

St. Peter's, Holy Guardian Angels, and St. John the Baptist Parishes
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April 20, 2025

Easter Sunday

Resurrection of the Lord

Mass Readings for Easter Sunday

The **First Reading** is from *Acts 10:34; 37-43*. These verses are part of the story of the conversion of Cornelius, a Roman army officer. Stationed in Caesarea, Cornelius believed the God of the Jews was the true God, but though a good-living man, he had not become a Jew. Advised by a divine messenger, he sent to Joppa for St. Peter, whose antipathy to pagans had been corrected by a vision seen that same day. Peter came to Caesarea and, contrary to his life-long custom, entered the pagan home of Cornelius, who explained to him why he had been asked to come.

This passage from Acts has been selected for Easter Sunday not only because the resurrection is mentioned in it, but especially St. Peter in his first discourse to a Gentile makes the resurrection the basic doctrine and the crowning proof of the truth of the Christian faith. As St. Paul says: "If Christ has not risen vain is our preaching, vain too is your faith" (1 Cor 15:14). And like Paul, St. Peter stresses the truth of the resurrection by citing witnesses, including himself, who had not only seen the risen Jesus but had spoken to him and actually eaten with him.

There is little doubt but that the Apostles and disciples had thought that the sad events of Good Friday had put an end forever to the mission of love and mercy of their beloved Master. In spite of his previous preferences to his resurrection, they had completely forgotten it and were convinced that the tomb near Calvary was the end of all their hopes. They had locked themselves into the room of the Last Supper for fear of the Jews—two of them had set off for home on the Sunday morning, down-hearted at the Master's failure; the others were waiting for an opportunity to slip out of the city quietly. But the resurrection changed all this. The unexpected, the unhoped-for happened. Even the most skeptical of them all, doubting Thomas, was eventually convinced of its reality. Had they been hoping

for it, or even thinking of it, there might be some reason to suspect it was only a hallucination, the result of their “wishful thinking,” but the very opposite was the case. They were hard to convince even when it happened.

All this was intended by God—the basis of our Christian faith was proved beyond doubt. Christ, who had died on the cross on Good Friday, was raised from the dead by his Father on Easter morning. He returned to heaven in the full glory of the divinity which he had hidden while on earth, together with his human body, now also glorified. There (in heaven), as God and Man, he pleads for us at the right hand of the Father until the day when he who redeemed all men will come to judge them all.

The Alleluia is repeated often during the Easter ceremonies. It is a Hebrew word which means “praise ye the Lord.” It is our attempt to give verbal expression to our joy and gratitude for all that God has done for us. We are no longer mere humans living on this planet for a few short years. We are citizens of heaven, made children of God the Father by Christ our Brother. And he has gone before us to his and our kingdom to prepare a place for us. He conquered death. Our earthly death has, therefore, now no real fears for us: it is not the end but the beginning of our true lives. It is only after our earthly death that we truly begin to live.

There is only death now which we can fear—the spiritual death of serious sin which can keep us from our true heavenly life. But while this is a possibility for all of us, it is only a possibility. The sincere Christian who realizes what God has done for him and what is in store for him, will never be so ungrateful to God or so forgetful of his own best interests as to let some temporal and passing pleasure, pride, or profit, come between him and the eternal home which God’s love has prepared and planned for him.

The **Second Reading** is from the letter of St. Paul to the *Colossians 3:1-4*. The method of administering Baptism in the apostolic days was by immersion. Those who heard the story of the Gospel and were ready to believe in the one true God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit who had cooperated in man’s redemption and elevation to divine sonship, were immersed in water to be cleansed from their sins and their previous worldliness. Immersion in water symbolized being buried in the tomb with Christ. By immersion, therefore, the new Christian died with Christ to all earthly attachments and desires. He was raised again from the water (the tomb) to be with the Risen Christ.

We are always looking forward to a happier day which is to come some time. All this is very natural and very human, because our present life is not our permanent life; our present home, this earth, is not the real home destined for us by our loving Creator.

We were created for unending happiness in heaven, and it is only when we get there that our desire and our quest for some great happiness will end. From then on, we will always enjoy and possess that all-satisfying happiness.

Today, Easter Sunday, St. Paul reminds us that we have this happiness within our grasp. We are moving steadily and more quickly than we realize toward it. The Holy Trinity, God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, have already done, and are daily continuing to do for us, all within their power. All that is needed is that we do the little that is asked of us.

St. Paul tells us we must “mind the things that are above not the things that are on earth.” We must never let the “things of earth,” the pleasures, the power, the possessions, which we can or could have in this life, block or impede us on our upward journey. Does this mean we must all return to the deserts of Egypt, as some early Christians did? By no means. We are not forbidden to have the lawful pleasures of life. We are not forbidden possessions or power if they are used justly. All we are forbidden is the unlawful use of the things of the world.

The **Gospel** for Easter is from *John 20:1-9*. The accounts of the resurrection of Christ differ in many details in the different writings of the New Testament, but the fact of the resurrection stressed in all of them, was the basis of the new Christian Faith. Had it not happened, Christianity would have been stillborn. It would have disappeared from Jerusalem and the world on that first Easter Sunday. Peter and his companions would have returned to their fishing-nets and boats on Lake Genesareth, and Christ the good and the kind man who had helped so many, would have been forgotten in half a generation.

But Christ was no mere man of kindly acts and words of wisdom. He was the Messiah promised for centuries. He was the suffering servant foretold by Isaiah, whose perfect obedience to his Father had led him to the Cross and the grave. But above all, he was the Son of God who had emptied himself (St. Paul) of his divine glory in order to be the perfect human servant of the Father, and who was now raised by the Father, with his divine glory restored, and his glorified resurrected body sharing in that glory. This was the kind of divine plan of God for mankind: through Christ, and because of Christ's (the new Adam's) perfect obedience, all

mankind would be made worthy of divine sonship, and worthy of one day rising like Christ from the grave in glorified bodies.

Is all this too good to be true? It is, if we make God in our image and likeness, as so many opponents of Christianity do. He is God and his love is infinite and incomprehensible to us. What God can see in me and my fellowmen will always be a mystery to me, but then I have not the mind of God. All I know and all I need to know is that I have sufficient proofs that God loves all men. The Incarnation, death and resurrection of his Divine Son for man's sake is the greatest proof of love for us that even the omnipotent God could give. He has given it. As a necessary consequence from this act of divine love, we are guaranteed our resurrection from the dead to a life of unending happiness and glory if we do not, in extreme folly, reject God's offer.

Today, let us thank God once more for Easter and for all it means for us.
—*Excerpted from The Sunday Readings, Cycle A, by Fr. Kevin O'Sullivan, O.F.M.*

Schedule of Mass Intentions

No Weekday Masses from April 21-May 9, 2025

No bulletins published for April 27, May 4 & May 11

Saturday, April 26, 2025

Fr. Angus MacDougall

SJB

4:00 PM

+ *Bert LeBlanc*

SP

5:30 PM

+ *Eva Landry, William A. & Gertie Landry*

Mary M. Fougere

No Masses at SH & HGA on Sundays, April 27 and May 4, 2025.

Saturday, May 3, 2025

Fr. Angus MacDougall

SJB

4:00 PM

+ *Mary & Ken Cosman*

SP

5:30 PM

+ *Kemp Larade*

Saturday, May 10, 2025

Fr. Yake

SJB

4:00 PM

+ *Harold Landry*

SP

5:30 PM

+ *Claire LeBlanc*

Sunday, May 11, 2025

Fr. Yake

SH

9:00 AM

+ *Melvina Pottie*

HGA

11:00 AM

+ *Dave Kemp*

Receipts

St. John the Baptist

April 12, 2025

Envelopes & Loose \$ 855.00

Development & Peace 325.00

Total \$ 1,180.00

St. Peter's
April 12, 2025

Envelopes & Loose	\$	650.00
Candles		18.25
Share Lent		55.00
<u>Total</u>	\$	<u>723.25</u>

Holy Guardian Angels
April 13, 2025

Envelopes & Loose	\$	1,007.00
Candles		40.80
Share Lent		75.00
<u>Total</u>	\$	<u>1,122.80</u>

Community Notes

**Easter Holiday Closures and Curbside Collection Service Change
Municipal Administration Building**

April 18 (Friday): Closed

April 21 (Monday): Closed

Solid Waste Management Facility

April 18 (Friday): Closed

April 19 (Saturday): Open

April 21 (Monday): Closed

Solid Waste Curbside Collection Service Change

Zone 3 curbside collection for Good Friday, April 18, for the areas of Black River Rd., Oban, Seaview, Thibeuville, West Bay, and along the Bras d'Or Lake to St. Peter's, will be rescheduled for Saturday, April 19.

Water and Sewer Emergency Contact

For urgent matters concerning water or sewer service, please call (902) 226-3988.

Anyone who is able to donate any worthwhile articles, to be used in a Knights of Columbus yard sale, is asked to contact:

George McNamara: 902 - 500 - 0126

Glenn Burke: 902 - 412 - 7764

George J Landry: 902 - 535 - 3248

ON THE FIRST SUNDAY of Lent, the Church celebrates the Rite of Election, and we affirm the intent of those who have asked to be baptized and received into the Church. As their names are enrolled, they are numbered among the elect who will receive the sacraments of initiation — baptism, confirmation and first Eucharist — at the Easter Vigil.

This year's Rite of Election in the Archdiocese of Baltimore was beautiful. The Cathedral of Mary Our Queen was filled to overflowing. Nearly 800 catechumens and candidates for reception into the Church were joined by their godparents, sponsors, families and friends. The palpable joy was a reminder that the Church is alive, growing and full of hope.

Afterward, I greeted those who participated. A young woman, a college student, took me aside. "It wasn't easy getting here," she said. She wasn't talking about the traffic but her spiritual journey. "Most of my life," she said, "I believed in God, but God always seemed distant. I didn't think he was interested in me or cared about me. I had a hard time believing that he loved me."

"What changed your mind?" I asked. "Soon after starting college," she said, "I was invited to campus ministry. I met a lot of people my age who really love the Lord and the Church. As they talked about their faith, I looked at my own life. I realized that God wasn't far away from me. I kept walking away from him. So here I am!"

As we approach the end of our Lenten journey and prepare for the solemn celebrations of Holy Week, let us take the following reality to heart: The Lord truly does love us. St. Paul wrote to the Galatians, "The Son of God ... has loved me and given himself up for me" (2:20). This is what we celebrate in Holy Week. God sent his Son to become one of us, to preach the good news of redemption, to heal the sick, to give us himself in

the Eucharist, and to suffer and die for the forgiveness of sins, only to rise in triumph on that first Easter morning. In this way, the God of glory and majesty has drawn very near to each of us and to all of us.

As you witness anew Jesus' entry in Jerusalem, sit with the Apostles in the Upper Room, walk the Way of the Cross, and stand guard at the entrance to the tomb, ask for the grace to realize what the Lord has done for us. He didn't redeem us from afar. He didn't wave a wand. No, he penetrated to the depth of existence where rages the battle between good and evil, sin and grace, life and death — and in our flesh, in our humanity, he won for us the victory.

This is something that God did for everyone, for he wants everyone to be saved and come to knowledge of the truth (see 1 Tm 2:4). But God also did it for each of us personally. You and I need to ponder what the young woman told me on the steps of the cathedral: "God wasn't far away from me. I kept walking away from him."

Her words offer us a second takeaway as well. She discovered Christ and began to follow Christ thanks to the witness and friendship of her fellow students. In a word, she spoke to me about "fraternity." No one takes the faith journey alone. We walk together.

The Order's *Cor* initiative is all about discovering in the depth of our hearts that God is close to us — indeed, he knows and loves us more deeply than we know and love ourselves. And this discovery involves walking together, supporting one another in our faith journey, helping one another to take to heart not mere ideas but the truths of the faith that flow from the love which the triune God has lavished upon us.

As we celebrate the joy of Easter, let us make it the goal of our lives to share in the victory over sin and death our Savior won for us. †



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Dying with Christ – Living with Hope

"In light of the troubling trend in our country, where assisted dying has rapidly expanded, we must prioritize life-affirming and compassionate care. This initiative

aligns with our commitment to fostering a culture that respects human dignity and offers hope, particularly those suffering."

- Bishop Wayne Kirkpatrick

CMDA Canada is offering Dying with Christ – Living with Hope through live online sessions.

Spring Series Session Options:

May 8, 15 & 22 at 8 pm AT

June 26, July 3 & 10 at 1 pm AT

This program presents a hope-filled perspective on a universal experience. Led by theologians and healthcare professionals, the series explores timeless insights into suffering, grief, dying, the duty to care, and how dying with Christ is attainable for everyone. In addition to experiencing this transformative course, you'll be equipped to bring the program to your community settings, such as churches, community centers, or online platforms.

Read Bishop Kirkpatrick's letter and register online:

<https://www.antigonishdiocese.com/dying-with-christ-living-with-hope/>