



APRIL 9, 2023 | EASTER SUNDAY

HOLY FAMILY PARISH

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312 Tazewell Ave.
Tazewell, VA 24651

ST. ELIZABETH'S
160 Merrick Lane
Pocahontas, VA 24635

ST. MARY'S
1122 Farmer Street
Richlands, VA 24641

ST. JOSEPH'S
1007 Independence Rd.
Grundy, VA 24614

After the Storm

HOW DO YOU feel getting something done very well after so many challenges? It could be a very difficult test or examination, a job description, a contract, an interview, a trying time etc. Most people come out from such with smiles, sighs of relief, and hilarious shouts. Others tend to be outwardly calm but inwardly excited while, for others, post-victory feeling could be indescribable. Indeed after the storm comes calmness.

The latter view could be linked to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. On Friday we were thrown into so much sorrow. Our Lord Jesus Christ was condemned to die. He was bruised, flogged, cajoled, abandoned, mutilated, and finally killed. It was all gloomy and confusion was rife. The apostles were devastated. The best among them goofed. Peter, who was given an enviable position as the key bearer, denied the Lord even before a little maid who could qualify as his

daughter. Judas who was overlooking the treasure of the community sold the master for thirty pieces of silver. And of course the others took to their heels when the situation became unbearable.

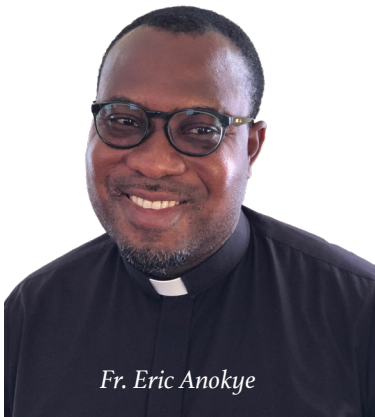
All these and more became past tales with the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ on this day. Indeed we have reason to rejoice because as St. Paul would say, death is destroyed and victory is complete (1 Cor. 15:54). It is also victory over the plans of the devil. From the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ the devil had been looking for ways of stopping the salvific work of the redeemer through different persons and situations, though without success until the appointed time when our Lord was subjected to suffering and death on the cross. So when we hear about Herod plotting to kill the infant, the scribes, Sadducees, Pilate, the priests, Pharisees, the towns people of Nazareth and their like, we should actually see these as orchestrations of the devil to frustrate the work of our redemption.

After the death of Jesus the devil also saw the need to stop him from rising from the dead through the chief priests and the Sanhedrin who went to Pilate to ask that the tomb be guarded by Roman soldiers (Matt 27:62-65). This was a situation where mere mortals wanted to prevent a divinely programmed redemptive plan.

This whole arrangement of supposing that the disciples will come to take the body of Jesus away

and say that he rose from the dead showed the anxiety on the part of the devil that, after all, the resurrection will make a show of the futility of his plans. It is important to note that nobody, spirit or human, can thwart the plans of God. At the appointed time, the divinely instituted moment, the soldiers strategized to beat Jesus back into the grave should he attempt to rise. However, there was an earthquake (Matt.28:1) and an angel came and rolled the stone that was covering the tomb away. The soldiers were so terrified that they became like dead men and at that instant our Lord rose majestically and triumphantly. The soldier woke up only when it was too late and they could only go to report themselves as sleeping when the disciples took the body of the Lord away—an incredible tale that is unbecoming of Roman soldiers.

The testimony of the women who went to the tomb early and met an empty tomb was ascertained by Peter and John who went to confirm the empty tomb. It is also our faith that our Lord has risen and that also marks our own resurrection. We are a resurrection people. There is no way our Lord could rise and we remain unaffected and unchanged by the power of his resurrection. To this end St. Paul would admonish us that if we believe that we have been raised with Christ we should seek for things above where Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father (Col.3:1f).



Fr. Eric Anokye

The resurrection of Jesus is productive of a lasting identity for us. There is need for every aspect of our lives to be marked with the character of the resurrection. Pope Benedict XVI in his book *Jesus of Nazareth* (part II) indicated that the Christian faith stands or falls with the truth of the testimony that Christ is risen from the dead. May his resurrection open new vistas of elevation for you.

Happy Easter.



PASTOR

Fr. Eric Anokye
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(276) 385-7312

OFFICE MANAGER/ BOOKKEEPER

Lydia St. Peter

OFFICE HOURS

Mon–Fri 9:30AM – 2:30PM

Please call the parish office to make arrangements for the **Sacraments of Baptism, Anointing of the Sick or Holy Matrimony** as well as funerals. **Reconciliation** is available from 30 minutes before a scheduled Mass.

MASS TIMES

SATURDAY

4PM – St. Joseph's

6PM – St. Mary's

SUNDAY

9AM – St. Elizabeth's

11:30AM – St. Theresa's

TUESDAY & FRIDAY

10AM – St. Theresa's

Cover image:

Rembrandt van Rijn, *Christ and St. Mary Magdalene at the Tomb*, 1669

The one thing you need to enter the mysteries of Holy Week

By Father Steve Grunow, wordonfire.org

One of the great mysteries of Holy Week is the revelation of how God in Christ deals with our refusals, particularly the most terrifying refusal of all—that is, the cross. The cross is terrifying because God died, and not only died, but died in the most horrific manner we could devise.

The mystery is that such a terrifying response is met with God's acceptance of what our refusal imposes. God in Christ accepts death, and death in the manner that we devise: death on a cross.

Isaiah foresees all this—God's acceptance of the cruel sentence of death we impose on him—in the “servant” texts from Isaiah's great book of prophecy. The “servant,” who is the Messiah, does not offer resistance to those who intend to harm him, to kill him.

Why?

God does this to reveal something of extraordinary importance about who he is and what he wants, particularly how he intends to deal with our refusals. And what he reveals is not only important, but also surprising.

Worldly standards of justice would determine that the horror of the cross should be met with an even more horrific wrath, a wrath at the very least equivalent to what we unleash in the cross. If we refuse God, should not God refuse us?

The answer to this question, given by Christ on the cross, is absolutely inexplicable. God doesn't refuse us; instead, he imparts to us a mercy that exceeds the demands of justice, and sets a world gone wrong back right. Through our refusal of God, we beg for wrath. But God doesn't want to destroy us; God wants to save us.

And so, what God does with the cross is accept it and then transform it, inserting himself into the furthest reaches of our refusals, descending himself into the alienation from God that we would impose on ourselves, and from that place, offering us a mercy that is as surprising as it is undeserved. Our attempts to destroy God are foolish and futile, and in the end, God undermines our every attempt to do so, because in our efforts, we do not destroy him; we only risk destroying ourselves. And our destruction is not what God wants.

Thus, God meets our refusals with his mercy. Now we have to decide if we are willing to accept the mercy of God. If we do, then we have to change.

This is the decision that the cross of Christ demands that we make.

You see, the mercy of God is not about evading consequences; it is about the opportunity to set things right. The mercy of God is the gift of another chance, a chance that offers us the possibility of being changed, rather than being ruined.

Would we rather be changed or ruined? God shows us in the cross of Christ what he wants. But what do we want?

The Gospel presents the sad fact that Judas was not alone in his betrayal of Christ. The fact is that in their disappointment and fear, many of those who were closest to Christ abandoned him in his hour of greatest need. Despite all their protests to the contrary, when the moment came and the dark shadows descended, many of Christ's followers ran for the cover of the night.

As it was then, so it is now.

None of us should be so prideful as to place ourselves among the few who remained with Christ as he underwent his suffering and death. The Apostle Paul reminds us, lest any of us think more of ourselves than we should, that all have sinned, all have fallen short (Rom. 3:23).

It is only in an attitude of humility that one can truly enter into the mysteries of Holy Week and appreciate their meaning and understand their purpose.

Unless we admit our refusals, repent of our sins, and have the same attitude as Christ, who “emptied himself, taking the form of a servant” (Phil. 2:7), we choose to lurk in the dark rather than walk with the Lord Jesus into his light.

Humility is the one thing we need this Holy Week.

“Indeed, the cure for death does exist. *Christ* is the tree of life, once more within our reach. If we remain close to him, then we have life. Hence, during this night of resurrection, with all our hearts we shall sing the *alleluia*, the song of joy that has no need of words. Hence, Paul can say to the Philippians: ‘Rejoice in the *Lord* always, again I will say, rejoice!’ (Phil 4:4). Joy cannot be commanded. It can only be given. The risen *Lord* gives us joy: true life.”

– Pope Benedict XVI

"There's a scene in Sigrid Undset's conversion novel *The Wild Orchid* I think of often. It describes the book's protagonist, Paul Selmer, entering St. Olav's cathedral in Oslo very late one night, after an evening ill spent. He considers himself an agnostic but is informed about Catholic beliefs, being the lodger of a Catholic family.

"Sitting alone in the dark, he sees the sanctuary light flicker in the distance. It suddenly occurs to him: if this tiny flame tells the truth, that is, if God is truly present here, then life needs to be rethought entirely; then nothing is the way he'd previously thought it might be. Easter is what enables this perception."

– Bp. Eric Varden, Bishop of Trondheim, Norway



mass intentions

Date **Intention**

4/8 SATURDAY

4PM Lenetta Street by Frannie Minton

6PM The Maybank family

4/9 SUNDAY

9AM Mike Rocchetti ☩

11:30AM Olivia Tester ☩

stewardship of treasure

Donations Received as of April 2 (Week 40)		
CHURCH	ATTENDANCE	OFFERINGS
St. Joseph's	12	\$333
St. Elizabeth's	26	\$1,225
St. Mary's	9	\$1,010
St. Theresa's	54	\$1,588
Total	101	\$4,156
Outside Donations		
Year to Date Received		\$118,010
Goal		\$107,385
Ahead/Behind Goal		+ \$10,625

please pray for

Louise Serreno*
Gerry Hankins
Clarence Moore
Lexi Cox
Sarah Wall
Tammy Bennett
Margaret Wasilewski
Nic Ulate
Frannie & Rayburn Minton
Sue Bailey
Christian Lambert
Shane Neal
Archbishop John Kwofie
Pete Belcher
Lucas Boyd
Ralph Heldreth
Chris Jessie
Leo Brown
Carolina Ferrare
Junior Aiken
Jeanne Hash
Lara Marshall
Carol & Jim Shumate
Andrew Satmary
Glenn Harrison
Donna Petro
Christian Marshall
Tina Rocchetti
Alice Godin
Randy Snyder
Bryan Gunter
Michael Beavers
Natalie Dodge

Roger Empson
Dreama Ritter
Marco Warner
Chris Lambert
Virginia Dy
Mary Muncy
Cindy Lambert
Jean St. Clair
Helen Petro
Clinard Coleman
Joan Harrison
Joe & Yvonne Blevins
Kyle Brown
Bobby Cole
Jeffrey Parkhurst
Fr. Dan Brady
Sarah Walters
Everly Duns
Amelia Proffit
Maurice Law
Zac Carter
Dennis & Frances Savage
Nancy Jo Testerman
Donnie Neal
Josh Cornwell
John Shumate
Seth Waddell
Doug Vance
Russ Hatfield
Connie Pace
Lynn Jones
Joy Hamilton
Jeanne & Nick Ameli

council members

PARISH COUNCIL:
Tonya Hylton, Frannie Minton, Ralph Shawver, Barbara Jones, Donna Lambert, Maria Farris, Debbie Parkhurst

FINANCE COUNCIL:
Kathy & Bob Buchanan, Randy Bolling, Doug Vance, Anne Danko, Jim Talbert, Jackie Shawver, Lydia St. Peter

parish news & events

Note: There will be no daily Mass next week!

Annual Diocesan Appeal Update: We surpassed our \$7790 goal and have collected \$6,735 to date with \$3,100 in recurring gift projections.

Thank you so much for your generosity!

*“Christ, our paschal lamb, has been sacrificed;
let us then feast with joy in the Lord.”
– 1 Cor 5:7*

birthdays & anniversaries:

9: Mike & Janet McDonagh (Anniversary)

14: Nerissa Carpio, Michael Beavers | **15:** Floyd Huntley, Paul Giuliani



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