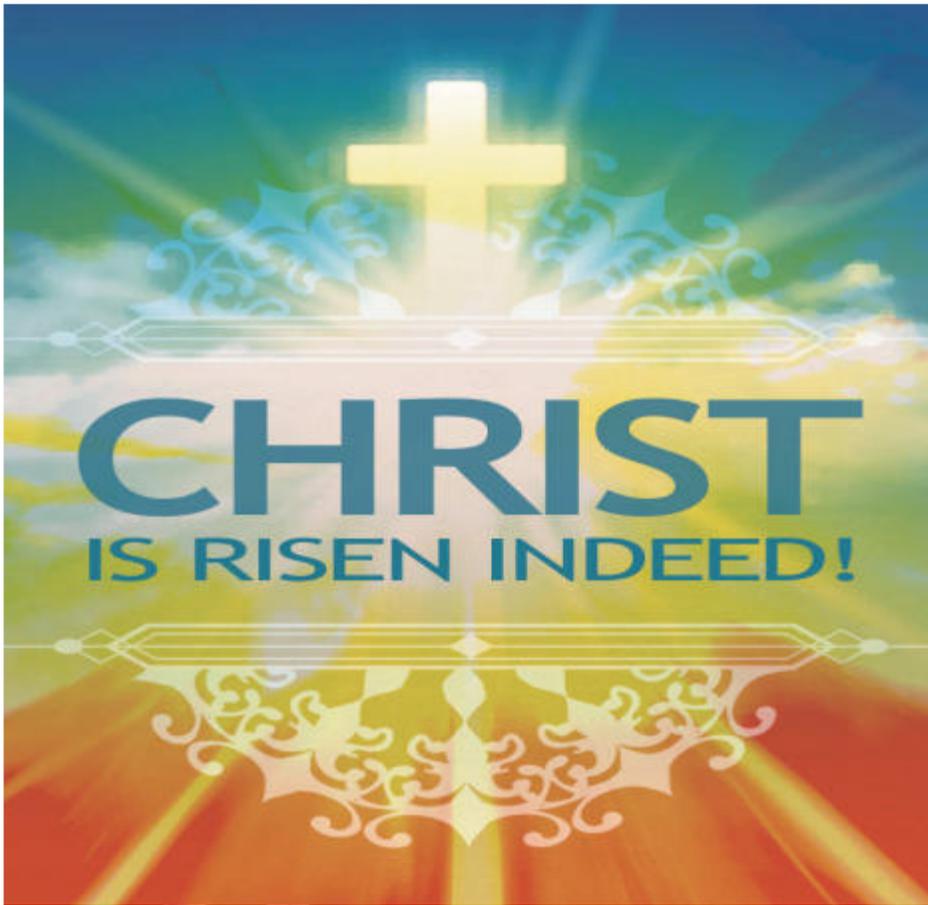


# Third Sunday of Easter

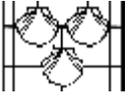
St. James the Greater



## *First Holy Communion*

WELCOME TO THE TABLE OF THE LORD!

Delaney Lovaas, Dalton Hebert, Ellery Martin, Kimberly Mueller, Oliver Poss, Kendall Bessen, James Erickson, Graham Armstrong, Emily Von Ruden, Lauren Norrish, Marcus Brummond, Kian Edwards, Ashlynn Conlin, Isabella Reyes, Cooper Sommer, Grayson Schotz, Natalie Mowry, Laura Nelson, Harper Nodolf, Hope Baliff, Iris Dayton, Sy Munoz, Bailey Renley



## Message from Fr. Tom

**Happy First Communion Weekend!** The older I get the more I know that what would always keep me in the Church, regardless of other things that might bother me, is the Eucharist. There's a questionnaire that I give to the parents of our First Communion students each year, and one of the questions is: **"If you were not to receive Communion for an entire year, the most negative effect would be..."** And then the options are:

I would lose track of the saving deeds of Christ, and his continual offer of forgiveness

I would feel more isolated.

I would lose awareness of God's love for me.

I would lose the awareness of my real connection to all other people in the world.

I would lose motivation to serve others.

I would miss the opportunity for inner transformation and sharing my fully in divine life.

I would forget about the presence of God in my life and in the world.

I would lose my connection to the Catholic Church.

I wonder which of the above responses resonate with you. Sometimes we see the true value of something only after we lose it. I suppose this has been the case with many of the faithful during these COVID times. For some, absence has made the heart grow fonder, while probably for others, they've not missed it so much. Some have been able to experience Spiritual Communion from home with our online masses, which others have a harder time with this. My hope for our First Communion children is that their parents will continue to take them to church so that they will develop an attachment to receiving the Eucharist, and that they will be among those who miss it dearly should they ever be deprived.

There will be an additional "First Communion Mass" outdoor at 12:00 on Sunday, but also up to three families could choose to celebrate their child's First Communion at our usual indoor masses so that we can all share in their joy. Whether it's a Wedding or a Funeral or a First Communion, it is "right and just" to see them as parish events. The more we can develop a sense of the group or communal dimension of what we do as Church, the more we will understand the Good News, I do believe.

**Have you ever thought about hosting a foreign exchange student?** Fr. Larry Seidl, coordinator of the Global Catholic Outreach Exchange Program, wrote me last week that he found host families for 17 of the 19 students in the program, and is looking for two more. These students are from Ukraine and Slovakia, speak English, and **would attend Regis High School if placed in Eau Claire.** When I was a boy, my family hosted Ella and then a couple years later, Beatrice, sisters from Guatemala. I was able to visit them 50 years later during a Maryknoll Missionaries pilgrimage, which was a very happy reunion. If you would like to explore the possibility of hosting one of these exchange students, you can **get in touch with me or call Fr. Larry directly: 920.412.0320.**

The **Parish Pastoral Council met last Tuesday.** After prayer, the council discussed our weekend mass situation with special focus on how often and at what time to celebrate mass outside. Then I introduced to the council that it appears the diocese will be running a capital campaign of sorts, probably starting at the end of summer. It's a little premature to announce but a couple parishioners have been contacted by the diocese to elicit their opinions on things, so I figured I might as well let people know what is probably coming. The timing, right after being asked to give to the Cathedral Restoration is a little frustrating to me, but apparently there were needs that could wait a little while but the Cathedral work had to be started with great urgency. With all those matters discussed, we got into the meat of the meeting which was to continue the process of Strategic Planning, this time focusing on "Weaknesses" in our parish. There weren't as many high-fives shared as last meeting when we discussed our strengths, but it was a good discussion nonetheless. Perhaps we will take a brief survey on this in the weeks ahead, but in the meantime feel free to contact a council member or parish staff with any "weaknesses" you'd like to add to the list.

So, that's about it for now. **May the joy of our First Communion children spread to all of us!**

## Fr. Tom's Homily

### 11 April 2021

### Second Sunday of Easter

*Acts 32-35; 1 John 5:1-6; John 20:19-31*

Our smaller school children like to show me when they've lost a tooth. I do find it sort of interesting, and I find myself wishing I could lose a few teeth that would grow back. And **you might be surprised to hear what scars hospital patients are happy to show their visiting priest.** As a young priest I thought it was a little odd for someone to bare their skin or pull aside a loose bandage to show me a fresh blood-stained wound. Now, while I don't seek out this experience, I will say that **I feel privileged when anyone wants to show me their wounds or scars.**

**In that way, this Thomas, I, am like that Thomas, the Apostle, who, I imagine, stood aghast at the lethally wounded and yet quite alive Jesus standing in front of him—so aghast that he could only get on his knees and stammer through his awe, “My Lord and my God.”**

On the surface, Thomas' demand seems like a simple demand to see Jesus before he believes he is alive—seeing is believing. But it seems to me that **he has a very important insight. He knows that any Risen Christ worth believing in will have the wounds of the crucifixion still on his body.** What matters isn't the simple fact of life after death—awesome as that would be—but that our wounded selves can find life again.

Some of **our wounds** we are proud of. Mothers' scars from giving birth. Soldiers' scars from bravery in battle. Others are evidence of mistakes we wish we could take back. A missing fingertip caught on a saw. A mark on a face that got too close to a scissors. Most scars no one will ever see unless we tell people because they are not outside on our skin but inside. Rejections and mistreatments that made their marks on our hearts and have made us wary of trusting others, and even trusting God. Born to be loved, we were not loved perfectly, and so we all need healing on some level. **What Thomas is seeking is what we all seek: assurance that there is life beyond our wounds.** Even with our wounds we can find wholeness and joy.

**I took inspiration from the life of Steven this week.** We celebrated his funeral on Friday, a young man with many wounds from the burden of the disease of alcoholism. He knew brokenness, and his inner wounds. But he also knew he could do a lot of good in the world. Once with a very distinguished professional career, he also found himself right at home with the homeless, volunteering at Sojourner House and teaching the residents how to play cribbage. Our wounds can indeed even be a blessing when they enable us to touch the wounds of others without wincing or shying away. **When we make peace with our brokenness, we can be at ease with others in their brokenness.**

Easter faith—faith in the Resurrection—is about saying “Yes, there is life beyond my wounds; there is life beyond the problems, and even the downright cruelty I see in the world.” We might put it into the context of our Covid crisis. So many people have suffered. Some bodies suffered from the virus directly. Many died. Others have been suffering economically. **I think we've all suffered from the divisiveness** of it all as choices like wearing a mask or getting the vaccine have put a wedge of separation between people.

On this Sunday the focus is often on whether or not we believe in the bodily Resurrection of Jesus. That's not an insignificant issue, but this year what seems more important to me is to ask ourselves if we trust that there is life beyond our own wounds, our hostilities, our divisions—if we can dust ourselves off from this global tragedy and get up and move forward to do the work of God: feeding the hungry, comforting the hurting and lifting one another up.

Then we can live the redeemed life described in our first two readings—living in deep communion with one another where no one was in need, and in St. John's vision having such confidence in life beyond our wounds that in a real sense we have conquered everything the world can throw in our face, for we are fed by something much deeper than the world can offer us. Wounds didn't stop Christ from rising. **He shows them to Thomas and us today, to show us that a wounded hand can heal and what was dead in us can come back alive.**

## DIOCESE of LACROSSE

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

8 April 2021

Year of St. Joseph

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Blessed Easter! May the joy of the Easter Season fill your hearts and homes!

Easter reminds us that it is Jesus, who makes all things new again. After this year of pandemic, we are all longing for our lives to be renewed, our families to be healthy and for us to gather once again to celebrate the Eucharist as a complete family of faith.

During this year, we have all faced challenges whether through illness, employment issues, or just the separation from our loved ones. Yet, even in crisis there are gifts which we receive. This past year has provided me with additional time to pray, to reflect and to discern about the future of our parishes, our schools, our many ministries and our beloved Diocese. This reflection compels me to reach out to you, our faithful parishioners to seek your input regarding the future of our faith community.

Therefore, we have embarked on a feasibility study that embraces some of the short-term and long-term strategic initiatives and needs of the Catholic community of La Crosse. As part of this study, we have invited approximately 1,650 families from around the Diocese to provide their input so that it may guide me as to how we may proceed. Hearing from so many faithful Catholics should provide the information necessary to forge our path forward.

I encourage you, should you receive an invitation to participate in the study, to please do so. Your input will have a direct impact on the decisions we make for our future.

May God bless you and your family during this Easter Season!

In the Hearts of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I am,

+William Patrick Callahan

Bishop of La Crosse

**St. Peter's Chicken Dinner**

St. Peter's Catholic Church in Tilden will be having a Chicken Dinner on Wednesday, April 21, from 4-7 PM or until gone. The price of the meal is \$10. The meal features chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, cabbage salad, and more. This event is drive-thru only. Co-sponsored by Catholic Life Insurance. Please contact Kathy Blum for more information: 715-288-6471.

**New Parishioners/Pastoral Visitations/Prayer Tree/Elizabeth Ministry:** Please contact Christine if you would like to join the parish, be visited at home or at the hospital, have a prayer request, or if you or someone you know is expecting and would like to be supported by volunteers.

**Mass Intentions & Schedule**

Weekday masses are at 9:00 AM Tuesday-Friday.

Wednesday masses are school masses with VERY limited seating for parents or parishioners.

Friday masses are now open to the public.

Masks & social distancing are required.

Sat. April 17 4:30 PM James Connolly

Sun. April 18 8:00 AM People of St. James

10:00 AM Pat Johson

Noon: First Eucharist

Tue. April 20 Sr. Marion Bauer

Wed. April 21 (school mass) John Spitzenburger

Thu. April 22 Mark Brantner

Fri. April 23 (NOT a school mass) Dan Puetz

Sat. April 24 4:30 PM Peter Klaver

Sun. April 25 8:00 AM People of St. James

10:00 AM Jane Norrish

**Sermon on the Amount**

April 4, 2021

Sunday Adult Envelopes (132) \$14,452.50

2020 same week (187) \$21,180.50

Students \$0.00

Plate \$1,492.01

Total \$15,944.51

Year to date Adult Env./CPL Income through Mar. 31, 2021:

Actual (July 1-Mar. 31) \$497,464.64

Budgeted (July 1-Mar. 31) \$465,010.00

Long term maintenance & facilities improvement fund and Past\*Present\*Future Campaign income for Apr. 4 was \$840.00 for a total since July 1, 2020 of \$51,121.36.

**Here We Grow Again Volunteers Needed**

Here We Grow again sale is a consignment style thrift sale that happens semi-annually at Hobb's Ice arena.

Here We Grow Again sale is donating all of its donated items to children in our community. Foster kids, kinship kids, low income families. Families may choose to donate items (to Lutheran Social Services, King's Closet, & to Apple Pregnancy) that do not sell during the sale. Items that need to be sorted between "return" and "donated" after the sale.

An honor student at Regis is coordinating further sorting of donated items.

We need volunteers on Sunday April 25 starting at 1:30.

To volunteer or with questions contact: Jessica Kaiser, 715-205-9922, [payner82@yahoo.com](mailto:payner82@yahoo.com).

**Social Concerns Corner:**

Earth Day is April 22<sup>nd</sup>! Did you know you can recycle items like swiffer pads, lotion containers, toothpaste tubes, and more through a free program called Terracycle? Sign up at <https://www.terracycle.com/en-US/> to learn more!

## Sign up for Weekend Mass!

**NOTICE for people just now returning to church:**

We are using a sign up system for the 4:30 PM and the 8 AM masses, that assigns particular seats to each person. This allows us to maintain social distancing and ensure that everyone gets a seat.

If you are internet-able, please go to the parish website [stjameseauclaire.org](http://stjameseauclaire.org) to sign yourself up.

If you are not, please call Christine at the parish office or on her cell phone at 715-579-1523 to sign you up.

If you have a sign up for mass and cannot make it, please let Christine know so someone else can take your seat.

Please try to leave the seats in the hearing loop area for those who need it.

## Music Ministry



Let us continue to REJOICE in the Word and Songs of the Liturgy!

Liturgy means *the work of the people* - and when the people must work from home, they will find new ways of getting the job done. It is my belief that we will continue to rise to what comes our way in this

rapidly changing new reality and that we will do it with the same joy and curiosity that guided us in the spring of 2020. The late Maya

Angelou once said, "A bird doesn't sing because it has an answer, it sings because it has a song." That is what ritual is for us. It is our song, and even if we are forced to move locations, we will continue to sing. "Excerpt from Today's Liturgy" Jeffrey Bonilla the writer is the Director of Music for St. Monica Catholic Community in Santa Monica, California. -submitted by Mary Kolstad,



Also—for now the 10 am mass will be outside. We are evaluating both the frequency and duration of outdoor masses; please stay tuned as we adapt to changing situations. You do NOT need to sign up for the 10 AM mass, only IF/WHEN it is outdoors. Please bring your own chair to outdoor masses. Masks are required.



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More scenes from Easter Sunday!



## Parish Staff

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**Bulletin deadlines:** end of day Mondays.

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