

Fourth Sunday of Easter

St. James the Greater



CHRIST
IS RISEN INDEED!



April 25, 2021

Message from Fr. Tom

I think the parish really enjoyed seeing all the **First Communion**s last weekend. Kimberly Mueller flew solo at the 8:00 mass, so, thanks to her family, every mass was able to witness at least one First Communion. We had two at the 4:30, one at the 8:00, six at the 10:00, and eight at the 12:00. There will be some more this weekend. I asked quite a few people if they remembered their own First Communion and was surprised that not everyone did. All parents, however, remembered their children's First Communion, which is maybe how it works with parenting—losing yourself in your love for your children. I myself remember my First Communion quite well. Everyone in my second grade class chose any mass during the year. My family chose Thanksgiving morning. I didn't know it at the time, but the Greek word "Eucharist" apparently means "Thanksgiving," so that was a good choice!

Sometimes I forget that the flow of our Liturgy of the Eucharist is all about giving thanks. Our offerings of bread and wine and money are meant to be an offering of thanks—from what we are given we give back. We have two prayers when we bless God for "through your goodness we have received the bread (and then wine) we offer you." We then say "It is right to give him thanks and praise!" Following this, the prayer just before the Holy Holy Holy is all about praising God for the saving love God has offered us through Jesus. Even the consecration prayers themselves—"This is my Body given up for you...My blood poured out for you"—are meant to be experienced with awe and thanksgiving. If you ever fall into the habit not grounding your prayer at mass in gratitude, you might remind yourself in the coming weeks, and see if it makes any difference in how you experience mass.

Our Parish Finance Council met last Tuesday. All agreed that our balance sheets looks strong. Anne happily reported that Easter gifts were especially strong this year—so a big thanks to all who were able to make those gifts. 39 weeks into this fiscal year, our envelope offerings are up \$29,000 over last year, which is remarkable. However, this increase is almost matched a \$27,800 decrease in plate offerings—which makes sense since we have not taken collections during mass, which few exceptions, this fiscal year. One thing I did not realize until this meeting was that typically over one-third of our weekly revenue comes from online giving. This is really a positive thing as it provides a consistent flow of money to support our mission.

Also from the finance meeting, we learned that our Spring Parish Grounds Clean-Up Day will be Saturday, May 1, so get your rakes ready and join the fun that morning, if you dare. Our representative to the Regis Schools finance council, Angie Whiteside, reported that projections for next year show enrollment holding steady. Last, progress to making our Diocesan Annual Appeal goal is lagging, with a shortfall of \$23,000. We all have until the end of June to try and make it to our goal, so that we don't have to make up the difference from our parish checking account.

I'm sure a lot of us were attentive to the news out of Minneapolis and the trial of police officer Derek Chauvin, whose actions were judged to have led to the death of George Floyd. Reading various reactions from church leaders, I thought this one by Bishop Stowe of Lexington, Kentucky was strong and good:

"Hopefully today's verdict in the Chauvin trial marks the beginning of an era of accountability for the violation of human dignity and the taking of human life by those in power. It is a long overdue result that finally brings justice for a Black victim of a brutal killing by police. This verdict respects both the rule of law and what the whole world watched on video. ...it affirms...that George Floyd's life matters. Let us pray that a precedent has been set that will allow people of color to know that their lives are to be protected by law enforcement and that there will be consequences when they are not...."

I am heartened, too, that I am not hearing negative things about police in general. I know last year in the wake of this tragic incident, police and former police from St. James were so disheartened by the actions of officer Chauvin. I am so grateful for those men and women who pledge to protect us. They see a lot of life's darkness that the rest of us can hardly imagine, and I know that more than any of us they want people to respect one another and live in peace.

I watched a journalist's video filmed at the home of a Black family in Brooklyn Center while protests were occurring outside their home after the police shooting death of Daunte Wright. Three girls, aged approximately from 2-7 tried hard to lead a normal evening, but of course that was impossible with the shouting and explosions outside their window. The youngest started crying and the mom calmed her by telling her "It's all right. It'll be all right." That's our prayer, too. May God help us Christians (and all others) to do what we are able to bring greater peace to our wounded world by truly loving our neighbor.

18 April 2021

Third Sunday of Easter

Luke 24:25-38

Today's Gospel show us the Risen Jesus opening the minds of his disciples by showing them where in the Hebrew Scriptures it shows that the Christ/Messiah would have to suffer and die. That was a big hurdle for the early Christians—how to make sense of the fact that the long-awaited Messiah of the Jewish People, the one that everyone expected to be a strong ruler king with military power to oust the Roman occupiers from Israel, would apparently be defeated by the Romans who crucified him.

Maybe you heard the story about this department store, something like Menards, where they were experiencing a lot of theft. The rumor was that it wasn't customers who were stealing things but the store's own workers. So, they hired extra security guards to watch the workers as they left the store. Guard Guillermo saw worker Wanda wheeling out a mysterious-looking box, and so asked what was in the box. "Oh, just wood chips," said Wanda to Guillermo, "the lawn and garden supervisor said I could take some from the pile." Not satisfied, Guillermo suspected stolen goods within the woodchip, so he made Wanda empty the box. It was just wood chips. Next day it was the same situation. Guard Guillermo thought that worker Wanda might now assume she could get away with anything, so again he made her empty the box she was wheeling out. Again, just wood chips. This same scene happened seven days in a row. Then Guard Guillermo went to talk to the man who hired him, and asked if there was still a lot of stealing going on because he has not seen any. His boss frustratingly said, "Yes, someone is still stealing." "Well, what are they taking?" "Well, just in the last week, someone stole seven wheelbarrows." Guard Guillermo had all his attention on the boxes and didn't notice the wheelbarrows that carried the boxes and that never returned.

Jesus knows that his disciples need to see something that they're missing. That he has to suffer and die in order to really be the kind of Messiah who saves us. In the Road to Emmaus story it says that when the disciples learned the same lesson "their hearts were burning." It doesn't say that here but we can assume that they were similarly enlightened. It all made sense to them. It made sense to them that salvation was not as escape from suffering and death, but a way through suffering and death to something greater. And for their lives, and our lives now, when we are broken, sick, rejected...we are not failures, but beloved children of God, brother to the Messiah who holds us and leads us to new life.

Sometimes after we "get it," we think it's time to relax. Like solving a riddle or a crossword puzzle and wanting to just kick back and enjoy. Almost in the same breath of his explanation, however, Jesus tells them they will be sent out to preach to the nations. There is a figure in Buddhism called a bodhisattva, who, though having achieved enlightenment and able to enter a state of bliss, chooses out of compassion to stay fully engaged in the world to help less enlightened people in their suffering.

That's my thought for our First Communion children today. Receiving Communion means two things. Jesus shares himself with you today, his very self. I hope it warms your heart to receive Jesus today, as it does mine every time I receive him. I hope you will cherish and savor this time of Communion always. But Jesus in our Eucharist also fuels us and pushes us into the world to love others. You are receiving a precious gift today. I hope you receive it very often. If you live to be 88 years old and if you go to church every Sunday, I did the math and you'll receive Jesus in the Eucharist 4160 times. That's a lot of Jesus in you. That's a lot of Love, and a lot of divine Power for you to go out and love everyone in the world.



Eau Claire Catholic Women's Club

On May 17 the Eau Claire Catholic Women's Club will hold their Spring Banquet at The Eagles Club. Social hour will begin 5:00 PM, dinner 6:00 PM. The menu includes chicken cordon bleu, and apple crisp with ice cream. The total cost is \$25 and payment should be sent to Judy St. Arnault by May 8. Following dinner we will conduct the installation of new board members. If you have any questions contact Renee Liming (715) 379-6782.

Parish Grounds Cleanup: Saturday May 1.

Rose Sale

The Eau Claire County Chapter of Wisconsin Right to Life is holding its annual Rose Sale after the Masses on Mother's Day weekend. The beauty and delicacy of the rose reminds us of the dignity of each human life; its red color and thorns reminds us of the untold lives lost to abortion. Please consider purchasing a rose for the special woman in your life or in memory of that special person. Suggested donation: \$3 each or two for \$5. **Because of Covid, we will not be able to make change, so please bring the correct amount for donation.**



REGIS Legacy SOCIETY

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Planned gifts made through the Regis Legacy Society help ensure that the educational and spiritual mission of Regis Catholic Schools will continue in the future.

WILL YOU INCLUDE THE REGIS CATHOLIC SCHOOLS FOUNDATION IN YOUR ESTATE PLANS?

Our planned gift society was created in appreciation of the generous donors whose legacy will live on through their planned gift to the Regis Catholic Schools Foundation.

There are a number of ways to remember the Regis Catholic Schools Foundation through your estate plan. For more information on joining the Regis Legacy Society, please contact:

Mark Golden '83
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 (715) 830-2273, ext. 1407
 mgolden@RegisCatholicSchools.com

www.RegisCatholicSchoolsFoundation.com

SUPPORT REGIS TODAY, MAKE A DIFFERENCE TOMORROW

Mass Intentions & Schedule

Weekday masses are at 9:00 AM Tuesday-Friday.
 Rosary and Adoration are available after the Tuesday Mass until 10:30 AM.
This week the school Mass will be Friday with limited seating. Wednesday will be open to the public.
 Masks & social distancing are required.

Sat.	April 24	4:30 PM	Peter Klaver
Sun.	April 25	8:00 AM	People of St. James
		10:00 AM	Jane Norrish
Tue.	April 27		Arnold & Marian Bauer
Wed.	April 28		Larry Hagens (No School)
Thu.	April 29		Kathy Kunferman
Fri.	April 30		Jim Connolly (School Mass)
Sat.	May 1	4:30 PM	George Hanson
Sun.	May 2	8:00 AM	Living Members of PCCW
		10:00 AM	People of St. James

Spring has sprung, the grass is riz, I wonder where the flowers is? They are at:
St. Joseph's Church Drive-in Plant & Bulb Sale
 Monday, May 3, 4:00 to 7:00 PM
 Where: St. Joseph's Catholic Church Parking Lot, Rock Falls, Hwy 85, between Eau Claire and Durand
 Sponsored by: St. Joseph's PCCW
 Donations: Drop off any donated plants at the church basement back entry April 26 -May 3 by 3:00 PM
 Questions: Call Bonnie 832-5830 or Jenny 875-4656
 Wide variety of plants and bulbs for sale; Yard Art will also be available to buy. Bring a friend (and a box for purchases) and enjoy great buys on a wide variety of plants, bulbs, and yard art! All items will be pre-priced.

Sermon on the Amount	April 11, 2021
Sunday Adult Envelopes (151)	\$13,336.00
2020 same week (111)	\$14,804.00
Students	\$20.00
Plate	<u>\$99.00</u>
Total	\$13,455.00
Easter	\$12,011.05
Year to date Adult Env./CPL Income through Mar. 31, 2021:	
Actual (July 1-Mar. 31)	\$497,464.64
Budgeted (July 1-Feb. 28)	\$465,010.00

Long term maintenance & facilities improvement fund and *Past*Present*Future Campaign* income for Apr. 4 was \$340.00 for a total since July 1, 2020 of \$51,461.36.

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Bulletin deadlines: end of day Mondays.

Signups for Mass No Longer Needed!!

By this point everyone seems to be used to Covid restrictions, and mass attendance has been at manageable levels, so we are **ending having to sign up for mass starting on May 1 (next weekend)**. Everyone can come and sit where they like. **PLEASE** continue to social distance within the pews.

Stand in the Light Memory

Choir will stream their spring virtual showcase "Music Legacies" on Thursday, April 29th at 6:30 p.m.. The showcase will feature music, personal stories, generations of talent and so much more! Follow this link to our YouTube channel to watch. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCaQ-bQa5E2rySz61lu3d3aQ>. Many St. James members are part of this choir!!

Scenes from First Communion Weekend! Congratulations to our First Communicants!



Just what you have waited for!!
SCRAP METAL DRIVE

Saturday May 1 - 9
Please **NO** refrigerators, air conditioning units or electronic products.
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