



ST. PETER'S CHURCH

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Liberty, NY 12754

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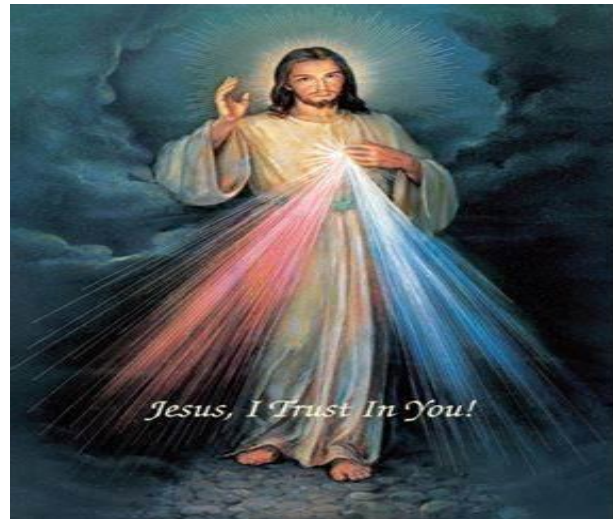
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April 16, 2023

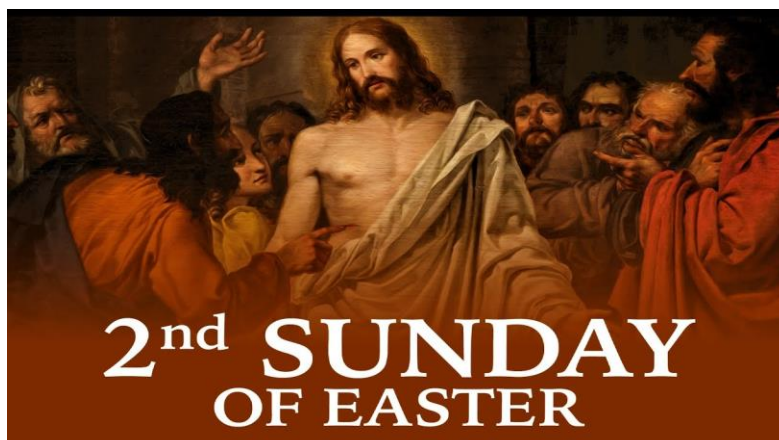
Second Sunday of Easter



LIVING OUR FAITH

Brothers and sisters, our Easter celebration continues! In today's first reading we hear about how the first disciples gathered to celebrate the resurrection. This is an image of our gathering within our parish communities. Like the first disciples we need each other to believe and to celebrate that belief. We are truly signs and wonders of Christ the risen Lord in the world. Catechumens came to faith because of others who were witnesses of the Lord. Even when we doubt, the witness of others strengthens our hope and renews the peace Christ promised.

Questions: *We often struggle to celebrate Easter as a full season in the same way we do with Lent. As we complete the Octave of Easter, how do you plan to continue to celebrate the resurrection? The first reading describes a community living in the aftermath of their immediate encounter with the risen Christ. How does our community compare?*





Faustina Kowalska: A prophet of God's mercy

St. Faustina reminds us that death implies resurrection and that judgment will be tempered with mercy.

JEANNINE M. PITAS

Often during Mass, I see the Lord in my soul; I feel His presence which pervades my being. I sense His divine gaze; I have long talks with Him without saying a word; I know what His divine heart desires, and I always do what will please Him the most. I love him to distraction, and I feel that I am being loved by God. At those times, when I meet with God deep within myself, I feel so happy that I do not know how to express it. Such moments are short, for the soul could not bear it long, as separation from the body would be inevitable. Though these moments are very short, their power, however, which is transmitted to the soul, remains with it for a very long time. Without the least effort, I experience the profound recollection which then envelopes me – and it does not diminish even if I talk with people nor does it interfere with the performance of my duties. I feel the constant presence of God without any effort of my soul. I know that I am united with Him as closely as a drop of water is united with the bottomless ocean.

It is due to St. Faustina Kowalska's spiritual conversations with Christ—recorded in her 600-page diary—that Catholics all over the world celebrate the Sunday after Easter as the Feast of Divine Mercy. It is because of her that we pray the Divine Mercy chaplet on rosary beads and look to the image of Divine Mercy for inspiration.

St. Faustina was born to a low-income family; chose to live a simple life of hard labor, prayer, and self-denial as a Sister of Our Lady of Mercy; and died at the age of 33. But her interior life was filled with passionate devotion and joy. "I want to be a thurible filled with hidden fire, and may the smoke rising you to You, O Living Host, be pleasing to you," Faustina wrote in her diary. "I feel in my own heart that every little sacrifice arouses the fire of my love for You, but in such a silent and secret way that no one will detect it."

I first learned of St. Faustina Kowalska when I was a teenager growing up in Buffalo, New York. After a wave of church closings, the beautiful St. Luke's, where my grandmother was baptized and married, was up for sale. Feeling a call to mercy, two Buffalonians—a restaurant owner named Amy Betros and a cancer researcher named Norm Paolini—decided to buy the building and transform it into a mission serving Buffalo's poorest, most marginalized people.

Since 1994 St. Luke's Mission of Mercy has opened its doors to all in need of food, shelter, companionship, and spiritual guidance. The church still houses an image of the Divine Mercy, a painting of Jesus with two rays of light emerging from his heart, and St. Faustina is the mission's unofficial patron.

Over the years I have spent many Good Fridays walking in St. Luke's yearly procession through the neighborhood, stopping at houses along the way to say a version of the rosary based on Faustina's diary. After years of hearing those same excerpts, I decided to read her writings in their entirety.

My initial reaction to Faustina's words was mixed. I was perplexed when I read of her ascetic practices, such as wearing a hairshirt or drastically limiting her food intake. It is hard to imagine leading the life she did. Moreover, our society leaves little room for the kind of visionary mysticism Faustina experienced.

Even during Faustina's time few understood her religious experience. Many of her sisters questioned her frequent illnesses, wondering if she was feigning them in order to avoid manual labor. They also doubted the verity of her visions.

If Faustina were alive today, it is likely that her visions and conversations with Christ would be labeled hallucinations; she would be hospitalized and perhaps prescribed a strong SSRI. If she failed the psychological assessment many of today's religious orders require, perhaps she would not have been allowed to enter religious life at all.

Having volunteered in a mental health hospital and cared for a loved one with psychosis, I have learned that the benchmark of one's mental health is an ability to function in society. Under our current capitalist system, this means being able to hold down a job and care for oneself.

But what if the society, rather than the individual, is ill?

This was certainly true of the times Faustina lived in, and she knew it. Although she never mentions Nazi Germany by name in her diary, she does express concern for Spain and communist Russia, countries that have abandoned God, and feels the need to pray constantly for Poland. Though she did not live to experience World War II, she seems to have had a strong premonition of it, feeling a need to spread the message of mercy before God returned in harsh judgment.

Moreover, some of her visions seem to prefigure Hitler's invasion of her country and the Holocaust. In 1937, she wrote, "Today, I saw how the liturgical mysteries were being celebrated without liturgical vestments in private homes, because of a passing storm; and I saw the sun come out from the Blessed Sacrament, and all the other lights went out, or rather, they were dimmed; and all the people were looking toward this [one] light." While she claimed not to know the meaning of this vision, some later came to see it as prefiguring the Nazi occupation, when Mass was celebrated secretly in private homes and eventually in concentration camps.

Unfortunately, the profundities of human cruelty made manifest during World War II still exist. Even those of us fortunate enough to live in countries where an authoritarian regime does not regularly assault our dignity still live and depend on systems that are inherently unjust and oppressive. It is no surprise to me that

mental health issues are rampant in the wealthy countries of the world. While we enjoy a high level of luxury, we also suffer a large degree of stress. The social bonds that once held us together—family, religion, civil society—are no longer as tight. Loneliness and isolation are rampant; fear is on the rise. Our society is indeed ill.

Well aware of the harsh reality her world was facing, Faustina was plagued by doubt and sometimes despair, but again and again she felt called to communicate God’s message of mercy, to be a “secretary” and faithfully write down all that God told her.

“From all My sounds, like from streams, mercy flows for souls, but the wound in My heart is the fountain of unfathomable mercy. From this fountain spring all graces for souls. The flames of compassion burn Me. I desire greatly to pour them out upon souls. Speak to the whole world about My mercy,” she writes. This is the message that Pope Francis took up in declaring 2016 a Year of Mercy.

We, living in a century that so far looks not much better than Faustina’s, are called to the same mercy. Let us find strength in the chaplet, in the image of Divine Mercy, in the Feast of Mercy on the Sunday after Easter. Let us maintain, like Faustina, a conviction that death implies resurrection and that judgment will be tempered with mercy.



Readings for this Weekend – April 16th

Acts 2:42-47
1 Pt 1:3-9
Jn 20:19-31

Readings for next Weekend – April 23rd

Acts 2:14, 22-33
1 Peter 1:17-21
Luke 24:13-35

Donations for last Weekend – Easter Sunday
\$5,830





LET US PRAY

We continue to pray for peace in the troubled areas of our world, for the people of the Ukraine and all those affected by the recent violence in our communities.

We join our Holy Father in his prayer intentions for
April 2023 –

For a **culture of peace and non-violence:** We pray for the spread of peace and non-violence, by decreasing the use of weapons by States and citizens.

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK AND THOSE IN NEED

If you would like to add a name to our prayer list, contact the Parish office. We kindly ask that you do not request a name to be included without the express consent of the person for whom you are requesting prayer. *We ask for prayer for Charles Thomas and ministry, Betty & Robert Friedland, Brian & Maria Cosgrove, Richard Rakin, Andrew Mikulski, Rod Baumert, Todd Conklin, Jean Van Lowe, John Fitzsimmons*

PRAYERS FOR THE DEARLY DEPARTED

We remember all our deceased family members, friends, and parishioners and in particular:

Gary Tempel, James Jensen, Bridget Hinkle, Det. Sgt. Frank Gualdino, Pope Benedict XVI, Arianna Toscano, Maureen Stiene, Louis Halvas, Kathryn Jones, Sister Kevin John Shields, OP, Anne Ferro, Stanley Brian Stewart, Mary Woods, John Ryan

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

In celebration of this special day, the Divine Mercy Chaplet will be prayed at 9:30am this Sunday, April 16th, in the Church.

Praying with Chant

A Gathering to Inspire and Renew a Life of Prayer



Date: Sunday April 30, 2023

Time: 1:00-2:30pm

Place: Saint Peter Catholic Church
262 North Main Street, Liberty, NY

“Chant deepens the very nature of prayer. It becomes the beat of the heart, the hope of the seeker. It is the etching of the Presence of God on the mind. It is the daily memory and promise of God’s presence that clasps two souls to one another: I in God, God in me.” ~ From *The Monastic Heart* by Sr Joan Chittister.

Praying with Chant, allows you to enter the monastery of your own heart and rest in the presence of the Divine.

The chants you will learn are musically simple, using only 3 to 4 tones. They are made accessible for the beginner and the untrained voice. Taught in a step-by-step manner, listen, and then repeat, chanting as a group, not alone and all in English.

During our time together there will be repetition of chants interspersed with periods of silence to experience chant as prayer, as meditation.

Each participant will receive (at no charge) the CD, *Doorway to Devotion A Contemplative Entry into Christian Prayer* by Jim Reale.

About the teacher:

Jim Reale has been teaching and composing chant for more than two decades. He has presented at national conferences with Fr Richard Rohr and Fr Thomas Keating.

“This [Doorway to Devotion] is the aid and the *practice* that we teachers of contemplative prayer need! For some wonderful reason, it often takes *sound* to lead us to the *Soundless*.”
Fr Richard Rohr, O.F.M.

PARISH MISSION AT ST. PETER'S IN MONTICELLO

As part of the current Eucharistic Revival, St. Peter's Church in Monticello will sponsor a Parish Mission led by Fr. Glenn Sudano, CFR, of Holy Family Farm, from April 24th -26th, 7-8 pm. The topics for each evening will be:

Monday: Who is Jesus?

Tuesday: Forgiveness and the Love of God (the opportunity to go to confession will be available afterwards).

Wednesday: The Healing Power of the Eucharist.

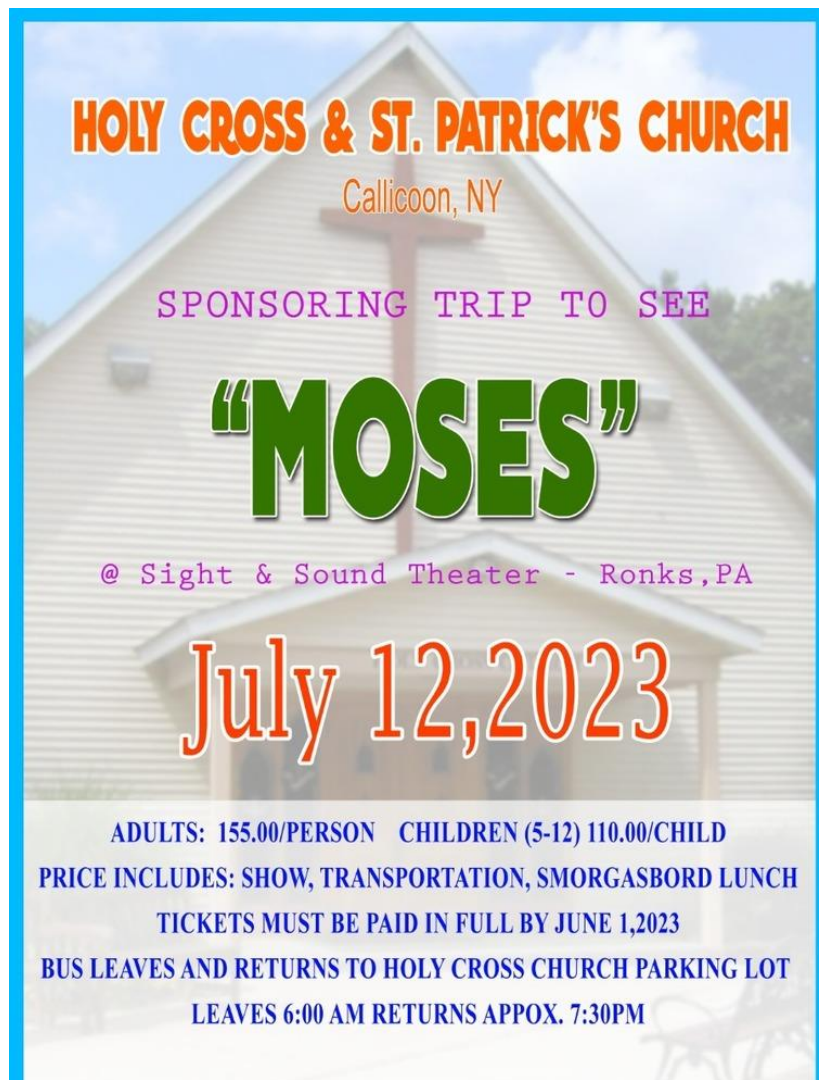
There is no charge, but baskets will be available for any free will offerings. Please come to any or all of these evening sessions as we each try to grow closer to our Lord, Jesus in His Eucharistic Presence.

All are welcome.

ST MARY'S AND ST ANDREW'S CHURCH-ELLENVILLE-TO HOST CARLO ACUTIS' EUCHARISTIC MIRACLES EXHIBIT

As part of the Eucharistic Revival, St. Mary's and St. Andrew's Church, Ellenville, NY, will host "Eucharistic Miracles of the World," an exhibit of miracles cataloged by Blessed Carlo Acutis. Carlo was an average Italian teen who enjoyed gaming, computer programming, and soccer; he was also a devoted Catholic whose love of Christ inspired him to catalog all of the known Eucharistic miracles of the world.

He died at age 15 after a short battle with leukemia and is now on the path to sainthood. The exhibit will run from **April 30-May 14**, open daily from 10 am-8 pm in the parish hall at 137 South Main St. Ellenville. The church will also be open for prayer. Visit www.smsaparish.org for a complete calendar of events, or call 845-647-6080.



HOLY CROSS & ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH
Callicoon, NY

SPONSORING TRIP TO SEE

"MOSES"

@ Sight & Sound Theater - Ronks, PA

July 12, 2023

ADULTS: 155.00/PERSON CHILDREN (5-12) 110.00/CHILD
PRICE INCLUDES: SHOW, TRANSPORTATION, SMORGASBORD LUNCH
TICKETS MUST BE PAID IN FULL BY JUNE 1, 2023
BUS LEAVES AND RETURNS TO HOLY CROSS CHURCH PARKING LOT
LEAVES 6:00 AM RETURNS APPROX. 7:30PM

OUR REGULAR WEEKEND MASS SCHEDULE:



Saturday evenings at 7 PM: *Mass in Spanish*

Sunday mornings at 10 AM: *Mass in English* **

Sunday evenings at 4:00 PM: *Mass in English*

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 8:30 AM: (*Mass in English*)

**We will continue to livestream our Sunday morning Mass on Facebook.

