

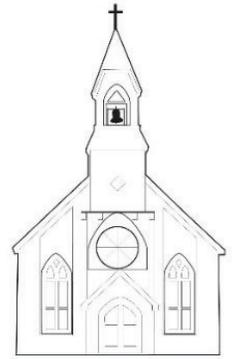
OUR LADY OF MERCY

9 Parsippany Road, Whippany, NJ 07981

Phone: 973-887-0050

E-Mail: office@ourladyofmercyparish.com, www.ourladyofmercyparish.com

Parish Office: Monday-Thursday 9:00 AM-3:00PM, Friday 9:00 AM-noon.



SERVED BY

Pastor..... Fr. Michal Rybinski
pastor@ourladyofmercyparish.com

Deacon Vincent LoBello
DeaconVinny@ourladyofmercyparish.com

Parish Secretary..... Joni Cabassa
office@ourladyofmercyparish.com

Trustee Edwin Peterson

Bookkeeper Hillary Ammerman
bookkeeper@ourladyofmercyparish.com

Youth Protection Coordinator Christine Selitto
.....protection@ourladyofmercyparish.com

Coordinator of Religious Education Sarah Hunter,
olmRF@ourladyofmercyparish.com, 973-887-0050,
Ext. 3.

MASS SCHEDULE

Monday-Friday 9:00 AM (Chapel)

Saturday Evening 5:30 PM (Church)

Sunday 7:30 AM, 9:30 AM, 11:00 AM (Church)

MINISTRIES

Altar Linens Carol Hunter
olmAltarLinens@ourladyofmercyparish.com

Altar Rosary Society..... Marlene Ferrence
rosary@ourladyofmercyparish.com

Altar Servers Fr. Michal Rybinski

Caring and Sharing Majella LoBello
DeaconVinny@ourladyofmercyparish.com

Cleaning Ministry Patti Cobane, Anne Roda-Farrell
cleaning@ourladyofmercyparish.com

Extraordinary Ministers Kathy Dittrick, Marilyn Kuehner,
olmEM@ourladyofmercyparish.com

Food pantry Carol Hunter
olmAltarLinens@ourladyofmercyparish.com

Garden Ministry Phyllis Stec & Annette Putts
garden@ourladyofmercyparish.com

Health Ministry Marlene Peterson & Kathy Dittrick

CONFESSION

Mondays ... 7:00-8:00 PM (Chapel)

Saturdays . 5:00-5:30 PM (Church)

First Fridays..... 8:15-8:50 AM (Chapel)
or by appointment

DEVOTIONS

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament (Chapel)

- Monday 7:00-8:00 PM
- Friday 9:30-10:00 AM (Divine Mercy Devotion)
- First Thursday 9:30-10:00 AM
- First Friday 9:30 AM - 12:00 noon

Rosary

- Monday-Friday 8:30 AM (Chapel)
- Saturday 5:10 PM (Church)
- Sunday 7:00 AM (Church)

Miraculous Medal Novena

- Wednesday after 9:00 AM Mass

Devotion to St. Joseph

- First Wednesday after the 9:00 AM

olmHealthMinistry@ourladyofmercyparish.com

Homebound Ministry..... Deacon Vincent LoBello
DeaconVinny@ourladyofmercyparish.com

Hospitality Ministry Dan Mihalko
hospitality@ourladyofmercyparish.com

Ministers of the Word..... Kim Gigantino,
lectors@ourladyofmercyparish.com

Music Ministry..... Tomasz Halat
music@ourladyofmercyparish.com

Scripture Group Steve Freire
bible@ourladyofmercyparish.com

Ushers John Guido
ushers@ourladyofmercyparish.com

Walking with Moms in Need..... Karen Carbonello
moms@ourladyofmercyparish.com

APRIL 5, 2026 ❖ EASTER SUNDAY

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, April 4

8:00 PM

❖ Easter Sunday, April 5

7:30 AM living and deceased members of the Oexle and Patterson Families; † Margaret Schleifer; † Gene Miranda

9:30 AM intentions of Tomasz Halat (on his Birthday); Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy; † David Kalisch; † Emanuela Cappellini; † Michael Sorresse; † Brian Murphy

11:00 AM for the protection of the unborn and their mothers; † Theresa Smith; † Adam Piatkowski; † Philip and Rose DeAngelis

Easter Monday, April 6

9:00 AM intentions of Mother Therese Kowalski; † Helen Norton (1st Ann.); † John Woytas (6th Ann.); † Henry Gronski

Easter Tuesday, April 7

9:00 AM intentions of Fr. Pio; † Maureen Lenox; † Zofia Kosak; † Dorothy Intile

Easter Wednesday, April 8

9:00 AM private intentions of Fr. Michal; † Jakub Sieńko

Easter Thursday, April 9

9:00 AM † Kathleen Conn; † William Smith

Easter Friday, April 10

9:00 AM † Marie Karr; † Janet Heery; † Nancy Perkalis (2nd Ann.)

Easter Saturday, April 11

5:30 PM intentions of Michael DeCandia; for the protection of the unborn and their mothers; † Elizabeth Silvaney; † Sarah Adamo

❖ 2nd Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy), April 12

7:30 AM † Bob Cobane; † Gordon Class (36th Ann.); † William Ryan

9:30 AM † Emanuela Cappellini; Antoinette and Tony Loia

11:00 AM Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy
† Francesco Marzella

PRAYER LIST

Please pray for: Nick Agro, Nancy Bakalis, Michael Bota, Giuseppa Casarrubea, Beverly & Blaine

Fresco, Arlene & Fred Gentile, Generoso Giesullo, Marla Giordino, Bertha Gonzalez, Kevin Goodsir, Cristopher Gruno, Emil Herkert, Georgjean Huegler, Helga Klemann, Anthony LaFerrara, Frank LaMura, Ana Manna, Victor & Ruth Madill, Joey Meluso, Ann Morpeth, Cathy N., Anne Marie Nappi, John O'Connor, Michael O'Connor, John & Marie O'Mullan, Philip Patavia, Anna Quagliato, Jaxson Rivera, Bob Roberts, Pamela Romanek, Eileen Scheibner, Theresa Seleski, Judythe Swift, Janice Trocino, Belarmino Viegas, Carolyn Vittoria, Rick Yarem.

PRAYER INTENTIONS OF THE POPE

For priests in crisis: *Let us pray for priests going through moments of crisis in their vocation, that they may find the accompaniment they need and that communities may support them with understanding and prayer.*

SANCTUARY CANDLE

The Sanctuary Lamp burns this week:

Church: healing of Julie Holzer

Chapel: in memory of Margaret Schleifer

COLLECTION

Sunday collection (3/29)..... \$7014

Easter flowers (up to date)..... \$1505

Thank you for your generosity!

THIS WEEK AT OLM

Monday-Friday (Chapel)

- 8:30 AM: Rosary

- after the Mass: Divine Mercy Novena

Monday, April 6 (Chapel)

- 7:00-8:00 PM: Eucharistic Adoration

Wednesday, April 8 (Chapel)

- after the Mass: Miraculous Medal Novena

Friday, April 10 (Chapel)

- 9:30-10:00 AM: Eucharistic Adoration

Saturday, April 11 (Chapel)

- before the 5:30 PM Mass: 9th Day of Divine Mercy Novena

Sunday, April 13 – Divine Mercy Sunday (Chapel)

- 3:00 PM: Holy Hour

REST IN PEACE

Please pray for the repose of the soul of **Linda Thomas**. Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, and let the perpetual light shine upon her. May she rest in peace!

FROM FR. MICHAL

Dear Friends,

"Christ is risen!" – this ancient, joyful cry resounds once again, carrying the fundamental truth of our faith. The Day the Lord has made has come; the day in which the darkness of sin and the finality of death have been conquered by Light and Life.

Easter is not merely a memorial of a historical event from two thousand years ago. It is a reality that happens here and now, in the heart of each of us, if only we open ourselves to the action of the Risen Lord. The poignant silence of Holy Saturday has given way to the triumphant "Alleluia!", reminding us that God's love is stronger than any human weakness, betrayal, or even physical end of existence.

May the radiance of Easter brighten all the shadows of your daily life. I wish you that the Risen Christ brings the gift of true peace to your families – the peace that the world cannot give. May He heal the wounds of discord, rebuild broken bonds, and fill your homes with mutual kindness and love.

I wish you that hope which flows from the empty tomb of Jesus may give you strength in your struggles with illness, financial difficulties, or loneliness. Remember that after every Calvary comes a resurrection, and Christ, who Himself passed through suffering and death, walks side by side with each of you.

I also wish you the courage to be witnesses of the Risen Lord in your workplaces, schools, and neighborhoods. May your lives, filled with faith and acts of mercy, become a living Gospel, legible to every person, especially those who do not yet know Him or have wandered away.

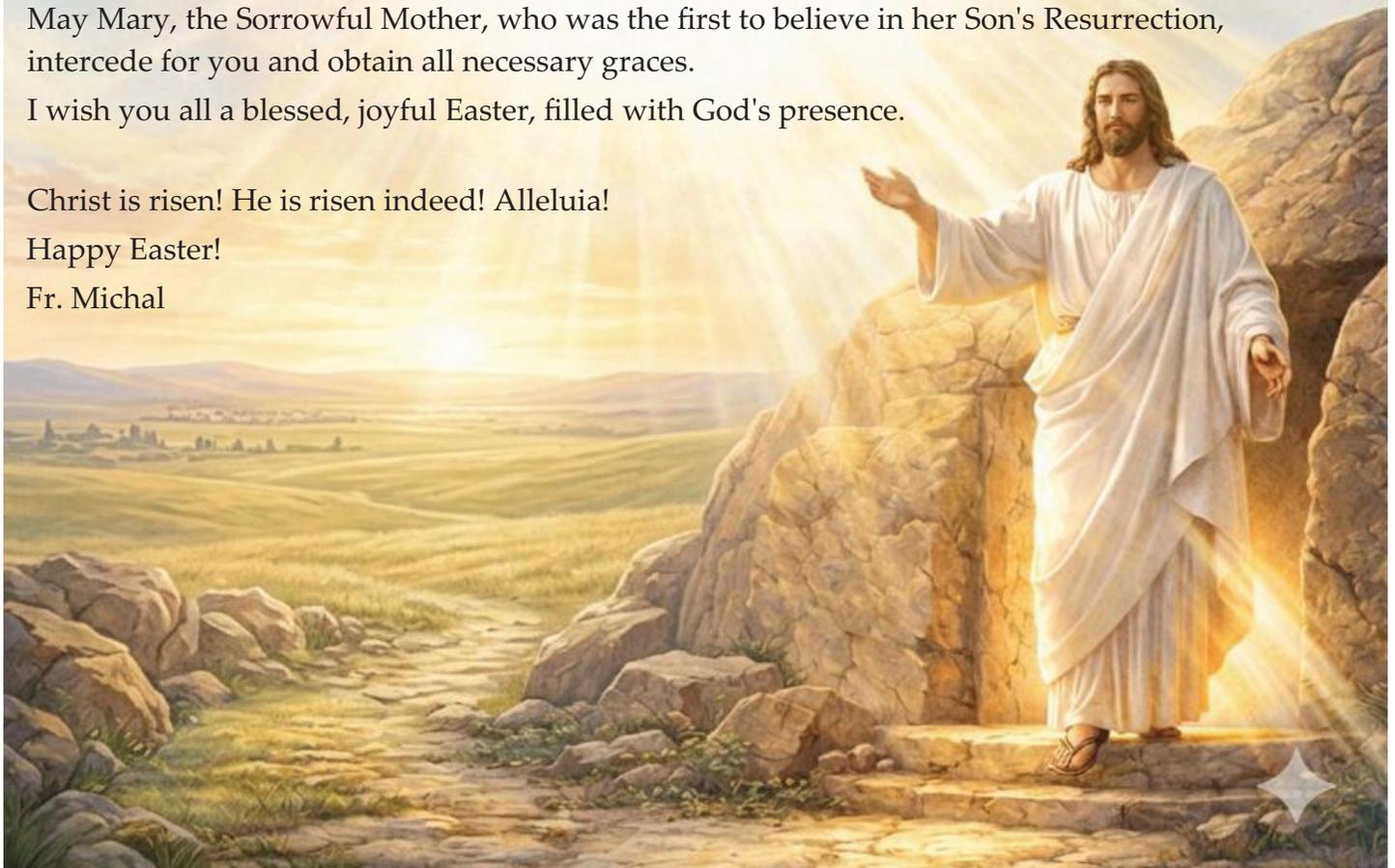
May Mary, the Sorrowful Mother, who was the first to believe in her Son's Resurrection, intercede for you and obtain all necessary graces.

I wish you all a blessed, joyful Easter, filled with God's presence.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Happy Easter!

Fr. Michal



THANK YOU

Lent and Holy Week are now behind us. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who, in any way, helped us prepare and celebrate this most sacred time.

During Lent we prepared for Holy Week, the Paschal Triduum, and Easter both through prayer and by building community.

- On Wednesdays and Fridays, we gathered for the Stations of the Cross, so I would like to thank all ministries for preparing meditations and for carrying the cross and candles. I would also like to thank everyone who participated in this devotion.
- I am grateful to Deacon Vinny for leading the Lenten men's sharing group, and to all men who accepted the invitation to participate.
- My sincere thanks go to Dan Mihalko, the entire staff, and all the parish ministries who helped prepare, organize, and run our Fish Fry. I also thank everyone who attended and helped create a wonderful community of the table. This project was also made possible by our sponsors, whom I warmly thank for their financial support: OLM Counting Crew, Knights of Columbus, the Schleifer Family, Shear Temptations, 6 OLM Families, Arden Courts and MGR Construction. I would also like to express my gratitude to the volunteers who prepared the gymnasium for the Fish Fry, handled the cleanup, served food to the tables, and ensured everything ran smoothly: OLM Counting Crew, Knights of Columbus, Girl Scouts, WPHS Interact Club, Boy Scouts, CYO, and OLM Parishioners.

Holy Week was a time to celebrate in a truly prayerful and meaningful way thanks to the help of many people.

- I would like to sincerely thank Joni Cabassa for coordinating so many people and projects, which made it possible to smoothly plan and celebrate these holy days!
- I thank all the lectors for preparing and proclaiming so many readings during these sacred days.
- I am grateful to our choir members, cantors, and Tomasz – our Music Director for providing the beautiful music throughout Holy Week.
- I also thank our Deacon, altar servers, and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion for their dedicated service during the many liturgies.
- My gratitude also goes to everyone who decorated the church and chapel for Easter. In a special way I would like to thank Rosa DeCandia, who put a great effort into the design and worked diligently to decorate the church.
- I also thank all those who cleaned and prepared the church and chapel for these most important days.
- I am deeply grateful to all of you for the generous donations to our parish during these days—especially for the Easter flowers, which make it possible for us to accomplish so much together. The list of intentions you have written on the envelopes is on page 5 and will be updated in future bulletins.

Finally, I would also like to thank you for the birthday wishes and gifts I received these days. This was such a wonderful surprise! I truly didn't expect it, and I'm so incredibly grateful. Thank you as well for your Easter wishes, prayers, and every form of help and support. Thank you also for your prayers for my mom and grandma – your prayers mean a lot to my family and me!

Thank you all very much for everything!

Fr. Michal

Next Sunday, we celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday. To mark this occasion, I invite everyone to join us for the Hour of Divine Mercy at 3:00 PM in our chapel.

EASTER FLOWERS

Thank you to all who donated for Easter flowers. The donations were made *in memory of* or *in honor of*: Anthony, Diana, Joan **BACIEWICZ**; Bernice **BENKERT**; Ferdinand A. **BEYER**; Michelina **BOCCHINO**; Alma Johnson **BROWN**; Patricia, Robert, Tommy Jr. **BRUENO**; Ignazio, Irene, Joseph, Rosa **CAGNIRO**; Weldon **CANOUGH**; Domenica **CAPOZZI**; Victor and Phylis **CASALE**; Donald Michael and Elvera Lucille **CASEY**; Dominic and Lane **CERRATO**; Angelo **CIANCI**; Gordon, Patricia, and Thomas **CLASS**; Bob and Ellen **COBANE**; John and Teresa **CIRELLO**; John and Virginia **CISTERNINO**; Edward and Mary **CLARK**; Michael J. **CORBITT Sr.**; Grace and Louis **CUGINI**; Joseph P. **D'AGOSTINO**; Living and deceased members of the **D'AGOSTINO** Family; Living and deceased members of the **DEDYO** Family; Mr. and Mrs. Michael **DISANTO**; Living and deceased members of the **DODGE** Family; Living and deceased members of the **DUCHENSKY** Family; Anna, Antonietta, and Luigi **FAVODIANO**; Brian, Elsie and John **FERRENCE**; Frances and William **FLAVEL**; Living and deceased members of the **FRISOLI** Family; Living and deceased members of the **GARNICA** Family; Living and deceased members of the **GENTILE** Family; Katie and Paul **GIBLOCK**; Carmela and John **GIGANTINO**; Living and deceased members of the **GODINE** Family; Anthony and Elizabeth **GRUMKA**; Jane and Thaddeus **GUSCIORA**; Living and deceased members of the **HENDRICKS** Family; Mr. and Mrs. **IANNUZZI**; Living and deceased members of the **IBARA** Family; Atanacia, Cresenciano, Isidoro **JAVIER**; Arch and Randolph **JOHNSON**; David **KALISCH**; Martin T. **KEATING Jr.**; Kevin **KELLY**; Edward; Living and deceased members of the **KELLY** Family; Margaret and William **KOEHLER**; Florence **KONDROSKI**; William and Elinor **KUEHNER**; Doris and Robert **LOLATTE**; Anna Coanley and Joseph P. **MAHIG**; Living and deceased members of the **MANNA** Family; Benito, Florenda, Santiago **MANTES**; Ernest and Mary **MARION**; Dinah, Efrem, Eliseo, Felicidad, Michael, and Villia **MARTIN**; Grace **MATTINA**; Chris and Joseph **MATYS**; John and Mary **MCKEAN**; Bertha and Willard **MCPEEK**; Living and deceased members of the **MICHAELSON** Family; Helen, Leonard, Mark **MIETLOWSKI**; Claire and James **MINEY**; Celina and Frank **MIRALDI**; Donald and Mildred **MONEY**; Ann Sr., Booby, and Howard Sr. **MORPETH**; Mr and Mrs William **MORRIS**; Mr and Mrs Francis **MULVIHILL**; Frank and Margaret **MUSARA**; Gregory **OESE**; Living and deceased members of the **OEXLE** Family; Living and deceased members of the **O'GRADY** Family; Living and deceased members of the **OLEZ** Family; George **OPAR**; Brian **O'TOOLE**; John Sam and Theresa **PALMUCCI**; Mary, William F. Sr. and William F. Jr. **PALUMBO**; Diana **PARK**; Brian **PARKOT**; Nenita **PASCHAL**; Living and deceased members of the **PATTERSON** Family; Living and deceased members of the **PERRONE** Family; Mr. Francesco **PERRONE**; Mr. and Mrs. Domenico **PERRONE**; Joseph **PETRI**; Joseph and Zbigniew **PIOTROWSKI**; Mr. and Mrs. Frank **POWELL**; Cathy and Joseph **PYONTEK**; Carolyn **RAITH**; Living and deceased members of the **RICCI** Family; Living and deceased members of the **RODEBUSH** Family; Richard **ROMANO**; Anna and Rudolph **ROSSI**; Phyllis and Thomas **RYAN**; Harry and Leila **SAGO**; Mary **SALKO**; Nick and Tina **SALVATORE**; Bill **SCHWEIZER**; Mr and Mrs John **SHEROWSKI**; Jan **SHEROWSKI**; Maryann **SCHILARE**; Living and deceased members of the **SCHULER** Family; Jakub and Zofia **SIENKO**; Elizabeth, George and William **SILVANEY**; Elwin and Mildred **SKIFF**; Brian **SLEECE**; George and Wilma **STEYERWALD**; Anna M. and Michael Sr. **STOYKO**; Living and deceased members of the **SWIELAS**; Bruce **THAIN**; Catherine and Lew **THOMAS**; Patty, Robert, and Steven **THOMPSON**; Genowefa and Henryk **TOMCZYK**; John, John R. Jr., and Marge **TORT**; Living and deceased members of the **TOWERS** Family; Mary and Michael **TRUPPO**; Martin and Rhoda **VANDYK**; Living and deceased members of the **VIETMEYER** Family; Kazimiera **WDOWIAK**; Alice and Arthur **WERNER**; Living and deceased members of the **WESBECKER** Family; Asunta and Norman **WIEDERMAN**; Living and deceased members of the **WIEDERMAN** Family; John Jr., John R. III, Mary, and Timoty **WOYTAS**; Anna and Victor **ZANETTI**; John E Jr. and John E. Sr. **ZICCARELLO**

EASTER ANTIPHONE

During the Easter season, which lasts until the Solemnity of Pentecost, the prayer of the Angelus is replaced by the hymn *Regina Caeli* (“*Queen of Heaven, rejoice*”). Unlike the Angelus, which is recited, this hymn—when prayed publicly—is usually sung while standing. It is one of the four great Marian antiphons, and its text was found in an antiphonary from 1171 originating from St. Peter’s Basilica.

The author and date of composition are unknown, although it is generally believed to have been written between the 9th and 12th centuries. It is sometimes attributed to Pope Gregory V (996–999). A beautiful and vivid legend, however, attributes it to another pope of the same name, St. Gregory the Great (590–604).

According to this tradition, in the year 596, during the Easter season, Rome was struck by a plague. In order to stop it, the Pope ordered a penitential procession. At dawn on the appointed day, he and his clergy gathered at the Roman church of Ara Coeli, from where they proceeded toward St. Peter’s Basilica. The Pope carried an icon of the Blessed Virgin Mary, traditionally attributed to St. Luke. As they passed by Hadrian’s Mausoleum, a voice was heard from above, singing praise to Mary, the Queen of Heaven. The Holy Father, astonished by this extraordinary event and moved by the angelic song, responded aloud: “*Ora pro nobis Deum, alleluia*” (“*Pray for us to God, alleluia*”). At that moment, a radiant angel appeared, holding the sword of the plague, which he then sheathed—and from that moment the epidemic ceased. In memory of this miraculous event, the name of the building was changed to the Castel Sant’Angelo (Castle of the Holy Angel), and the words of the angelic hymn were placed on the roof of the church of Ara Coeli. Much later (probably in the 12th century), additional lines were added, forming the antiphon as we know it today. Great promoters of this hymn, as with many Marian prayers, were the Franciscans. Initially, they recited it as an addition to the Magnificat during Vespers in the Easter Octave. In the second half of the 13th century, they incorporated it into their breviary prayer. By order of Pope Nicholas III (1277–1280), it became part of the official prayers of clergy throughout Rome. Later, Pope Benedict XIV (1740–1758), by a decree dated April 20, 1742, recommended that this hymn be recited during the Easter season, from Holy Saturday until the Saturday before Pentecost. Here is the text of the prayer:

ENGLISH

Queen of Heaven, rejoice, alleluia.
For he, whom you did merit to bear, alleluia.
Has risen as he said, alleluia.
Pray for us to God, alleluia.

LATIN

Regina coeli, laetare, alleluia.
Quia quem meruisti portare, alleluia.
Resurrexit sicut dixit, alleluia.
Ora pro nobis Deum, alleluia.

Then follows the versicle and response:

V: Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia.

R: For the Lord has truly risen, alleluia.

The priest then prays:

Let us pray. O God, who gave joy to the world through the resurrection of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, grant, we beseech You, that through His Mother, the Virgin Mary, we may obtain the joys of everlasting life. Through Christ our Lord.

R: Amen.

We will pray this prayer in place of the Hail Mary, which we usually recite after the blessing. The prayer has been printed and added to our hymnals.

BIBLE IN ONE YEAR – 14TH WEEK OF 53

The Bible is the oldest, most translated, purchased, and even most censored book in human history. Even from a purely academic standpoint, it is the absolute foundation of mankind. Our laws, our core morality, and the major events of human history trace directly back to these ancient books. Skeptics love to call it a fairytale. But dictators don't execute people for reading fiction. Governments don't use their resources to ban myths. They only silence what threatens their ultimate power. They only ban the truth. For centuries, secular scholars mocked biblical accounts — like the existence of King David or the Hittite Empire — claiming they were just made-up legends. Then archaeologists started digging. And every single time, the dirt proves the scriptures right. It's not just a religious text. It is the unbroken timeline of humanity. Isaiah 40:8: *"The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever."*

Day	First reading	Second reading	Third Reading
Monday	Judges 9-11	Ruth 4	Psalms 137
Tuesday	Judges 12-15		Psalms 146
Wednesday	Judges 16-18		Psalms 147
Thursday	Judges 19-21		Psalms 148
Friday	1 Samuel 1-2		Psalms 149
Saturday	1 Samuel 3-5		Psalms 150
Sunday	1 Samuel 6-8		Psalms 86

JOIN THE ST. JOSEPH MEN OF FAITH!

We are a brotherhood of Catholic men striving to grow in holiness through prayer, fellowship, and service. Inspired by St. Joseph's courage and devotion, we seek to lead our lives with integrity and strengthen our parish through faithful discipleship. Come be part of a community of faith and brotherhood. Monthly gatherings • Prayer • Discussion • Parish service

Meeting Time: 1st Saturday of every month starting May 2nd 10 AM

Location: Conference room in the parish center

Contact: Deacon Vinny email- deaconvinny@ourladyofmercyparish.com

WELCOME OUR BLESSED MOTHER INTO YOUR HOME

We invite you to take part in a beautiful spiritual journey! The statue of Our Blessed Mother is ready to "travel" to your home, offering your family a special week of grace, prayer, and reflection. Having Mary in your home serves as a wonderful reminder of her ever-loving presence in our daily lives and provides a sacred space to pray for your family's special intentions. How to Participate:

- Sign Up: Simply add your name to the signup sheet located on the board in the main vestibule of the church.
- Pick Up: You may collect the statue after the 5:30 PM Saturday Mass (or after any Sunday Mass).
- Share the Blessing: To prepare for the next family, please return the statue in time for the 5:30 PM Mass the following week.

Our hope is that Our Blessed Mother will be on a constant "journey" through the hearts and homes of our parish community. Open your doors to her, and she will surely welcome you into her heart.

STARS IN THE CHAPEL

Our chapel has 120 stars on the ceiling above the altar to support its restoration. You can contribute by making a donation, and a star will represent your support in the chapel. Each star will belong to a person or group that wants to help the chapel. We believe that everyone who cares about the chapel will understand and support our efforts to restore its original beauty. Each donor will receive a certificate for their star, and their contribution will be recognized with a plaque on the chapel wall. So far, 31 stars have found sponsors. If you would like to buy a star, please contact Joni at the Office.



THE ORIGINS AND CALCULATION OF EASTER SUNDAY



Jesus died during the feast of Passover. Therefore, when determining the date of Easter, we refer to the lunar calendar used by the Jewish people, according to which the date of this holiday is indicated.

Since the early centuries, various methods and traditions for determining the date of Easter have developed among Christians. According to the tradition of the Catholic Church, it is to be the first Sunday after the first full moon following March 21st, which marks the first day of calendar spring. The foundations for determining the date of Easter trace

back to the biblical mandate that preparations for Passover should fall on the 14th day of the month of Nisan, and Passover itself on the 15th day of Nisan. Nisan is the first spring month and the first month of the Jewish liturgical year, which is based on lunar months. Lunar months begin with a new moon; in their middle—on the night between the 14th and 15th day—the full moon occurs.

It was then that the Jews celebrated—and continue to celebrate—the feast of Passover. It commemorates the Exodus from Egyptian captivity, but it is also a time of thanksgiving for all of God's blessings and a symbolic moment of the world's renewal. The timing of this holiday refers to the very beginnings of the world. According to Jewish tradition, the world was created in the spring when all plants began to grow. When God created the moon, it was full, complete, and bright. Day and night were equal, as God divided them equally. In the lunar calendar, the date of Passover is fixed. It is always observed so that the supper takes place after dusk, exactly during the full moon. This can fall on any day of the week.

Christianity adopted this tradition but with a fundamental difference: we do not celebrate on the full moon itself, but on the Sunday following the spring full moon. This refers to the first day of the week, the day on which Jesus rose from the dead. Initially, Christians did not conduct their own calculations. They waited for the Jews to set the day of Passover and celebrated on the first Sunday after the Jewish feast. As early as the 2nd century, attempts were made to determine the date of Easter independently of Jewish calculations. The primary difference that emerged was that the Jewish Passover, while naturally celebrated around the vernal equinox, did not strictly have to fall after it. The Church, however, established that the "spring full moon" must occur after the start of calendar spring on March 21st.

By the 3rd century, specific Christian calculations appeared—Easter tables—indicating, sometimes far in advance, when the holidays would fall in subsequent years. There were over a dozen calculation systems, and they were quite complex. It was then that different traditions began to take shape between the West and the East: In the West the date was set as the first Sunday after the spring full moon, in the East it was assumed that three days should be added to the moment of the full moon (treated as the symbolic time of

Christ's death) in anticipation of the Resurrection. For example, if the full moon fell between Friday and Saturday, the Western Church would celebrate that coming Sunday. The Eastern Church, however, would wait another week.

These differences became permanent after the Great Schism between Eastern and Western Christianity in the 11th century. Additional discrepancies—which cause the date of Easter in different Churches to vary by as much as four or five weeks—result from differences in calendars. The Catholic Church uses the Gregorian calendar (introduced in the 16th century), while Orthodoxy remains with the Julian calendar. Currently, the difference between them is 13 days. Consequently, March 21st falls on different days, meaning the spring full moons are calculated differently. In the Catholic Church, Easter always falls between March 22nd and April 25th.

According to Eastern tradition, Easter is determined by the Orthodox Church and non-Catholic Eastern Churches. According to Western tradition, it is determined by the Roman Catholic Church, Eastern Catholic Churches, and Protestants.

Recently, proposals have emerged—particularly within the Catholic Church—to establish a fixed date for Easter based on our calendar, independent of the lunar cycle. This wouldn't be a specific day of the month, but rather a set Sunday (e.g., the second Sunday of April). However, there is currently no universal agreement among Christians on this matter.

JERUSALEM AFTER CHRIST

Jerusalem was conquered by King David around 1000 BC and established as the capital of his kingdom. From then on, it remained the primary city—most notably as the religious capital. This was still the case during New Testament times. For us, the most significant event that sanctifies Jerusalem is Jesus Christ: His death on the cross and His resurrection, both of which took place in this city.

Christianity also left a profound mark on the city's history. However, before that happened, the "events of salvation"

first unfolded within a quiet, closed circle of Christ's followers. The Apostles took Christ's mission as their most vital task: to go and proclaim. They were to travel throughout the known world, preaching the Gospel of salvation and administering baptism for eternal life. They gathered in small groups, meeting in secret first within Jerusalem itself, and later in other cities of the Roman Empire, eventually reaching Rome.

Christianity began to grow first in the hearts and souls of its followers. The seed of the Gospel started to sprout and flourish in the lives of the first believers, and subsequently in Christian parishes and communities. We read in the Acts of the Apostles how Christ's disciples gathered in private homes. There, they celebrated the liturgy and met for the so-called "*breaking of bread*." There is no doubt that this was the Eucharist.

Meanwhile, "*great politics*" and "*great history*" followed their own course, which in turn influenced the fate of Christianity. Specifically, within the Roman Empire, waves of persecution broke out. Persecuted



Christianity was forced into hiding. Witnesses of Christ gave their lives for the faith and in the name of Jesus, which—paradoxically—resulted in even more followers.

At that time, Palestine was part of the province of Syria. It was not even an independent province but a part of a larger administrative unit. No one could have guessed how history would unfold, or what a massive impact this small, provincial land with its capital in Jerusalem would have on the future. It is worth noting that for the Romans, the administrative capital of Palestine at the time was Caesarea Maritima. The Romans ruled Palestine, and much depended on them; Rome decided the course of history. The Jews had no independence and no state of their own. King Herod was merely a puppet in the hands of Rome—a puppet tolerated by the Romans only to keep Jewish aspirations for independence in check.

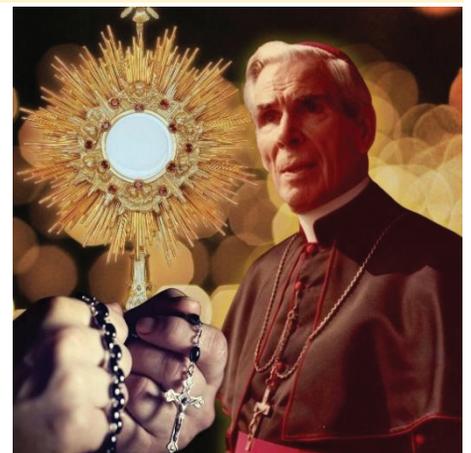
However, the Jews yearned for full independence. A series of uprisings and revolts broke out. Such unrest likely took place during Jesus' lifetime as well. Shortly after Christ's resurrection, another uprising erupted, which was bloodily suppressed by the Romans. To eliminate the problem, Rome decided to systematically silence all points of resistance and crush the national liberation movements once and for all. To achieve this, Roman legions under the command of Titus landed by ship in northern Palestine at the port of Akko (known in Greek as Ptolemais). The troops moved from north to south, crushing every spark of Jewish rebellion. In 70 AD, they reached Jerusalem. The siege of Jerusalem began, as it was the headquarters of the resistance against Rome. Although the army had been present in Jerusalem before, this was the final showdown. The entire city was encircled by a second siege wall. Jerusalem fell in short order. The Romans stormed the city, plundering and burning it. Among the structures claimed by the flames was the Temple of Jerusalem. This Temple, which for centuries had been the glory of the city and the symbol of God's presence among His people, was destroyed in 70 AD once and for all. It never regained its former splendor and was never rebuilt. The site lay in ruins and was abandoned for centuries. It wasn't until the 6th and 7th centuries that Muslims took an interest in the site and built the mosque known today as the Mosque of Omar (or the Dome of the Rock). It stands where the Temple of Jerusalem once was.

Thus, the prophecy of Jesus—who wept over a Jerusalem that did not believe or accept salvation—was fulfilled. Jesus had foretold: "*The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side... they will not leave one stone on another*" (Luke 19:43-44).

AWAITING THE BEATIFICATION OF ARCHBISHOP FULTON SHEEN - #3

In 1957, as a result of a conflict with the Metropolitan of New York, Cardinal Francis Spellman, Sheen lost his job in television. He returned to it only four years later. His new program, The Fulton Sheen Program, once again attracted millions of viewers. He resigned from hosting it in 1968, when age began to take its toll on him. He was 73 years old at the time.

He was not only a titan of work but also of prayer. He often said that he would not have achieved so much in life without the Holy Hour – a daily, one-hour adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, which he practiced continuously for 60 years, from the day of his priestly ordination until his death. He treated it as "*the most important appointment of the day,*" considering it the source of both spiritual strength and intellectual inspiration. He frequently told his listeners the following story, which took place in China after the communists came to power. One of the Catholic churches was ransacked, and the consecrated Hosts were taken from the tabernacle and scattered on the floor. The church was closed so that no services could be held there, and a guard was posted outside. An eleven-year-old girl witnessed what had happened and secretly slipped



into the church at night. She counted 32 Hosts lying on the floor. She knelt before them for an hour, praying in reparation. Because the regulations at the time forbade laypeople from touching the Blessed Sacrament with their hands, the little Chinese girl bent down and received Holy Communion directly from the floor with her tongue. For 32 nights, the same scene was repeated: the eleven-year-old secretly entered the church, spent an hour in adoration before the scattered Hosts, and then consumed one of them from the floor without using her hands. On the last night, after receiving Communion, she accidentally stumbled. The noise alerted the guard. The girl was caught and beaten to death. After telling this story, Fulton Sheen would say to his listeners that if a little Chinese girl could give such a witness to the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist with her life, then he—being a bishop—felt all the more obliged to do the same through daily adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

TEACHING MASS - LITURGY OF THE WORD #8: THE GOSPEL

“The reading of the Gospel is the high point of the Liturgy of the Word. The Liturgy itself teaches that great reverence is to be shown to it by setting it off from the other readings with special marks of honor: whether on the part of the minister appointed to proclaim it, who prepares himself by a blessing or prayer; or on the part of the faithful, who stand as they listen to it being read and through their acclamations acknowledge and confess Christ present and speaking to them; or by the very marks of reverence that are given to the Book of the Gospels.” (General Instruction of the Roman Missal, 60)

The Gospels... The subject would seem to be well-known, for even if someone does not know the Holy Scriptures, they often believe they know the Gospels. However, there is a certain danger associated with the Gospels. By attending church and hearing them frequently, we become somewhat "immune" to them. They often roll off us like water off a duck's back; we don't truly listen to them or reflect upon them. Do we really know what "Gospel" means?

We say: the Gospel of St. Mark, St. Matthew, St. Luke, St. John... Let us notice, however, that the true titles of these writings are different: the Gospel according to St. Mark, according to St. Matthew, according to St. Luke, according to St. John... This form of the title—traditional and very ancient—should alert us to the fact that the author is not the most important element in the Gospels. Moreover, Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John were not strictly the "authors," because in reality, there is only one Gospel.

What, then, is a Gospel? To answer this, we must first define what a literary genre is. Imagine someone who cannot cook having to prepare dinner. This person looks for instructions in a manual and happens upon a geometry textbook. Obviously, if they cook according to a "recipe" from a geometry book, nothing will come of it. It would be even worse if we tried to learn geometry from a cookbook! The literary genre determines the "recipe" by which the Gospel was written.

For centuries, people wondered if a great fish could swallow a man and if that man could emerge alive and well after three days. Why did they wonder? Because they confused literary genres! At first glance, the story of Jonah seemed like a historical narrative. While there was indeed a prophet named Jonah, son of Amittai, he lived in the 8th century BC, while the entire story of Jonah was written in the 4th century BC. One must know that the story of Jonah is neither a prophetic nor a historical book, but an instructive tale—something similar to the Gospel parables. In this story, the author wants to tell the readers, on one hand, that one cannot escape from God, and on the other (which is far more important and the true goal of the book), that God also cares for pagans—even those as cruel as the Assyrians were. One cannot act like Jonah, who fled from God because he knew He is merciful and gracious, and did not want His mercy revealed to the Ninevites. God is merciful and gracious to all—that is the teaching of this book. Distinguishing the literary genre is therefore very important; it is impossible to define what a Gospel is without keeping this in mind.

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