

SECOND SUNDAY OF

Easter

(OR SUNDAY OF DIVINE MERCY)

APRIL 19, 2020

Jesus said to Thomas, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me?
Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

John 20:29

Saint Teresa of Avila Parish

LOVE GOD. LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR. MAKE DISCIPLES OF JESUS.

PARISH CLERGY

Reverend J. Jerome Wild, Pastor

Deacon Francis C. Lally, Permanent Deacon

Deacon David J. Matour, Permanent Deacon

Reverend Richard M. Jacobs, Sunday Asst.

Reverend Kail C. Ellis, OSA, Sunday Asst.

Website: www.stteresaofavilaparish.com



PARISH STAFF

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Ursula Lawrence, Parish Secretary/Receptionist
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MOTHER TERESA REGIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL

405 Allendale Road, King of Prussia, PA 19406

Principal: Christine Pagan

Phone: 610-265-2323

Website: www.MTCschool.org



To sign up for the Online Giving Program
through OSV, please go to this website
and follow the posted instructions
www.osvonlinegiving.com/4395

Dear Parishioners,

The Apostles had set all their hope on Jesus. And it all came to a horrifying and humiliating end with the crucifixion . Now they were reduced to hiding behind a locked door for fear that the authorities would do to them what they had done to Jesus.

While they were cowering in fear, Jesus appeared to them. John tells us that Jesus shows himself to them, "despite the locked doors." John is not just referring here to the heavy wooden doors of their hiding place. He is talking about the closed doors of their hearts. Jesus doesn't wait until they calm down or get perspective on the situation. Rather, he breaks through the door of their fear announcing the good news that he is alive.

Just as Jesus is not shut out by the closed doors of the apostles' fear, neither is he shut out by the closed door of Thomas' doubt. Instead, taking up Thomas' challenge, Jesus appears to him so that he can put his doubt aside. The nail marks on his hands, feet, and side dispel any doubt that this is truly the risen Jesus standing before him.

All of us have times when we approach God with a closed heart. We might fear that He will take from us more that we're willing to give. Or, we might fear that we'll be made fun of if we live His message in a total and radical way. Our hearts may also be hardened by doubt. With so many different religions and so many different opinions, we might wonder, who's to say which is the right way?

No matter where we are our faith-no matter how closed our hearts may seem-Jesus can break through that closed door and reveal himself. If you can only go so far, Jesus can meet you there. If you can only believe so much, Jesus can take your hand and lead you a little further along. There is not doubt, fear, or weakness that Jesus, through the power of his resurrection and the power of his Holy Spirit, cannot surmount.

Thomas is an example for us here. Doubting Thomas was martyred for his witness to the good news of Jesus' resurrection. Jesus broke through the closed door of Thomas' doubt and filled him with the faith which enabled him to eventually give his life for Jesus.

The same is true for us. On Divine Mercy Sunday, Jesus wants nothing more that to reveal himself to us, dispel our doubts, and lead us to freedom and peace.

Blessings,

Father Jerry Wild



During the pandemic when you are prevented from receiving the Eucharist at Mass, the Church encourages us to make an act of "spiritual communion," where we unite ourselves to God through prayer. It is a beautiful way to express to God our desire to be united with him when we are unable to complete that union in the reception of Holy Communion. The prayer of Spiritual Communion can be prayed not only if you are unable to attend Mass during the coronavirus but even in the midst of your daily work.

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my life & soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally at Mass, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You.



Offering Totals:
Sunday Offering 4/12/2020 \$3929.00
March Online Giving \$10,300.00.

During this uncertain time please remember the Parish depends on your weekly contribution. Please mail to the Parish Office, drop off into the new mail slot at the Parish Office entrance, or sign up for online giving.

The Rose of Life for this week is requested by Marie and Bill Baker in memory of Simpson and Baker families.



April 19, 2020 **Divine Mercy Sunday**

First Reading — All who believed were devoted to the Teachings of the apostles, the communal life, the breaking of the bread, and prayer (Acts 2:42-47).

Psalms — Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting (Psalm 118).

Second Reading — God has given us an undiminished inheritance, safeguarded for us in heaven (1 Peter 1:3-9).

Gospel — The risen Christ comes to his disciples with peace and the Spirit. The absent Thomas doubts (John 20:19-31).



Table Prayer for the Season of Easter

This is the day the Lord has made!

Today is the Day of days:

We are filled with Easter joy, nourished by the bounty of the earth.

Today is the Day of days:

May we know Christ present when we break bread with those we love.

Today is the Day of days:

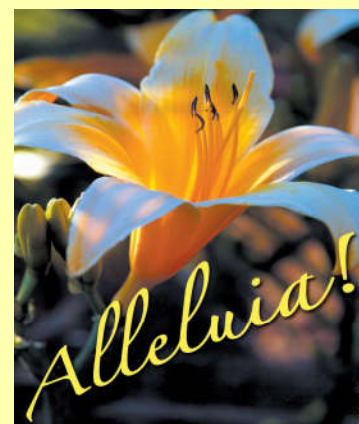
Let us show Christ to the poor and hungry, so our service to them is a sign of his glory.

This is the day the Lord has made!

Let all the earth cry out with joy, today is the Day of days!

Bless this meal, O Lord, and grant everyone a place at the feast of heaven.

Amen.



GET REAL!

Those of us who flatter ourselves that we have a "realistic" view of the world may listen to the first reading today and say, "Get real!" when we hear Luke's account of the early, Elysian days of the Christian movement. All seems to be rosy, lots of wonders are performed, everyone shares selflessly, they eat together in "exultation," and the Lord added to their numbers? Well, who wouldn't be attracted to a group like this? From the wind that swept through the upper room at Pentecost as the Spirit of God blew over the face of the waters in Genesis, and the fire that appeared over each disciple as the light appeared at the dawn of creation, Luke's intent in Acts is to show a new creation, a restoration of creation's original goodness through the working of the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit who continues to make us into the Body of Christ. We may occasionally, like Thomas in the Gospel, say, "Get real!" but our ultimate reality in the Spirit is to work continually to make our Christian community a new creation, one in which others will find God's joy and beauty.

Mass Intentions, Saints and Special Observances

Sat. April 18	Vigil Mass
4:15 PM	Albert Helverson
Sun. April 19	Divine Mercy Sunday
9:00 AM	Patricia Brown
11 AM	Brigid McGill
Mon. April 20	Easter Weekday
10:00 AM	David DiSimone
Tues. April 21	St. Anselm
7:00 AM	Mary Carolyn Carona
Wed. April 22	Easter Weekday
7:00 AM	Dalmazio DiCristifaro
Fri. April 24	St. Fidelis
7:00 AM	Mary A. Sommers
Sat. April 25	Vigil Mass
4:15 PM	Victor Orler
Sun. April 26	Third Sunday of Easter
9:00 AM	Vincent DiCarlantonio
11:00 AM	Andrew Morrisroe



Friends,

In recent weeks, the coronavirus outbreak has had a profound impact on countries around the world, & increasingly, here in the United States. In light of measures being taken to contain the outbreak and avoid further illness, many of us may be hesitant to leave our homes. In many areas, Mass and other church services may not be available. It is at this exact moment that our faith is most needed. In an effort to continue the practice of our faith in these trying times, I would like to invite you to [join us online](https://www.wordonfire.org/daily-mass) for daily Mass. Word on Fire will be [offering daily Mass](https://www.wordonfire.org/daily-mass) for the foreseeable future. Join me, or Word on Fire CEO Fr. Steve Grunow, right here:

<https://www.wordonfire.org/daily-mass>.

If you cannot attend Mass or join us online, I encourage you to read the Goels, pray with your families, and join yourself to the Eucharist—the source and summit of our Catholic faith—by making an act of spiritual communion. And please continue to pray for those affected by the coronavirus.

Peace

+ Robert Baum

Around the Archdiocese & Local Area

Rosary Campaign for an End to the Coronavirus - Nightly at 8 PM

The Office for the New Evangelization of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia invites you to join us online, by phone or in spirit as we pray the Rosary **every night at 8 PM**. We will ask the miraculous intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary to put an end to the coronavirus. Over 1600 households have joined in for this time of communal prayer.

Full details about how to join in can be found at phillyevang.org/rosary.



Prayers

A full list of spiritual resources during the pandemic from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia can be found at archphila.org/resource/

Growing in FAITH

4 reasons to be hopeful right now

It's hard not to worry these days with reports of viruses and financial concerns. Yet we in God's family have more reasons to be hopeful no matter how uncertain the world ...

God, our Father, knows what we need. "If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him" (Matthew 7:11). He will take care of us when we trust him.

He can work miracles when we ask. "Know that the Lord works wonders for the faithful; the Lord hears when I call out" (Psalm 4:4). "Be strong and of good courage, do not fear ... for it is the Lord your God who goes with you; he will not fail you or forsake you" (Deuteronomy 31:6). Just when life looks bleak, God can surprise us.

He will never abandon us. "You, Lord, are near to all who call upon you ... (Psalm 145:18). Know that he is always close.

Worrying won't do any good. "Can any of you by worrying add a moment to your lifespan? If even the smallest things are beyond your control, why are you anxious about the rest?" (Luke 12:25). Don't waste energy on worrying about what is beyond your control. Enjoy your blessings.



Praying With Our Parish

Please pray for all our recently deceased,
Helen Garcia and Constance Salamone

Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her. May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Please pray for the healing of:

Andy Capone, Edward Hartman, Owen Connor, Nino Gulotta, Sarah Hughes, Doris Diconcini, Joan Schaffer, Frank Gallo, Diane Bentola, Eugene Yanity, Sue Perrachia, Chip Fulmer, Jimmy Siravo, Roy Sullivan, Teresa Vesey, Mary Gruber, Elise Pancio, David Bydalek, Baby Lucas Coll, William Brown, Fr. Sam Kelly, David Titanich, David Dolga, Leo Corcoran, Anne Marie Garraty, Marcia Prester, Robert Perkins, Ed Wallace, MaryAnn Dayoc, Deacon Michael Dayoc, Suzanne O'Brien, Cynthia Fish, Frances Rutlo, Julia Adams, Margaret Miller, A.J. Mc Gee, Nicholas Cruciani, Teresa Garate, Peter Mulligan, Marguerite McCutcheon, Beverly Zapata, David & Samantha Roberto, Alessio Gentile, Betty Lee Horst, Anndreana Picard, Viola Clark, Joan Moore, Jane Miecskowski, Jeanette Mallon, Raoul Garcia, Joe Lehman, Heather Bollinger, Sarah Neve, Eileen Swiech, Pat Leberman, Shannon Austin, Barrie Gehrlein, Max Maertzig, Don Pell, Eli & Ella Vivian, Helen Garcia, Eduardo Rojo, Michael Semach, Jean Brosso, Jeanette Collins, Tamara Proietto, Ron Roberts, Jack MacDonald, Marilyn Keis, Jean Butera, Brooke Weidenfeld, Julie Noble, Lahra Birmingham, Ralph Pettine, Lauren Mendez, Anthony Jacquin Mendez, Mary Snyder, Barbara DeSantis, Diana Rava, Baby Alayna Lihn, Christine Tasker, Jonathan Auris, John Witlin, Baby Brock Immel, Barbara Tassoni, Melissa Williamson, Donna Hicks, Kristine Schafer, Chip Capinski, Janice Gilpin, Sr. Dorothy Sullivan, RSM, Domenic DiPaolo, Alyssa Lackner, Gilbert Martinelli, Tina Moyer, Margaret Cesare, Lawrence Reynolds, Jim Uckele, Jennifer Owens, Jack Walsh, Peggy Walsh, Al Caza, Terry Strainick, Debbie Scott, Bill O'Neill, Butch Cunningham, Barbara Breitbarth, Steven Kehoe, Rosemary Schlichtig, Diane Benton, Tony Polvin, Diane Haws, Margaret Bosler

Please pray for all those who serve our country:

Army Spec. Anthony Chiaravalloti, Vincent Bergandino, MGySgt Darin Chinavare; Cmdr. David L. Cute, Jr. USN; John Doran; Lance Hecker, Sp.Op; Cmdr. Matt Kosnar, LCPL Mikey Kirkpatrick; Capt. Thomas Lerner; Captain Valerie Smith; Msgr. Timothy R. Whalon; Capt. Jaysen Satterwhite.

Parish Information

A warm greeting is extended to all who have come to worship with our community of faith. We are grateful for our faithful parishioners who are here every week. We also welcome all our visitors and invite you to consider joining our parish. If you are not Catholic, we encourage you to contact our Parish Office for information about becoming a member of the Church.

PARISH REGISTRATION is held in the vestibule of the Church after all Masses on the 1st and 3rd weekends of the month. You may also register at the Parish Office on weekdays during business hours.

BAPTISM is usually celebrated on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month at 12:00PM. Please call the Parish Office at 610-666-5820 for upcoming baptism dates. Parents must attend our Pre-Jordan Class prior to their child's baptism. Our next Pre-Jordan class will be held at 7:00 PM on **Wednesday, May 20 at 7 PM** in our Parish Center.

MATRIMONY: Couples must make arrangements for matrimony in person with the Pastor at least six months prior to date of their anticipated wedding ceremony. One of the parties must have family registered in the parish at the time the couple comes to make arrangements. Please call the Parish Office for an appointment with Father Wild.

ANointing OF THE SICK: Parishioners who are seriously ill, weakened by advanced age, or entering the hospital for surgery are encouraged to request the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. Homebound sick and elderly may receive Holy Communion in their homes on a regular basis. Please contact the Parish Office to arrange for a home visit or to request an anointing.

MOVING? Please let us know by calling or emailing the Parish Office so we can update our records.

Due to the change in tax laws, donation summaries for 2019 will be sent out by request only. If you would like to receive your donation summary for 2019, please contact the parish office at 610-666-5820 or email to starectory@verizon.net



Help me, O Lord, that my eyes may be merciful, so that I may never suspect or judge from appearances,



A Reason To Believe – The Resurrection –

Jesus' resurrection from the dead is the foundation of our Christian faith, proclaimed from its very beginning. Today, however, many people are de-sensitized to the salvation story, its historical reality, and the radical claim it makes on our lives. It is worthwhile, then, to review some of the bases for the resurrection's historical reliability. Several of these are discussed below.

The Empty Tomb

Against the well-documented historical record of Jesus' crucifixion from varied ancient sources, the empty tomb of Jesus has been a formidable proof of the resurrection. From the start, it has been a confounding obstacle to naysayers, whose speculative attacks have been unavailing.

Three days after Jesus' burial, his tomb was found empty and he was proclaimed to have been seen alive. These claims occurred in Jerusalem, the very place where Jesus was crucified, died, and was buried; they were not proclaimed in some remote village far removed from these events. The hostile Jewish or Roman authorities could have easily debunked the disciples' radical and incendiary claims by simply displaying Jesus' lifeless body. They were unable to, however, as the body was nowhere to be found; so they instead accused Jesus' followers of stealing his body and hiding it in a secret grave. This accusation persisted into the second century, as reflected in Justin Martyr's *Dialogue With Trypho* between 155 and 170 A.D.

Jesus' detractors offered no proof for this speculation, and it is not credible. Those who proclaimed the risen Jesus faced hardships that included imprisonment, beatings, and death. Under Jewish beliefs, they also faced the threat of eternal damnation by proclaiming their witness to the resurrected Jesus and worshipping him as God. While people may summon the courage to endure such trials for a genuine belief, they would not do so for a lie.

Centuries later, another speculation arose that Jesus did not die on the cross, but merely swooned and was mistaken for dead, then escaped the burial tomb on his own or with the help of his followers. This speculation is likewise without proof or merit. It assumes that, after all his suffering, Jesus was able to hold his breath long enough to fool Roman guards who had to take him down from the cross, and who would be reprimanded if they allowed a crucifixion victim to escape. It also ignores the pathetic condition Jesus would have been in from his sufferings – the flesh of his backside deeply shredded by the whip and then ripped open more so by its scraping against the cross as Jesus pushed from his nailed feet upward to open his lungs so he could get a single breath (crucifixion was a slow death by asphyxiation); his arms stretched about six inches and dislocated from his shoulders from the weight of his body; nerves crushed in his wrists (then considered part of the hand) and feet from the spikes driven through them; extreme blood loss; and unable to walk due to his wounded feet. Such a person may be pitied, but he would not inspire the launch a brazen movement to worship him as God conquering death. This fanciful speculation fails for the same reason as the stolen body theory – Jesus' followers would not endure their hardships and deaths for the sake of a lie. Moreover, such a cruel hoax would fly in the face of the good character of Jesus as attested by both Christian and non-Christian sources.

The Resurrection Appearances

Both Christian and non-Christian sources attest to the fact that Jesus' followers claimed to have witnessed him alive beginning three days after his death on the cross. The New Testament Gospels, Acts, and Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians recount Jesus' appearances at different times, places, and circumstances. Recorded witnesses include Mary Magdalene and the "other Mary", Peter, James, and John, the gathered disciples multiple times, 500 brethren at once, and lastly Paul. These witnesses saw and heard Jesus on each of these occasions, and in several instances touched him and ate with him. They were so convinced of this that, again, they faced hardships and death rather than recant what they had seen. For example, James "the brother of Jesus" was a skeptic who converted and became a leader of the

Christian church in Jerusalem after his eye witnessing of the risen Jesus; and the Jewish-Roman historian Josephus, a non-Christian, recorded that James was thereafter martyred by the Sanhedrin.

Lacking affirmative competing evidence, some skeptics have sought to dismiss these appearances as mere hallucinations. This attempt fails, however, as hallucinations are individual in nature and not shared by groups of persons such as those who witnessed many of Jesus' appearances. No two people have the same hallucination. Moreover, hallucinations are rare among individuals and usually stem from drug use or physical malady. Nor would this suggestion account for the conversion of skeptics like James the brother of Jesus or Paul, who was a persecutor of Christians. Even the apostle Thomas was a skeptic until he witnessed the resurrected Jesus himself, in the company of the other apostles. Finally, hallucinations would not account for witnesses touching Jesus or eating with him.

The Christian Church

The fact of the Christian Church also attests to the resurrection of Jesus. Its history traces to Judea around 32 A.D, and its earliest proponents constantly referred to the resurrection as the basis for their teaching, way of living, and expectations about dying. They also moved their Sabbath celebration from Saturday to Sunday, the day of Jesus' proclaimed resurrection. This was astounding, as the first Christians were faithful Jews, changing a day set apart by God as a basic tenet of Jewish faith and culture for thousands of years. They would do so only because of an event of divine revelation.

Additionally, the New Testament contains the eyewitness attestations of John, Peter, Matthew, and Paul to the fact of the resurrection; and Paul's letters referred to the resurrection in a manner reflecting that the event was well known. It is simply not credible that these men, who left their homes for a poor and itinerant existence of hardship and imperilment to their lives, all to change the world with a message of morality and love, were consummate liars.

Much more has been written on the resurrection than may be included here, but these bases and more affirm its historical reality. Against the affirmative evidence for the resurrection, skeptics through the centuries have offered no affirmative evidence for their alternative speculations. As Cambridge scholar Brooke Foss Westcott observed, "Nothing but the antecedent assumption that it must be false could have suggested the idea of deficiency in the proof of it."

Jesus' atonement for our sins and forging of the path to our salvation is not a fanciful story with a happy ending. His crucifixion and resurrection were real, historical events. It remains for us, in the reality of our lives, to proclaim him Lord and to follow his path with humility, gratitude, perseverance, and above all, love. This is the claim of the salvation tale, and for this we were made. It is our path to God and holiness, where we are complete.

From parishioner, Richard McDonald

