we actually create a totally new environment by our forgiveness.

In some sense, our forgiveness of others is the most practical way we make Jesus' wounds our wounds. Every day we surface occasions to do so. Since scholars commonly believe no one who ever knew the historical Jesus ever wrote anything about him that we possess today, Jesus' remark about "those who have not seen and have believed" becomes quite significant. Not only must we the readers deal with just the risen Jesus, so did the author of John's gospel! We're in the same boat. It's both encouraging and disturbing to realize that neither of us are exempt from always reflecting on being other Christs.

—taken from the writings of Father Roger Karban, which appear on the internet

**CHILDREN'S BULLETINS:**

Each week, we are making available a **Children's Worship Bulletin**. There are **two editions**: [3-6] and [7-12]. They are available on the table as you leave. The Bulletin focuses on the readings for the week. These are wonderful tools for your children to learn more about the scripture readings for the week. We hope you will take them for your families or your grandchildren. Thanks.

Children's Worship  
Bulletin ✨

greeting of peace, a Penitential Rite, and then a Dismissal Rite — a sending. They believe and have been renewed by His having breathed the Spirit again upon the chaos, bringing about the possibility of a new creation.

But there is something — someone — missing; Thomas is out doing his own thing or dealing with his shame privately. When he does show up, the others tell Thomas what they had experienced — Jesus had shown them His wounds and so they believed. So Jesus comes again, and Thomas is there. Jesus offers him His Body and Thomas receives and believes. Intimacy leads to fruitfulness and the liturgy is completed by the fruitful lives and preaching of the Sent. Thomas does not me to believe through insights or logic, but through an unreasonable encounter with himself. The encounter is unreasonable because love is beyond good reasons and deductions. All twelve have such an experience. They had denied who they were, but Jesus, having stayed faithfully obedient to Himself through His life and death, begins the reversal of the consequences of the "Old Adam" — "My Lord and my God."

The early Church began in frail doubtings and imprisoning fears. Jesus appears and says that seeing Him physically is meant to be retold, and they are to tell others, more by their actions, that Jesus has risen and is present so as to make believing a way of seeing and living. Their old ways of falsifying their identities is over. They are met by Jesus in their apartness — their shameful-shadowful isolation from each other.

The Holy Water fonts are full now, and we enter our worship places with re-washable garments. Our new shoes are scuffed and worn into being like the old ones. Jesus appears again in Word and Sacrament to find us, bless us, and mission us to go back to the running and the doing the Acts of the Apostles. His love is everlasting, but our human limitations can move us to retire early and regret our Thomas-like doubts.

We are baptized into Christ as a process — not as a product. The journey takes the grace of time and we wish we had the excitement always of the new shoes. We are not runners, but walkers and creepers — and even stoppers. Jesus does not abandon us to ourselves because of who He claims us to be. We are of the earth by creation and of the Divine by His Resurrection.

When Jesus offered his Body to Thomas, we must all realize that he offers us the same Body. Thomas was not converted by an idea — he was transformed by the Body — and so are we. Our putting our hands out to receive His Body is the beginning of the untying the ribbons or strings, or ropes, or chains which prevent the "gift of me" to become a "we". We are meant to be sent, and — as with the Eucharistic Presence of Jesus — made available, made nourishing, made visibly present within the reality of our simple bodies.

Gerard Manly Hopkins ends his poem with these words: "I am all at once what Christ is, // since he was what I am, // and this jack, joke, poor potsherd, patch, matchwood, // immortal diamond // Is immortal diamond." —edited from the writings of Father Larry Gillick, S.J., which appear on the internet

**DRESSES FOR HONDURAS:**

One of the nurses in our Gilmour Clinic is involved in a **dressmaking project** for the children of Honduras. They have devised a method of making sundresses out of common pillowcases, and then adorning them with other items for decoration. And that is where you come in. **If you have any old buttons, ribbon, ric-rac, lace or other sewing trim**, please bring them in. The group would like to collect these items to help decorate the dresses they are working on. This is an on-going project; the dresses will be sent to Honduras every time there is a mission trip. The next trip is scheduled for March of 2016. There is a **basket in the narthex of the Chapel** to collect any donations you may have. Thank you for your help!

**A PROVERB:**

Enjoy the little things, for one day you may look back and realize that they were big things.

**LIVING JOY:**

A prisoner of war, a nominal Christian, was being abused. However, one guard was regularly kind. One day the guard stood next to the prisoner and drew a Cross in the dirt. Then he smiled and whispered: “Believe.” The POW’s faith took a seismic leap.

“Joy,” wrote Leon Bloy, “is the most infallible sign of the presence of God.”

The results are in, and they are not happy ones. “Weekly church attendance for US Catholics is much closer to 25% than to 50%.” The researchers hail from the Sociology Department at the University of Notre Dame. These scholarly findings do confirm what many of our unscholarly eyes have been telling us on Sunday mornings. No doubt many of our fellow Catholics are staying under their electric blankets on Sunday mornings out of sheer laziness and indifference. Still there are countless others staying there because of an absence of faith. And, faith is what it is all about this Easter season.

One has to wonder as to the cause of this lack of faith in others — is it the person themselves, or is it us? I was riding the New York City subway. Across from me sat a religious in full habit. She struck me as singularly unhappy. She seemed so stern. Even when I greeted her, she did not reply. My stop arrived and I exited. A passenger, unknown to me, shared the same destination. He had witnessed her deliberate snub of me. On the platform, he said to me: “That nun was a very poor advertisement for the good news that Jesus has risen.”

I kept my silence, murmured a “God bless,” and moved off. Yet, Monsieur Bloy’s observation did come to mind. Someone had the patience to count the number of times the word “joy” appears in the Bible — the number is an astonishing 542.

Am I a joyful person? Are you? Do people look at us and sense that we firmly believe that Jesus the Lord has conquered death? Do they sense that we subscribe to that beautiful line from the Book of Revelation: “I was dead and now I am to live for ever and ever” [Revelation 1:18]. Or do they feel as my fellow subway passenger that there is no Easter joy about us, and that we appear to be prophets of both doom and gloom? It is an awesome responsibility to be a Christian. And we must act accordingly. A non-joyous Catholic is an oxymoron. Ours is an age where faith is an absent quality in even many ostensibly Catholic households.

It is important to reflect that genuine joy is not “make believe.” Nor does authentic joy call it a day when it makes us feel good and causes us to walk about with a large smile. Rather, it leads us to live lives worthy of the risen Christ we salute this sacred season. We become people filled with good works as well as cheer. James Tahaney has put the point I am trying to make well — we tell God that we do love Him, but we must prove that declaration by our actions — “proof comes from performance, not promises.”

We would all do well to check our Catholic and Christian lives critically from time to time. Are we working at the faith as well as we should? Can others looking at us tell that we are clearly the followers of Jesus? Do we possess Easter joy? Haven’t we been told often enough that faith is something caught and not taught? One of the best ways to both measure ourselves and then correct a bad situation is with the Scriptures themselves. Perhaps you may want to follow the advice offered by O.T. Gifford in the book he titled: *Hints to Young Christians*. And no matter what one’s age is, one should be a definition of a young Christian. Isn’t that what the Easter Gospels are all about? Gifford writes: “If you’re getting lazy, read James. If your faith is below par, read Paul. If you’re impatient, consider the book of Job. If you’re a little strong-headed, go and see Moses. If you’re weak-kneed, have a look at Elijah. If there is no song in your heart, listen to David. If you feel spiritually chilly, get the beloved disciple John to put his arms around you. And if you’re losing sight of the future, climb to Revelation and get a glimpse of heaven.”

—taken from the writings of Father James Gilhooly, which appear on the internet.



affirmed — namely, that in the end evil will not have the last word. It will fall. Good will eventually triumph.

More deeply, it asks us to roll the dice of our lives on that trust and that truth: What Jesus taught is true — virtue is not naïve, even when it is shamed. Sin and cynicism are naïve, even when they appear to triumph. Those who genuflect before God and others in conscience will find meaning and joy, even when they are deprived of the world’s pleasures. Those who drink in and manipulate sacred energy without conscience will not find meaning and life, even when they taste pleasure. Those who live in honesty, no matter the cost, will find freedom. Those who lie and rationalize will find themselves imprisoned in self-hate. Those who live in trust will find love. God’s silence can be trusted, even when we die inside of it.

We can live in faith, love, forgiveness, conscience, and fidelity in spite of everything that suggests that they aren’t true. They will bring us to what is deepest inside of life and love because God vindicates virtue. God vindicates love. God vindicates conscience. God vindicates forgiveness. God vindicates fidelity. God vindicated Jesus and will vindicate us if we remain faithful as Jesus did.

—taken from the writings of Father Ronald Rolheiser, O.M.I., which appear on the internet

**READINGS FOR THE WEEK:**

**Monday:** Isaiah 7:10-14; 8:10, Hebrews 10:4-10, Luke 1:26-38

**Tuesday:** Acts 4:32-37, John 3:7-15

**Wednesday:** Acts 5:17-26, John 3:16-21

**Thursday:** Acts 5:27-33, John 3:31-36

**Friday:** Acts 5:34-42, John 6:1-15

**Saturday:** Acts 6:1-7, John 6:16-21

**3<sup>rd</sup> Week in Easter:** Acts 5:27-41, Revelation 5:11-14, John 21:1-19

**CLEAN OUT THOSE CLOSETS AND SERVE OTHERS:**

Winter is here— and Spring is coming. Another time to once again clean out the closets. Clothing that no longer fits, or has been replaced by new items, can become great items for others. Always remember the words of Jesus: “The poor you shall always have with you” [Matthew 26:11]. Please continue to bring your *gently used* men’s, women’s and children’s clothing to the Lennon Board Room, or place it in the cedar chest which is located in the Chapel narthex [just press the key button to open the chest]. We partner with Fatima Center to help provide clothing for general use. Also, **business work clothing for this season is especially needed. The Fatima Center helps men and women prepare for job interviews.** If you have some of these items, this would be a good time to send them along. Clothing for all seasons is accepted, but please try to keep in mind that storage facilities are limited at Fatima — so it would help if you could focus on winter and spring items at this time. You may pick up a tax form when you drop off the clothing here at Our Lady Chapel — there are forms in the cedar chest. Clothing may be brought on the weekend, or during the week. Thank you. **If you have any questions, please contact Patty in the chapel office [440-473-3560].**

**A HEAVENLY REMINDER:**

Realize that God is always watching us, helping us shape our behavior accordingly. There’s no software security to block heavenly surveillance.

—Rabbi Yossi Marozov

**VINDICATINGs HUMAN FIDELITY AND GOD’S SILENCE:**

Theologians sometimes try to simplify the meaning of the resurrection by packaging its essence into one sentence — in the resurrection, God vindicated Jesus, his life, his message, and his fidelity. What does that mean?

Jesus entered our world preaching faith, love, and forgiveness, but the world didn’t accept that. Instead it crucified him, and, in that crucifixion, seemingly shamed his message. We see this most clearly on the cross when Jesus is taunted, mocked, and challenged — if you are the son of God, come down from there! If your message is true, let the God verify that right now! If your fidelity is more than plain stubbornness and human ignorance then why are you dying in shame?

And what was God’s response to those taunts? Nothing — no commentary, no defense, no apologia, no counter-challenge, just silence. Jesus dies in silence. Neither he nor the God he believed in tried to fill that excruciating void with any consoling words or explanations challenging people to look at the bigger picture or to look at the brighter side of things. None of that. Just silence.

Jesus died in silence — inside God’s silence and inside the world’s incomprehension. And we can let ourselves be humbly scandalized by that silence — just as we can let ourselves be perpetually scandalized by the seeming triumph of evil, pain, and suffering in our world. God’s silence can forever scandalize us — in the Jewish holocaust, in ethnic genocides, in brutal and senseless wars, in the earthquakes and tsunamis which kill thousands of people and devastate whole countries, in the deaths of countless people taken out of this life by cancer and by violence, in how unfair life can be sometimes, and in the casual manner that those without conscience can rape whole areas of life seemingly without consequence. Where is God in all of this? What’s God’s answer?

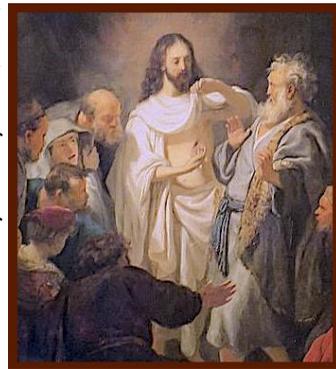
God’s answer is in the resurrection, in the resurrection of Jesus and in the perennial resurrection of goodness within life itself. But resurrection is not necessarily rescue. God doesn’t necessarily rescue us from the effects of evil, or even from death. Evil does what it does, natural disasters are what they are, and those without conscience can rape even as they feed off life’s sacred fire. God doesn’t intervene. The parting of the Red Sea isn’t a weekly occurrence. God lets his loved ones suffer and die, just as Jesus let his dear friend, Lazarus, die and God let Jesus die. God redeems, raises us up afterwards, in a deeper more lasting vindication. And the truth of that statement can even be tested empirically.

Despite every appearance, sometimes, in the end, love does triumph over hatred. Peace does triumph over chaos. Forgiveness does triumph over bitterness. Hope does triumph over cynicism. Fidelity does triumph over despair. Virtue does triumph over sin. Conscience does triumph over callousness. Life does triumph over death. And good does triumph over evil — always. Mohandas K. Gandhi once wrote: “When I despair, I remember that all through history, the way of truth and love has always won. There have been murderers and tyrants, and for a time they seem invincible. But in the end they always fall. Think of it, always.”

The resurrection, most forcibly, makes that point. God has the last word. The resurrection of Jesus is that last word. From the ashes of shame, of seeming defeat, failure, and death, a new, deeper, and eternal life perennially bursts forth. Our faith begins at the very point where it seems it might end, in God’s seeming silence at Jesus’ death.

And what does this ask of us?

First of all, simply that we trust its truth. The resurrection of Jesus asks us to believe what Gandhi

**“HANDS-ON” RELIGION:**

John’s Gospel presents us with a familiar figure — Thomas the twin, commonly known today as “Doubting Thomas” [John 20:19-31]. He was not with the other disciples when the risen Christ appeared to them and when they shared the good news with him. Thomas emphatically declared that he would not believe unless he saw for himself the wounds of the crucified Lord — putting his finger in the nail marks and his hand into Christ’s pierced side. Not satisfied with the testimony of others, Thomas wanted to experience the risen Lord himself — to know first-hand that his crucified Master was indeed alive in a new and glorious way.

A week later Jesus appeared again to the disciples, and this time Thomas was with them. Inviting Thomas to see and touch his wounds, Jesus said: “Do not be unbelieving but believe.” Thomas answered with one of the great faith statements in the Gospels: “My Lord and my God.” Jesus then added: “Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed.”

Thomas represents the contemporary desire for direct religious experience. The traditional supports for belief have been weakened. Atheism is now a viable option in our culture. Young people today do not automatically follow the religious beliefs of their parents. In this situation, individuals are more likely to appropriate or maintain the Christian faith if they have a genuine experience of God’s saving love mediated by Jesus Christ.

A widow who suffered intense feelings of loneliness after her husband’s unexpected death and is now coping better with her new life situation, is convinced she survived only with God’s help. A cradle Catholic who kept the commandments throughout his life made a retreat; he developed a new personal relationship with Christ which deepened his faith and expanded his commitment to help those in need. Reflecting on her life, a grandmother realized that she has always felt Christ’s presence — especially in the sacraments — leading her to a profound sense of gratitude for the gift of faith. A woman who doubted God’s merciful love for a couple of years after having an abortion participated in the American Bishops’ national program — Project Rachel — designed to bring healing to those involved in abortion, and was blessed with a solid, enduring belief in a merciful God who never tires of forgiving. A young man who lived as a nominal Catholic without much thought or conviction even when going to Mass and getting married in the Church, had a great awakening when he held his newborn son in his arms for the first time and spontaneously prayed with Thomas: “My Lord and my God.”

Can you think of a time when you actually experienced God’s love in your life? How does this experience deepen your faith?  
—taken from the writings of Father Jim Bacik which appear on the internet

**AMAZON.COM:**

Please remember that when you want to buy something from Amazon.com, you need to first go to [www.ourladychapel.org](http://www.ourladychapel.org) and click on the Amazon logo at the bottom of the home page! Because of this simple step — and at no cost to the purchaser — Our Lady Chapel receives a percentage of all purchases that are made from Amazon.com. Ever since we have begun this program, we have consistently been receiving significant checks from Amazon that are being credited to help pay for chapel expenses. This affinity program remains in effect throughout the year, so we ask everyone to continue to remember to start your purchases at Amazon on the Our Lady Chapel home page! Thank you.

**JUST A REMINDER:**

“Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.”



**QUESTIONS ABOUT FAITH ARE GOOD:**

There are two important visits of the Risen Lord to the Apostles — and others — gathered in the Upper Room [John 20:19-31]. The first is the visit of Jesus to his disciples on, as Luke tells us, the same day as the resurrection — that is the first day of the week. He characteristically greets them with the words: “Peace be with you”, and then shows them his hands and his feet. This eases their fears and provides them with evidence that it is indeed Jesus who is speaking to them. The Risen Lord then breathes on them and says: “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

There is no “formal account” Pentecost in John’s Gospel — nor, for that matter, in any of the other Gospels. The formal presentation of Pentecost occurs only in the Book of Acts of the Apostles [see Chapter 2]. So for John, Easter and Pentecost are part of the same theology.

John’s treatment of Pentecost does not have the “drama” of Luke’s account, nor is there a speaking in many languages. What we see in John’s Gospel is something much more intimate — Jesus breathes on his disciples and gives them the gift of the Holy Spirit, announcing their mission to forgive sins. In the Church we recognize this special moment as the origin of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Since the Apostle Thomas was not there for this visit of the Risen Lord, it is quite understandable that he has doubts that it actually occurred. However, the tables are turned on Thomas when eight days later Jesus comes to them again and this time singles out Thomas for particular attention. At this Thomas makes his extraordinarily profound profession of faith: “My Lord and my God.” It is a wonderful story which tells us that the one who doubted most of all is enabled to make the most extraordinary profession of faith.

Back in the days of our grandparents and great-grandparents many people would make this phrase a personal prayer at the consecration of the Mass. As the priest raises up the body and blood of Christ at the consecration, they would pray Thomas’ words: “My Lord and my God”. It would be a wonderful custom for all of us to do as part of our own prayer at Mass, or anytime we come before the presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

Priests — and maybe you also — often hear people saying that they have trouble with doubts in their faith. While it is quite common, it is nevertheless very troubling for the individual who tells you they experience these doubts. They often feel that their faith is deeply challenged and this can cause them a lot of anxiety. It is important to console these people and to reassure them that having doubts about one’s faith is nothing unusual. In fact, experiencing doubts and having questions reminds us that faith is precisely what is needed.

If we had no doubts — if all our beliefs were perfectly clear and rational — then there would be no need for faith. We would be completely certain about all the doctrines of the Church and there would be no room for uncertainty. But then we would not be talking about faith, but about certainty. By its very definition, faith is uncertain. Believing that Jesus is the Son of God and believing in his teaching as well as in all the various doctrines of the Church — such as the resurrection — really does require faith because none of these things comes naturally to us.

What we mean by faith is coming to a conviction about a set of propositions that is unverifiable. We will never know the complete truth about heaven and earth until we die and enter the heavenly Kingdom. All we have to go on is what Jesus told us, and what the Holy Spirit has revealed to his



the horrible attacks of evil upon the world and say to Him: “I trust in you.” We go before Him recognizing our own sinfulness and say to Him: “I trust in you.” There are hundreds of thousands, if not millions still suffering the attacks of others. We recognize their pain and we call upon Jesus who is Love and Mercy and say: “I trust in you.” There are many who have committed the most unspeakable sins — particularly sins against life who need to bring their sinfulness before the Lord and say: “Jesus, I trust in you.” We need to bring our own sins before the Lord and say: “Jesus I trust in you.”

St. John Paul II concluded the canonization homily by saying: “And you, Faustina, a gift of God to our time, a gift from the land of Poland to the whole Church, obtain for us an awareness of the depth of divine mercy; help us to have a living experience of it and to bear witness to it among our brothers and sisters. May your message of light and hope spread throughout the world, spurring sinners to conversion, calming rivalries and hatred and opening individuals and nations to the practice of sister and brotherhood. Today, fixing our gaze with you on the face of the risen Christ, let us make our own your prayer of trusting abandonment and say with firm hope: Christ Jesus, I trust in you!”

—taken from the writings for Father Joseph Pellegrino, which appear on the internet.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP — THE EDGE:**

EDGE will not meet until **Sunday, April 10<sup>th</sup>** when we will be discussing the Season of Easter. We are not meeting before then because many schools taking Spring Break before Easter. Bring your friends. Come and try us out. Come and find out what the EDGE is all about. If you have not joined us before, that’s OK. **Just call the office and let us know that you are going to be coming.** We ask you to do this because there will be food involved. Our EDGE Youth Group has a Faith-Service-Social component, and we look forward to your participation. All are welcome. **If you can’t join us on either March 25<sup>th</sup> or April 10<sup>th</sup>, our next meeting will take place on Sunday, April 24<sup>th</sup> when we will be going to clean up Calvary Cemetery.** Please join us for a wonderful experience.

**ATTENDANCE:**

If you attend Mass regularly here at Our Lady Chapel, it would be helpful if you filled out a form [name, address, phone number, children, etc.] indicating this fact, if you have not already done so. Such information not only helps us to know who is attending Our Lady Chapel; it also is of great assistance to us in record keeping [for our friend, the IRS] of any contributions which you may make.

**ENVELOPES:**

- When you need a **new supply** of envelopes, please feel free to take a supply of them from the table in the vestibule, or call Father John at the Campus Ministry Office [473-3560].
- When you **use** your envelope, please make sure that **your number** is on it. If you need to know your number, please call the Campus Ministry Office. Thanks.

**WEEKLY OFFERING:**

Baskets will be passed during the “Preparation Rite” and will be brought to the altar as part of the Offerings to help offset chapel daily operating expenses. When you choose to use the envelopes, your donations to Our Lady Chapel will be acknowledged so that you have a record for the IRS.

**Total Offerings: Saturday [3/26/16] ----- \$ 894.00**

**Total Offerings: Sunday [3/27/16] ----- \$ 2,666.00**

**WISDOM:**

You cannot hold a torch to light another’s path without brightening your own.

—Rumi

**DIVINE MERCY:**

In the year 2000, the Second Sunday of Easter occurred on April 30<sup>th</sup>. On that day, the Holy Father, St. John Paul II, canonized Sr. Mary Faustina Kowalska. St. Faustina was only 33 years old when she died in 1938. She spent most of her life in convents in Poland. Yet her life has made an impact upon the world.

It all began when she was a little girl at Eucharistic Adoration. She felt drawn to the Lord and was determined to give her life to Him. She asked her parents if she could enter a convent when she was 16, but they told her that she had to work to support the family. In 1924 at age 19 she attended a dance in a Park with her sister, Natalia. While at the dance she had a vision of Jesus suffering. She rushed off to the first Church she could find where she was told by the Lord to go to a convent in Warsaw. She left the next morning. When she arrived in Warsaw she again went to the first Church she could find and spoke to a priest there who recommended a local lady where she could stay until she found a convent that would take her. Convent after convent turned her down until she was finally accepted at the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy. In 1931 she had a vision of Jesus as the King of Divine Mercy, wearing a white gown and having white and red rays flowing from His side. She was told to paint this picture and under it put the words: “Jesus, I trust in you.” She was to be an apostle of the Mercy of God, letting the world know about the compassion of the Lord.



St. John Paul II said in his canonization homily that St. Faustina was told that the two rays coming from Jesus’ heart represented blood and water. Blood referred to the sacrifice of the cross, and the gift of the Eucharist. Water referred to the gifts of baptism and the Holy Spirit. Jesus told her: “My daughter, tell people that I am love and mercy personified.” St. John Paul II said that this was a needed message for the people who had witnessed the sufferings of millions during the last century.

This is also a necessary message for us who still witness the horrible actions of people against others throughout the world — as well as know the horrible results of our own personal sins. St. John Paul II said: “This consoling message is addressed above all to those who, afflicted by a particularly harsh trial or crushed by the weight of the sins they committed, have lost all confidence in life and are tempted to give in to despair. To them the gentle face of Christ is offered; those rays from his heart touch them and shine upon them, warm them, show them the way and fill them with hope.” How many souls have been consoled by the prayer: “Jesus, I trust in you”, which Providence initiated through Sr Faustina! This simple act of abandonment to Jesus dispels the thickest clouds and lets a ray of light penetrate every life.

Guilt destroys us. We cannot bear it. We cannot tolerate the thought that others might learn about our sins — learn who we truly are. We cannot tolerate our own hypocrisy. Sometimes we try to suppress guilt by acting as though it is not there. But it is. Sometimes we try to convince ourselves that we shouldn’t feel so bad. We rationalize our sins, think that our actions have not been sinful, or maybe, just not all that bad. We fall for the lies that this or that is not a sin because there are a lot of people doing this. But this doesn’t work. If there is a shred of morality within us, then the guilt remains, at work destroying our happiness and, ultimately, destroying us. The only way that we can return to being our true selves is through the love and mercy of Jesus Christ. In Jesus, love and mercy merge.

Consider the resurrection appearance that John’s Gospel presents [John 20:19-31]. We come upon the disciples in the Upper Room. They are completely perplexed. What should they make of the stories that Mary Magdalene told them? What should they make of the empty tomb that Peter and John had found? And then, in that Upper Room — that place where they had received the Eucharist on Holy Thursday — Jesus appeared. What were His first words? He said: “Peace be with you.” He came to bring peace. Again, a week later, Jesus appeared, and again His first words were: “Peace be with you.”

Jesus Christ is the source of our peace. He is love. He is mercy. We go before Him in the face of

Church. And this has to be taken on trust.

Not everyone can do this — not everyone can find it within themselves to believe in God and in what he has revealed to us. Many people find it incomprehensible, and think that the best thing to do is to leave all this faith business aside and get on with their lives. Others, however, find that what the Church teaches makes perfect sense and they have absolutely no difficulty in believing the whole deposit of faith. But most of us fall somewhere between these two extremes. Most of us believe in God and in his Son Jesus and also in the Holy Spirit. We believe, too, in the power of the sacraments and trust in what the Church teaches us about these things. However not all of us find ourselves able to believe in the whole package — there may be a few things that we don’t understand or haven’t yet had explained to our complete satisfaction. Nevertheless despite these occasional reservations we find ourselves able to accept the various doctrines of our faith and where we have difficulties we hope and trust that we are on the right track.

The problem comes when we start to face doubts. When in prayer we suddenly find ourselves wondering if Jesus really did rise from the dead or whether he really is the Son of God or whether he actually has the power to forgive our sins. These unwonted thoughts can cause us a great deal of anxiety and they can distract us from our prayers.

The question we have to ask ourselves is this: where do these thoughts come from? Or we could perhaps better ask ourselves: who wants us to be distracted and to doubt our faith? And there is only one answer to these questions — the Evil One.

These doubts don’t arise from any problems in our reasoning. We have at an earlier stage in our life thought deeply about our faith and come to the conclusion that even though the doctrines of the Church are not scientifically provable, on the balance of probability we can place our trust in God and in what he has revealed to the Apostles. We have reached this intellectual position realizing that what God has revealed is a marvelous explanation of all that exists and something that we can believe in.

The only one who wants to undermine our faith is the Devil, the Evil One. So let me suggest that it is he who is troubling us with these doubts and uncertainties. It is only he who can lose out if we believe in God, and so he manufactures all kinds of tricks to keep us from a wholehearted faith in God.

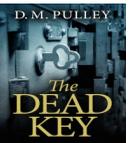
Knowing one’s enemy is the very first step to take when you have a battle to fight. And knowing where these unwonted thoughts come from is the first step to defeating them and to recovering our balance. When we experience these times of doubt then quickly tell the Evil One to go away. Tell him to stop bothering you with these troublesome ideas and then begin to say your prayers as you always did.

Certainly this will not completely solve the problem, but it will surely help you to get on to an even keel and help you to place your hope and trust in a good and gentle God.

—taken from the writings of Father Alex McAllister, S.D.S., which appear on the internet

**ENJOY A WONDERFUL EVENING:**

**Friends of the Gates Mills Library** are hosting their annual dinner on **Thursday, April 7<sup>th</sup>** at the **Chagrin Valley Hunt Club**, 7620 Old Mill Road, located by the bridge in the village of Gates Mills. **Cocktails are at 6 PM and Dinner will be served at 6:30 PM.** Speaker for the evening will be D.M. Pulley, winner of the 2014 Amazon Breakthrough Novel Award, and author of the mystery/thriller novel entitled: *The Dead Key*. Cost of the evening is \$45 [cocktails are cash]. Contact **Lisa Reid** at **216-533-3418** or at [larworkerscomp@gmail.com](mailto:larworkerscomp@gmail.com) to make reservations or to answer any questions.

**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:**

Father John will be available to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation with you on **every Saturday** between **3:30 – 4:00 PM**. Confessions are also available “by appointment.” The Reconciliation Room is located in the small chapel directly across from Father John’s Office



#### 4 WAYS TO SPREAD THE WORD THAT JESUS IS RISEN:

From yelling hallelujah, to chocolate bunnies, to egg hunts, to reuniting with whatever you fasted from during Lent, Easter is easily one of my favorite times of the year. But to find the greatest gift of Easter, you'll have to put down your basket and all that yummy, sugary stuff that fills you up, and instead run to something empty — a tomb where the body of Jesus, the King of the Jews, was laid to rest.

We celebrate the resurrection of Jesus loud and proud every Easter Sunday, not only because it begins the most important liturgical time of the year, but because His resurrection is the heart of our Christian faith and the most pivotal moment in human history. St. Paul reminds us that “if Christ has not been raised, then empty is our preaching; empty, too, is your faith” [1 Corinthians 15:14].

This is the classic “all-or-nothing” decision we have to make with Jesus. He either rose from the dead, or He didn't — there's no in-between. We either have to believe that He gave His life for us on the cross and then came back to life, or we have to cast off the whole resurrection story as factious.

But the fact is that there are plenty of logical reasons to believe that Jesus actually did rise from the dead. Jesus didn't just tiptoe out of the tomb and play hide-and-go-seek with the people of his time. He rolled back that stone all the way and proceeded to make His resurrected presence known to hundreds over the next few weeks. The resurrection is the event that altered the course of history forever.

Before I started to take my faith seriously, I often saw Jesus simply as the guy who died for our sins so that when I messed up, it wasn't that big of a deal. But the more I encountered people who were on fire for their Christian faith — and the more I started going to daily Mass and youth group — the more I began to question this box I had put Jesus in. I was faced with the question: “If all Jesus did was die for me, then why didn't the story end then and there? How are we still here worshipping Him today if His life just ended on the cross?”

Those questions are answered on Easter Sunday when we celebrate and proclaim His resurrection. Jesus is alive. He did so much more than just die for us — He went the extra step that only Jesus could take, and rose from the dead for us. If we truly and firmly believe in the miracle of Easter, then it's imperative that we do more than just celebrate for one Sunday; we need to go out and proclaim that He is risen!

There are plenty of reasons why it's important to proclaim that Jesus is alive. The resurrection is a world-shaking event that is confirming, conquering and continuing. **The resurrection is confirming** because it proved Jesus' divinity. Up until His crucifixion, He had been bold and controversial in His teachings of who He really was and who had sent Him. As Jesus is hanging from the cross, people walk by shaking their heads and taunting Him, saying things like: “if you are the Son of God, come down from the cross” [Matthew 27:40]. But Jesus showed that He indeed was the Son of God and proved His divinity not in simply saving Himself from death on the cross, but by defeating death by living again.

**The resurrection is also conquering** because of this defeat of death — as well as defeat of Satan. St Paul reminds us: “We know that Christ, who was brought back to life, will never die again. Death no longer has any power over him” [Romans 6:9]. Satan also has no power over Jesus, nor over us, thanks to the resurrection. The devil fought savagely to overthrow the kingdom of heaven, and probably thought he had won on Good Friday. But instead of the cross and the tomb being a symbol of Jesus' defeat, they became symbols of His triumph. Sin and death were conquered that day once and for all.

Lastly, **the resurrection of Jesus is continuing** because He destroyed the notion that “You Only Live Once”. And in doing so, Jesus opened the door for us to join Him in resurrection when He comes again. Jesus walking out of the tomb won back for us what was lost because of Adam's sin in the garden.

It's important to understand not only why we should proclaim that Jesus is risen, but also how we should proclaim it. Easter is 50 days long, and according to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, it should be “celebrated in joy and exultation as one feast day.” We can't simply leave the

wonder and excitement of the resurrection on Easter Sunday and then pack it up along with all of the decorations until next year. Instead, we must spread the joy and exultation of Easter — along with our hallelujahs — far and wide. Here's some thoughts on how we can do this.

1. **Keep His commandments.** Jesus, at the Last Supper told His disciples: “If you love me, you will keep my commandments” [John 14:15]. Imagine Easter as a sort of New Year's for your faith, and a great opportunity to make resolutions to keep His commandments. In the renewal of our baptismal vows, we are refreshed and renewed in our journey to heaven. If this is something Jesus decided to tell His apostles right before He headed to Calvary, you better believe it's important. It sounds straightforward, because it is: follow the Ten Commandments and in doing so, you will be proclaiming and glorifying our risen king's name.
2. **Jump into the sea.** Shortly after the resurrection, Simon and some of the other disciples decided to go fishing. At dawn, they see a guy standing on the shore, and eventually realize it's Jesus. When Simon Peter realized Jesus was back from the dead, he was so excited that he jumped right into the water with his clothes on and swam to the shore [see John 21]. In your own life, when you see Jesus, jump into the sea and swim towards Him. When you have the opportunity to encounter God, rush to Him! — whether in your youth group, through adoration, or however you can get to Him; you are the one He hung from the cross for, and who He rolled away the stone for — so go to Him.
3. **Don't just stand there.** When Jesus ascends into heaven, His disciples were probably a bit unsure if He was leaving for good this time — because they're still looking up when two men dressed in white appear next to them and say: “Men of Galilee, why are you standing there looking at the sky? This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will return in the same way as you have seen him going into heaven” [see Acts 1]. The message is clear — what are you waiting for? Jesus made it clear to His disciples before He left that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them, and that He expected them to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth. Now that Jesus is risen, don't just stand in front of the tomb looking around for Him; it's time to go out and spread the word that He is alive and He is ready to enter into our hearts, and to prepare for the coming of the Holy Spirit.
4. **Go Forth.** And so the fun begins! If we are to truly celebrate this Easter season as it is meant to be celebrated, we must spread the word of what has happened. The resurrection is too monumental of a moment to keep to ourselves. If one of your friends died and then showed up on your couch a few days later asking what they missed, wouldn't you tell the world? Jesus being nailed to a cross spoke volumes about His love. The rolled-away stone and empty tomb strongly displayed His power. This Easter, let us join together in one, loud voice and proclaim the power of the resurrection, so that all may come to know that Jesus is alive.  
taken from the writings of Jay Martin, an associate of the Bible Geek.



#### LIFE TEEN:

Our next Life Teen gathering will take place on **Sunday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, when we will pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet.** Come and try us out. Life Teen generally meets right after Sunday Mass — from **11:30 AM—1:00 PM** in the **Lennon Board Room.** Life Teen is open to **all high school aged young people.** **Just call the office and let us know that you are going to be coming.** We ask you to do this because there will be food involved. We have a great deal of fun together and we grow in our faith at the same time. **Respond to your texts and/or emails, or call the chapel office [440-473-3560] to be notified.** If you can't join us on April 3<sup>rd</sup> **our next meeting will be on Sunday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, when we will undertake a service project together.** Please join us for a wonderful experience. Please continue to remember all our teens and young people in your prayers.



LIFE TEEN