



The Messenger

ST. MARY OF THE ASSUMPTION

November 2025



**THE PATH TO
ETERNAL LIFE**

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A Ministry of Comfort:

Serving Families in Their Time of Loss



As part of St. Mary's Care Ministry, our *Bereavement Luncheon Team* offers a tender expression of comfort and faith to families during times of loss. This dedicated team of twelve volunteers prepares, serves, and cleans up after funeral luncheons held in the Parish Hall, allowing grieving families to gather, share memories, and find comfort together without worrying about the details.

Under the caring, thoughtful leadership of Pauline Wolf, the ministry team communicates with the next of kin to plan the reception, discussing details such as guest count and simple touches like centerpieces or table arrangements. Families are invited to provide photos or personal mementos, which the team lovingly displays on a memory table, creating a space to honor the life of their loved one.

While the family provides catering, the ministry offers complimentary coffee, tea, lemonade, and water, and ensures the hall is set up and welcoming, ready to receive

guests. After the luncheon, the team handles cleanup quietly and respectfully, giving families the freedom to focus on what truly matters: being together.

This ministry embodies several of the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy:

- *Feeding the hungry* by offering nourishment and hospitality,
- *Comforting the sorrowful* by providing presence and compassion,
- *And praying for the dead* through their service and care.

Through these humble acts, the Bereavement Luncheon Team reflects Christ's love, bringing consolation, peace, and hope to those walking through grief.

If you would like to learn more or join this compassionate team, please contact the Parish Office or reach out to Pauline Wolf.

WELCOME

Dear friends,

Praised be Jesus Christ, who offers eternal life! Welcome to the November edition of *The Messenger*. Our main theme this month is eternity, as we observe the traditional Catholic month of remembrance for those who have gone before us.

November 1st is All Saints Day, celebrating all those who are with God in eternity, praising Him and praying for us.

November 2nd is All Souls Day, when we remember the Faithful Departed, asking God to bring them to heaven if they are not already there.

The front cover art is part of a colorized work by Gustave Doré (French, 1832-1883) - *The Divine Comedy*, Canto 28 - *The Scintillating Host of Heaven*.

In 1321, the great Italian poet Dante Alighieri finished the work *The Divine Comedy*, a narrative poem of over 700 pages, with 100 individual songs (Cantos). Dante is one of the world's greatest literary geniuses. His influence on the Catholic imagination, inspiration for art, language, and poetry in general, is tremendous.

The Divine Comedy is divided into three main sections: *Inferno* (Hell), *Purgatorio* (Purgatory), and *Paradiso* (Heaven). Dante takes the Catholic, scriptural belief in the afterlife, and presents it in this brilliant, poetic account of travelling through each of the three parts.

In this issue, you'll find our regular, inspirational columns, as well as special features connected to the truth of eternal life.

We have articles on mental health and eternal life, Estate Planning, and a new feature on the history of the Church with the lives of our heavenly friends, the saints. In *Catholic Apologetics*, you'll read why it matters to the Catholic Church that the remains of the deceased be laid to rest in a place set aside - in Holy Ground.

Between these, pictures and updates of parish events, other features old and new, this month's *The Messenger* is a blessing that brings truth, hope, and goodness to our world. Thank you for reading, and enjoy!

Peace,
Fr. John

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This reflection invites us to echo the disciples' plea, "Lord, teach us to pray," and to walk the paths that lead to eternal life: faith, repentance, mercy, and hope.

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This reflection invites us to see the Works of Mercy not as a checklist of good deeds, but as a way of life - becoming "salt and light" in the world.

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Catholic funerals and burial in Holy Ground are acts of faith, which proclaim our belief in the resurrection, and entrust our loved ones to God's mercy within the communion of saints.



Merry & Bright

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Saint Mary of the Assumption and all the work you do
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"And this is the promise that he made us: eternal life."

Countless. There are countless times in the **Jewish and Christian Scriptures** when the sacred writings teach about **eternal life**. There are countless religious traditions and spiritualities, now and throughout history, that point us to an afterlife. There are countless stories, experiences, and even more intuitions that point to a reality beyond our current world.

In this Deeper Dive, I'd like us to consider what the Scriptures and the Church say about **eternal life – Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory** – and how that can affect our lives here on earth.

The Scriptures describe **heaven as a banquet filled with song**. The prophets speak of **heaven's peace**: Isaiah writes, *"Then the wolf shall be a guest of the lamb... the calf and the young lion shall browse together, with a little child to guide them"* (11:6).

The Scriptures describe **heaven as perfect love** – not only for God and for those in heaven, but also for us here on earth. Asking Mary, St. Jude, or anyone else in heaven to pray for us isn't "replacing Jesus." They pray in the name of Jesus and by His power, just as we do.

St. James says, *"The fervent prayer of a righteous person is very powerful"* (5:16).

God hears everyone's prayers, but when our hearts are more like His, He moves even more powerfully through them. Those in heaven are perfectly righteous.

Peace, joy, love, truth. Love for God. Love for our neighbor as ourselves. We were made for these. We can experience them on earth, but in heaven they are perfect.

Heaven is beyond everything we can imagine. We cannot fully picture a world of perfect, eternal love. We cannot fully imagine an encounter with God that never ends or is never clouded by doubt, busyness, or sin.

Whatever greatness we can conceive, heaven is infinitely greater. The fullness of the Eternal Trinity, the glory of God, all things transformed in perfect, eternal love.

Jesus and the New Testament are very clear: the way we spend our lives on earth is directly connected to how we will spend eternity. There are **two destinations. Only two.**

So now we must consider what Jesus and the New Testament teach about Hell.

Hell is the opposite of heaven. It is being alive for all eternity with the absence, and the opposite of everything good we were created to be. There is no joy, love, peace, or truth, and no hope of ever experiencing them.

The soul in hell **committed grave sins knowingly and freely and refused to ask for forgiveness** while on earth. This is an essential point: a person doesn't go to hell because they did terrible things; they go to hell because they **refused to repent and trust in the mercy of God.**

While hell is suffering, what makes it hell is that it's **eternal**. There is no hope that a soul there will ever leave it.

Even in our worst moments on earth, for ourselves or for our world, **we are not in hell. Why?** Because on earth, there is always hope for good to come from evil, and hope for the eternal life of heaven.

So, if there are only two destinations – heaven or hell –

What about Purgatory?

Purgatory – the Christian belief about a state of being purified after death, in preparation for heaven. We can say “place” and mean “state of being.”

During Purgatory, someone has already died and is on their way to heaven. These are souls that did not altogether refuse the mercy of God or the call of love and repentance here on earth. However, there are still things that need conversion or healing **before they can enter heaven.**

So, Purgatory isn't a **“Third Option.”** They are definitely going to heaven. But it's like **summer school before the student can graduate.** They've done generally well enough to receive the diploma, but they need a few more history lessons before they add graduation to their resume.

There is purification on earth, and plenty of it. The Lord is always working on earth to purge us of anything that would keep us out of heaven.

Here is one of the main differences (*besides the obvious*): on earth, we can still choose to reject God and His help. We still have a daily choice to follow His way and trust His mercy.

With Purgatory, there is no turning back. The soul is being purified of selfishness, the desire for sin, or fear, but they will never fall prey to these again.

This is why we pray for them! We don't pray that they'll stay out of hell. That's already been decided (*again, they're on their way to heaven*).

We pray and offer sacrifices for them as an act of charity, that they would enter the glory of eternal joy. All of this affects our lives on earth in every way.

Here are a few:

One of the most obvious ways is **Jesus' clear teaching**: our lives on earth influence where we spend eternity. We are called to be faithful to Jesus. We are called to repent well when we are not. How we do this will point us in the direction of either heaven or hell.

Another way is in suffering. **On earth, there is always the cross**, for everyone. One of the most difficult things about suffering is the temptation to think that it will never end, that there is no meaning behind it, or that our sacrifices have been in vain.

Jesus Christ gives us hope and comfort even in earthly suffering. But He gives the greatest hope in His promise of heaven: perfect and without pain or tears.

The promise of heaven doesn't make suffering go away on earth, but it extracts the poison of despair, cynicism, and crippling fear. It infuses every part of our lives with hope and confidence in the work of the Lord.

The reality of **eternal life** gives us zeal for virtue, repentance, and **trust in the mercy of God**. Let us embrace it, see heaven as our true goal and perfect home. Let us live our lives in the hope of living forever, together with the countless others in heaven, with our loving, Triune God.

“And this is the promise that he made us: eternal life.”

Peace,

Fr. John

Saint Teresa of Avila: What Souls in Heaven See of Their Loved Ones on Earth

by Ellen Dumer, LCPC



In moments of grief, many wonder whether departed loved ones still see our tears, hear our prayers, or feel our love. Saint Teresa of Avila, in *The Interior Castle*, and her letters, taught that souls united with God share in His divine light and knowledge. Once in heaven, they see reality through God's eternal perspective—not as distant spectators, but as participants in His loving concern for those on earth.

The blessed in heaven enjoy the Beatific Vision, beholding God face to face. In that vision, they remain aware of earthly realities, perceiving our lives through divine understanding rather than human emotion. Teresa wrote that "the soul that loves truly in God never loses its connection with those it cherishes." Their love, purified by grace, becomes stronger and more effective than before.

Souls in heaven intercede for us continually. Teresa described them as laboring for our salvation, presenting our needs before God "with an efficacy we cannot imagine." When doors open unexpectedly, when comfort or strength arrives unbidden, these may be fruits of their intercession. Their prayers, united perfectly with God's will, have immense power—far beyond anything possible on earth.

Teresa compared the soul in divine union to a clear crystal reflecting God's light. Such souls perceive our deepest needs, seeing the spiritual growth that trials bring and the eternal purpose behind every joy and sorrow. They see our prayers as fragrant offerings before God and our tears as sacred sacrifices. What we view as chaos or defeat, they perceive as part of a divine masterpiece of love and redemption.

The saints and our departed loved ones recognize not only our struggles but also our hidden

victories—the quiet acts of forgiveness, faith, and compassion that may go unnoticed by others. Teresa affirmed that "the smallest act of pure love on earth creates rejoicing in heaven." This communion is more intimate than any earthly conversation, for it is rooted in God's own love.

Teresa's mystical theology and the Catholic doctrine of the Communion of Saints (CCC 946-948) reveal that death transforms, rather than ends, our relationships. Those who once loved us now love with the infinite love of God Himself. They continue to accompany, guide, and intercede for us as we journey toward eternal union.

When you feel alone, remember her words: "What appears to be separation is actually the deepest form of spiritual union." Your loved ones are not lost. They remain your advocates and companions, now living in the radiant light of God's eternal love.

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Stewardship of Life and Legacy

As Catholics, we are called to see everything we have, our time, talents, and treasures, as gifts from God. Estate planning is more than paperwork. It is an act of stewardship, love, and faith. By preparing now, we provide for our families, honor our Church's teachings, and witness to hope in eternal life.

Why Estate Planning Matters

Without a plan, the state decides how your assets are distributed. A will ensures your intentions are carried out, providing clarity for loved ones and peace of mind for you. A living will and medical directives communicate how you want to be cared for in times of illness, ensuring your dignity is preserved in harmony with Catholic moral teaching.

Making Faithful Choices

- **Wills & Living Wills** protect your loved ones, clearly expressing your values and last wishes.
- **End-of-Life Decisions**, such as ordinary care (*food, water, pain relief*) must be provided, but burdensome or extraordinary measures are not required when they only prolong suffering without hope of recovery.
- **Power of Attorney (POA / Medical POA)** names trusted individuals to handle financial or medical decisions if you are unable, with guidance rooted in your Catholic faith.



A Legacy of Faith

Your estate plan can reflect more than finances. It can pass on your Catholic witness. Consider including charitable gifts to your parish, Catholic schools, or ministries. Leave instructions for Catholic burial rites. Write an "ethical will" or legacy letter to share your faith story and encourage your children and grandchildren.

The Catholic Difference

Catholic estate planning is not just about securing assets, it is about preparing the heart. We make these plans knowing that life is a pilgrimage, and death is a doorway to eternal life. In leaving a faithful plan, we care for our families and strengthen the mission of the Church.

“*Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain wisdom of heart.*”

– Psalm 90:12

Planning today is an act of trust in God's providence and a gift of love for those who follow after us.

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Our 9th-grade and high school students braved the high ropes course, cheering each other on through every challenge. The retreat was a joyful mix of faith, courage, and teamwork! The adventure reminded them that God is always with us, even when the path is high and uncertain.



We gathered for an Opening Mass with our Faith Formation students to begin the 2025-2026 school year, asking God's blessing on their studies and growth in faith.



OCTOBER IN REVIEW



The Care Ministry hosted a Tea, filling the hall with conversation and delicious treats. With their thoughtful hospitality and dedication, the afternoon became more than just tea; it was a beautiful way to share fellowship and strengthen the bonds of our parish family.



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Deacon Phil led the Blessing of the Animals, bringing families and their beloved pets together for a fun morning of prayer and gratitude. With wagging tails and gentle purrs, the event celebrated the joy of God's creation.



The Knights and Bethany Team hosted the second annual Family Basket Bingo with good food, prizes, and fellowship. The hard work and hospitality of these ministries made it more than a game; it was a joyful way to bring our parish family and community together. Special thanks to the Belles for the delicious desserts!



Our parish hall came alive once again with a little friendly competition at this month's Bingo and Luncheon. From sharing a meal to celebrating winners, it was a wonderful way to spend time together with our bingo friends.



The Boy Scouts conduct a respectful Flag Retirement Ceremony, honoring the symbol of our nation.



Stitches of Service: Volunteers gathered for the Belles Sewing Day to create with love, laughter, and purpose.



Trick-or-treaters came for our annual Trunk 'N' Treat, where decorated cars, costumes, candy, and games made for a fun and festive evening. It was an awesome way to celebrate with our community.

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Many hands made light work as our Youth Group, Operation Christmas Child ministry, and Co-op families came together to pack 97 shoeboxes filled with love, sharing Christ's joy with children around the world.



QUESTION OF FAITH



The Angels and Saints are praying for us?
What does that mean?

We ask each other to pray for our intentions, and we also ask Jesus directly for those same intentions. We don't stop asking for prayers just because we're going to Jesus, and we certainly don't confuse Jesus with those who are praying for us.

In heaven, the angels and saints are aware of what is happening on earth. They are praying for God to act on earth and are taking on our prayers as their own.

Each of the elders held a harp and gold bowls filled with incense, which are the prayers of the holy ones [on earth].” — Revelation 5:8

“I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been killed because of the witness they bore to the word of God. They cried out in a loud voice, ‘How long will it be, holy and true Master, before you sit in judgment and avenge our blood on the inhabitants of the earth?’” — Revelation 6:10

“Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a gold censer. He was given a great quantity of incense to offer, along with the prayers of all the holy ones... The smoke of the incense, along with the prayers of the holy ones, went up before God from the hand of the angel.” — Revelation 8:1-2

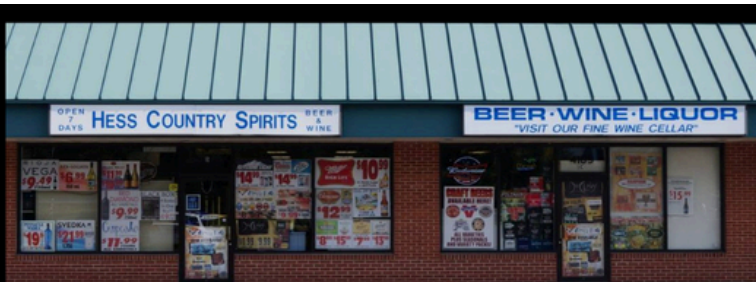
“Sometimes we hear a Catholic say, “I prayed to St. Anthony.” The word pray has different meanings, just like the word love. “I prayed to Jesus” means “I asked Him as my God.” “I prayed to a saint” means “I asked the saint to pray to Jesus for me.”

It's not “praying to the dead.” Those in heaven are more alive than we are! It's also not the sin of contacting the dead or spirits; we're not asking angels or saints to give us secret knowledge or to “get around” God or His ways.

We know that these angels and saints are in heaven and are perfectly one with the will of God.

St. James says, “The fervent prayer of a righteous person is very powerful.” If this is true for those on earth, how much more for those in heaven?

The Communion of Saints—the “holy ones”—is the union in Christ of those on earth, through Purgatory, and in heaven. God has made us one Body in Christ, and the members in heaven are offering perfect, powerful prayers for us.



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Time: 6PM

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Jim Edwards or Lee Surkin

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Salt and Light: Catholic Social Teaching and the Works of Mercy

The Corporal Work of Mercy: To Bury the Dead

The Works of Mercy are the main ways the Church follow Jesus' commands: *love your neighbor as yourself, love one another as I have loved you, and be merciful, as your Father is merciful.*

The 7 Corporal Works of Mercy are:

- Feed the Hungry
- Give Drink to the Thirsty
- Shelter the Homeless
- Visit the Sick
- Visit the Prisoner
- Bury the Dead

To Bury the Dead means to place the body of the deceased into a grave, columbarium, or mausoleum. It is rooted in Scripture and reverence for the body.

Jesus Christ truly died in the flesh and was buried. He was given a grave, and His Body was shown reverence and cared for with perfume and oil.

Jesus rose in the flesh. He was not a ghost or a kind of shadow. He ate in front of the disciples and invited them to touch His hands and feet. In one of the Gospels' great moments of faith, He brings the hand of Thomas to touch His side.

We follow the Lord in death and burial. At the end of time, we will rise in the flesh in glorified bodies, like Him.

This Work of Mercy is:

- an act of faith that, while we humans are part of creation, we are made in the image and likeness of God, unique in all creation with spirit and flesh.
- an act of mercy that says, "for whatever sins or weaknesses you had on earth, you are still worthy of reverence and hope."
- an act of mercy for those who mourn, treating the body that they loved with reverence, and giving them a place to come to grieve and hope.

What about those who die in a way that they cannot be buried in a grave, columbarium, or mausoleum? We are called to remember and revere them as best as we can, even as the norm remains a true burial. The Resurrection will be a miraculous event, no matter how a person dies.

The Almighty God knows all and will renew all of His creation, especially the human person. To bury the dead is an act of mercy, reverence, and faith.

"Our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will change our lowly bodies to conform with his glorified body."

- Philippians 3:20-21

"Having bought a linen cloth, Joseph of Arimathea took the body of Jesus down, wrapped him in the linen cloth, and laid him in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance to the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus watched where he was laid."

- Mark 15:46-47



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ST. PIER GIROGIO FRASSATI

By Rayma Young

St. Pier Girogio Frassati was born in Italy in 1901. He is called the laughing saint. He was canonized on September 7, 2025, and we celebrate his feast day on July 4.

During his lifetime, Pier laughed a lot and sang all the time. He loved hiking, and his favorite place was the mountains. His motto was "to the heights," or in Italian, "verso l'alto!"

Pier also enjoyed singing while horseback riding, which made his friends all share an explosion of joy.

His parents wanted him to go to college and earn a lot of money and not "waste time on church." But Pier had other goals. He loved to care for other people. Pier often visited the poor and lonely and brought food to the hungry.

One day, coming home from Mass, he gave his bus fare to some poor people and then ran home. Pier helped the poor when they were sick, even if it meant risking his own life!

Pier got very sick and died on July 4th, 1925, when he was only 24 years old.

St. Pier, pray for us!

Decode the Emojis











Key

Prayer and the Spirit Connect Us God’s Word Reveals His Plan
Heaven Is Peace with God Salvation Is a Gift, Not a Prize
Jesus Is the Door to Heaven



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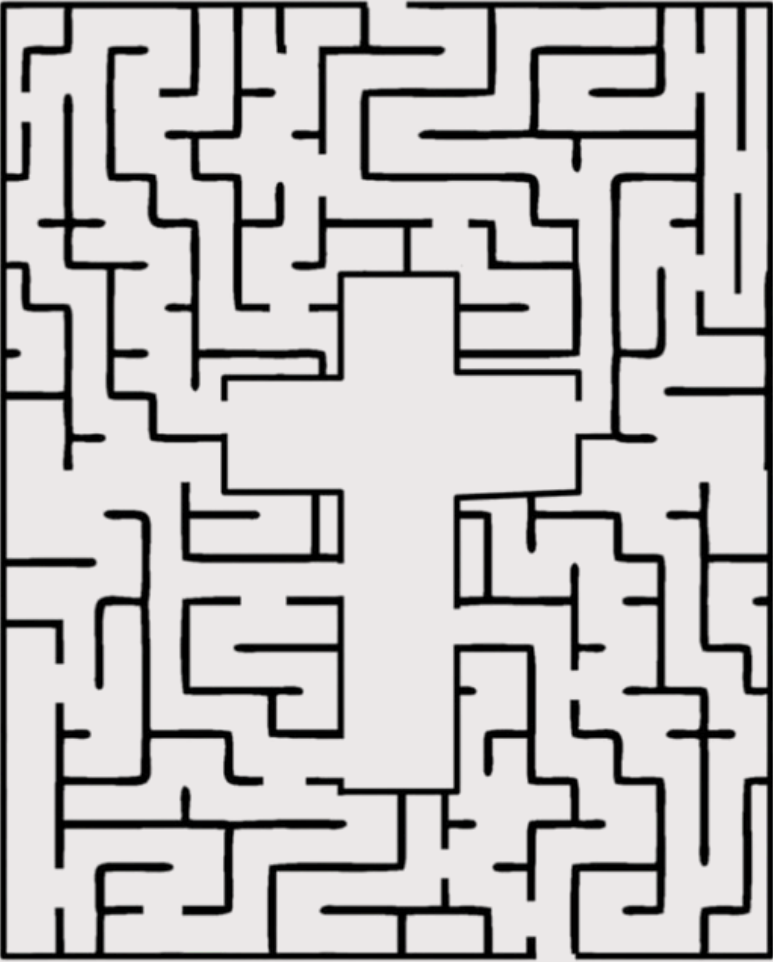
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Answers

1. God's Word Reveals His Plan 2. Jesus Is the Door to Heaven 3. Heaven Is Peace with God 4. Prayer and the Spirit Connect Us 5. Salvation Is a Gift, Not a Prize

From Fisherman to Foundation: The Beginnings of Our Catholic Faith



Have you ever wondered where our Catholic faith came from? You were likely taught by your parents, grandparents, and teachers, but our faith is much older than them!

In this series, we'll explore the origins of the traditions and teachings that have shaped our Catholic faith, and how that faith has spread to more than 1.3 billion people around the world today. Through the lives of the saints, we will trace the movement of the Holy Spirit throughout our Church's history.

Our Church was founded by Jesus Christ himself (Matthew 16:18-19). Together we'll learn about our deep and fascinating history: Church persecutions and the martyrs, the papacy and monasteries, the assembly of the Bible, the celebration of our seven sacraments, and more.

Time and again, God has used ordinary people to reveal His heart to the world.

We begin in the **Apostolic Age (33-100 AD)**, named after the apostles and their faithful work. This includes Paul, Luke, Timothy, and a host of others found in the New Testament. This era began with Pentecost and ended with the death of the last Apostle, St. John, around the year 100.

During this time, under the Emperor Nero in 67 AD, there began a series of Ten Persecutions of the Church, with the last under the Emperor Diocletian (d.305). In these, Rome fiercely persecuted Christians, outlawing the faith and torturing or killing those who refused to renounce their beliefs. Yet the steadfast witness of early martyrs such as Saints Perpetua, Felicity, and Lawrence inspired conversion and baptism, propelling Christianity forward.

After the **Apostolic Age**, we enter the **Patristic Era**, or different periods of the Church Fathers. The first of these, called the Apostolic Fathers, were the ones who were trained by the Apostles and carried on what they received from the Lord. These included Saints Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp, and Justin Martyr - they taught with authority, defined Church doctrine, and refuted heresy (*false teaching*).

After this is the *Ante-Nicene Fathers* ("before Nicaea," the Church Council held in 325). Among the Catholic heroes during this period are Saints Cecilia, Agnes, Lawrence the Deacon, and Anthony the Great. One saint that stands between this era and the next is the bishop Saint Nicholas: defender of the Gospel, giver of anonymous gifts, and protector of children - later known by his Dutch name *Sinter Klaus* or *Santa Claus*.

One of the greatest saints in this whole era is also one of the first: St. Peter. Peter arrived in Rome about fifteen years after Christ's Ascension and led the early Church from there. St. Peter was many things: faithful, flawed, prayerful, and deeply devoted. As the first Bishop of Rome (the papacy), he began an unbroken line of leaders that continues all the way to Pope Leo XIV today. Peter, originally named Simon, was the first to recognize Jesus as the Messiah and to believe in His divine power (Matthew 16:16).

When the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water, Peter stepped out of the boat and walked toward Him, a powerful testament to his faith (Matthew 14:28-31).

Yet Peter struggled, just as we do. He famously denied knowing Jesus on the night before the Crucifixion (Luke 22:56-62). His failure reminds us that we all depend on the saving power of Jesus and the grace of the sacraments.

When the Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost, Peter was the first to preach the Good News (Acts 2:1-4, 14-41). He fulfilled Jesus's command to "feed my sheep" (John 21:17), preaching, baptizing, celebrating Mass, and ordaining priests throughout Jerusalem, Antioch, and Rome, making disciples of all nations.

Peter, the humble fisherman turned fisher of men, ultimately gave his life for the faith. He was crucified, as Christ was, on the very spot where St. Peter's Basilica stands today. Through his leadership and martyrdom, Peter established Christ's Church in Rome and set the foundation for the papacy, which endures to this day.

St. Peter, pray for us!

Top 10 Catholic Truths About End of Life & Eternal Life

(You'll Thank Us Later)

1. Death = Graduation Day.

Forget tassels. This is the ultimate "cap and gown" moment, and Jesus hands out the diplomas.

2. Heaven is not a boring harp concert.

It's the biggest family reunion ever (and yes, there's food – we're Catholic).

3. Purgatory is God's holy spa.

It's less "eternal punishment" and more "deep cleanse before the party."

4. Cemeteries are basically Catholic dorms.

Everyone's waiting for Resurrection Morning check-out.

5. Funeral incense = Heavenly air freshener.

Because even our prayers smell good.

6. Saints are the original "Squad Goals."

They're already in Heaven, and they're rooting for us to join them.

7. Eternal life isn't someday—it's already started.

Spoiler alert: you're in it now.

8. Holy Water = Baptism Bookends.

The Church dunks you at the start and sprinkles you at the finish line.

9. Death has been officially defeated.

(Jesus: 1, Death: 0. Final score. No rematch scheduled.)

10. The Last Word is LOVE.

Not Netflix, not taxes, not even doomscrolling. Just Love – forever.

Follow Us!



Catholic Apologetics

Why Funerals and Catholic Burial in Holy Ground Matter

In our culture of convenience, even death can become detached from its sacred meaning. Memorials may be virtual, ashes scattered on a favorite beach, and remembrance compressed into a slideshow. Yet the Catholic Church holds firm: our bodies, created by God and temples of the Holy Spirit, deserve to be laid to rest in consecrated ground.

Holy ground is not just soil. It is land blessed and set apart, a visible sign that death is held within the embrace of Christ and His Church. To be buried in a Catholic cemetery (or placed in a mausoleum or columbarium) is to rest among the faithful, awaiting the Resurrection with the communion of saints. It is an act of belonging, both to God's family and to His promise of eternal life.

The Church asks that even cremated remains be placed in sacred ground, because scattering diminishes the sign of hope in the Resurrection. Burial is not simply disposal; it is a witness. It proclaims that this life mattered, that this body will rise again, and that Christ has the final word over death.

For the grieving, holy ground is also a place of encounter. Families return to pray, to remember, to place flowers as gestures of love that continues beyond the grave. Catholic cemeteries are not places of despair but fields of hope, planted with the promise of new life in Christ.

"Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." - John 12:24

In the end, Catholic burial is not only about where we are laid to rest but about what we believe: that in Christ, the grave is not the end but the beginning of forever.



"To bury the dead in holy ground is to proclaim: this life mattered, this body will rise again."



2745 Fallston Rd.
Fallston, MD 21047

410-692-5200

Around the Archdiocese



Immaculate Conception Church, Towson, MD
Registration Opens in August 1



Faith Love & Hope
The Path to Christ

Save the Date
SATURDAY | NOVEMBER 8, 2025
7:00am-3:30pm

Catholic Speakers | 8:00am Mass
Adoration | Confession | Breakfast & Lunch
Vendors & Ministry Tables

Volunteers Needed!
MarylandCatholicWomen.com

SLEEPY HOLLOW FALL FESTIVAL



November 9, 2025 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

FOOD

Grilled Cheese Please
Burgers
Traditional Tacos
Craft Cocktails
Coffee & Tea
Bake Sale

FAITH

Prayer
Fireside Chats
Music
Folklore

FUN

NFL Zone
Touch A Truck
Arts & Crafts
Petting Zoo
Fairy Hair
Live Music

Holy Family Catholic Community
7321 Burkittsville Road, Middletown, MD 21769

Funeral Planning: Practical and Prayerful Preparation

November 16 @ 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm EST

This workshop will equip you with practical and prayerful preparation guidelines to help make end-of-life decisions while honoring our faith, and easing the burden on our loved ones.

OLPHParish.org



Advent Market Celebration



Saturday, November 22
St. John the Evangelist

11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Advent Wreaths
Handmade crafts
Artisan vendors
Live music and Caroling
Food trucks
Kids crafts
Petting zoo
Pony rides
Santa!

Annual Blessing and Lighting of the Parish Christmas Tree

December 06

After the 4 pm Mass

Join us at the front of the Parish property, then join us for the kick-off of our Christmas Light Display. Refreshments in the Youth Room. Grab a seasonal beverage and some cookies, walk through the displays, get into the festive spirit!

Sponsored by St. Mary's Youth Ministry, K of C, and the Bethany Team.



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A LOOK AHEAD

NOV



1

1st Saturday Grief Support Group

Held in the Conference room. This group provides a safe and welcoming church atmosphere for those grieving.

10 am



4

Monthly Bingo / Luncheon

BINGO! A Harford County tradition on 1st Tuesdays.

Admission includes lunch.

Doors open 9:30 am, games begin 11:00 am



8

Belles Craft Show

Beat the rush and shop early. Browse our crafters and enjoy homemade, treats, and more from local makers.

9 am - 2 pm



13

St. Mary's Blood Drive

To schedule a time, visit redcrossblood.org and sign up for zip code 21132 or call Darlene at 410-404-8583

12:30 - 5:00 pm



15

Care Ministry Anointing of the Sick Mass and Luncheon

Luncheon to follow after Mass, in the hall. Please RSVP by call or text to Pauline at 410-937-7647

11 am



23

K of C Annual Turkey Shoot

Take your chance at winning a turkey, ham or shrimp just in time for the holidays! Food, prizes, and family-friendly fun awaits. All are welcome!

11 am - 3 pm



23

Fall-themed Guided Paint Afternoon

For anyone 6th grader and older, come enjoy a relaxing afternoon, no painting experience necessary!

1:30 - 3:30 pm



30

Advent Fair

Make your Advent wreath, enjoy breakfast, and welcome a special visit from St. Nick.

After Masses
9 am - 12 pm



**Christmas Items
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In stock now: Advent candles, Nativity sets, Holy Family statues, Christmas ornaments, children's Christmas books, Jesse Tree kits, devotional books, rosaries & medals, saint candles, and locally crafted gifts.

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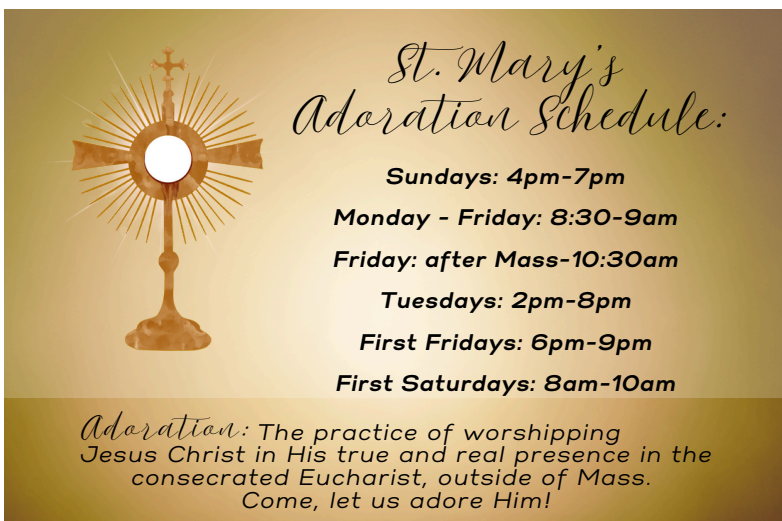
Visit us after Mass or during parish events and support your church community.

Saint Mary's
Assumption
Religious Gifts & Books

Editor's Note – Correction and Apology

We extend our apologies to our readers and to author Gregory Mank for the editing errors that appeared in his movie review of *Going My Way* in last month's edition. The corrected version can be found in the digital edition of *The Messenger*, available at <https://stmaryspylesville.org/>.

– The Editorial Team



*St. Mary's
Adoration Schedule:*

Sundays: 4pm-7pm
Monday - Friday: 8:30-9am
Friday: after Mass-10:30am
Tuesdays: 2pm-8pm
First Fridays: 6pm-9pm
First Saturdays: 8am-10am

Adoration: The practice of worshipping Jesus Christ in His true and real presence in the consecrated Eucharist, outside of Mass. Come, let us adore Him!

Prayer for the Faithful Departed

*Eternal rest grant unto them,
O Lord, and let perpetual light shine
upon them. May they rest in peace.
Amen.*

*May their souls, and the souls
of all the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God,
rest in peace.
Amen.*

PARISH HELP WANTED



SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

We are in the beginning planning stages of creating a small group ministry. If you are interested in being a part of the planning and/or are interested in leading a small group, please contact
Christy@stmaryspylesville.org



BABY SITTERS

Seeking babysitters age 14+ who are Red Cross Babysitting/CPR certified and looking for jobs. Parents seeking sitters, please let me know your needs. I'll build a connection list and introduce families and sitters.

Please contact: Trish Covelly
covellyt@zoominternet.net
Parent/guardian contact required for minors.



KITCHEN MINISTRY

Love to cook, serve, or just lend a hand? Our Kitchen Ministry is looking for volunteers to help with meal prep, serving, and cleanup for parish events. No experience needed. Contact Cheryl: clhstitching@yahoo.com

FIELD AVAILABLE



2.5-3 acre field that was previously used for pigs. We are looking to see if anyone would like to grow hay or something similar on it next year. If interested, please contact Mike: maschleupner@gmail.com



CHRISTMAS SEASON POINSETTIAS

Our Christmas Season poinsettias need some volunteers to care for them this year. The plants need daily checks to ensure proper water care. If you can help with this, contact Joy Fender. at jcfender2018@gmail.com



BULLETIN / THE MESSENGER SUBMISSION REQUEST



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