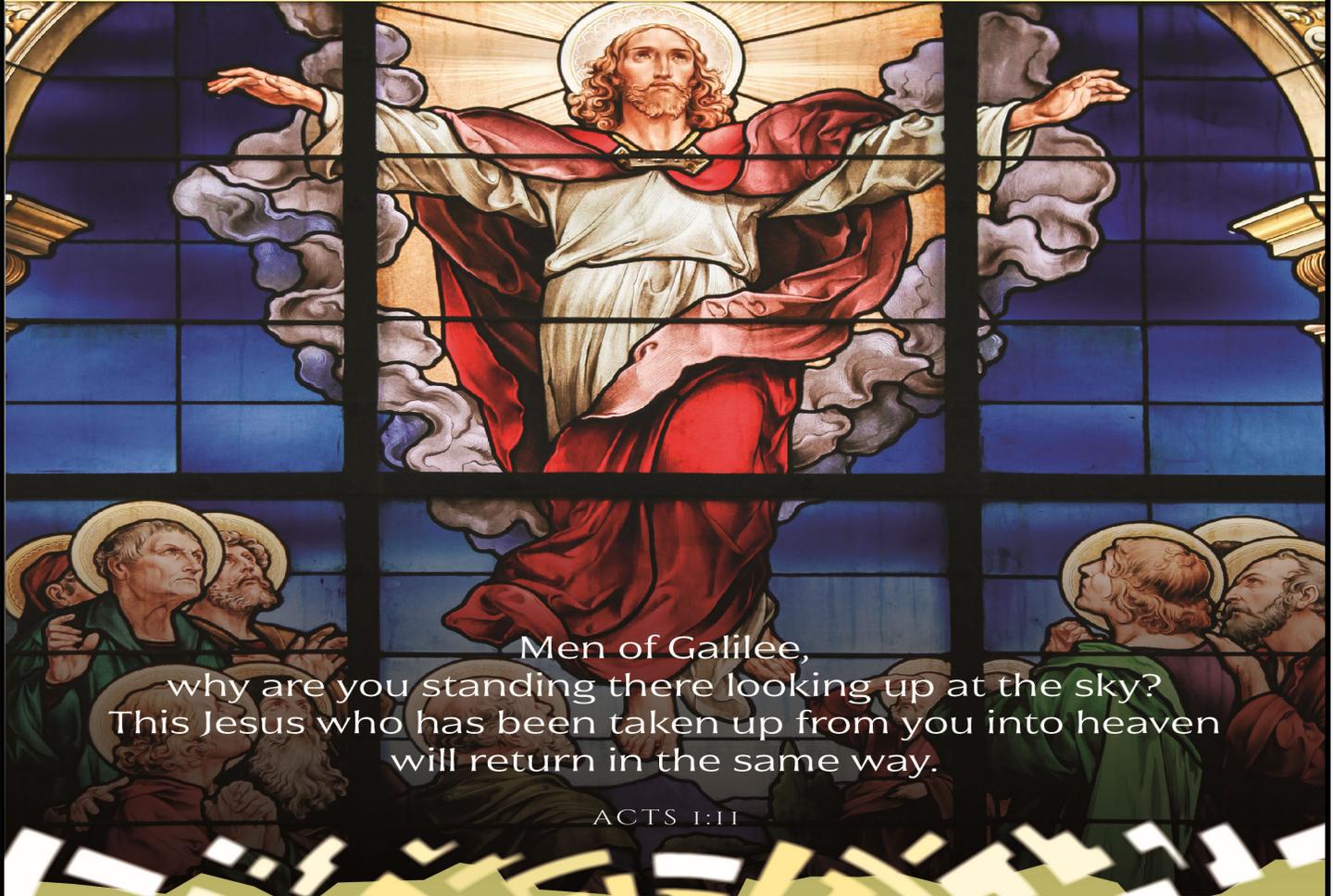


St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church
Martinez, California



Men of Galilee,
why are you standing there looking up at the sky?
This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven
will return in the same way.

ACTS 1:11

THE
ASCENSION
OF THE LORD

MAY 16, 2021

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LITURGY SCHEDULE

SATURDAY: 8:00 AM - INDOOR / LIVESTREAMED SATURDAY VIGIL MASS: 4:30 PM - INDOOR
SUNDAY: 8:30 AM - INDOOR / LIVESTREAMED
UPDATE: 10:00 AM - OUTDOOR MASS (Drive-thru Communion after Mass) 103.5 FM
1:00 PM - SPANISH MASS - INDOOR

ADORATION- TBD (Private Prayer available after weekday daily mass) Please call the office for access.

DAILY ROSARY: Monday - Saturday 7:30 AM

DAILY MASS: 8:00 AM - Indoor and Livestreamed

DIVINE MERCY CHAPLET: 8:30 AM

RECONCILIATION: 7:15- 7:45 AM Daily (M-F)

Saturday: 3:00-4:00 PM

PARISH & SCHOOL STAFF

PARISH OFFICE: (925) 228 - 2230
FAX: (925) 228 - 1318

Fr. Michael Nufable, Ext 6
Parochial Administrator
frmiken@stcmtz.org

CHURCH LOCATION:

606 Mellus Street, Martinez, CA

PARISH OFFICE/CENTER & MAILING ADDRESS:

1125 Ferry Street
Martinez, CA 94553-1720

PARISH WEBSITE: www.stcmtz.org

OFFICE HOURS: PLEASE CALL FOR APPOINTMENT
CLOSED ON WEEKENDS

Sylvia Lloren Ext. 1
Office Administrator/Sacramental Coordinator/
Communications
sylvial@stcmtz.org

Troy Killorn Ext. 3
Director of Music Ministry / Maintenance Manager
troyk@stcmtz.org

Karen Glen Ext. 4
Bookkeeper / Safe Environment Coordinator / RCIA
kareng@stcmtz.org

Andrea Watkins Ext. 5
Director Religious Education (K-8)
Family Sunday Faith Formation Ministry
andrea@stcmtz.org

Deacon Albert Dizon Ext. 7
dcnalbertd@stcmtz.org

Deacon David Holland Ext. 7
dcndaveh@stcmtz.org

Paul & Jennifer Holland Ext. 8
Co-coordinators, Confirmation Ministry
paulh@stcmtz.org & jennyh@stcmtz.org



ST. CATHERINE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Jessica Griswold, Principal
jgriswold@csdo.org

SCHOOL K-8: 604 Mellus Street,
Martinez, CA 94553

TELEPHONE: 925-228-4140

FAX: 925-228-0697

OFFICE HOURS: TBD

SCHOOL WEBSITE: <http://school.stcatherinemartinez.com>

ST. CATHERINE PRE-SCHOOL 925-229-2255

Mea Auld, Pre-School Director mauld@csdo.org
scpreschool@comcast.net

PRE-SCHOOL LOCATION: 1125 Ferry Street, Martinez, CA

SAFE ENVIRONMENT: Before serving or continuing in your
ministry or organization, please complete the Diocesan required Safe
Environment for Children Project Training @ www.virtusonline.org

COURTESY REMINDER

Please register your vehicle to park in the upper
parking lot. Vehicle registrations are intended for
you and your family to remain inside your vehicle.
Not for parking your car and sitting outside.

Thank you for understanding and cooperation.

Mass Schedule Update As of 5-4-2021
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
for Saturday Vigil and Sunday, Holy Masses

EFFECTIVE 5/16/2021

Due to the change of weather our 11 AM outdoor
Mass has been moved to 10 AM.

10:00 AM Sunday, Mass (Outdoor)

- Communion will continue to be provided for 15 minutes after the Mass in front of the church.
- Both Pedestrian and Vehicle registration available.

1:00 PM Sunday, Spanish Mass (Indoor)

Please continue to sign up via:

Eventbrite or on our Parish Website.

The link is also available through **MyParishApp**
message and/or our **Facebook** page.



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“Let’s stay connected” via one of our
many social media platforms:

Parish Website: www.stcmtz.org

Bulletin Submission email:

stcathmtz@yahoo.com

Submissions are due no later than 12PM
every Friday for the following Sunday.
Exception: Early Holiday Deadlines



Facebook:

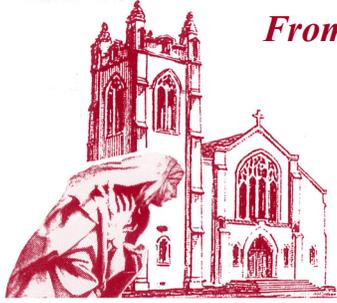
<https://OfficialStCatherineofSienaChurch>



MyParishapp:

Please download: **myparishapp** to your
phones.

- Step 1. Text App to number 88202.
- Step 2. Download the app via the link.
- Step 3. Search for St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Martinez.
- Step 4. Now stay connected!
- Step 5. Share with others, you know.
Go to the **menu**, click **share**, and choose
who you want to share!



From the Desk of the Parochial Administrator



The Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ be with you Brothers and Sisters,

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord, the account we heard in today’s Gospel: Then the Lord Jesus, after he spoke to them, was taken up into heaven and took his seat at the right hand of God. We celebrate knowing that where Jesus has gone, he is enabling us to go as well.

The first man to walk on the moon, Neil Armstrong famously said, “One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.” Although that step out of the spaceship was just one small step for him, it had fantastic significance for the human race. Neil Armstrong walking on the moon meant that others could walk on the moon.

As astonishing as Neil Armstrong’s action was, Jesus’ ascension into heaven is what truly has significance for all of humanity and creation. Through the fall of Adam and Eve, all of humanity was separated from God. But through Jesus’ life, passion, death, and resurrection, he paid the price for sin and enabled us to be in union with God through him. Through the Ascension, Jesus has made it possible for sinners like us to enter heaven and abide in God’s presence. Just as Neil Armstrong overcame limits, which allowed man to walk on the moon, so has Jesus overcome death, allowing us to reach heaven.

But this is no easy journey. Just as Neil Armstrong went through training, we require training, as it were, formed as disciples of Jesus Christ. In doing so, we become more like him and become more and more able to enter the glories of heaven. There is no chance we could ever accomplish this on our own – but we are not alone. Jesus has gone before us to show us the way and sent us the Holy Spirit to be our Helper and Paraclete.

It is the Holy Spirit who enables us to follow the command Jesus gives us before he ascends in today’s Gospel: Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature. We are his disciples, and he has shown us the way. Let us follow him with joy and thanksgiving.

Next week, we celebrate the Feast of Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit – marking the end of the Easter Season. I pray that these Easter weeks have been a solid spiritual “renewal” for you as we approach the Summer months. Thank you for praying with us today.

In Christ,
Fr. Mike

**"Day In and Day Out, For The Greater Glory of God"
"Life with Christ is a wonderful adventure" – St. Pope John Paul II.**

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**Go to internet and type <http://formed.org>
Enter our parish name and city.
Start enjoying on your phone or computer.**

SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

- Sunday: The Ascension of the Lord; World Communications Day; Shavuot (Jewish observance) begins at sundown
- Tuesday: St. John I
- Thursday: St. Bernardine of Siena; Julian Calendar Ascension
- Friday: St. Christopher Magellanes and Companions
- Saturday: St. Rita of Cascia; Vigil of Pentecost

**The Ascension of the Lord
May 16, 2021**

Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved.
— *Mark 16:16*

St. Catherine of Siena Parish follows Jesus by welcoming all, sharing our gifts, and giving glory to God.



THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

Entrance: Alleluia! Sing to Jesus
HYFRYDOL

1. Alleluia! sing to Jesus! His the scepter, his the throne; Alleluia! his the triumph, His the victory alone; Hark! the songs of peaceful Zion Thunder like a mighty flood; Jesus out of ev'ry nation Has redeemed us by his blood.

5. Alleluia! Alleluia! Glory be to God on high; Alleluia to the Savior Who has won the victory; Alleluia to the Spirit, Font of love and sanctity; Alleluia! Alleluia! To the triune majesty.

Text: 87 87 D; based on Revelation 5:9-14; William C. Dix, 1837-1898, and Compilers. Music: Rowland H. Prichard, 1811-1887.

Penitential Act:

Glory to God in the Highest...

First Reading: Acts 1: 1-11 (58B)

In the first book, Theophilus, I dealt with all that Jesus did and taught until the day he was taken up, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. He presented himself alive to them by many proofs after he had suffered, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While meeting with them, he enjoined them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for "the promise of the Father about which you have heard me speak; for John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." When they had gathered together they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" He answered them, "It is not for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has established by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." While they were looking intently at the sky as he was going, suddenly two men dressed in white garments stood beside them. They said, "Men of Galilee, why are you standing there looking at the sky?"

This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will return in the same way as you have seen him going into heaven."

Responsorial Psalm: 98:1, 2-3, 3-4
R. God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets foe the Lord.

Second Reading Ephesians 4: 1-13

Brothers and sisters, I, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace: one body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore, it says:

He ascended on high and took prisoners captive; he gave gifts to men.

What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended into the lower regions of the earth? The one who descended is also the one who ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things. And he gave some as apostles, others as prophets, others as evangelists, others as pastors and teachers, to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to mature to manhood, to the extent of the full stature of Christ.

Gospel Acclamation: John 14:23

R: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia
Whoever loves me will keep my word, says the Lord, and my Father will love him and we will come to him. **R: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia**

Gospel

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

Mark 16:15-20

Jesus said to his disciples:

“Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned. These signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will drive out demons, they will speak new languages. They will pick up serpents with their hands, and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not harm them.

They will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.” So then the Lord Jesus, after he spoke to them, was taken up into heaven and took his seat at the right hand of God. But they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the word through accompanying signs.

Profession of Faith

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,

(At the words that follow, up to and including "and became man," all bow)

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and
the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored
and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.
I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Presentation of the Gifts:

One Sacrifice of Christ
Rick Modlin / Robert Feduccia

1. One sacrifice of Christ, one throne above the heavens. Christ has risen as he said, and will come to wake the dead. Christ will return to set us free. One sacrifice of love, one message for the nations: Jesus suffered, died and rose, and ascended to the throne. Christ will return to save the world.
2. One gaze we lift above, where Love was drawn to heaven. We stand watchful through the night for our King to come in light, heirs to the glory of the Lamb. One mighty Word of truth: Christ did arise in triumph. Now he sits upon the throne; God's right hand is he alone. Christ reigns in splendor over all.
3. One banquet richly set for all God's holy people. We will dine in joy and peace, and our song will never cease, praising the Lamb upon the throne. One shout of joy we raise, one voice in exaltation. For in glory Christ has gone, and in hope we now are drawn to one sacrifice of Christ, one sacrifice of Christ.

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The Liturgy of the Eucharist

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are Full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We Proclaim your death O Lord, and profess your resurrection until you come again.

**Great Amen
The Lord's Prayer / Sign of Peace
Lamb of God**

**Communion:
Lord, I am not worthy
That you should enter under my roof,
But only say the word
And my soul shall be healed**

Communion: Bread of Life Bernadette Farrell
Refrain:

Bread of life, hope of the world, Jesus Christ, our brother: feed us now, give us life, lead us to one another.

1. As we proclaim your death, as we recall your life, we remember your promise, to return again.
2. The bread we break and share was scattered once as grain: just as now it is gathered, make your people one.

3. We eat this living bread, we drink this saving cup: sign of hope in our broken world, source of lasting love.
4. Hold us in unity, in love for all to see;
that the world may believe in you, God of all who live.
5. You are the bread of peace, you are the wine of joy, broken now for your people,
poured in endless love.

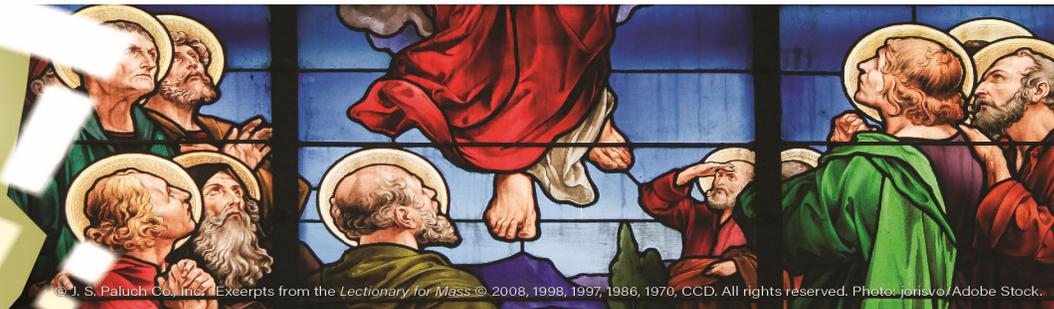
© 1982, Bernadette Farrell. Published by OCP. All rights reserved.

Sending: Go Make of All Disciples ELLACOMBE

1. "Go make of all disciples:" We hear the call, O Lord, That comes from you, our Father, In your eternal Word.
Inspire our ways of learning Through earnest, fervent prayer, And let our daily living Reveal you everywhere.

Men of Galilee, why
are you standing there
looking up at the sky?
This Jesus who has been
taken up from you
into heaven
will return in the
same way.

ACTS 1:11



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THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD
 MAY 16, 2021

THE CENTRAL MYSTERIES

Throughout the season of Easter, we ponder the mysteries that are central to our faith in Jesus Christ. We reflect on Jesus’ life, ministry, passion, death, and resurrection and consider the meaning of Christ’s life and love. Today we celebrate Jesus’ ascension and wonder with the apostles what we are to do and how we are to live as a result. As disciples, we are called to put our faith into action, grow to be more like the Lord, be united with other believers in community, and bring others to Christ through the way we live our lives. In so doing, we will live a life worthy of our call in Christ, a life of unity in the Spirit, of hope and peace.

WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AT THE SKY?

“Why are you standing there looking at the sky?” We can only imagine the apostles’ astonishment, not only at Jesus’ ascension, but at the message from the men in white garments who appeared at that very moment. Jesus had been crucified and died, rose from the dead and spent time with them, teaching them to understand how he had fulfilled all that had been written about the Messiah, and suddenly, he was taken up to heaven. Surely they would have wondered what was happening and what the meaning of Jesus’ ascension was. We wonder with them. What does Jesus’ ascension call us to be or do? We rely on the testimony of those who were with Jesus to grasp the mystery of his life, death, resurrection, and ascension. Their witness calls us to believe in Jesus, grow in relationship with him, and live as his disciples in the world.

YOU HAVE SEEN AND HEARD, NOW GO DO

It isn’t enough to say we believe in Jesus. We are called to live as members of Christ’s body and share the joy of faith with others. We do this by discerning and fulfilling our vocation, the ways in which God calls each of us to live. Often when we think of vocation, the first thing that comes to mind is the priesthood. But each of us experience vocational calls, to our state in life and to the ways in which we live, work, and serve. Each of us has been given different gifts and are called according to our gifts. We are equipped with talents and skills through which we may contribute to bringing the mercy, compassion, truth, goodness, and beauty of God’s love to the world. What are your particular gifts and talents? How may you be called to use them to bring Christ’s love to others, leading them to see and hear the Good News of Jesus Christ?

TODAY’S READINGS

- Acts 1:1–11
- Psalm 47:2–3, 6–7, 8–9
- Ephesians 4:1–13 [1–7, 11–13]
- Mark 16:15–20

Thank you to everyone who came out for our last class of Faith Formation for 2020-2021!

A special thank you to our amazing Catechists who led our group in a Living Rosary and Crowning of Mary. Each class led a decade of the rosary with parents and children participating. We ended our lovely prayer with a beautiful song and special crowning of Mary. Good job Emily Watkins and Caroline Leonard! Thank you to all the families who made Faith Formation a priority for your family. And, a heartfelt thank you to our very talented and dedicated Catechists: Nicole Getty, Gia Hernandez, Veronica Alvarez, Kim Murphy, Laura Leonard, Susan Edpao, Maria Brennan, Carlos Melendez, Rose Haliewicz, and Tony Candotti. And a special thank you to Debbie Pellizari for always providing the kids with snacks!



**Congratulation's
to all the First Communion Children who received their Holy Eucharist Sacrament
this weekend at St. Catherine of Siena Parish**

*Angel Allen
Anthony Allen
Samantha Araujo
Javier Barragan
Jorge Barragan
Samantha Gomez
Gisela Hernandez
Jimena Paola Lopez Higuera
Jonathan Morales
Jorge Morales
Alexander Silva
Camila Silva
Mason Tenuto
Estrella Vasquez*

*Selena Alvarado
Kayla Dobson
Makana Esperanza
Zosia Gadek
Maria Gil
Mac Hill
Giuliana Iskandaryan
Colt Land
Caroline Leonard
Claire Low
Brian Miller
Diego Reyes
Elinore Sattes*



WORSHIP

To facilitate a transforming encounter with God as we come together in worship.

What happened between the resurrection and ascension of Jesus?



St. Leo the Great explains the purpose of the time that elapsed between the resurrection and ascension.

One fascinating time period in the Gospel is the days that elapsed between the resurrection and ascension of Jesus.

Jesus appeared to many and walked with his disciples on multiple occasions.

St. Leo the Great provides a rich meditation on this time span in the Bible in a sermon that is featured in the Church's *Office of Readings*.

In particular, he singles out **various spiritual themes** that Jesus may have been trying to highlight.

Fear of death removed

*Dearly beloved, those days which intervened between the Lord's Resurrection and Ascension did not pass by in uneventful leisure, but great mysteries were ratified in them and deep truths were revealed. In those days **the fear of death was removed** with all its terrors, and the immortality not only of the soul but also of the flesh was established. In those days the Holy Spirit is poured upon all the Apostles through the Lord's breathing upon them, and to the blessed Apostle Peter, set above the rest, the keys of the kingdom are entrusted and the care of the Lord's flock.*

Resurrection of Jesus is affirmed

Dearly beloved, through all this time which elapsed between the Lord's Resurrection and Ascension, God's Providence had this in view, **to teach his own people and impress upon their eyes and their hearts that the Lord Jesus Christ had risen, risen as truly as he had been born and had suffered and died.** Hence the most blessed Apostles and all the disciples, who had been both bewildered at his death on the cross and backward in believing his Resurrection, were so strengthened by the clearness of the truth that when the Lord entered the heights of heaven, not only were they affected with no sadness, but were even filled with great joy.

Promise of hope and joy

*It was during that time that the Lord joined the two disciples as a companion on the way, and, to **sweep away all the clouds of our uncertainty**, reproached them for the slowness of their timid and trembling hearts. Their enlightened hearts catch the flame of faith, and lukewarm as they have been, they are made to burn while the Lord unfolds the Scriptures.*

***Truly it was great and unspeakable, that cause of their joy**, when in the sight of the holy multitude the Nature of mankind went up: up above the dignity of all heavenly creatures, to pass above the angels' ranks and to rise beyond the archangels' heights, and to have its uplifting limited by no elevation until, received to sit with the Eternal Father, it should be associated on the throne with his glory, to whose Nature it was united in the Son.*

This time period in the Gospel, while very short, was not without purpose.



STEWARDSHIP

To create a culture in the parish rooted in gratitude and generosity.

May 9, 2021

Weekly Offering:	\$3,298.00	ONLINE	\$2,400.00
Easter:	\$ 10.00		\$ 203.00
St. Vincent de Paul:			\$ 305.00
School Scholarship:			\$ 190.00
Maintenance:			\$ 20.00

Thank you for your continued support both spiritual and financial.



DISCIPLESHIP

To empower a community of Christian people walking together as disciples of Jesus in order to share His good news.

MASS INTENTIONS

SAT	5/15	8:00	Mary Weimerst
		4:30	Rodolfo Ayalde†
SUN	5/16	7:00	Debbie Pelizzari - Birthday
		8:30	McLoughlin & Curtin Families†
		10:00	Int. St. Catherine Parishioners
		1:00	Rodolfo Mercado †
MON	5/17	8:00	Souls in Purgatory†
TUES	5/18	8:00	Int. Lily Quisumbing - Birthday
WED	5/19	8:00	Int. St. Catherine School Families
THUR	5/20	8:00	William & Doris Broussard†
FRI	5/21	8:00	Int. Paul Cook - Birthday
SAT	5/22	8:00	Int. Tessie Obligacion - Birthday
		4:30	Terry Greerty†
SUN	5/23	8:30	McLoughlin & Curtin Families†
		10:00	Int. St. Catherine Parishioners
		1:00	Carlota Gallardo †

If you would like to request a Mass Intention for the 2021 calendar year please fill out the form located on our website: WWW.STCMTZ.ORG mail or drop off at the office.



St. Catherine Parish offers deepest sympathy and prayers for the families and, the repose of the soul of all who entered into eternal life.

Rodolfo Mercado
Victims of the Coronavirus



If you are looking for a ways to help our parish, here are a few options:

1) **On-line Giving:** www.stcmtz.org

2) **My parish App:**

CLICK on the "giving icon"



3) **Diocesan Support for the Parishes**
Go to the Diocese of Oakland home page

CLICK on the Giving tab

Select the Parish Support option

<https://www.oakdiocese.org/parish-support>



May 29 and 30 Sunday 2nd Collection
We thank you for your continuous support and welcome contributions throughout the year.

THE SHIP OF THE CHURCH

The Church is like a great ship being pounded by the waves of life's different stresses. Our duty is not to abandon ship, but to keep her on her course.

—St. Boniface

CRS RICE BOWL COLLECTION

We celebrate our Risen Lord with praise and joy. Now is the time to bring your Lenten CRS Rice Bowl collections to the Church or Parish Office by May 1. There are several ways to return your almsgiving offering:

- 1) Rice bowls with coins.
- 2) A check to St. Catherine of Siena, note: CRS Rice Bowl
- 3) The parish's online giving page. Remember, your contributions to Rice Bowl changes lives: 75% of the proceeds help Catholic Relief services worldwide and **25% of the proceeds remain in the Oakland Diocese**, with a portion being given out as **grants to St. Vincent de Paul conferences** and other organizations working to alleviate hunger and food insecurity in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.

Thank you for your generosity.



St. Catherine of Siena Parish Community and School

School Mission Statement

Saint Catherine of Siena School answers the call to nurture each child – spirit, mind and body – in a safe, caring environment by providing Christ-centered, challenging curriculum preparing each child for a future as people of faith, service, respect, and responsibility.



PARISH REGISTRATION
Are you Registered with our Parish?
Has your family status changed? If you would like to register or update your current family information with the Parish, you may do so with our new on-line form located on our website, www.stcmtz.org or call the office, and we can help you with any update.



Before serving or continuing in your ministry, you must complete the Diocesan required Safe Environment for Children Project Training @ www.virtusonline.org Thank you.

READINGS & REFLECTIONS

Sunday, May 16, 2021 SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Good things come from unlikely places

It may bring a smile to our lips to hear the argument for why we're obliged to love others: because God loves us first. And if God can love us (be honest here!) then clearly love need not be earned. This World Communications Day, Pope Francis invites us to consider how future-apostle Nathaniel once dismissed Jesus because of his origins: "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" To really love people, we have to begin by not categorizing them: by gender or race, nationality or religion, native language or political party. Even Nazareth holds surprises!

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 1:15-17, 20a, 20c-26; 1 John 4:11-16; John 17:11b-19 (60). "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also must love one another."

Monday, May 17, 2021 EASTER WEEKDAY

Solitude and solidarity

Many have experienced more solitude than they care for during the pandemic, but it'd be a shame to lose the lessons of the experience once it's over. Catholics have a strong tradition of finding the sacred in solitude. The monastic life, for example, is all about withdrawing from society to draw closer to God and ultimately to each other. Turning inward is an opportunity for growth. Ritualizing the routines of life—in the midst of grief and stress and fear—helps to maintain inner stability and clarity. At the same time, far too many haven't had the luxury of solitude to remove themselves from danger—let this fact light a fire in all of us to fight for justice for those who have risked all to serve society this past year.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 19:1-8; John 16:29-33 (297). "I am not alone, because the Father is with me."

Tuesday, May 18, 2021 MEMORIAL OF JOHN I, POPE, MARTYR

Define your terms

In 2011, the Nicene Creed in English changed from the poetic-butim precise "one in being"—recited at Mass for more than 40 years—back to a seemingly unusual, clunky Latin word: consubstantial. We learned that consubstantial was a critical distinction hammered out at various church councils to clarify that Jesus was divinely coeternal with God. It was a pronouncement specifically designed to refute the Arian heresy that denied Christ's divinity. The struggle against Arianism cost Pope John I his life in 526. Words matter. Take time to choose the right ones.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 20:17-27; John 17:1-11a (298). "Now glorify me, Father, with you, with the glory that I had with you before the world began."

Wednesday, May 19, 2021 EASTER WEEKDAY

Going home

Final farewells are difficult. While there can be grace in the chance to express love and gratitude, there also can be great pain at the thought of never again seeing a face, touching a hand, hearing a voice. There is true heartache in accepting that there will be no more shared meals, meaningful discussions, shared futures planned together as we surrender the companionship of a loved one. It is a bitter-sweet time because the grief of anticipated loss is proof of an equally deep love. Yet it is not the end—faith promises us more.

On this Easter Wednesday, with trust in the promise of new life, give thanks to God for someone whose love and faithfulness has enriched your life.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 20:28-38; John 17:11b-19 (299). "They were all weeping loudly . . . for they were deeply distressed that (Paul) had said that they would never see his face again."

Thursday, May 20, 2021

MEMORIAL OF BERNARDINE OF SIENA, PRIEST, RELIGIOUS, MISSIONARY

History will be our judge

Church history is filled with admirable figures who stand out for their tender love and compassion. Bernardine of Siena was not that kind of saint. A fire-and-brimstone preacher with a moralizing temperament, he encouraged "bonfires of the vanities" where townsfolk pitched household items suggestive of luxury or leisure—mirrors, perfumes, games—into the fire. Seen from our vantage point, many of his sermons had antisemitic, misogynistic, and homophobic overtones. Though a commanding preacher who lived a life of devotion, Bernardine—like all of us—was a product of his times, limited by the pastoral and theological perspectives handed down to him. His innovations in vernacular preaching continue to inspire, yet his limitations in compassion and inclusion serve as a cautionary tale. None of us has a monopoly on moral purity. Kindness and compassion, however, never go out of style.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 22:30; 23:6-11; John 17:20-26 (300). "And I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one."

Friday, May 21, 2021

MEMORIAL OF CHRISTOPHER MAGALLANES, PRIEST, MARTYR, AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

Live fully

Each of us is called to give our lives fully on behalf of our love for and commitment to God. Most of us will not die a martyr's death, but some of us will. Christopher Magallanes was one such person. Christopher's call to be a martyr was lived every day through his prayer and ministry as a priest: founding schools, providing work opportunities, and even constructing a dam to help the people. He was killed because of his love for the people, a love emanating from his deep faith. How does our faith inspire us to give of ourselves fully?

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 25:13b-21; John 21:15-19 (301). "'Simon, son of John, do you love me?' Simon Peter answered him, 'Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.' He said to him, 'Tend my sheep.'"

Saturday, May 22, 2021 MEMORIAL OF RITA OF CASCIA, RELIGIOUS

Hope is a perennial

We all could use a friend like Saint Rita of Cascia. Wed against her

will at the tender age of 12, she somehow survived abuse and family feuds to become a reconciling force in a violent region of 15th-century Italy. She has acquired a following, along with Saint Jude, as the patron of hopeless causes. On her deathbed, it is said she asked for a rose from her garden. Though it was winter, we are told a single blooming rose was found and brought to her. Never lose hope—no cause is hopeless!

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 28:16-20, 30-31; John 21:20-25 (302). "There are also many other things that Jesus did."

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