Looking For A Faith Community? Wherever you are on your faith journey, we welcome you to join our community. You may register by calling the Faith Community Office.

Prayer for the Church

Holy Virgin of Guadalupe, Queen of the Angels and Mother of the Church.
We fly to you today as your beloved children.
We ask you to intercede for us with your Son, as you did at the wedding in Cana.
Pray for us, loving Mother, and gain for our nation and world, and for all our families and loved ones, the protection of your holy angels, that we may be spared the worst of this illness.
For those already afflicted, we ask you to obtain the grace of healing and deliverance.
Hear the cries of those who are vulnerable and fearful, wipe away their tears and help them to trust.
In this time of trial and testing, teach all of us in the Church to love one another and to be patient and kind.
Help us to bring the peace of Jesus to our land and to our hearts.
We come to you with confidence, knowing that you truly are our compassionate mother, health of the sick and cause of our joy.
Shelter us under the mantle of your protection, keep us in the embrace of your arms, help us always to know the love of your Son, Jesus.

April 19, 2020
Website: ElizabethSouthAlleghenyCC.org
A person was going through a very dark time, questioning the meaning of life, not feeling very purposeful or worthwhile, and feeling disconnected and unappreciated. Suddenly, they gazed up at the night sky, found themselves in awe of all the stars and constellations, and exclaimed, I am here on purpose and I am loved! Having been brought by God to this moment of intense connection and awareness, his life changed from that moment on.

If we are always preoccupied with the challenges, obligations, and stuff of daily life, we can easily miss the wonderful opportunities when the resurrected Christ is knocking at our door. If we open ourselves to the fullness of experience, we will find ourselves listening and embracing all that is around us, being caught up in the magnificence of creation’s grandeur and knowing in our heart and soul that God is and I am.

While that sounds like a simple, tell-me-something-I-don’t-know kind of revelation, it is life changing when it takes root in the depth of a person’s soul. Stumbling upon this awesome truth and internalizing it doesn’t require an assent of the mind. It beckons for a claim on our soul. We find ourselves knowing something profound that cannot be explained or reasoned, but purely is. When we are caught up in an experience and encounter the truth, it doesn’t matter how all of the pieces got put together. Truth is simply truth. The my Lord and my God affirmations come when we are lifted up out of our preoccupations and silliness and are in the presence of mystery and mercy.

God is mystery, one who is beyond our grasp but at the same time within our reach, knowable yet unknowable. And when in the presence of mystery, there comes an intense experience of mercy. We know deep within the essence of ourselves — and in the very life of creation — this beating, unconditionally accepting, life-sustaining, profound, mysterious yet familiar presence of love. We have found our peace.

Peace be with you.
Breathe in and breathe out. Peace.
Second Sunday of Easter

Poor Thomas. Singled out from among the disciples because he refused to believe what they were telling him—that they had seen, in the flesh, their friend and their Lord, Jesus Christ.

Can any of us really blame him?
All of the disciples were terrified, crestfallen, hiding.

But what of Thomas?
Just where was he when Jesus appeared the first time to the group huddled in fear? He had gone out—out of the community where his faith had life. Maybe this was actually a blessing for Thomas and not the curse associated with the doubting Thomas moniker bestowed on him by tradition.

Oh, the divine mercy of the Lord!
Could Thomas be the forerunner of all of us who come in fragile hope and uncertainty to the Christian community, so beautifully described in the reading from the Acts of the Apostles? Could Thomas be an ultimate exemplar of the faith described in the First Letter of Peter?

We Walk By Faith

But what of us?
The early Christian community could only trust the words of these same apostles, the ones Thomas couldn’t believe, when they preached Jesus Christ risen from the dead.

Who could believe what they said?
The Holy Spirit, breathed upon the disciples in that first encounter, emanated so powerfully from them that they were able to convene seemingly utopian communities of faith. Filled with divine mercy, their lives became an evangelization to the world.

And this is how we too are sent out, like the disciples, filled with the Holy Spirit and bearing the Lord’s peace and mercy to a troubled, suffering world. The wounds of Jesus are very real today in the needy and broken. May we always work to bind up those wounds wherever we find them.

Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed.

• John 20:29b

Fire
—St. Catherine of Siena

Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire.

Happy Easter! Some Easter Thoughts

Our world challenges our faith on a daily basis leading us to ask soul searching questions:

• How can God allow . . .
• Why should we believe anything they say when . . ., and
• What difference does it make? You don’t have to believe anything to be a good person.

Today we are reminded that the gift of faith comes from God’s abounding merciful love.

Faith is a gift.

So why doesn’t God give it to everybody?
God doesn’t force Himself into hearts or lives. He gently calls to us, singing us songs of love. God invites us to share in His all encompassing loves, compassion, mercy and forgiveness. We are able to choose to accept or reject God’s love and abiding presence. We are invited to share our faith.

The world in which you and I live desperately needs people of faith. Don’t just think of professed religious without adding yourself to the list.

But I’m just not able to preach the Gospel.

Pope Francis once said: No one deserves faith. No one can buy it. It is a gift. Through praise, we prove our faith and belief that Jesus was sent to forgive sins.

Remember we are called to preach the Gospel always and use words when necessary. All of us are blessed with so many blessings in our lives. Each of us had some hard or difficult times in our lives. We can share our story when the opportunity arises.

We need to remain persistent and consistent in our faith, not taking it for granted. Faith needs to be fed and nurtured, praying, reading the Bible, going to mass, receiving the sacraments, and so on.

At times we may experience doubt or questions. We are not alone. Jesus prayed, Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will.

Many saints, including Mother Teresa and Thomas the Apostle, experienced doubt or questions for years. But she and so many others resisted their doubt and used it for deeper study and prayer. Don’t allow your doubt to slowly erode your relationship with Father, Son and Spirit.

Confront your doubt or questions and pray over them. Doubt is the springboard to faith.

Thomas said, My Lord and my God.
We continue to pray for the time when we can gather as a family around the abiding presence of the Risen Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.

May Easter Joy
be in our hearts, minds, and actions.
He Is Risen! Happy Easter!
Get Real!

Those of us who flatter ourselves that we have a realistic view of the world may listen to the first reading today and say, Get real! when we hear Luke’s account of the early Christian movement. All seems to be rosy, lots of wonders are performed, everyone shares selflessly, they eat together in exultation, and the Lord added to their numbers? Well, who wouldn’t be attracted to a group like this? From the wind that swept through the upper room at Pentecost as the Spirit of God blew over the face of the waters in Genesis, and the fire that appeared over each disciple as the light appeared at the dawn of creation, Luke’s intent in Acts is to show a new creation, a restoration of creation’s original goodness through the working of the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit who continues to make us into the Body of Christ. We may occasionally, like Thomas in the Gospel, say, Get real! but our ultimate reality in the Spirit is to work continually to make our Christian community a new creation, one in which others will find God’s joy and beauty.

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You Should’ve Been There!

Most of us have had the misfortune of missing something important simply by being absent, and then hearing about what happened. In today’s reading, unique to John’s Gospel, Thomas is the only apostle who was not around when Jesus appeared to his friends for the first time after his death and resurrection. They were frightened and grieving, not knowing what would happen to them. Remember, they found themselves to be fugitives, seemingly guilty by association with a criminal executed by government officials. Suddenly, Jesus was with them, beaming peace and mercy to his fragile followers. What joy! What a shock, too!

We will never know why Thomas had left their hiding place. All we know is that he returned to wild stories about Jesus being alive after dying a brutal death. He must have thought that the other apostles in their grief had a shared delusion of what they wished were true. When Thomas finally saw Jesus, he gave what is considered the most profound profession of faith: My Lord and my God! In his tender mercy, Jesus ministered to Thomas by helping him to see for himself.

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Sacraments

**Baptism of Infants & Children**
Baptism is a joyful event in the life of the church. Baptism is celebrated any Sunday after Mass. *Parents are required to attend a Pre-Baptism Class.*
Previous arrangements are necessary.

**Instruction in the Faith - R.C.I.A.**
The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults Program is offered for those interested in the Catholic Faith. For more information, please contact Fr. Wagner.

**Reconciliation**

- St. Eugene Church, Liberty
  - **Tuesday, 7 - 7:30 pm**
- St. Michael Church, Elizabeth
  - **Saturday, 11-11:30 am**
- Queen of the Rosary Church, Glassport
  - **Saturday, 1- 1:30 pm**
- St. Michael Church, Elizabeth
  - **Saturday, 3:15-3:45 pm**
- St. Eugene Church, Liberty
  - **Saturday, 5:15-5:45 pm**

**Marriage**
The prospective bride and groom are to make arrangements with the priest or deacon at least 6 months prior to the proposed date of the wedding. Diocesan regulations require all couples to attend an approved pre-marriage preparation program.

**Anointing of the Sick**
The Anointing of the Sick is celebrated communally on the Second Sunday of the Month.

**Ministry to the Sick and Shut In**
Homebound members of the Parish should call the Parish Office to make arrangements to receive Holy Communion at home.

**Sponsorship Forms**
Only registered, practicing, fully-initiated Catholics are eligible for sponsor certificates. Please call the Parish Office.

**Bulletin Information Deadline**
2 weeks in advance of publish date. elizabethsalleghenybulletin@gmail.com

**Moving**
Please call or email your new address to the Parish Office.

Child Abuse Hotline 1-888-808-1235

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**Mass Intentions For The Week**

**StE St. Eugene Church, Liberty**
**StM St. Michael Church, Elizabeth**
**QoR Queen of the Rosary Church, Glassport**

**April 19 - 26, 2020**

**Saturday, 18, Vigil, Second Sunday of Easter, Divine Mercy Sunday**
Fr. Tom  Carl & Mary Ann Yurkovich - Family
Fr. Miro  Raymond ‘Skip Zajicek– Family

**Sunday, 19, Second Sunday of Easter, Divine Mercy Sunday**
Fr. Tom  John Belkowski - Daughter, Claudia
Fr. Miro  Jean Hvozdik - Sons of the American Legion

**Monday, 20, Easter Weekday**
Fr. Miro  Edward ‘Radar’ Kuzio - Paul & Linda Skalski

**Novena - Infant of Prague**

Fr. Tom  Patrick J. Safran, Sr. – Family

**Tuesday, 21, Easter Weekday**
Fr. Tom  Julius & Anna Morris - Daughter, Barbara
Fr. Miro  Kathryn Kish - Son, Joseph Kish

**Wednesday, 22, Easter Weekday**
Fr. Miro  Stephen Gribschaw - Eileen Hays
Fr. Tom  Joshua David Huwalt - Pappy & Grannyma Stanton

**Novena - Michael the Archangel**

**Thursday, 23, Easter Weekday**
Fr. Miro  Catherine Pickell - M/M Michael Ruffing
Fr. Tom  Betty Kaczkowski - Parish Family

**Friday, 24, Easter Weekday**
Fr. Miro  Jean Todaro - Cathy Partyka & Dorothy Jaskulski
Fr. Tom  Walter & Mary Lou Smith - Patty

**Saturday, 25, Vigil, Third Sunday of Easter**
Fr. Tom  Connie Altomare - Walter & Gloria Kortz
Fr. Miro  Louis Piotrowski – McCarthy Family

**Sunday, 26, Third Sunday of Easter**
Fr. Tom  Thomas Sigler & Mary & Steve Konchak - Agnes Sigler
Fr. Miro  Ruth Rushe - Jim & Elaine David

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**We remember** . . . In your charity, please remember all those who have died, especially:

- **all who will die today,**
- **and those who have no one to pray for them.**
- **Resting in Paradise.**
- **Eternal Rest grant unto them O Lord.**
- **And Let Perpetual Light Shine on them.**

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**April Rosary Intention**
That those suffering from addiction may be helped and accompanied every day.
Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time.

Sunday, April 19; Second Sunday of Easter
Acts 2:42-47; 1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31
Empty chairs, full hearts—On this day 25 years ago, 168 people died in the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. The footprint of the building is now ringed by trees providing a living threshold for ground made sacred by grief. A surviving wall records the names of those who lived through the tragedy, while a Field of Empty Chairs recalls the adults and children who perished. Violence created the need for this memorial. But the chairs, which become vigil lights of memory through each night, attest that a light shines in every darkness. Be that light. They devoted themselves... to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers.

Monday, Apr 20: Easter Weekday
Give life the last word—Today is the 21st anniversary of the Columbine school shooting. How to cope with the sorrow and outrage of that incident and so many similar ones? We begin to rebuild our society when we allow the Spirit to flow through us and see the face of God in others. Every human being... however weak, is created in the image and likeness of God, Pope Benedict XIV said in Cameroon in 2009. Every person must live!... Death will never have the last word! Acknowledge the right of those around you to live, no matter their differences, their weakness or strengths, their failings or successes. You do not know where [the wind] comes from or where it goes; so it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.

Tuesday, Apr 21; Anselm, bishop
Acts 4:32-37; John 3:7b-15
Our Redeemer, in the flesh—In 1098, Saint Anselm wrote the treatise Why the God-Man? to champion a core Christian tenet: the Incarnation—the belief that Jesus was both fully human and fully divine. Incarnation is a big deal. Nearly every heresy tackled by the Early Church concerned errant beliefs about Jesus’ true nature. No, we don’t believe that Jesus was merely human (Arianism) or that he was all divine, only pretending to be human (Docetism). We believe that the second person of the Trinity took on human flesh to save us. Imagine that! You must be born from above.

Wednesday, Apr 22; Easter Weekday
Acts 5:17-26; John 3:16-21
Give your sister some breathing space—Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life.... This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. Thus opens Laudato Si, Pope Francis’ encyclical On Care for Our Common Home. Do we really want to live in darkness? Shine a light on what each of us can do to clean up the planet. And plant a tree for good measure! The light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light.

Thursday, Apr 23; George, martyr
Acts 5:27-33; John 3:31-36
Face the dragon—The legend of Saint George the dragon slayer is a famous one, but it’s not as rooted in historical fact as is the manner of his martyrdom. Yes, George had the courage to face a monster—but the monster was the Roman emperor Diocletian, whose persecution of Christians in the early 300s martyred not only George but well-known saints Sebastian, Agnes, Lucy, and Philomena, among countless others. George, a soldier, remained joyous even when tortured for his belief. What negative influences threaten your own joyous practice of Christian faith today—and are you willing to face them, as George was? One who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of earthly things.

Friday, Apr 24; Fidelis of Sigmaringen, priest, martyr
Acts 5:34-42; John 6:1-15
Clothes make the saint—Holding a law degree from Germany, Fidelis of Sigmaringen (1577-1622) was known as the poor man’s lawyer who sometimes would give his destitute clients the clothes off his back. But he tired of the adversarial nature of the law profession, so he joined the Capuchin Friars. Ordained a priest in 1612, Fidelis was sent to Switzerland to convert Calvinist reformers. In violent reaction to his successful efforts, Fidelis was set upon and murdered. He was canonized in 1746 by Pope Benedict XIV. Fidelis means faithful in Latin. Exercise your faith today by donating clothes to the poor in memory of Fidelis. This is truly the Prophet, the one who is to come into the world.

Saturday, Apr 25; Mark, evangelist
1 Peter 5:5b-14; Mark 16:15-20
Write the Good News with the ink of your life—Mark was an early follower of Jesus but not one of the 12 apostles. Most scholars think that he was the John who is called Mark referenced in Acts 12:12 who joined in mission work with Paul and Barnabas. Today’s first reading mentions that he had a special son like relationship with Peter. Beyond that, little is known except that he used the gifts he had been given to write the shortest and earliest gospel a few decades after Jesus’ death. His gospel became the inspiration for Matthew and Luke to write theirs. How will those who come after you take inspiration from your life and the way you shared the Good News? Go into the whole world and proclaim the Good News to all creation.

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting. —Psalm 118