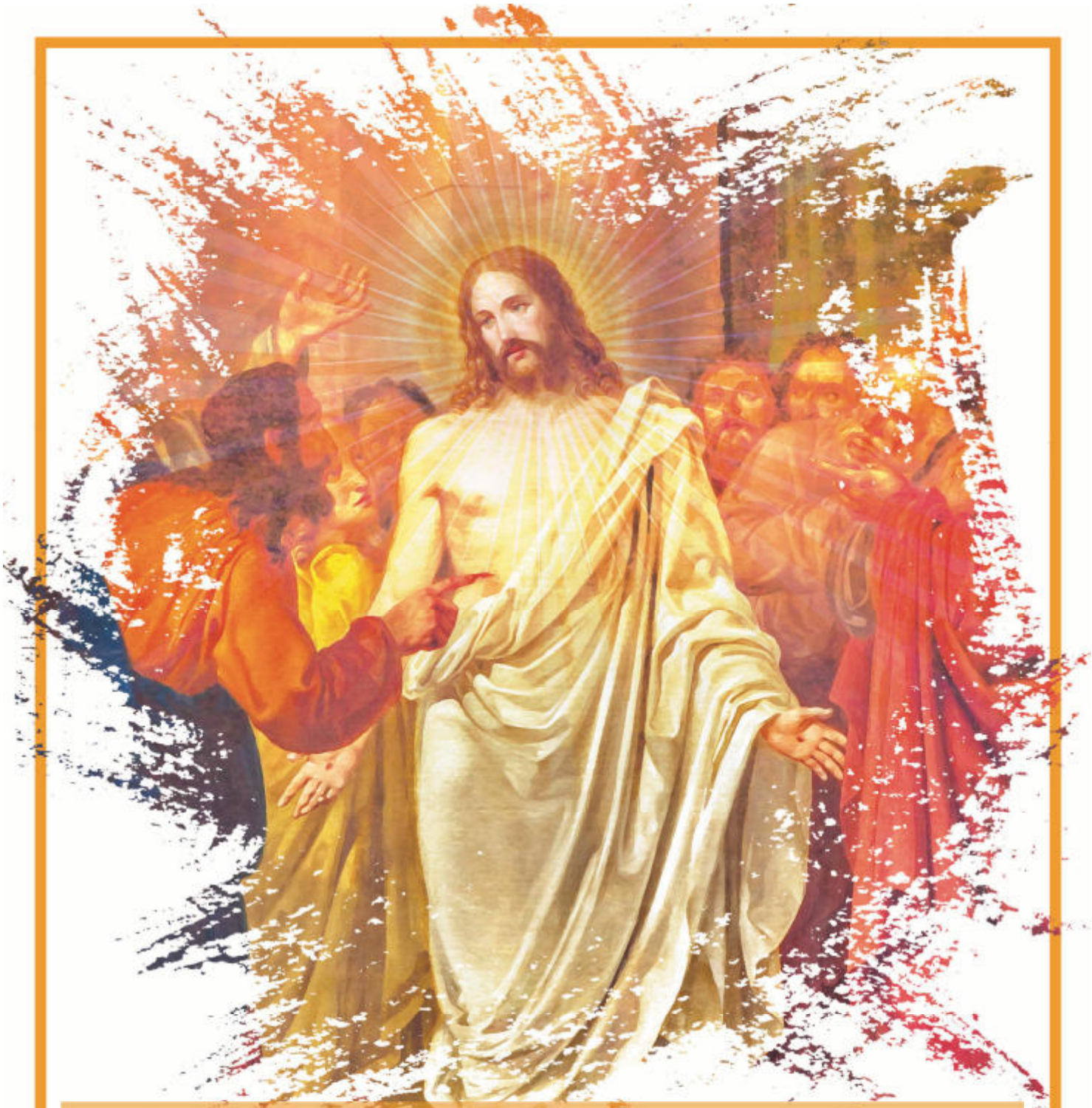

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"BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO HAVE NOT SEEN AND HAVE BELIEVED." —JN 20:29

2ND SUNDAY OF EASTER

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SUNDAY'S READINGS

FIRST READING:

With great power the apostles bore witness
to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus,
and great favor was accorded them all. (Acts 4:33)

PSALM:

Give thanks to the Lord, for his is good, his love is everlasting. (Ps 118) Or Alleluia.

SECOND READING:

Everyone who believe that Jesus is the Christ is begotten by God,
and everyone who loves the Father
loves also the one begotten by him. (1 Jn 1:1a)

GOSPEL:

Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you.
As the Father has sent me, so I send you." (Jn 20:21)

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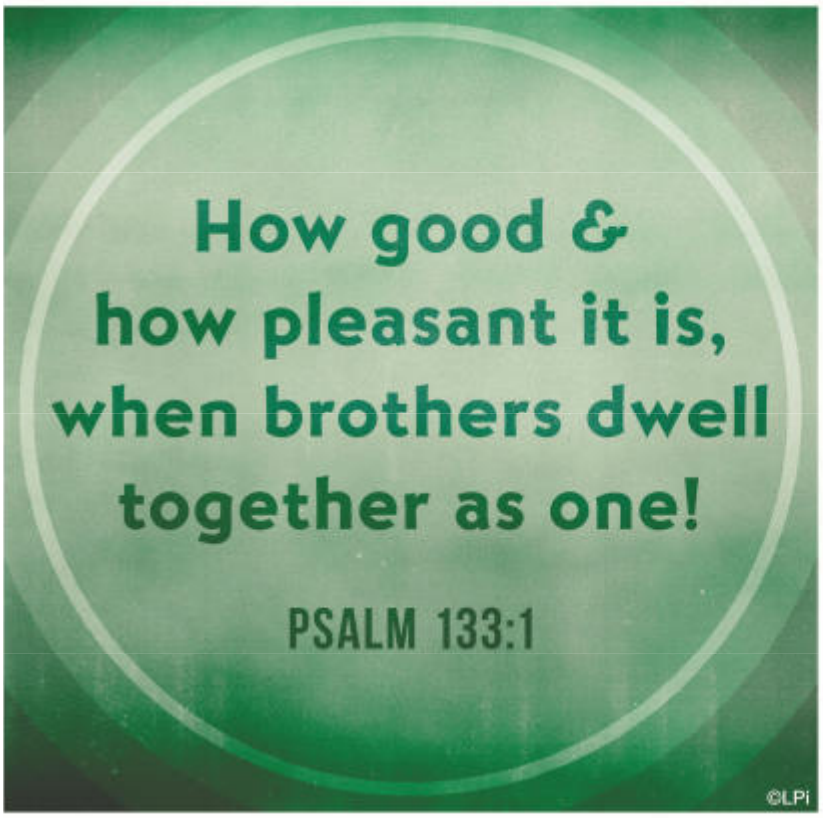
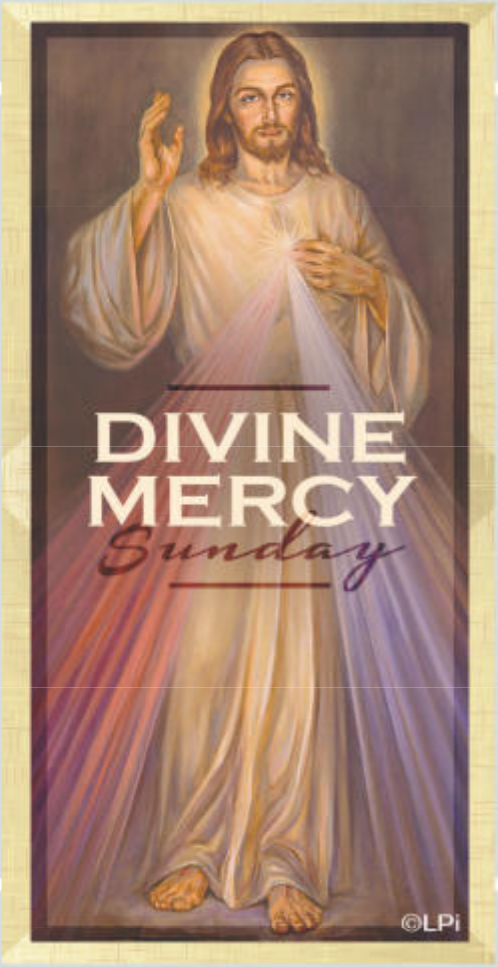
OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK OF APRIL 11, 2021

Sunday:	2nd Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy)
Tuesday:	St. Martin I, Pope and Martyr
Thursday:	Tax Day
Next Sunday:	3rd Sunday of Easter





REFLECT

FIRST READING

Luke gives us a glimpse into the solidarity of heart and mind with the original community of believers in Jerusalem. How does your current community of faith compare to this first-generation Jerusalem church?

SECOND READING

John speaks of the power of faith and love for believers in conquering evil in the world. How does the faith and love in your life sustain you?

GOSPEL READING

The story of Thomas' doubt in the resurrected Jesus is one of the most well-known resurrection narratives. Why do you think Christians throughout the ages are drawn to this story?

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EYE HAS NOT SEEN

They say seeing is believing. But if you've ever ordered a pair of pants online, you know that's not always the case. Whatever the photos promise us, what looked like a perfectly nice shade of navy blue on our computer screens comes in the mail as an unusual shade of blue green that only appears in the giant box of Crayola crayons.

The Apostle Thomas, who couldn't bring himself to accept that Jesus had risen from the dead without seeing him, is such an utterly relatable figure in the Gospels. Thomas is still reeling from a loss — not only of his good friend but his Lord, who was taken prisoner and crucified before his eyes. Thomas is guarding himself. He's not believing the hype. He's going to be the only judge of what is real and what is fiction.

Would any of us be any different? We've all had those thoughts. Can we believe it all — Jesus, salvation history, the Eucharist — when we haven't seen it with our own two eyes?

That's when we need to remember that those two eyes were absolutely positive they had ordered a pair of navy blue pants.

It's easy for us to sit back stroking our chins in judgment at Thomas, "you didn't believe the testimony of your friends!" But do we accept the testimony of our friends? The saints, the popes, the Church fathers themselves?

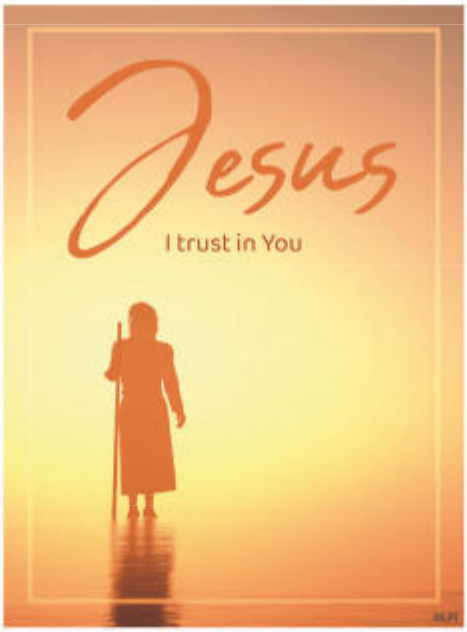
Sometimes the things that are most worthy of believing can't be seen with the naked eye.

—Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

WHY ARE PRIESTS TRANSFERRED FROM ONE PARISH TO ANOTHER? HOW IS THAT DECIDED?

Bishops take the appointment of pastors to parishes very seriously and the decision to assign or transfer priests is one of the most important decisions bishops can make, effecting the lives of everyone in the parish community.

In 1984, the bishops of the United States implemented a six-year term limit for pastors (which can be renewed by bishop); term limits for associate pastors vary from diocese to diocese. Sometimes a particular priest is assigned to a parish or chaplaincy to respond to specific issues (such as a parish merger, a fundraising campaign, or because he has special qualifications that make him a good fit for the community). In the case of new or recently ordained priests, the vibrancy and diversity, the presence of a school, or certain social programs offer invaluable training and ongoing formation.



In making their decisions regarding the placement of priests, most bishops rely on a priest personnel committee or a council of priests. There is also a period of dialogue with the priest(s) who will be moved, sometimes even including an extended period of discernment and self-assessment, helping to be as sure as possible that the assignment of a priest to a particular community will truly benefit the people and be a healthy one for the priest himself.

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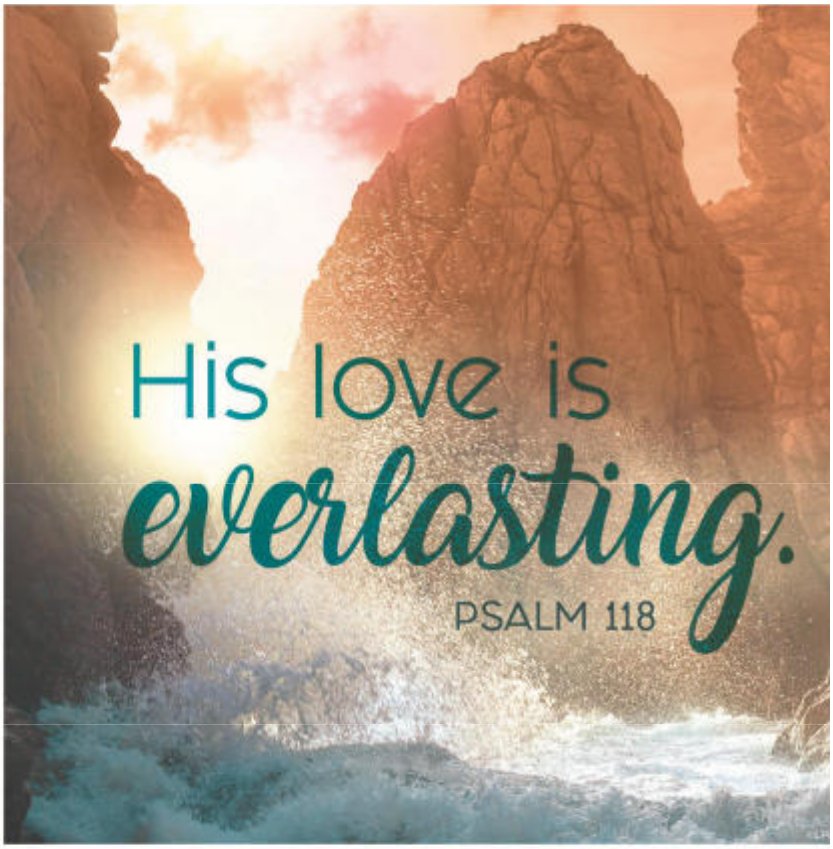
LIVE THE LITURGY
INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

Alleluia! Forgiveness has risen from the grave! What a wonderful joy fills us today as we ponder the inexhaustible mercy of God. When experienced, we are moved to do all in our power to avoid sin and embrace the loving presence of our risen God. God stands ever ready to receive us and wants nothing more than for us to come home. How reluctant we are to believe this truth! We want proof, tangible evidence and absolute assurance that what we have been told is true. Jesus has risen from the dead and brings us peace. It is the gift of wholeness and holiness that is breathed upon us by God's life-giving and healing mercy. May the rays of love that flow from the heart of Christ pierce ours!



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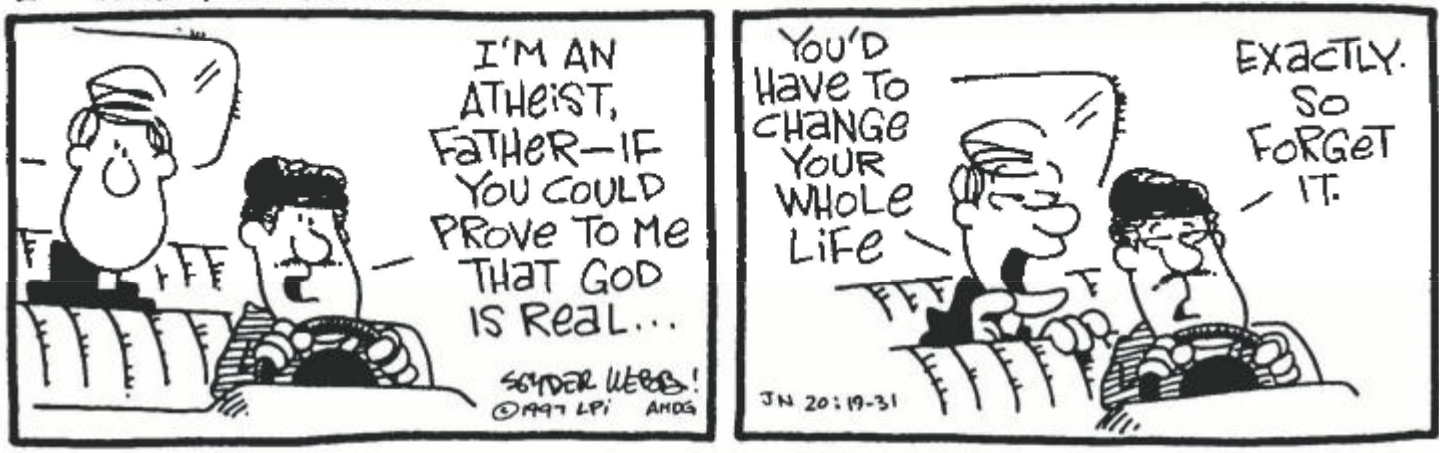
Our parish is grateful for your continued support at this time. Thank you!

2ND SUNDAY OF EASTER



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GOSPEL MEDITATION
ENCOURAGE DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE

What a wonderful joy fills us today as we ponder the inexhaustible mercy of God. "Mercy is the heart of God," Pope Francis tells us. The image of a heart has been used to point to the very life source of a person as it is the organ that allows life to flow through our veins and sustain us. Mercy is the heart of God. Imagine this dynamic, powerful, compassionate, piercing, embracing, loving, propelling, penetrating, absorbing, and enveloping, transforming presence of God flowing into the very depth of our souls. It is God's mercy that allows blood to flow through our veins. It is God's mercy that forms every atom of our being and leads us to what is true. God's mercy reveals all superficiality and falsehood, and lays bare all distortions, empty promises, weakness, and sin.

"Mercy is the force that reawakens us to new life and instills in us the courage to look to the future with hope," Pope Francis continues. God's all forgiving, compassionate love is with us. When we finally believe and accept that Christ's resurrected transfigured presence resides with us, we then find within us a strong confidence to accept life's imperfections and

disappointments and move on. Every day is a new adventure in new life. God leaves the past behind and opens doors to the future. It doesn't matter how many mistakes we made yesterday. All that matters is what we do tomorrow and what we learn along the way. It is so easy to remain tethered and mired in the past, but there is no need to do so. God is all about tomorrow and the work God has yet to do in our lives.

Mercy gives birth to hope. Hope for the greatest of sinners and hope for the worst of disasters. There is nothing God cannot do and nothing God cannot fashion. After all, everything we know and treasure was once nothing, and look what God did with the nothing God had! The resurrected Christ stands before us with nail marks in his wrists and wounds on his body as a testament that not even injustice, suffering and death can trample over and destroy God's mercy. What have we to fear? Why do we keep ourselves from peace? Our lack of faith prevents us from going forward and fully receiving the holiness God desires to breathe upon us. Breathe in God's mercy, allow the wind of God's presence to kiss all of your sins and caress all of your fears. Exhale peace.

Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."
- Jn 20:28-29

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3 EASY STEPS

TO KEEPING YOURSELF & OTHERS HEALTHY!

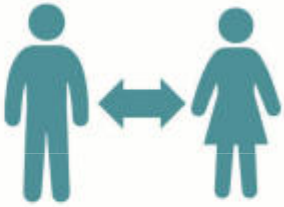
We are cautioned to be especially careful during the Coronavirus outbreak. Here are some simple ways to keep sickness away.

WASH YOUR HANDS

Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds using soap and water. If you can't wash your hands, use hand sanitizer frequently.

DON'T TOUCH YOUR FACE

Especially around the eyes, nose and mouth. If you must sneeze, use a tissue or your arm.



KEEP YOUR DISTANCE

Practice social distancing during this epidemic and stay away from large groups. Instead, call, email or check up on family and friends using social media.

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Kids Corner

READ THE GOSPEL & COLOR

In today's Gospel, Thomas had a hard time believing his friends. Jesus was alive! They saw Jesus! Well, Thomas could not believe it. He needed proof. Thomas wanted to see Jesus for himself. Thomas wanted to touch Jesus' scars on his hands and his side. Once Thomas did that, then he would believe. You may have doubting friends like Thomas. Be patient with them. Do not get angry with them. Love them instead, and gently tell the truth about Jesus. Ask Jesus to open their hearts so they can believe in him, too.

PRAYER

God, help me to be patient with my doubting friends. Show them that Jesus is their savior, too.

MISSION FOR THE WEEK

Talk to God about a friend who does not believe in Jesus. Ask God to give you the right words to say about Jesus. Then ask God to help you be patient.

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Monday, Apr 19, 2021
Easter Weekday

Saint Timon, whose feast is today, is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles (6:5) as one of seven deacons chosen by the apostles to assist in ministering to the community of believers in Jerusalem. As the apostles concentrated on preaching, the deacons assisted in providing for the material needs of the community. This focus on both word and deed, or evangelization and service, continues to be the hallmark of Christian discipleship. As the church teaches in Lumen Gentium, "Each one of the faithful must willingly hear the word of God and accept God's Will and must complete what God has begun by their own actions with the help of God's grace." What will you do to continue the work of love that begins and ends with God?

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 6:8-15; John 6:22-29

Tuesday, Apr 20, 2021
Easter Weekday

On this day in 1303, Sapienza University of Rome was instituted by Pope Boniface VIII. Sapienza, boasting such famous alumni as Maria Montessori and Federico Fellini, is considered the first pontifical university—an institution approved by the Vatican and committed to teaching theology, philosophy, and canon law. Today, all pontifical universities are governed by the document Veritatis Gaudium, a 2017 update written by Pope Francis. It begins: “The joy of truth expresses the restlessness of the human heart until it encounters and dwells within God’s Light and shares that Light with all people.” How will you share God’s light today?

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 7:51—8:1a; John 6:30-35

Wednesday, Apr 21, 2021
Memorial of Anselm, Bishop, Doctor of the Church

How would you define the term theology? Google it and you find it described as the critical study of the nature of God or the divine. Saint Anselm (1033-1109) said it another way: “Theology is faith seeking understanding.” Every time you try to understand how God allows suffering or wonder how it is that God loves every human being, or try to understand if God truly hears your prayers, you are doing the work of theology. As a French Benedictine monk and later archbishop of Canterbury, Anselm was a wise and learned teacher who challenged the secular power of kings. Your life may not seem extraordinary, but the pursuit of knowledge about God belongs to you as well. Don’t be afraid of the questions. Ask for grace to allow the questions to help your faith grow.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 8:1b-8; John 6:35-40

Take Five for Faith
Daily renewal for busy Catholics

Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow a day at a time.

Thursday, Apr 22, 2021
Easter Weekday

Today’s first reading about Philip explaining scripture to a receptive Ethiopian is a beautiful example of something that Pope Francis often emphasizes: the need for openness when we encounter another, especially someone different from us. In homilies, speeches, and documents, the Holy Father tells us we are called to encounter Jesus, to allow ourselves to be changed and shaped by that encounter, and to bring the same attitude to our dealings with people. Pray for the grace of openness toward the people you encounter today.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 8:26-40, John 6:44-51

Friday, Apr 23, 2021
Easter Weekday

Prior to his conversion, Saint Paul, who earlier in life was known by his Hebrew name Saul, was most definitely no saint. He not only disliked those who followed Jesus, he attacked them. So, what happened? He encountered Jesus the Christ. Jesus did not put Paul through what fiction refers to as a “mind wipe,” or erasure of former personality and memory. Jesus called Paul to stop and see clearly the truth of his mindset and actions. And then Paul put in the work. This is something we all have to do—put in the work—especially when our dislike of those who are different leads to harm.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 9:1-20; John 6:52-59

Saturday, Apr 24, 2021
Easter Weekday

Followers of Jesus have been disputing the meaning of the eucharistic meal and Jesus’ instructions to “eat my flesh and drink my blood” ever since the words were first uttered. Many could not look beyond a literal interpretation of the words to see the powerful symbolism of the image of the paschal lamb offered for the sins of the community at Passover. So, they simply walked away. Now that the sacrifice has been accomplished and Easter season is well underway, will you turn away as well, or are you with those who stayed with Jesus because, like Peter, you have come to believe that he has the words of eternal life?

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 9:31-42; John 6:60-69

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April
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Mass Intentions

Weekend of April 10th & 11th
2nd Sunday of Easter

✠ David Jewett
For the People of St Stevens
Special Intentions for
Robert Ziefel

Monday April 12th
Special Intentions for
Bill & Elizabeth Mariner

Tuesday April 13th
✠ Lottie Lewandowski

Wednesday April 14th
✠ Marcella Dawson

Thursday April 15th
✠ Lois Schucardt

Friday April 16th
✠ Wieslaw Pajak

Weekend of April 17th & 18th
3rd Sunday of Easter

✠ Mary Alice Abood
For the People of St Stevens
✠ Frederick Mayernik

Mass Times

Daily Masses
Monday—Friday at 8:00 a.m.

Sunday Masses:
Saturday Vigil at 4:00 p.m.
Sunday at 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.

All Masses are streamed
http://saintstevensparish.org

Adoration Chapel

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8:30 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m.,
1:30 p.m., 2:30 p.m.

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Office & Gift Shop Hours

Monday—Thursday, 9:00 a.m.—12 Noon
Closed Friday

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You Took My Parking Space at Church

One day, a man decided to visit a church. He arrived early, parked his car, and got out. Another car pulled up alongside him and the driver stepped out, yelling, "I always park there! You took my place!"

The visitor went inside for Sunday School, found an empty seat, and sat down. A young lady from the church approached him. "That's my seat!" she exclaimed. "You took my place!" Somewhat distressed by the rude welcome, the visitor said nothing.

The visitor then went into the sanctuary and sat down. Another member walked up to him. "That's where I always sit! You took my place!" Even more troubled, the visitor still said nothing.

Later, as the congregation prayed for Christ to dwell among them, the visitor stood up. His appearance began to transform. Horrible scars appeared on his hands and on his sandaled feet. Someone from the congregation noticed him and called out, "What happened to you?"

The visitor replied, as his hat became a crown of thorns, and a tear fell from his eye, "I took your place."

When you have read this, simply say a prayer. Maybe, just maybe, we can get the world to start thinking of who took our place.

adapted from various sources

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