



Saint Benedict the Moor Parish

Personal Parish for Black Catholics in Pittsburgh

"Without a Vision, the People Perish" (Proverbs 29:18)

APRIL 20, 2025

Mass Schedule

Sunday 11:00 am

Livestream:

facebook.com/SBTMPGH/live

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Sundays at 10:30am &

by appointment.

Baptisms, Weddings, and Funerals

by appointment.



Our church is accessible.

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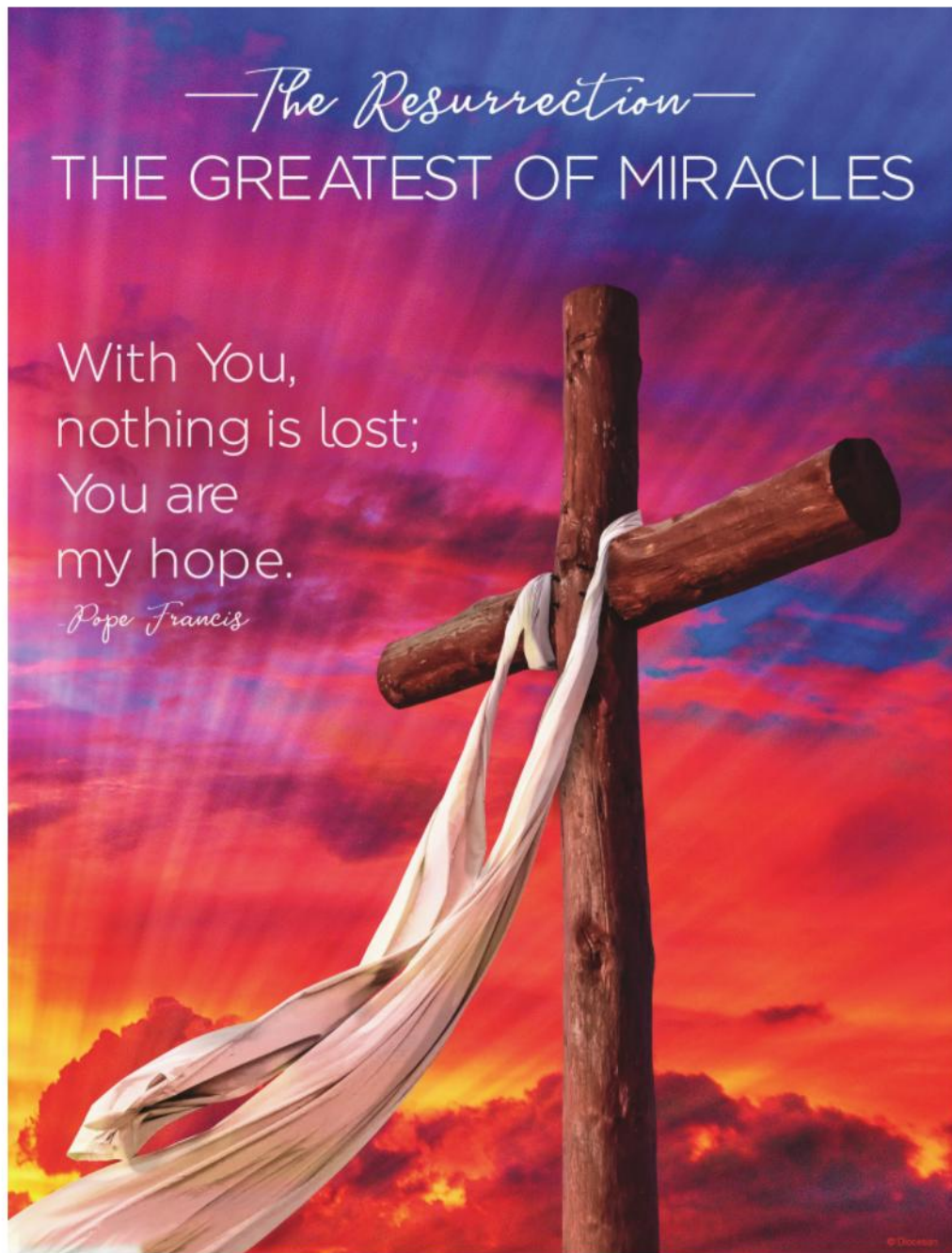
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St. Benedict the Moor Parish-PGH



[SBTMPARISHPGH](https://www.instagram.com/SBTMPARISHPGH)



[SBTmparishPGH](https://www.youtube.com/SBTmparishPGH)

Mass Intentions

April 20 11:00 am
Easter Sunday

Fr. Matthew Hawkins
Parishioners of St. Benedict the Moor

April 27 11:00 am
Second Sunday of Easter

Fr. Matthew Hawkins
*Lamia & Simon Whaby
(Simone Hickey)*

Stewardship April 13th

Offertory	Parish Appeal	Tech
\$6,304.25	\$725.00	\$50.00
Care for the Poor	Church Upkeep	Good Friday
\$75.00	\$85.00	\$40.00

Weekly Mass Attendance

April 13th—189

Prayer Requests

Ann Betters
Antoinette Peters
Blessing Gbolo
Bonita Dsouza
Claudia Harrison
Christina Hall
Chris Grayson
Damitra Penny-Harris
Delores Denton
Duane Ashley
Gail Jackson
Jennifer Whitley
Joan Moran
Johari
John Young
Karen McDill
Vincent Hall Jr

Protection of God's Children

Report suspected child abuse at
the 24-Hour Child Abuse Hotline:
800.932.0313.

If a child is in imminent
danger, call 911.

To report church-related abuse to
the Diocese of Pittsburgh call:
888-808-1235

St. Benedict the Moor: A Model for Today's Catholics

Fr. Matthew Hawkins



St. Benedict the Moor is not just a saint for Black Catholics—he is a saint for all Catholics. His life reflects the universal call to holiness, grounded in the Gospel and open to all people, regardless of background. Yet for Black Catholics, his witness carries particular significance. In a world that often misunderstands or oversimplifies our faith and identity, St. Benedict offers a theological vision that invites us to live with confidence, clarity, and a deep awareness of our spiritual and intellectual heritage.

On race, St. Benedict teaches us something vital: to embrace our heritage without falling into tribalism or resentment.

His dignity did not come from his social status or his ethnicity, but from his human nature made in the image and likeness of God. He reminds us that our worth is not determined by how others categorize us or how we categorize ourselves but by the eternal truth that we are beloved children of God. His life is a quiet but powerful affirmation that race can be honored without becoming an idol—and that unity in Christ transcends the boundaries that society often tries to impose on us.

On spirituality, St. Benedict's life calls us beyond emotion-driven or performative faith. He models a spiritual life that is disciplined, prayerful, and rooted in the long tradition of Christian asceticism and mystical contemplation. Though he had no formal education and could not read or write, his wisdom and insight drew even the most learned theologians to seek his counsel. He shows us that true spiritual authority comes not from titles or degrees, but from a heart purified by prayer, sacrifice, and divine love.

On the fullness of humanity, St. Benedict offers a compelling witness. He lived a life that transcended both radical individualism and racial essentialism. His identity was not fragmented but fully integrated in the Body of Christ. He didn't choose between being Black and being Catholic—he lived as a whole person in the unity of faith, embodying the richness of both his cultural and spiritual heritage.

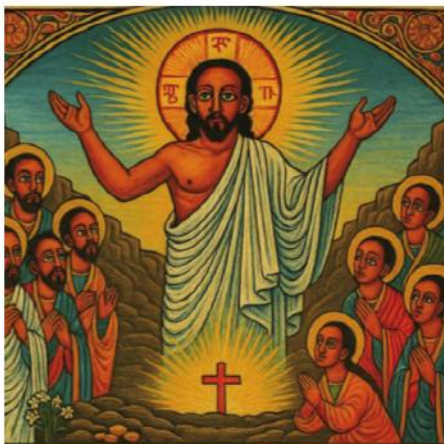
For Black Catholics—especially those who may feel isolated or misunderstood—St. Benedict provides a timeless model of how to live with integrity, wisdom, and holy freedom. He did not conform to the expectations of the world, nor did he react with bitterness. Instead, he rooted his life in the eternal truths of the faith and walked the path of holiness with grace, humility, and strength.

Here at St. Benedict the Moor Parish, we are invited to follow his example. His legacy challenges us to cultivate a faith that is neither reactionary nor sentimental, but deeply ordered, thoughtful, and Gospel-centered. Let us not reduce him to a symbol or a token of racial representation. Let us instead honor him as a guide leading us to encounter all the other saints in the universal Catholic Church—one who calls all of us to greater excellence, deeper prayer, and more faithful witness to Christ.

St. Benedict the Moor, pray for us.



Fr. Matthew Hawkins



The Empty Tomb and Our Former Lives

"They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him."

—John 20:2

On that first Easter morning, Mary Magdalene arrives in the darkness. The stone has been rolled away, and the body is gone. She runs to tell Peter and the beloved disciple, and they in turn run to see it for themselves. They peer into the emptiness. The cloths are folded, but the Lord is nowhere in sight.

There are no angels yet. No hallelujahs. No appearances. Only an **empty tomb**, and with it, **confusion, absence, and wonder**.

This is how the resurrection enters the world: not with spectacle, but with **mystery**. The first witnesses do not immediately believe. They search, they run, they peer in. They are trying to make sense of something utterly new, something that breaks every expectation.

It's important to linger here, because we, too, often arrive at Easter in the dark. We may carry griefs or uncertainties. We may feel like we are staring into an empty place where once there was promise. The good news is:

this is how Easter begins. The mystery of the resurrection doesn't erase our fears, but it transforms the space around them. The empty tomb is not the end of hope—it is the doorway to something greater than we could have imagined.

In our first reading from Acts, we meet Peter after he has walked through that doorway. He has encountered the Risen Lord, and it has changed him completely.

"God shows no partiality," Peter declares. *"Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him."* (Acts 10:34–35)

This is not the Peter who once misunderstood the cross or tried to keep Jesus from suffering. This is a Peter who now understands that the **resurrection is for all**, not just a chosen few. He is speaking to Gentiles—outsiders—and telling them they, too, are invited into this new life.

The resurrection does not belong to one culture, one people, one time. **It belongs to the world.** Christ is risen, and with him rises the dignity of every human being, across all lines we once thought divided us.

Easter is not a private victory. It is a public proclamation: **there is now no one beyond the reach of God's love.**

Psalm 118 gives voice to this surprise:

"The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. By the Lord has this been done; it is wonderful in our eyes." (Psalm 118:22–23)

This is the heart of Easter's paradox: the **rejected one**—Jesus, crucified and buried—becomes the very foundation of new life. The one dismissed, misunderstood, cast out, and left for dead has become the cornerstone of a new creation.

This speaks not just to what happened to Jesus, but to how God works in our lives. **What we reject or consider broken, God can redeem.** Where we see failure, God may be laying the foundation of something greater. Where we feel lost or disqualified, God is quietly preparing a new beginning.

It is, indeed, *wonderful in our eyes*.

Finally, in his letter to the Colossians, St. Paul draws the curtain back further and tells us what this resurrection means for us—**not just one day in the future, but right now.**

"If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above... For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God." (Colossians 3:1–3)

The tomb is empty—and so are our old lives. The risen Christ invites us to live differently, not clinging to fear or bitterness, not defining ourselves by our failures or our past. **We have died to all that.** We are now people of the resurrection.

To live as if raised means to seek what is above: to pursue mercy over vengeance, love over self-protection, hope over cynicism. It means we live with the peace of knowing that Christ holds our life—not just in eternity, but even now, in the midst of our ordinary days.

So if you come to Easter like Mary Magdalene—wondering where the Lord is—take heart. He is not gone. He is risen. And He is calling your name.

Step into the light. The tomb is empty. And your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Alleluia.

This Week: The Resurrection of the Lord

"Christ, our paschal lamb, has been sacrificed; let us then feast with joy in the Lord. (1 Corinthians 5:7)."

First Reading: Acts 10:34a, 37–43

Responsorial Psalm 118:1–2, 16–17, 22–23

Second Reading: Colossians 3:1–4

Gospel: John 20:1–9

Next Week: Second Sunday of Easter/Sunday of Divine Mercy

"You believe in me, Thomas, because you have seen me, says the Lord; blessed are those who have not seen me, but still believe (John 20:29)!"

First Reading: Acts 5:12–16

Responsorial Psalm 118:2–4, 13–15, 22–24

Second Reading: Revelation 1:9–11a, 12–13, 17–19

Gospel: John 20:19–31

Introduction to Christianity: Living in the Light of the Resurrection

Fr. Matthew Hawkins



Easter reminds us that reality is not random or meaningless. As Christians, we believe the world is created and sustained by a personal God who is love. This world is not an illusion or a passing shadow, but a gift filled with meaning and purpose. Each of us is lovingly called into being by God and invited into communion with Him.

Christian prayer, especially contemplative prayer, is not about escape or detachment. It's about entering into the silence where we encounter the living God—not a vague force, but a personal “Thou” who speaks, who loves, who invites. In this silence, we don't empty ourselves into nothingness—we become more fully ourselves in relationship with the One who made us.

Through practices like Lectio Divina, Eucharistic adoration, the Holy Rosary, and the Jesus Prayer, we are drawn closer to the heart of God. The goal is not to rise above love or suffering, but to be transformed by love—even in suffering—to resemble Christ more fully.

On Easter, we proclaim that death does not have the final word. Love does. And in the light of the Resurrection, we see the world not as something to escape, but as something already being transfigured by grace.



Mass Intentions & Sanctuary Candle

The office is taking requests for Mass Intentions and Sanctuary Candles for 2025. Both are \$10 each.

Please contact Priscilla Davis at (412) 281-3141 or office@sbtmparishpgh.com for more information or to place your requests.

Discover the *beauty, truth, and wisdom* by participating in weekly meetings with Fr. Matthew Hawkins on Thursdays at 7 pm on Zoom. Please see **Bible Study** on the homepage of our website: <https://sbtmparishpgh.com> for information and to register for the Zoom link. For more information, contact Fr. Matthew: at 412.281.3141 or mhawkins@diopit.org.

Also, Be sure to tune in to Fr. Matthew's Dramatized Scriptural Rosary at 7:00 PM every evening on 102.1 FM

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