The Fifth Sunday of Lent

Mass Intentions

SUNDAY, April 6 – Fifth Sunday of Lent
8:00 A.M. The Geosits Family
9:30 A.M. Maria Assunta Spiiter
11:00 A.M. Ann Marie Killeen
12:30P.M. For the People of St. Francis
Rino Del Carro

MONDAY, April 7-Weekday
9:00 A.M. Maria Assunta & Joseph Spiteri

TUESDAY, April 8-Weekday
9:00 A.M. Marie Salamone

WEDNESDAY, April 9-Weekday
9:00 A.M. Lt. Robert B. Cruz

THURSDAY, April 10-Weekday
9:00 A.M. Joseph Salamone

FRIDAY, April 11–Saint Stanislaus
9:00 A.M. Mary Di Pietro

SATURDAY, April 12-Weekday
9:00 A.M. Purgatorial Society
Victor A. DiDonato
Filomena Mincone

5:00P.M. For the People of St. Francis

SUNDAY, April 13–Palm Sunday
8:00 A.M. Holy Name
9:30 A.M. Vito Silletti
11:00 A.M. Raymond Loud
12:30P.M. Giuseppe Carlino
Rino Del Carro
Filomena Mincone
Assunta Di Virgilio
Antonio Bruno

Today's Readings

The Fifth Sunday of Lent

Isaiah 43:16-21
Philippians 3:8-14
John 8:1-11

"….while Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. But early in the morning he arrived again in the temple area, and all the people started coming to him, and he sat down and taught them. Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in the middle. They said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women.* So what do you say?" They said this to test him, so that they could have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger. But when they continued asking him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." Again he bent down and wrote on the ground. And in response, they went away one by one, beginning with the elders. So he was left alone with the woman before him. Then Jesus straightened up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She replied, "No one, sir." Then Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go, [and] from now on do not sin any more." **(John 8:1-11)**

Readings for the Week

MONDAY: Daniel 13:1-9,15-17,19-30,33-62
John 8:12-20

TUESDAY: Numbers 21:4-9
John 8:21-30

WEDNESDAY: Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95
John 8:31-42

THURSDAY: Genesis 17:3-9
John 8:51-59

FRIDAY: Jeremiah 20:10-13
John 10:31-42

SATURDAY: Ezekiel 37:21-28
John 11:45-56

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

Isaiah 50:4-7
Philippians 2:6-11
Luke 22:14-23:56

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

My Dear Parishioners,

There are times in life when each of us needs to begin anew. We recognize that our former ways are hurting us or preventing us from being who we desire to be. We need a fresh beginning, a new way of thinking, acting, and living. Such newness of life will demand a deep personal change.

Beyond embracing the disciplines of Lent-prayer, fasting, and almsgiving-Lent is a time for us to be renewed in our spiritual life. It is a time to be made new again in the Lord. If we are going to be made new, we have to be willing to change the way we think, act, and live. All of our Lenten works must flow from and lead to that change in order that we may be new people.

The Scripture readings of the Lenten season guide us on the path of change. Today's readings reinforce this claim. Through the prophet Isaiah we are called to see the new way in which God treats his people. The power of God that snuffed out the lives of the enemies of Israel will now bring life where there is barrenness and death. This same power of God can bring life and holiness where there is sin and death. God wants us to know that his mercy can make us new again. We must be willing to perceive it, believe it, and embrace it.

Jesus boldly displays the power of God's mercy when he is publicly confronted with a woman's sin of adultery and its penalty of death. As God's mercy supersedes his justice, so too, the people's compassion must supersede laws. Through Jesus, God's mercy calls and allows this woman to change and to begin anew. Through Jesus, God's mercy calls those condemning the woman to change their way of thinking and acting.

We will never gain spiritual benefits of Lent unless we each become a new person. First, we must desire to be a new person. Second, we must be willing to change. Third, we must be open to be formed by the Word of God and his Holy Spirit in order that we know how to change. Fourth, we must conform our minds, our hearts, and our lives according to Jesus. Finally, we must be able to see the infinite value and final result of our unity with Christ. This is the energy that can make us new creations in the Lord.

We have a great example of this transforming power in the life of St. Paul. Our reading from his Letter to the Philippians today comes from a man who became a new person in Christ through the power of the Word of God. He totally changed his way of thinking and living. Everything became worthless in comparison to knowing Christ and being one with Christ and his Cross now, in order that he may be one with Christ in resurrection and life. In our need to turn away from our former lives, there is a little or a lot of Paul in each of us. He must also be our model for change. His words must reflect our new way of life.

If only we could be made new! If only we could begin a new life in the Lord! The good news is that we can, and we must be made new through the power of God's mercy shown to us through Jesus. This is the call of Lent. This is the reason for being Christian. This is the force that unites us with Jesus in an eternal Easter.

All the Blessings of a Holy Lent,
Msgr. Maresca

Welcome New Parishioners

We welcome those who registered in our parish during the month of March 2025.

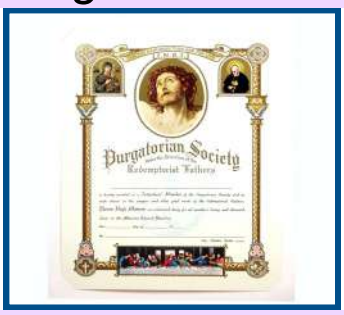
Henry Taibo
Diane Verde
Cynthia Winkler/Chris Feltman
James & Katelyn Murtagh

Baptisms

We welcome those who were Baptized in our parish during the months of March 2025.

Romeo Raffaele Calabro
Carter Mac Mongiori
Eloise Maya Mueller
Benicio Alexander DeJesus
Endrick Arlo Arellana

Purgatorials



The following names have been enrolled in our Purgatorial Society for the month of March 2025. Please remember to continue to pray for their families.

Rosa Puccio
John Hengl

Recently Deceased

The following have passed away during the months of March 2025.
We continue to pray for the recently deceased members of our parish.

Justin Diaz
Emelio Rodriguez
Josephine Werst
Filomena Mincone
Jean Bruno
Concetta Babore
John A. Hengl

Gracious God, we humbly entrust into your loving hands the souls of those we love, who have passed from our sight. May they find eternal rest and peace, surrounded by your boundless love and light. Grant them comfort and joy in your presence, and let the memory of their lives be a source of strength and inspiration for us. We pray for all who grieve, that they may find solace in your embrace and hope in the promise of eternal life. In your mercy, Lord, grant them eternal rest, and let perpetual light shine upon them. Amen.

Lent

In the hope of assisting the faithful of the Diocese of Brooklyn to celebrate this season of preparation for Easter in a fruitful manner, Bishop Robert Brennan wishes to call attention to the following:

ABSTINENCE: All the faithful who have reached 14 years of age are required to abstain from eating meat on Ash Wednesday (March 5) and on all the Fridays of the Lenten Season.

FASTING: All the faithful between the ages of 18 and 59 (inclusive) are bound to fast on Ash Wednesday and on Good Friday (March 29) by limiting oneself to one full meal and avoiding food between meals. Light sustenance may be taken on two other occasions during the day.

EASTER DUTY: After having been initiated into the Most Holy Eucharist, the faithful are obligated to receive holy Communion at least once a year, this precept to be fulfilled during the Easter Season, unless it is fulfilled at some other time for a good reason. In the United States, the period for fulfilling this precept is extended from the First Sunday of Lent (March 9) until Pentecost Sunday, (June 8).

RECONCILIATION MONDAY: Reconciliation Monday is observed in the Diocese on the Monday of Holy Week (April 14th). Observance of this day allows the faithful to experience the grace of forgiveness and mercy in the Sacrament of Penance. Those conscious of grave (mortal) sin are obligated to confess before receiving Holy Communion.

TIME OF CELEBRATION OF THE EASTER VIGIL: Sunset in Brooklyn on Holy Saturday, April 19, is at 7:40 pm. The celebration of the Liturgy for the Easter Vigil should begin after that, realistically at 8 p.m..

MUSIC: During Lent, the "Alleluia" is not sung or said. Musical instruments are to be used at liturgical celebrations only to give support to the singing.

CHURCH DECORATIONS: The church should not be decorated with flowers during Lent.

HOLY WATER: Holy Water is not removed from the fonts during Lent. It is only removed immediately before the Celebration of the Lord's Supper and replaced at the Easter Vigil with water blessed at that celebration.

FUNERALS: Funeral masses are not permitted during the Paschal Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday). The rite to be used at funerals during those days is the rite for Funerals Outside Mass.

RECONCILIATION MONDAY

April 14, 2025

On Monday, April 14th, our Diocese will join both the Archdiocese of New York and the Diocese of Rockville Centre in celebrating ***Reconciliation Monday***. On this special day, our parish will offer the ***Sacrament of Reconciliation*** from 3:00PM to 5:00PM and 6:00PM to 8:00PM, in preparation of for the holy days of the Paschal Triduum.

Holy Name Society

On Sunday, April 13th, the 8:00am Mass is the Holy Name Mass. The mission of the Holy Name Society is to promote devotion and reverence for the Holy Name of God and Jesus. What better way than to participate in the Holy Name Monthly Mass. All are invited to join in this celebration.

What are you doing for Lent?

To help us during our Lenten journey, the following opportunities will be taking place in our parish.

1. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place each morning at 8:00AM Monday through Saturday.
2. Mass is celebrated each morning at 9:00AM Monday through Saturday.
3. Stations of the Cross will be held every Friday during Lent at 7:30PM and will conclude with Benediction.
4. Confessions are heard every Saturday from 4:00 to 4:30PM.
5. Reconciliation Monday is ***April 14th***. Every Church in our Diocese, the Archdiocese of New York and the Diocese of Rockville Centre will be hearing confessions. We will be hearing confessions from
   3:00 to 5:00PM and 6:00 to 8:00PM
   What a wonderful experience to receive the mercy of Christ in this great sacrament.
6. All are welcome to join the St. Francis of Assisi Scripture Study Group on Thursday nights at 7:20PM. The group is for anyone who would like to deepen their understanding of the Bible.

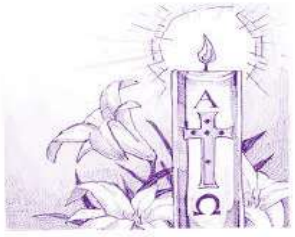
2025 Mass Book

The 2025 Mass Book is now open for the remainder of 2025.

All Announced Masses up to June 30th are $15.00. After July 1, 2025 Masses will be **$20.00.**
Beginning July 1, 2025, the 11:00AM Mass will have multiple intentions.

Purgatorial Mass Cards are $30.00
Memorials (Altar Bread, Wine, Sanctuary Lamp and Altar Candles) are $75.00
Altar Flowers are $100.00

Easter Candle



If anyone would like to make a donation or memorialize the ***Pascal Candle,*** please stop by the rectory and speak with Marybeth. As you know, the Pascal Candle is blessed and lighted at the Easter Vigil and remains in the sanctuary until the feast of Pentecost. It is then used for all our funerals during the year.

The Easter Candle will burn in Memory of:

Rose & Denis Sweeney
Lucia & Ralph Borgia
Domenick Borgia
Ralph & Rita Maresca
Fr. Peter D. Gillen
William LeDone
The Malloy Family
The Buckenmayer Family
Evelyn & Sam Perrone
Gloria & Ed Montel
Frank Meditz
Victoria Fugcilli
Dolores & Ferdinando Prete

Beginning next weekend our statues will be covered and will remain so until Holy Saturday night.

This is done, as it was done in the past, to allow the faithful when they pray, no distractions in reflecting and mediating on the Crucifix. Let us in the last weeks of Lent remain close to the Lord as He journeys to Jerusalem, to take up His cross, to suffer and die for us.

Remember in your prayers all those in our parish who are sick, that they may find health and comfort:

Awyn Profit, Jack Orlando, Steven Joyce, Judy Hanley-Brickner, John Wrenn, Augustin Cisneros, James Nunez, Vincent Wytak, John & Carol Ross, Jeffrey Hyans, Marie LoVolpe, Jessica St. Preux, Al Ciani, Alesha Moses, Nancy McCaffrey, Christopher Wojtalik, Theresa Pacheco, William Goss, Luke Pacheco, Vincenza Papa, Jim Schneggenburger, Anthony Criscuolo, Samantha O'Sullivan, Marilyn Miller, Pat Gravino, John Carmody, Rosario Duran, Vivian Papa, Joel Steinmann, Anna Governali, Tim Graham, Antonio Postiglione, Mario Tamburello, Christopher Araimo, Charles Principato, Jim Kreitler, Humberto Cordova, John Schakir, Margaret Culhane, Benedicto Randazzo, Angelo Niakas, Peter Lopez, Rick Simonsen, Aubrey Madden, Madison Millett, Leonardo Di Marco, Michelle Yashita, and the Polychronakis Family.

Also remember in your prayers all the deceased of the Parish. Please remember to continue to pray for vocations to the priesthood, religious life, diaconate, and married life.

Fifth Sunday of Lent

April 6, 2025

"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples."

Consider a vocation as a priest, deacon or in the consecrated life.

Contact the Vocation Office at (718) 827-2454 or

email:vocations@diobrook.org

Parish Mission Statement

St. Francis of Assisi Parish is a Catholic community that is centered in Jesus, gathers in worship and witnesses the Gospel message. The parish values and welcomes each person's gift of time, talent and treasure. As a faith-filled community, we are committed to minister to the spiritual, educational and material needs of all people.

FOCUS:

Go , and from now on do not sin any more.

In this Lenten season, our readings reflect on mercy and repentance. Indeed, repentance is at the foundation of our Lenten calling. May we truly examine our hearts for ways we can seek God's abundant ,mercy and grow in our relationship with Him. Like the woman caught in adultery , we must be willing to allow Jesus to see our shortcomings if we wish to receive the forgiveness He offers.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place before the 9:00AM Mass. The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed at 8:00AM each morning, Monday through Saturday, giving parishioners an opportunity for private prayer before the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. At 8:30AM the rosary will be prayed by parishioners. At 8:50AM the Blessed Sacrament will be reposed. Jesus calls us to perseverance in prayer. "Pray without ceasing." "Watch and pray." Eucharistic adoration helps us discover the Real Presence of Christ.

What a wonderful way to begin our day praying before the Blessed Sacrament in silence or praying the Holy Rosary.

Please make every effort to take advantage of this time with the Lord. We are living in challenging times and we all need the Lord to strengthen our faith and give us the courage to live each day.

Memorials for the Week of April 6 2025

SANCTUARY LAMP

In Loving Memory of
Dr. Rosario and Mrs. Stella Gualtieri
Requested by
The Thompson Family

ALTAR CANDLES

In Loving Memory of
Maria Assunta and Joseph Spiteri
Requested By
The Spiteri Family

Mass Attendance for March 29/30, 2025

5:00PM	**94**
8:00AM	**49**
9:30AM	**120**
11:00AM	**111**
12:30PM	**52**

Total: 426

Welcome to Our Church

If you wish to register as a parishioner of St. Francis of Assisi Church, please stop by the Rectory Office during regular business hours. There you can pick up a census card which can be filled out at that time or returned by mail or in the Sunday Collection Basket. You can even download the census card on line. Just check our website at: ***stfrancisofassisiastoria.org***
You will then begin to receive weekly offering envelopes.

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI SCRIPTURE STUDY

"Now this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ"
(John 17:3)

Dear SFA Friends and Family

The SFA Scripture Study Group will meet on Thursday, April 10th in the St. Joseph room of the Rectory from 7:20-8:50. We will begin a new study entitled *Eternal Life*.

Join us as we
Grow in Knowledge and Love of Scripture.

All are Invited … ALL ARE WELCOME!

The Gospel readings and study will be conducted using the Little Rock Scripture Study program. Study booklets will be provided.

If you are interested in joining the study group or would like further information, please contact us through the Rectory at **(718) 728-7801.** Please be sure to leave your name and contact information.

OCIA
Order of Christian Initiation for Adults

Adult classes have begun for those who need the Sacrament of Confirmation. If you need to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation or need to be fully initiated into the Church (Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation) please call Sister Francesca Monday or Thursday, from 9:30am to 3:30pm. Her number can be found on the front of the Bulletin.

Thank you.

St. Francis of Assisi Parish Weekly Offering

Thank you for your continued generosity of giving each week. Your weekly offering helps us pay our monthly bills.

Sunday 3/22-3/23 **$4,968.00**
2nd Collection-Catholic Relief ***$947.00***

School parents must use church envelopes.

Your **EASTER GIFT TO MY CHURCH** can be returned in any collection**.**

Your Easter Gift will go toward the operation of our parish with all it's programs and services.

Thank you for your continued generosity and support of our parish.

Easter Mass Remembrance envelopes can be returned in any collection before Easter.

The names of your loved ones, living or deceased, will be remembered at the Easter Novena of Masses celebrated Easter week.

Annual Catholic Appeal 2025

DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN

The Annual Catholic Appeal for 2025 has begun in our Diocese. Our goal this year has been lowered to **$37,511.** Most of you should have received information regarding this Appeal. This year the theme is: **JUBILEE OF HOPE, RENEWAL OF FAITH AND CHARITY.**

I ask you to prayerfully reflect on what you can contribute to help us reach our goal. The Annual Appeal allows Bishop Brennan to continue to carry out the mission of the Church here in Brooklyn and Queens.

I am grateful to those who have contributed in the past and thank you for your generosity and support. If you have not contributed, I ask to make every effort to help us reach our goal.

I share with you the words of Jesus to his followers: "The measure you measure with will be measured back to you."

Thank you for all your effort.
God Bless,
Msgr. Maresca

50/50 March 2025 Winners

First Prize
Mr. & Mrs. Angelo Niakas

Second Prize
Diana Serpagli

Third Prize
Mrs. Assunta Scarda

Congratulations!

Easter Flower Offering envelopes can be returned in any collection.

Please **clearly print** the names as we will be listing the names in our Bulletin.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

THIS WEEK

April 6-April 12

Sunday, April 6
9:30AM Pre-Communion Mass
10:40AM CCD

Monday, April 7
12:00PM Golden Age
3:30PM Children's Choir
7:30PM Adult Choir

Tuesday, April 8
6:30PM AA Meeting

Wednesday, April 9
3:00PM Drama Club
7:00PM Baptism Class

Thursday, April 10
10:00AM-Legion of Mary
3:30PM Jiu Jitsu
6:00PM IACA-Easter Party
7:20PM Scripture Study

Friday, April 11
7:30PM Stations of the Cross

Saturday, April 12
6:00PM Youth Group Meeting
Girl Scout Cookie Sale After 5:00PM Mass

NEXT WEEK

April 13-April 19

Sunday, April 13
PALM SUNDAY
Girl Scout Cookie Sale After Each Mass
8:00AM-Holy Name
10:40AM CCD

Monday, April 14
RECONCILIATION MONDAY
Confessions: 3-5 & 6-8
3:30PM Children's Choir
7:30PM Adult Choir

Tuesday, April 15
6:30PM AA Meeting

Wednesday, April 16
3:00PM Drama Club

Thursday, April 17
HOLY THURSDAY
9:00AM Morning Prayer
10:00AM-Legion of Mary
7:30PM Mass of the Lord's Supper

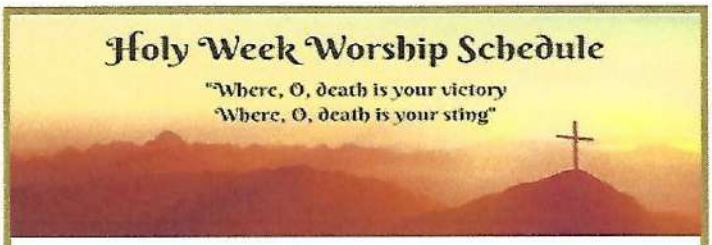
Friday, April 18
GOOD FRIDAY
9:00AM Morning Prayer
2:30pm-Stations of the Cross
3:00PM Passion of the Lord
7:30PM Passion of the Lord

Saturday, April 19
HOLY SATURDAY
9:00AM Morning Prayer
7:30PM Easter Vigil Mass

APRIL 2025
LECTOR / MINISTER SCHEDULE

	FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT APRIL 5 - 6	PALM SUNDAY APRIL 12-13	EASTER SUNDAY April 19-20	SUNDAY OF DIVINE MERCY APRIL 26 - 27
LECTORS				
Saturday 5:00PM	Debbi Skinner	Edward Kubina		Dolores Ratkowski
7:30PM			Debbi Skinner	
Sunday 8:00 AM	Rob Laucella	Andrew Soltesz	Rob Laucella	Andrew Soltesz
Sunday 9:30 AM	Martha O'Toole	Patrick O'Toole	Sharon Costanza	Patrick O'Toole
Sunday 11:00 AM	Carol Hickey	Carol Hickey	Carol Hickey	Carol Hickey
Sunday 12:30 PM	Anna Marie Del Carro	Jackie Machia	Anna Maria Tenaglia	Maria Bruno
MINISTERS				
Saturday 5:00PM	----------	Ray Conlon	----------	Ray Conlon
Sunday 8:00 AM	----------	----------	----------	----------
Sunday 9:30 AM	Theresa Mincone	----------	----------	----------
Sunday 11:00 AM	----------	----------	----------	----------
Sunday 12:30 PM	Nicolette Cosentino	----------	----------	Giuseppina Sferazza

*** REMINDER *** Once you are scheduled, if you cannot fulfill your assignment, please make every effort to call and get a replacement. Thank You



PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 13, 2025

Palms will be given out as you enter church and will be blessed at the beginning of each mass.

Saturday 5 P.M.

Sunday **8:00 A.M.**
9:30 A.M.
11 A.M.
12:30 P.M. (Italian)

HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 17, 2025

Morning prayer - 9:00 A.M.

Mass of the Lord's Supper - 7:30 P.M.

Visits to the Repository Until - 10:00 P.M.

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 18, 2025

Morning Prayer - 9:00 A.M.

Stations of the Cross - 2:30 P.M.

Liturgy of the Passion & Death of the Lord:
3:00 P.M.
7:30 P.M.

HOLY SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 2025

Morning Prayer - 9:00 A.M.

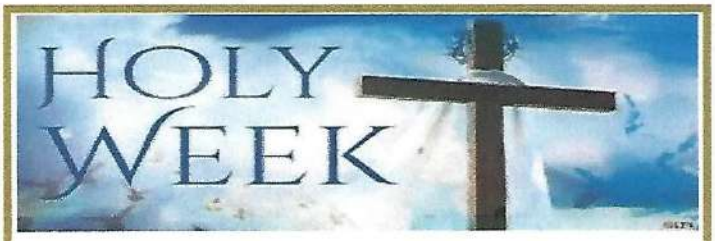
NO CONFESSIONS

NO 5:00 P.M. MASS

Easter Vigil - 7:30 P.M.

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 20, 2025

Masses **8:00 A.M.**
9:30 A.M.
11:00 A.M.
12:30 P.M. (Italian)



ALL ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SERVICES DURING HOLY WEEK

As we begin the Mass of the Lord's Supper, Jesus showed his love in his desire to remain with us always through the institution of the Holy Eucharist. Jesus invites us to intimacy, the intimacy of eating a meal together, the intimacy of his becoming our very food and drink so that he might share his life with us. The intimacy of remembering Jesus' life, death, and resurrection so deeply that Jesus is present among us.

Jesus invites us into a relationship that is so strong and so deep that it will enable our faith to grow even deeper. This Holy Thursday, let us spend some quiet moments with Jesus present in the Eucharist and tell him of our hearts' desires.

Good Friday is a day of mixed emotions. As we think of the pain our gentle Jesus suffered we cannot help being sorrowful. At the same time, however, we have reason to rejoice. Through his suffering and death on the cross Jesus has completed his mission on earth. He has opened the way for us who believe in him to share in the joy of his resurrection.

As we prayerfully recall Christ's passion, we see in it a reason to hope. Being God's divine son, Jesus could have overcome his oppressors, but he freely took this suffering upon himself out of love for us. If we believe in him and, like him, trust in the love and mercy of his divine Father, we too, can triumph over death.

May this Holy Week be a source of strength, hope, and courage for each one of us as we accompany Jesus through these celebrations.

God Bless, Msgr. Maresca

St. Francis of Assisi Parish
Msgr. Ralph J. Maresca V.F., Pastor

LENT 2025

= a day of fasting and abstinence from meat

= a day of abstinence from meat

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
"Lent is the liturgical season of forty days which begins with Ash Wednesday and ends with the celebration of the Paschal Mystery (Easter Triduum). Lent is the primary penitential season in the Church's liturgical year, reflecting the forty days Jesus spent in the desert in fasting and prayer" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*). **March**			5 *Ash Wednesday* Attend Mass and receive ashes as a sign of penance. Ask the Lord to help you grow closer to Him this Lent.	6 Prayerfully choose meaningful but achievable practices of prayer, penance, almsgiving.	7 Wake up five minutes early to dedicate your day to God's service.	8 Offer to pay for coffee, fast food, or groceries for the person in line behind you.
9 *"Each tree is known by its own fruit"* (Luke 6:44). After Mass, ask God what "good fruit" He wants your life to bear this Lent.	10 Practice true charity: "Have patience with all things, but, first of all with yourself" (St. Francis de Sales).	11 Take fifteen minutes today for silent prayer. Don't worry about finding the right words. Just be still and let Him love you.	12 Enjoy pretzels, a traditional Lenten snack invented by monks. They thought the folded loops resembled arms crossed in prayer.	13 Skim the glossary of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* until something strikes your interest, and dive deeper.	14 Pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy today, especially for the dying. You can find more information here: https://www.usccb.org/prayers	15 Write a note of encouragement to someone you think needs cheering up.
16 Stay after Mass today to pray for the intentions of the Holy Father.	17 *St. Patrick's Day* In honor of St. Patrick's missionary work in Ireland, offer extra prayers for those who teach the Faith.	18 Listening well is a small but meaningful act of courtesy. Give the gift of your full attention.	19 *St. Joseph's Day* In honor of St. Joseph, focus on the Joyful Mysteries today, reflecting on St. Joseph's role in each event.	20 Lent and Holy Week are busy times in a Catholic parish. Call or stop by your parish office and ask how you can help.	21 "There is no such thing as innocent slander." (Pope Francis). Today, practice the penance of not complaining about anyone.	22 Contact Catholic Relief Services (877-435-7277 or www.crs.org) to see how you can support any of their projects.
23 Write down three points you remember from Father's homily. Choose one you want to put into practice this week.	24 Honor your word, even to yourself. Perform a chore you've been putting off.	25 *The Annunciation* Happy Solemnity! Today, we celebrate that God became man (John 1:14). Attend daily Mass or have a dessert—or both!	26 Make a small sacrifice today: No cream in your coffee, no butter on your toast, no music in the car.	27 Ask God to show you whatever keeps you from fully experiencing His love. Resolve to deal with it before Lent ends.	28 Counter pride with authentic humility. Pray, "O Jesus, I surrender myself to You, take care of everything!"	29 *"Return, O Israel, to the LORD, your God; you have collapsed through your guilt."* (Hosea 14:2) Pray the Act of Contrition and ask for forgiveness.
30 *Laetare Sunday* Today marks the halfway point to Easter! Have a dessert to celebrate that you have made it halfway to Lent.	31 Renew your commitment to your Lenten resolutions.	1 **April** Examine your conscience, using the Ten Commandments as a guide (Exodus 20:1-17).	2 Go to Confession and experience God's mercy. Thank Him for His love and resolve to avoid future sin.	3 Instead of spending time on your screen, read a good spiritual classic.	4 Attend daily Mass or visit the Blessed Sacrament sometime today. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice of love.	5 Choose to forego a financial luxury, such as online shopping or eating out. Abstain from it until Easter and donate the extra money.
6 Extend fellowship. Invite friends to brunch after Mass, either at a restaurant or at your home.	7 Loving others well starts with knowing we are loved. Ask God to reveal His love to you today.	8 Read the Passion Narrative from the Gospel of Luke (Luke 22-23). What areas of your life and heart need His grace?	9 Reduce the contents of your closets. If you used or worn something in a year, donate it to charity.	10 Go for a walk and look for signs of Spring.	11 Observe a (recreational) screen fast, from 12:00pm to 3:00pm, the time Jesus hung on the Cross.	12 Pray the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary, mediating on Christ's Passion through the eyes of His mother.
13 *Palm Sunday* When listening to the Gospel readings at Mass, imagine yourself in the scene. How would you respond?	14 Pray for all those coming into the Church at Easter Vigil.	15 Forgive anyone who has hurt you. Ask forgiveness of anyone you have harmed.	16 Reflect on your Lent: where did you grow? What graces did you receive? What habits would you like to continue after Easter?	17 *Holy Thursday* Make a Holy Hour today in a church or chapel to console Jesus for the abandonment, indifference, and sacrilege He suffers by us.	18 *Good Friday* Reread Luke 23. Jesus carried His Cross out of love for you. Resolve to imitate Him more faithfully this year.	19 *Holy Saturday* Light a candle and renew your baptismal vows to remain committed to Christ.

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Growing in FAITH™

Discovering **hope** and **joy** in the Catholic faith.

April 2025

St. Francis of Assisi Parish
Msgr. Ralph J. Maresca V.F., Pastor

One Minute Meditations

St. Catherine of Siena

Born in 1347, St. Catherine began having divine visions as a young girl, and after much resistance from her family, she became a member of the Third Order of St. Dominic. She lived a life of solitude, prayer, poverty, mortification, and acts of charity. Her reputation for holiness spread and people began seeking her advice, especially to resolve political feuds peacefully. She is a Doctor of the Church for her works of doctrine and spiritual inspiration.

"Silent Saturday"

On Holy Saturday, also called "Silent Saturday," we recall Mary's silent waiting for Jesus' Resurrection. Waiting is part of God's plan, and He uses that time to heal and prepare our hearts for the next stage. Thank God for the seasons of waiting, as you prepare your heart and home to celebrate the joy of Easter Sunday.

Celebrate Mercy

Divine Mercy Sunday, established by Pope St. John Paul II in 2000, fulfills Jesus' request to St. Faustina Kowalska in the 1930s, calling the world to trust in His infinite mercy. It is celebrated on April 27 this year.

"If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:3).

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Anointed for a Mission

Living as Priest, Prophet, and King

In ancient Israel, priests and kings were anointed with oil as a sign that they were set apart for a sacred mission. In baptism, we too were anointed, marking us as belonging to Christ and sharing in His threefold office as priest, prophet, and king. As we approach our new life at Easter, we can take our proper place in His kingdom:

Priest

A priest serves as a bridge between God and humanity, offering sacrifices and interceding for others. We embrace our baptismal priesthood when we pray for others, make sacrifices on their behalf, and fully participate in the Mass with devotion and joy.

Prophet

A prophet is God's messenger, speaking the truth and calling people to conversion. A prophet's words have power because they flow from a holy life. We share in Christ's prophetic mission by living out our faith, teaching others about God's love, and spreading the Gospel.

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9).

King

A true king protects, leads, and serves as a model of virtue. We fulfill our royal calling when we guide and educate others in the faith, resist sin, and strive to lead others to Christ. We are servant leaders when we build up the Church, defend what is right, and help others on their path to salvation.

By fully living our faith, actively participating in the Church, and embracing the Sacraments, we do more than follow Christ—we become His hands and voice in the world. This is our calling and our mission.

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics venerate the Cross on Good Friday?

Veneration of the Cross is a devotion, traditionally observed during the Good Friday liturgy. The Church invites the faithful to bow, kneel, or in some other way venerate the image of the crucified Christ.

While physically kissing a statue may seem unusual, the act is not about the object itself but about honoring the One it represents. Much like observing a moment of silence before a war memorial, we pause to remember and revere the greatest act of love. In this gesture, we express sorrow for sin, love for Christ, and gratitude for His saving victory.

Keep watch with Jesus

A Holy Thursday invitation

On Holy Thursday night, Jesus went to the Mount of Olives to pray. In His anguish, He turned to His disciples and asked, *"And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "So, could you not watch with me one hour?"* (Matthew 26:40). Yet, they slept.

That same night, Jesus instituted the Eucharist, ensuring His presence would remain with us always. This Holy Thursday, set aside an hour to stay with Him.

Enter the Garden: Meditate on Matthew 26:36-46 or Luke 22:39-46. Listen to Jesus' prayer of surrender: *"Thy will be done"* (Matthew 26:42). Make it your own, trusting that God will bring all things to fulfillment in His perfect way.

Make a spiritual Communion: St. Thomas Aquinas described this as a prayer of longing for the Eucharist when receiving it physically isn't possible. Though it cannot replace the Mass, it is deeply pleasing to God and nourishes the soul.

Simply be present: Prayer is not about many words or devotions but about being with Him. This Holy Thursday, offer Jesus your silent presence—attentive, open, and watchful—for He is always present to you.

from Scripture

John 20:19-31, "Doubting" Thomas believes

The two Resurrection appearances of Jesus to His disciples in this passage highlight God's merciful love. The first appearance was on Easter Sunday. He could have abandoned them, just as they had abandoned Him in the Garden of Gethsemane, but He didn't. Instead, Jesus appeared to them and gave them His peace, His Spirit, and the power to forgive sins in His name.

The second visit was for St. "Doubting" Thomas, who wasn't there the first time. He refused to believe that Jesus was really risen, despite the evidence of several eyewitnesses. He demanded physical proof. Jesus appeared in the Upper Room and invited him to touch Him. St. Thomas, moved to faith, cried out, *"My Lord and my God!"* (John 20:28).

This passage reminds us we can always bring our doubts, fears, and need for forgiveness to God, especially on this Sunday — Divine Mercy Sunday. To the disciples who abandoned Him, Jesus extended His peace and forgiveness. For St. Thomas who had been struggling with doubt, Jesus came in person to strengthen his faith. "Jesus, I trust in You!"

Feasts & Celebrations

April 13 – Palm Sunday. On Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion, we recall Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, when He was greeted by crowds waving palms and cheering, *"Hosanna to the Son of David!"* (Matthew 21:9). This Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week.

April 16 – St. Joseph Benedict Labré (1783). Nicknamed "the poor man of the Forty Hours (Eucharistic) devotion," St. Benedict lived most of his life as a poor pilgrim. When he wasn't in church, he lived on the streets, in poverty and absorbed in prayer.

April 25 – St. Mark the Evangelist (First Century). St. Mark wrote the second Gospel based on St. Peter's perspective and accompanied Saints Paul and Barnabas on their missionary journey in Cyprus. He is credited with founding the Church of Alexandria.

April 27 – Divine Mercy Sunday. Jesus promised St. Faustina that those who receive the Sacrament of Confession and the Eucharist on this day will receive complete forgiveness of sins and punishment—a grace akin to baptism. This extraordinary gift highlights God's desire to wipe away our past and renew us in His love.

April 28 – St. Louis de Montfort (1716). A French priest with a passion for preaching the Gospel, St. Louis had a special devotion to the Blessed Mother, and his True Devotion to Mary is widely popular today.

Q & A

How can I be sure that I am discerning God's will in prayer?

God calls all of us to greater holiness, deeper intimacy with Him and greater charity for others. If you feel God is calling you, consider the "roots and fruits" more carefully before responding.

While the Holy Spirit often works through our "holy imagination," not everything that pops into our heads is from Him. God will never tell us to sin or contradict Church teachings, and His voice is always gentle (if firm) and brings a deep peace that remains, even when our emotions and situations change.

Assuming the "roots" are good, you can take the first steps in answering the call. Examples of "good fruits" would be an increase in virtue, greater attraction to the Sacraments, a concrete change in how we treat others, and even a change of heart in others.

It's always good to find a good spiritual director when discerning "big" decisions, e.g., a vocation. Be at peace: if you are seeking God's will in good faith, He will direct you where you need to be.

Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

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95th Anniversary Mass Program

We are offering you an opportunity to have your name, **In Thanksgiving,** or the name of a loved one, **In Memoriam,** printed in our **95th Anniversary Mass Program.**

The cost is $25 **per name**. Please PRINT the names clearly on the lines below and return to the rectory by September 2, 2025.

Please circle

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Name _____

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Return form in any collection basket or at the rectory.

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