

May 17, 2026 – Ascension of The Lord

Saturday – May 16th – Vigil Mass

5:00PM For People & Families Struggling with Hunger (Fr. Benn)

Sunday – May 17th – Mass is Streamed Live

9:30AM Maryanne Gillen (Fr. Benn)

Monday – May 18th – Easter Weekday – St. John I, Pope & Martyr

9:00AM Fr. Gavin Muir, Pastor, Deceased 5/15/18 (Altar Rosary Society)

Tuesday – May 19th – Easter Weekday –

9:00AM NO MASS – Readings & Communion Distribution Only

Wed. – May 20th – Easter Weekday – St. Bernardine of Siena, Priest

9:00AM NO MASS – Readings & Communion Distribution Only

Thurs. – May 21st – St. Christopher Magallanes, Priest & Companions, Martyrs

9:00AM Reading & Communion Distribution Only

Friday – May 22nd – Easter Weekday – St. Rita of Cascia, Religious

9:00AM Living & Deceased Members of St. Lawrence

Saturday – May 23rd – Easter Weekday –

9:00AM Special Intention (Ted/Janet Achuff)

Please Pray for Our Sick and Housebound, Deceased Members, for an End to Abortion and Respect for all Life!

Lynda Stefanski, Peter Libasci, Joseph Bonk, Tom Trotter, Dave Blessing, Jeff Olimpo, Matt Sebastiano, Maria Middleton, Fern & John Gibson, William Merkle, Russ Funkhouser, Joseph Jones, Elizabeth Ann Schlotter, Andrew Schlotter, Bethany Steinberg, Joann Thaler, Julie Petry, Steven Fusco, Greg Gambino, Patrick D. Brown, Douglas Defreest, Jr., Benny LoScalzo, Steve Ombalski, Jane Burger, Ginny LaBar, Michael Gawronski, Marciano Alves Viera, Bernadette Maszczak, Shawn Kelly, Beth Collins, Nikia Helfant Messier, Anthony Libasci, Louis Cortese, Faith Marie Messier, Ann Lewis, Alvin LaBar, Emma Jones, **Bernie Boylan**

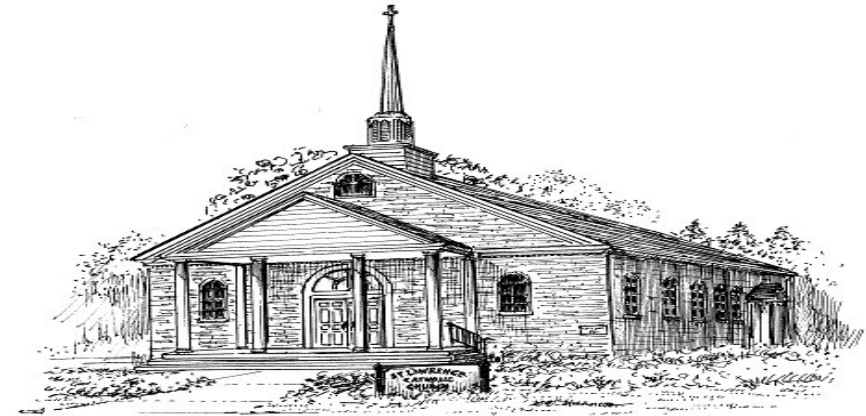
Church of Saint Lawrence

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Rev. Walter J Benn, Pastor

Rectory: 610-749-2684
Email: saintlawrence@verizon.net

[Website: saint-lawrence-church.org](http://www.saint-lawrence-church.org)



Mass Schedule: Saturday Evenings @ 5PM; Sunday Morning @ 9:30AM; Holy Days @ 9AM, 12 Noon & 7PM; Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday @ 9AM, Thursday Readings & Communion Distribution Only.

Eucharistic Adoration: Wednesday @ 9:30AM – 11AM

Confessions: Saturday @ 3:30PM - 4:30PM @ Church. Via Appointment - Contact Rectory

Holy Name Society: Meets Monthly; Second Monday @ 7PM @ Ceader Hall (Sept – May)

Altar Rosary Society: Meets Monthly; Second Thursday @ 7PM (Sept – May)

Lay Carmelite Community of St. Teresa of Jesus of Los Andes: Meets Monthly, First Saturday Following the 9AM Mass in Ceader Hall.

Marthas & Marys Ministry: Faith based group, meets First Friday @ 11:30AM @ Ceader Hall

Weddings: Contact Rectory for Details. Plans Preferred Minimun 6 Months in Advance.

Parish PREP Classes & New Parishoners: Contact Rectory via Phone or email.

Rectory Office: Mon-Fri @ 9:30AM – 12 noon

Pastor's Corner May 17, 2026

For centuries, the *Ascension of Our Lord* into heaven was always celebrated 40 days after Easter; thus, the title "Ascension Thursday". Many dioceses in the United States continue to hold to that tradition. However, in recent years, the Vatican has given the bishops of every diocese the latitude to celebrate the *Ascension of Our Lord* into Heaven on the Sunday following those 40 days. The pastoral reason for this is that fewer and fewer Catholics celebrate Our Lord's Ascension on Thursday; they are commuting to work, or are already at work, getting their children to school, and dealing with a number of other challenges they can't ignore. When they miss celebrating this important event, which is a part of the chain of Salvation, the Incarnation (Jesus being conceived as both Divine and Human), Christmas, Our Lord's public life, Our Lord's Passion, Crucifixion & Resurrection, the chain/the story of God is broken and interrupted. The final link in God's effort to offer mankind salvation is Pentecost. It is tragic that many Christians (including Catholics) isolate these events, and when they do, they compromise or water down the message that God has shared with them. Consequently, many bishops feel that by celebrating Our Lord's *Ascension* on the Sabbath, more of their people will learn how the *Ascension* is an important link in the process of the Faith and in their Salvation.

Today's Scripture Readings serve us well. Especially the 1st Reading (Acts of the Apostles) and the Gospel (Matthew). The shortage of space here does not allow for a full reflection on these Readings; however, there is one essential point that cannot be ignored. **What is the significance of Jesus**

leaving us in His human form? The answer to that question originates in the 1st book of the Bible, the Book of Genesis, with its story of Creation and its story of "The Fall of Adam and Eve", which we refer to as "Original Sin". As you have heard me comment many times, the *Original Sin* is something catastrophic; it was and is Mankind's arrogant choice to reject the Creator's love and wisdom, and presume that its wisdom is equal to God's. That we have a right to decide for ourselves what is good or evil. When that happened, it created a deadly wound..... a mortal wound between ourselves and God. To this day, many among humanity still fail to own that for all of their presumed knowledge, they still have failed (and always will) to heal those wounds, this condition. Within the blink of a thought, God has had the right to simply do away with us and start anew if He wanted; but, being true to His nature, which is being pure Love, He wishes to give humanity another chance to return to Him in the Garden. The only way for that to happen is for Humanity to use the very gift, the greatest gift God gave them when He created them, namely, the gift of their *Free Will*. Since humanity betrayed that gift and its giver, the only way they can contribute to being reconciled to their Father Creator is to spend every day of their lives freely choosing to trust in His *Wisdom*, in recognizing what is right and what is wrong, and using His *grace* for the strength to put that Wisdom into action. It is not easy; it is not without suffering; it requires great humility and a great sense of gratitude. When we spend our lives cultivating those virtues and strengths, we will recognize why God created the Chosen People and the Mission He gave them, and how Jesus' Teaching, Life, Death, and the Father's response to the Son's

faithfulness through the Resurrection were the final pieces of His plan for the Salvation of His flawed Children.

What is the purpose of the Ascension? It was and is the same as it was the moment the Father created each of us and blessed us with free will. You can be like me and choose to be selfless, i.e., other-centered; or you can choose for the *Self*. In doing this, God put humanity on notice: He still loves each of us as His children, but each of us must use the core gift He gave us from the moment he created us, our precious *Free Will*. It's simplistic, but basically God is saying that just as the abuse of our Free Will wounded our relationship with Him, our use of our Free Will, with His help, will get us out of it, but we must use it every moment of every day that He gives us. The Ascension wasn't as important for Jesus as it is for us.

When we were growing up, from our teenage years into young adulthood, we needed to learn to make the right choices based on the values our parents tried to instill in us. They were not always easy choices to make, but our parents should not have needed to be present when those moments developed. The time came when either we embraced those values or didn't! They were then and are today, our moments in the Garden, admiring the Tree of the Knowledge of Good & Evil, with Satan in the background. However, we will never be alone in our efforts to do what is good and what is right. Remember Our Lord's words to the Apostles as he was about to ascend into heaven: ***"I am with you always, until the end of the age."***



Collections: May 10th Parish @ \$2305, Candles @ \$155, Poor Box @ \$189, Choir @ \$100. Thank You!!

Special Collection: Catholic Home Missions: May 17 & 18.



Knights of Columbus Bingo @ St. Lawrence Church, Friday, May 22, Doors Open @ 6PM, Games Start @ 7PM. See Flyer for additional details.



Altar & Rosary Trip

June 19, 2026, visiting the Shrine of Saint Joseph, Stirling, NJ; Lunch at Dora's, Clinton, NJ. Details to follow

MANNA FOOD DRIVE. May 16 & 17



The newly named parish group "Grace in Action" will be facilitating the Manna food drive at St Lawrence. Our theme is health, hygiene and household. We will be handing out donation bags the weekend of May 9 & 10 for pick up May 16 & 17. See flyer for additional details.