

# The Bell Ringer

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER, HYANNIS + APRIL 2026



## Jesus Christ Is Risen Today

*These excerpts are from the last homily of Pope Benedict XVI on the Easter Vigil 2012 before he retired..*

Easter is the feast of the new creation. Jesus is risen and dies no more. He has opened the door to a new life, one that no longer knows illness and death. He has taken mankind up into God Himself. “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God,” as St. Paul says in the First Letter to the Corinthians (15:50). On the subject of Christ’s Resurrection and our resurrection, the Church writer Tertullian in the third century was bold enough to write: “Rest assured, flesh

and blood, through Christ you have gained your place in heaven and in the Kingdom of

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God” (CCL II, 994). A new dimension has opened up for mankind. Creation has become greater and broader. Easter Day ushers in a new creation, but that is precisely why the Church starts the liturgy on this day with the

old creation, so that we can learn to understand the new one aright. At the beginning of the Liturgy of the Word on Easter night, then, comes the account of the creation of the world. Two things are particularly important here in connection with this liturgy. On the one hand, creation is presented as a whole that includes the phenomenon of time. The seven days are an image of completeness, unfolding in time. They are ordered towards the seventh day, the day of the freedom of all creatures for God and for one another. Creation is therefore directed towards the coming  
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## ***Jesus Christ Is Risen Today***

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together of God and His creatures; it exists so as to open up a space for the response to God's great glory, an encounter between love and freedom. On the other hand, what the Church hears on Easter night is above all the first element of the creation account: "God said, 'let there be light!'" (Gen 1:3). The creation account begins symbolically with the creation of light. The sun and the moon are created only on the fourth day. The creation account calls them lights, set by God in the firmament of heaven. In this way He deliberately takes away the divine character that the great religions had assigned to them. No, they are not gods. They are shining bodies created by the one God. But they are preceded by the light through which God's glory is reflected in the essence of the created being.

What is the creation account saying here? Light makes life possible. It makes encounter possible. It makes communication possible. It makes knowledge, access to reality and to truth, pos-

sible. And insofar as it makes knowledge possible, it makes freedom and progress possible. Evil hides. Light, then, is also an expression of the good that both is and creates brightness. It is daylight, which makes it possible for us to act. To say that God created light means that God created the world as a space for knowledge and truth, as a space for encounter and freedom, as a space for good and for love. Matter is fundamentally good, being itself is good. And evil does not come from God-made being, rather, it comes into existence only through denial. It is a "no".

At Easter, on the morning of the first day of the week, God said once again: "Let there be light". The night on the Mount of Olives, the solar eclipse of Jesus' passion and death, the night of the grave had all passed. Now it is the first day once again – creation is beginning anew. "Let there be light", says God, "and there was light": Jesus rises from the grave. Life is stronger than death. Good is stronger than evil. Love is stronger than hate. Truth is stronger than lies. The darkness of the previous days is driven away the moment Jesus rises from the grave and himself becomes

God's pure light. But this applies not only to Him, not only to the darkness of those days. With the resurrection of Jesus, light itself is created anew. He draws all of us after Him into the new light of the resurrection and He conquers all darkness. He is God's new day, new for all of us. . . .

On Easter night, the night of the new creation, the Church presents the mystery of light using a unique and very humble symbol: the Paschal candle. This is a light that lives from sacrifice. The candle shines inasmuch as it is burnt up. It gives light, inasmuch as it gives itself. Thus the Church presents most beautifully the paschal mystery of Christ, who gives Himself and so bestows the great light. . . .

It builds up the community of light. So the candle serves as a summons to us to become involved in the community of the Church, whose *raison d'être* is to let the light of Christ shine upon the world.

*Let us pray to the Lord at this time that He may grant us to experience the joy of His light; let us pray that we ourselves may become bearers of His light, and that through the Church, Christ's radiant face may enter our world (cf. LG 1). Amen. +*

# Who Are the Knights of Columbus?

*By Peter Bonfiglio, Grand Knight of Council 2525*

When 29-year-old Blessed Father Michael McGivney founded the Knights of Columbus in 1882, he knew what hardships and pressures these husbands and fathers — mostly poor, immigrant Catholics — faced. A culture with deep mistrust of the Catholic community, often dangerous working conditions, membership organizations that promised social benefits and mutual aid but came with strong anti-Catholic biases and the burden of knowing that their death would likely leave their families penniless and at risk of being separated.

Father McGivney, who is now being considered for sainthood for the work he did to assist families of workers in need, created a mutual insurance system to assist these laborers' loved ones. Since that time, the Knights of Columbus have become a worldwide organization with over 2.2 million members in 17 countries.

The Knights of Columbus are a Catholic men's organization founded on the principles of Charity, Unity, Fraternity and Patriotism. Closer to home, Council 2525, founded over 100 years ago, serves the parishes of Barnstable including St. Francis Xavier. We are here to assist the priests of our parishes when help is needed. We also

are known for our many charitable endeavors.

Most of you are familiar with our most famous charity activity, the Tootsie Roll drive, which raises funds for those with intellectual disabilities. The Knights are also unabashedly Pro-Life with many members attending events such as The March for Life, raise funds for Ultrasound machines to make unborn children visible to those considering abortion and volunteering at our annual Rose sale to support pregnancy resource centers.

The charitable efforts of the Knights do not end promoting the sanctity of life

activity. We assist the elderly with yard work or small home repairs. We have instituted an annual barbecue luncheon with the Cape Regency that brings smiles to the faces of residents and staff. We also volunteer to barbecue and serve food to the participants of the Special Olympics each May held at Barnstable High School and this past December hosted a pancake breakfast with Saint Nicholas for the St. Francis Xavier parishioners.

Prayer is also an important part of being a Knight. Members are encouraged to carry and say their Rosary. We participate in Rosary for Life, all *(Continued on page 4)*



## **... Knights of Columbus**

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Community Rosary and read at stations of the Cross during Lent. We also hold a Lenten Morning of Reflection each year.

The Lenten Food Drive encourages our parish members to contribute to those in need during the holy season. Last year, we had over 25 pickup trucks worth of food collected and over \$2,000 in donations to support the St. Vincent de Paul food pantry.

Our group also undertook the distribution of Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter food baskets to help some of those in need to enjoy the holiday season.

In the spirit of unity, the Knights host a Ham and Bean dinner in the Spring and an Italian Dinner on Columbus Day weekend to foster fellowship and camaraderie among the Knights and parishioners.

I trust that this article gave you a better understanding of who the Knights of Columbus are and what activities we undertake for the support of the community as well as for the parishes of Barnstable. +

*Knights Meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at Our Lady of Victory Parish, 230 South Main St., Centerville - 508-775-4054.*

St. Alphonse Ligouri in his book, *The School of Christian Perfection*, notes: "Men fall into sin because they lose sight of the presence of God." Therefore, we find His presence through the word of God in the Bible.

*"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."*

—John 15:12

It is impossible to love the Lord our God without at the same time loving our neighbor. The commandment that obliges us to love our God, obliges us also to love our neighbor. "And this commandment we have from God, that he who loveth God, love also his brother." (1 John 4:21).

From these words of the Apostle, St. Thomas Aquinas concludes that the one virtue of love embraces the love of God and the love of our neighbor. St. Jerome tells us that when the disciples of St. John the Evangelist asked him why he spoke so often of brotherly love, he replied: "Because it is the commandment of the Lord, and the fulfillment of this alone is sufficient for eternal salvation."

St. Catherine of Genoa once said to Our Lord: "O my God, Thou commandest me to love my neighbor, and I can love no one but Thee." Our Saviour replied: "My daughter, whoever loves Me loves everything that is loved by Me." Why, therefore, must we love our neighbor? Because he is loved by God. St. John was therefore right when he called him a liar who says that he loves God but hates his neighbor. Our Lord has promised that He will regard as done to Himself what we do for the least of our brethren: "Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these, my least brethren, you did it to me." (Matt. 25:40). From this St. Catherine of Genoa concludes: "If you wish to know how much a person loves his God, see how much he loves his neighbor."

Christian charity is one of the principal fruits of the Redemption. The prophet Isaiah had foretold this truth in the following words: "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid: the calf and the lion and the sheep shall abide together, and a little child shall lead them." (Is. 11:6). By these words he wished to say that the followers of Jesus Christ, though from different nations and different climes and of unlike characters and inclinations, would nevertheless live peacefully together, for brotherly love would induce them to practice mutual forbearance. And St. Luke, when speaking of the first Christians, says: "The multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul." (Acts 4:32).

This was the effect of the prayer which our Redeemer addressed to His heavenly Father on the eve of His Sacred Passion: "Holy Father, keep them in thy name whom thou hast given me; that they may be one, as we also are." (John 17:11). +



# *How St. Louis de Montfort Inspired Five Different Popes*

By Philip Kosloski\*

April 28th marks the anniversary of St. Louis de Montfort's death, a saint who has been hailed by many as one of the most influential persons of recent history. His inspiration has remained constant over the past three centuries and has shaped the hearts of many holy men and women, including the beloved St. John Paul II.

Montfort is most well known for his book *True Devotion to Mary* and for the "total consecration to Jesus through Mary" that he proposed in it. John Paul II highlighted this "total consecration" in his papal motto, a phrase he used up until his death: "Totus Tuus."

The entire phrase from St. Louis de Montfort is expressed as "*Totus tuus ego sum, et omnia mea tua sunt. Accipio te in mea omnia. Praebe mihi cor tuum, Maria*" ("I belong entirely to you, and all that I have is yours. I take you for my all. O Mary, give me your heart").

Yet, John Paul II was not the only saint or pope to bring attention to Montfort and his writings. Over the past 200 years, at least five popes have expressed their gratitude to Montfort and encouraged the Church to dive deeper into his Marian spirituality:

• **Pope Pius IX (1846-1878)** promoted it as one of the best forms of Marian devotion, and gave the decree, "the Venerable Servant of God, Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort, practiced the virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity toward God and neighbor, the cardinal virtues of Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance,

and the related moral virtues, to an heroic degree." Pius IX was also the pope who solemnly defined the dogma of the Immaculate Conception.



**The French postage stamp honoring St. Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort was issued in 1974 by the French Post recognizing the impact of this French saint.**

• **Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903)**, known as the "Rosary Pope," beatified Montfort in 1888, was highly influenced by *True Devotion* and decreed a plenary indulgence for those who practiced Montfort's Marian consecration. Pope Leo also wrote a total of eleven encyclicals on the rosary during his pontificate.

• **Pope St. Pius X (1903-1914)** adopted much of Montfort's Marian language in his encyclical on the Immaculate Conception, *Ad diem illum*, writing, "since it is through Mary that we attain to the knowledge of Christ, through Mary also we most easily obtain that life of which Christ is the source and origin." He also

granted an Apostolic Blessing for anyone who reads *True Devotion*.

• **Pope Pius XII (1939-1958)** canonized Louis de Montfort on July 20, 1947, where he highly praised the new saint, saying, "[Montfort's] great secret of attracting and giving souls to Jesus was his devotion to Mary. All his activity was founded upon her, all his confidence rested in her. In opposition to the joyless austerity, melancholy fear and depressing pride of Jansenism, (*Continued on page 6*)

## *St. Louis de Montfort . . .*

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he promoted the filial, trustful, ardent and expansive love in action of a slave of Mary” In the spirit of de Montfort’s “total consecration” and in response to Our Lady of Fatima, Pope Pius XII wrote in an Apostolic Letter how he “consecrated the entire world to the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mother of God, [and] in a most special way. . . we dedicate and consecrate all the peoples of Russia to that same Immaculate Heart.”

- **Pope St. John Paul II (1978-2005)** was highly influenced by Montfort, and recounted how he “read and reread many times and with great spiritual profit” Montfort’s writings. He also encouraged the faithful to follow the example of Montfort, saying, “In repeating every day ‘Totus tuus,’ and living in harmony with her, one can attain to the experience of the Father in limitless confidence and love, to docility to the Holy Spirit, and to the transformation of self according to the image of Christ.” He singled out Montfort’s writings again and again in the many documents he wrote on the Blessed Mother and even considered proclaiming him a “Doctor of the Church.”

As we can see through the example of these five popes, Montfort’s Marian spirituality has not lost its potency over the years and remains for us a pathway to a deeper union with Christ. +

- \* *This article was originally published in Aleteia, the online newsletter, on April 28, 2016, and is reprinted with the permission of the author.*

## *St. Louis de Montfort's Prayer to Jesus*

O most loving Jesus, deign to let me pour forth my gratitude before Thee, for the grace Thou hast bestowed upon me in giving me to Thy holy Mother through the devotion of Holy Bondage, that she may be my advocate in the presence of Thy majesty and my support in my extreme misery. Alas, O Lord! I am so wretched that without this dear Mother I should be certainly lost. Yes, Mary is necessary for me at Thy side and everywhere that she may appease Thy just wrath, because I have so often offended Thee; that she may save me from the eternal punishment of Thy justice, which I deserve; that she may contemplate Thee, speak to Thee, pray to Thee, approach Thee and please Thee; that she may help me to save my soul and the souls of others; in short, Mary is necessary for me that I may always do Thy holy will and seek Thy greater glory in all things. Ah, would that I could proclaim throughout the whole world the mercy that Thou hast shown to me ! Would that everyone might know I should be already damned, were it not for Mary! Would that I might offer worthy thanksgiving for so great a blessing! Mary is in me. Oh, what a treasure! Oh, what a consolation! And shall I not be entirely hers? Oh, what ingratitude! My dear Saviour, send me death rather than such a calamity, for I would rather die than live without belonging entirely to Mary. With St. John the Evangelist at the foot of the Cross, I have taken her a thousand times for my own and as many times have given myself to her; but if I have not yet done it as Thou, dear Jesus, dost wish, I now renew this offering as Thou dost desire me to renew it. And if Thou seest in my soul or my body anything that does not belong to this august princess, I pray Thee to take it and cast it far from me, for whatever in me does not belong to Mary is unworthy of Thee.

O Holy Spirit, grant me all these graces. Plant in my soul the Tree of true Life, which is Mary; cultivate it and tend it so that it may grow and blossom and bring forth the fruit of life in abundance. O Holy Spirit, give me great devotion to Mary, Thy faithful spouse; give me great confidence in her maternal heart and an abiding refuge in her mercy, so that by her Thou mayest truly form in me Jesus Christ, great and mighty, unto the fullness of His perfect age. Amen.

# Respect for Life Corner

By Rebecca Minninger

You are invited Friday, May 1st, to the Fall River Diocese Walk for Life. We will travel to Attleboro to the LaSalette Shrine for Mass with Bishop da Cunha and then pray and process to pray outside the local abortion clinic with many others who will join us. Mass will be at 10:30 a.m. and the day will end around 2:00 p.m. See the flyer below and come and join in this important effort to protect Life!

Please call Deacon Steve if you have questions or need a ride at 508-237-1154.



For your reflection, we offer this poem, written by Flora Jones, a participant at the National March for Life in D.C. It expresses the questions and emotions that arose in the child after he or she was aborted.

## A Moment's Pleasure

A moment's pleasure you leave the room, could you have left a child in a mother's womb?

Daddy, please, don't you hear me cry,  
Mamma may choose to let me die.

It has to be done; there is no other way,  
was all I could hear my Mamma say.  
She feels all alone, the sentence given;  
now I'm on my way to heaven.

Now Mamma regrets the choice she made;  
it makes her cry; she longs to hold me and  
sing a lullaby.

What about you Daddy, do you think of me?  
You could be rocking me on your knee.

As I look down on a world full of strife, please  
don't kill when there is life.

Can't they see babies are a gift from above,  
precious, innocent, and full of God's love?

If you or someone you know is suffering regret from an abortion decision recently, or years ago, this resource might be helpful for them: [HopeAfterAbortion.org](http://HopeAfterAbortion.org), and this one in Spanish, [esperanzaposaborto.org](http://esperanzaposaborto.org).

Always remember, Jesus always loves us and wants to heal us. +

## Prayer for the Holy Father

Almighty and everlasting God, have mercy upon Thy servant, Pope Leo XIV, our Supreme Pontiff, and direct him, according to Thy loving kindness, in the way of eternal salvation; that, of Thy gift, he may ever desire that which is pleasing unto Thee and may accomplish it with all his might. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be to the Father. . .*



**Words<sup>o</sup><sub>F</sub>  
WISDOM**

**Quotations from the Saints whose feasts  
are this month . . .**

“O Lord our God, grant us grace to desire Thee with our whole heart; that, so desiring, we may seek and, seeking, find Thee and so finding Thee, may love Thee and loving Thee, may hate those sins from which Thou hast redeemed us.”

— **St. Anselm**

“It is an easy thing to wear the mitre and a cross, but it is a most dreadful circumstance to have an account to give of a bishopric to the Judge of the living and the dead.”

— **St. Adalbert**

“It does not matter, whether or not I am killed, the religion has taken root on the island, it will not be destroyed by my death, since it comes not from men but from God.”

— **St. Peter Chanel**

“What made the holy apostles and martyrs endure fierce agony and bitter torments, except faith and especially faith in the Resurrection? What is it that today makes true followers of Christ cast luxuries aside, leave pleasures behind and endure difficulties and pain? It is a living faith that expresses itself through love. It is this that makes us put

aside the goods of the present in the hope of future goods. It is because of faith that we exchange the present for the future.”

— **St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen**

“Take advantage of little sufferings even more than of great ones.

God considers not so much what we suffer, as how we suffer. . . Turn everything to profit as the grocer does in his shop.”

— **St. Louis de Montfort**

“Love sacrifice are closely linked, like the sun and the light. We cannot love without suffering and we cannot suffer without love.”

— **St. Gianna Beretta Molla**

“Be strong and kill yourself with the sword of hate and love, then you will not hear the insults and abuse which the enemies of the Church throw at you. Your eyes will not see anything, which seems impossible, or the sufferings, which may follow but only the light of faith and in that light, everything is possible and remember, God never lays greater burdens on us than we can bear.”

— **St. Catherine of Siena**

“Following the example of our predecessors, seeing that the Church militant, which God has placed in our hands, in these our times is tossed this way and that by so many heresies, and is grievously troubled and afflicted by so many wars, and by the depraved morals of men, we also raise our eyes, weeping but full of hope, unto that same mountain, whence every aid comes forth, and we encourage and admonish each member of Christ’s faithful to do likewise in the Lord.”

— **St. Pope Pius V**



# Words of WISDOM

## Quotations on the beauty and value of Adoration of the Lord . . .

“In a world where there is so much noise, so much bewilderment, there is a need for silent Adoration of Jesus concealed in the Host. Be assiduous in the prayer of Adoration and teach it to the faithful. It is a source of comfort and light, particularly to those who are suffering.”

— **Pope Benedict XVI**

“The daily adoration or visit to the Blessed Sacrament is the practice which is the fountainhead of all devotional works.”

— **St. Pope Pius X**

“Jesus has made Himself the Bread of Life to give us life. Night and day, He is there. If you really want to grow in love, come back to the Eucharist, come back to that Adoration.”

— **St. Teresa of Calcutta**

“Through adoration, the Christian mysteriously contributes to the radical transformation of the world and to the sowing of the Gospel. Anyone who prays to the Savior draws the whole world with him and raises it to God. Those who stand before the Lord are therefore fulfilling an eminent service. They are presenting to Christ all those who do

not know Him or are far from Him: they keep watch in His presence on their behalf.”

— **St. Pope John Paul II**

“The Church and the world have a great need of Eucharistic worship. Jesus waits for us in this sacrament of love. Let us be generous with our time in going to meet Him in adoration and in contemplation that is full of faith and ready to make reparation for the great faults and crimes of the world. May our adoration never cease.”

— **St. Pope John Paul II**

“Look upon the hour of Adoration assigned to you as an hour in paradise. Go to your Adoration as one would to heaven, to the divine banquet. You will then long for that hour and hail it with joy. Take delight in fostering a longing for it in your heart. Tell yourself, ‘In four hours, in two hours, in one hour, our Lord will give me an audience of grace and love. He has invited me; He is waiting for me; He is longing for me.’ “

— **St. Peter J. Eymard**

“When we are before the Blessed Sacrament, instead of looking about us, let us shut our eyes and open our hearts; and the good God will open His. We will go to Him, and He will come to us, the one to give, and the other to receive. It will be like a breath passing from one to the other. What delight we find in forgetting ourselves that we may seek God.”

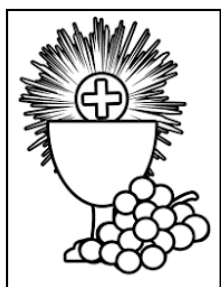
— **St. John Vianney**

“I am asking you, every single day of your life without any exception, to make a continuous hour of adoration in the Presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament . . .”

— **Venerable Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen**

# The Month of April 2026

## Monthly Theme: The Holy Eucharist



During the month of April, Catholics are encouraged to deepen their devotion to the Holy Eucharist through various practices, such as attending Eucharistic Adoration and participating in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass not only on Sunday but on a week day too if possible.

## Pope's Prayer Intention: Priests in Crisis

Let us pray for priests going through moments of crisis in their vocation, that they may find the accompaniment they need and communities to support them with understanding and prayer.

## Monthly Virtue: Love of Neighbor

We are called by God to love one another. We demonstrate love to our neighbor and share Jesus with the world through the Corporal Works of Mercy bearing witness to the truth. They are familiar and self-explanatory: Feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, shelter the homeless or welcome the stranger, visit the sick, visit the prisoner, and bury the dead.