

Welcome to the Holy Family Parishes of
Our Lady of the Holy Rosary
Sacred Heart
Ss Philip & James

Mission Statement

A family of God constituted
by the Holy Eucharist and
strengthened by the Holy
Spirit to make God known,
loved and served.



2nd

SUNDAY OF EASTER

"Blessed are those who have not seen
and have believed." - Jn 20:29

They have taken away my Lord and we don't know where they have laid him.

The title for my column this week is taken directly from the gospel of St. John (20:13) read on Easter morning. I believe it speaks to our experience as a Church under quarantine. Mary of Magdala's attitude of searching for the Lord and going after him with her heart is an example for us to emulate.

The story of Mary Magdalene should encourage us to persevere in seeking the Lord at all times, especially in times like these. Like the other disciples of Jesus, Mary Magdalene had been devastated by the cruel suffering and death of the man she had come to believe was the 'savior'. The bitter experience of the crucifixion caused the disciples (we can assume) to feel pain, anger and frustration. It caused them to fear and have doubts and be sluggish about their faith.

Mary Magdalene was determined to persevere in her love and search for the Lord. Her way of dealing with her sorrow and pain after Jesus' crucifixion led her gradually to become the first witness of the resurrection.

Love beyond the grave

For Mary Magdalene, love most certainly goes beyond the grave. Even if Jesus has been killed, she might have thought, I could still bring spices to his tomb. Even if Jesus has been taken away from the tomb I can go and carry him.

For her constancy in love, she was rewarded with the vision of the empty tomb followed by an encounter with the risen Lord himself.

Mary, therefore, becomes for all of us, during these days of "Church-lessness" an example of constancy in love and of the search for the Lord. For some time now, the experience of closing our Churches in observance of the measures to curb COVID-19 bring us so much emptiness. It's like saying with Mary from Magdala, "They have taken my Lord from the tomb and we do not know where they have laid him."

When is this going to end?

We long for and desire to be back in our pews and to be gathered together again, to line up for communion again, to pray together and have coffee hour, to have infant baptism, first communion and our special events. It's my ardent hope that such time will not delay. But while we wait for such a day to dawn, let us embark on the journey with Mary Magdalene.

Let us seek to love Jesus with all our heart, with all our soul and with all our strength; and let us love our neighbor as ourselves. This is what Mary Magdalene was doing. Her mission and the essence of her faith was to love her savior even beyond the tomb. This is what religion boils down to: Love your God and love your neighbor and just in case you did not know who your neighbor is, your neighbor can be a thief in jail, a nurse or doctor, a COVID-19 patient, a homeless person, your family, and the several image and likeness of God we see and come into contact with.

Blessings, Father Francis

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670 Mill Street

Toronto, IA 52777

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Cluster Office Hours

Monday: 9:00 am—2:00 pm

Tuesday: 9:00 am—2:00 pm

Friday: 9:00 am—2:00 pm

Telephone: 563-847-2271

Bulletin Deadline

Tuesday 12:00 noon

(unless otherwise noted).

- Sacrament of Baptism: Please call the cluster office for arrangements.
- Sacrament of Matrimony: Please contact Pastor 9 to 12 months prior to wedding date.

Church Family History

For most of the liturgical year the readings follow a certain pattern: the first reading is from the Old Testament, the second reading is from the New Testament, and then the gospel. But during this Easter season, the Old Testament reading is replaced by the Acts of the Apostles, an important book because it is the story of the Church's beginnings and how evangelization played a role in the spread of faith around the world.

Looking at this section of the Bible is like looking at family history, Church family history. We can look at how we ought to follow Christ by looking at those who literally "followed" Christ. This Sunday's first reading from Acts shows us Christ's blueprint for the Church he wanted to build. In the very first line it says, "They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers." (Acts 2: 42)

The early followers "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching" because the apostles had seen the resurrected Lord and passed on the truths of Jesus Christ. We too need to devote ourselves to the apostles' teachings, and we can do that by reading the Word, the Bible. These are the apostolic truths, the heart of the Church, because the heart of the gospel is Jesus. Through studying the Word we can grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord, and this will allow us to complete the important task we have been given, evangelization.

These early Christians also devoted themselves to "communal life (fellowship), to the breaking of bread." Today we think of this as gathering at Mass and receiving the Holy Eucharist. However, during this time of social distancing, we are not able to be together physically, but we are able to be together with our families, eating together and fellowshiping around the dinner table. This will help us to know, love, and serve God with one another so that the bonds of unity will be strengthened until we are together again.

And finally, there is prayer. Prayer was a tremendous priority to the early Church. The apostles were devoted to prayer and to their mission of evangelization. They were not distracted by the tasks of every day life, which though needed, did not constitute the core of their call. So like them, no matter what we have been called to do in life, it should be characterized by prayer, a potent weapon God has given to us to fulfill the mission he committed into our hands.

So these next few weeks when we hear the readings from the Acts of the Apostles, we need to remind ourselves of the commitment of our Church ancestors. Like them we need to remember the Church isn't a building. Church isn't something we attend. Church is something of which we are part. It's a relationship. We are called to be a part of a family with all the other people God has called. Belonging to the Church is one of the greatest blessings and sources of encouragement in our lives.

Colleen Burke Evangelization Team

Questions of the week – Reflect

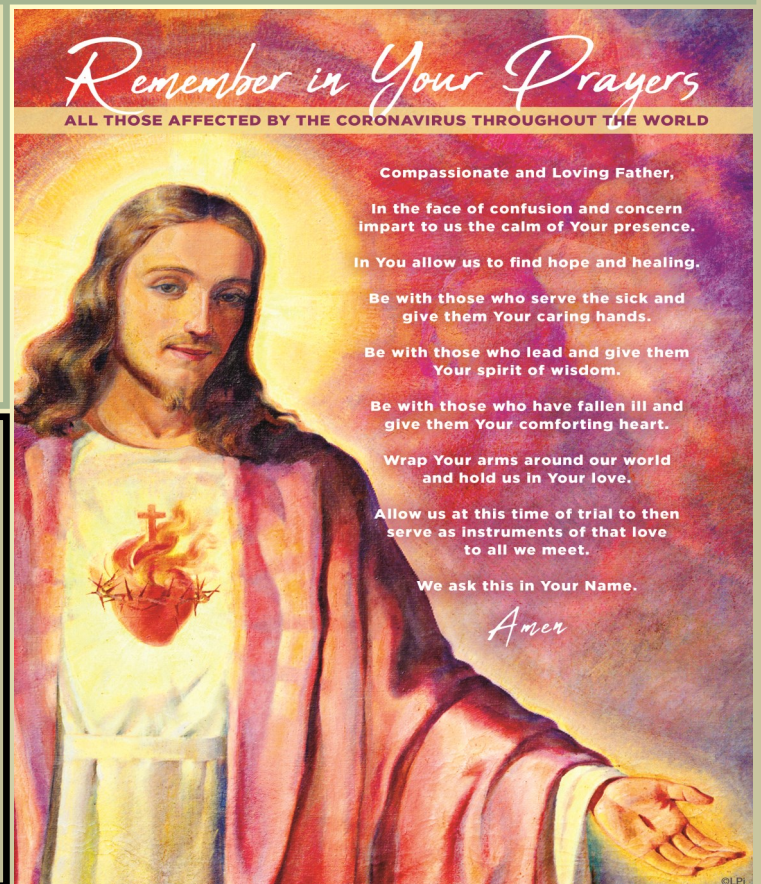
First reading – According to Luke, the original community of believers in Jerusalem met daily to pray, break bread, and commit themselves to the teaching of the Apostles. When have you experienced a similar level of communal harmony?

Second reading – The First Letter of Peter opens with a prayer of thanksgiving for the blessings received from the resurrection of Jesus. In what ways do you show gratitude for Jesus' resurrection from the dead?

Gospel reading – John is the only evangelist to record the episode of Thomas' initial doubt in Jesus' resurrection. What role does doubt have in your spiritual journey?

Dear Cluster Family,

With the closing of our churches, the cancelling of events, and the social distancing guidelines, we will be publishing more motivational and inspirational information on our pages. If you want a special note to go to your membership, i.e., thank yous, plans for the summer, etc., we can place them on the email that is sent to each list serve for that worship center. We do not want to advertise things that we will have to cancel in a week or two. So, until further guidance comes from the Diocese of Davenport and the Archdiocese of Dubuque, our bulletins will be filled with encouragement for these times! Please feel free to send any articles to our Cluster email!



POPE'S PRAYER FOR APRIL

Lord our God, who came to set your people free, hear us!

You who led your people out of bondage in Egypt and set Israel free from exile, you whose prophets preached freedom from idols, you who did not spare sending your only Son to free us from every disorder that impedes our road home to you, hear us!

We ask you to look with love and mercy upon our brothers and sisters who struggle with addiction of any kind. Grant, Savior, that they may all speedily find the help they need and be open to receiving it. Triune God, restore and transform their relationships, lead to the healing of injuries done and to deepening love among all, so that those suffering from addiction may never be without help or alone.

Make your loving and healing presence known to them; sustain their hope that with your grace they can rediscover the freedom that you intend for them; open their eyes with the truths of faith, which guide us on a secure path of life.

Amen.

Have you ever experienced awe?

Awe is commonly defined as a feeling of reverential respect mixed with fear or wonder. A moment of awe has the ability to lift us up out of ourselves and immerse us into something that causes us to wonder about ourselves, the meaning of life, and truth. Awe is an experience of connection that links us to something that is beyond the normal happenings of life. For us who believe that the resurrected Christ is present in all of life and the totality of the universe, being touched by awe can lead us to exclaim, "My Lord and my God!" Pondering the vastness of God's presence also brings us to a profound sense of God's mercy, which is the showering of His unconditional love on each of His daughters and sons. When we internalize this mystery, we may find ourselves standing in awe once again and feeling an intense sense of peace.

Cluster Parish Prayer List

1. Our Shepherds:

Bishop Thomas Zinkula, Archbishop
Michael Jackels, Fr. Francis Odoom,
Deacon Mike Shiel

2. The Aged & Infirm:

- Dick Nodurft, Melvin Duwa, Natalie Regan, Elmer & Dorothy Hasenmiller, Gloria Kagemann, Grace Kinney, & Carolyn Schwien.
- Betty Anderson, Rich Kleineck, Dennis Koppes, Wendy Larive, Jerica Christensen, Marilyn Stevenson, Rhonda Murphy, Leonard Lasack.

ONLINE MASS OPTIONS

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Vatican News Live Stream of Pope Francis' Masses— www.vatican.va

Catholic TV Mass—
<https://www.watchthemass.com/>

EWTN Daily Mass—
<https://www.ewtn.com/tv/schedule>

Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception— <https://www.ewtn.com/tv/schedule>

Daily Mass on YouTube - [Catholic Mass Today](#)

Archbishop Jackels online for Mass each Sunday morning at 9:00 am until public Masses resume: www.dbqarch.org/live-broadcasts

St. Paul the Apostle Catholic Church on Facebook— Mass, family rosary, praying together, etc.—Follow the page to join.

St. Joseph Catholic Church on Facebook— Mass—Follow the page to join.



Pope Francis Prayer Intention For April

We pray that those suffering from addiction may be

DAILY READINGS

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF 4/19

Sunday: Wis 12:13, 16-19/Ps 86:5-6, 9-10, 15-16 [5a]/Rom 8:26-27/Mt 13:24-43

Monday: Mi 6:1-4, 6-8/Ps 50:5-6, 8-9, 16bc-17, 21 and 23 [23b]/Mt 12:38-42

Tuesday: Mi 7:14-15, 18-20/Ps 85:2-4, 5-6, 7-8 [8a]/Mt 12:46-50

Wednesday: Sg 3:1-4b or 2 Cor 5:14-17/Ps 63:2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9 [2]/Jn 20:1-2, 11-18

Thursday: Jer 2:1-3, 7-8, 12-13/Ps 36:6-7ab, 8-9, 10-11 [10a]/Mt 13:10-17

Friday: Jer 3:14-17/Jer 31:10, 11-12abcd, 13 [cf. 10d]/Mt 13:18-23

Saturday: 2 Cor 4:7-15/Ps 126:1bc-2ab, 2cd-3, 4-5, 6 [5]/Mt 20:20-28

Next Sunday: 1 Kgs 3:5, 7-12/Ps 119:57, 72, 76-77, 127-128, 129-130 [97a]/Rom 8:28-30/Mt 13:44-52