

**ST. PATRICK
CATHOLIC CHURCH**
Neola, IA

Parish Office:
712.485.2750
office@stpatricksneola.com

Priest Office:
712.485.2753
priest@stpatricksneola.com

Faith Formation:
712.485.2754
dre@stpatricksneola.com



Parish Hall:
712.485.2433

Website:
www.stpatricksneola.com

St. Patrick Catholic Church
310 Avon Street
P.O. Box 127
Neola, IA 51559

Administrator: Rev. Julius Itamid
Deacon: Rev. Mr. Scott Brooks
Faith Formation Director: Shannon Nye
Business Manager: RaeShelle Jensen

MASS TIMES:

Weekdays: See page 2 for schedule
Saturday Evening: 5:30 PM (April to September)
4:00 PM (October to March)
Sunday Morning: 9:30 AM
Holidays: As announced in the bulletin
Reconciliation: First Saturday evening before Mass

**ST. COLUMBANUS
CATHOLIC CHURCH**
Weston, IA



St. Columbanus Catholic Church
22720 Weston Ave
Underwood, IA 51576-3920
Served from Neola

MASS TIMES:

Sunday Morning: 8:00 AM
Holidays: As announced in the bulletin
Reconciliation by appointment

March 28/29, 2026
Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

GOSPEL AT THE PROCESION Matthew 21:1-11

READING I Isaiah 50:4-7

PSALM 22: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

READING II Philippians 2:6-11

PASSION Matthew 26:14—27:66

April 2, 2026
Holy Thursday

READING I Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14

PSALM 116: Our blessing cup is a communion with the Blood of Christ.

READING II 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

GOSPEL John 13:1-15

April 4, 2026
Easter Vigil

READING I Genesis 1:1—2:2

READING II Genesis 22:1-18

READING III Exodus 14:15—15:1

READING IV Isaiah 54:5-14

READING V Isaiah 55:1-11

READING VI Baruch 3:9-15, 32—4:4

READING VII Ezekiel 36:16-17a, 18-28

EPISTLE Romans 6:3-11

GOSPEL Matthew 28:1-10

April 3, 2026
Good Friday

READING I Isaiah 52:13—53:12

PSALM 31: Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

READING II Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:7-9

PASSION John 18:1—19:42

April 5, 2026
Easter Sunday

READING I Acts 10:34a, 37-43

PSALM 118: This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad.

READING II Colossians 3:1-4

GOSPEL John 20:1-9

Introduction to the Liturgy of the Day

Taken from "Pastoral Patterns" by GIA Publications, Inc.

We begin today's liturgy in joy. When Jesus entered Jerusalem, he did so in triumph, as a hero would when returning from a victorious battle. What the crowds did not truly realize - but we do today - is that Jesus' battle was just beginning. More importantly, the battle would look to be lost when he dies on the cross, when instead this was his victory over sin and death. Therefore, as we hold these branches high and sing hosannas to acclaim our king, we do so not only with heaviness in our hearts for Jesus' suffering and death, but with joy as well, for it is on the cross that Jesus redeems us from our sins.

Introduction to the Liturgy of the Word

Taken from "Pastoral Patterns" by GIA Publications, Inc.

The climax of today's liturgy of the word is a climax befitting a Hollywood blockbuster. Saint Matthew's account of Jesus' death is the most dramatic of the four Gospels. When Jesus breathes his last, the earth quakes, tombs burst open, and the sanctuary veil is torn apart. The soldiers at the foot of the cross, blown away by all of these natural and spiritual phenomena, look up at Christ and proclaim, "Truly, this was the Son of God." At the last moment of Jesus' earthly life, these witnesses have received the gift of faith. May our faith be strengthened as we listen as we do each year at this time to the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Question of the Week

Taken from "Pastoral Patterns" by GIA Publications, Inc.

Will I keep watch and pray during the Triduum? When have I accompanied someone during a difficult time, if only to ensure they are not facing it alone?

Saturday, April 11, 2026

Saturday Masses change back to 5:30 pm for the summer

Weekday Masses

Mar 30 - No Mass
Mar 31 - St Patrick Parish - Matthew Roane 8:30 AM
Apr 1 - St Columbanus Parish 6:00 PM
Apr 2 - St Patrick - Holy Thursday 7:00 PM
Apr 3 - St Columbanus - Good Friday 3:00 PM

Weekend Masses

Apr 4 - St Patrick - Easter Vigil 8:00 PM
Apr 5 - St Columbanus - Easter Sunday 8:00 AM
Apr 5 - St Patrick - Easter Sunday 10:00 AM

APRIL 2, 2026 - HOLY THURSDAY - 7:00 PM (at St Patrick)

Lector - Rhea Gross
Servers - Case Gross, Noah Wollenhaupt, & Alexandra Nye
EME - Scott Brooks, Eric Busch, & Max Kozeal

APRIL 3, 2025 - GOOD FRIDAY - 3:00 PM (at St Columbanus)

All Ministers handled by St Columbanus

APRIL 4, 2025 - EASTER VIGIL - 8:00 PM (at St Patrick)

Lector - Mary Fischer, Shannon Nye & RaeShelle Jensen
Servers - Samantha & Alexandra Nye
EME - Scott Brooks, David Mann & Maureen Mann

APRIL 5, 2025 - EASTER SUNDAY - 10:00 AM

Lector - Rhea Gross
Servers - Emma & Thomas Sweeney
EME - Kristen Carlson, Liz Lyons, & Geri Bjorling

APRIL 11, 2026 - 5:30 PM

Lectors - Travis Bolte
Servers - None
EME - Scott Brooks
Bryan Weidner
Bonnie Wredt

APRIL 12, 2026 - 9:30 AM

Lectors - 9th Grade Class
Servers - Emma & Thomas Sweeney
EME - Scott Brooks
Kari Kunze
Kristen Carlson

APRIL 18, 2026 - 5:30 PM

Lectors - Corey Hough
Servers - Maysen Lausen
Henry Fischer
EME - Maureen Mann
Travis Bolte
Andrea Bolte

APRIL 19, 2026 - 9:30 AM

Lectors - Matt Brummett
Servers - Elena Brummett
Charles Brummett
EME - Jenny Hall
Chad Harder
Kari Kunze

TITHE COUNTERS

Mar 29 - Kevin Nye	Diane Rodenburg	Dani Baxter
Apr 5 - Mark Pogge	Sue Stenlund	Roger Hall
Apr 12 - Anne Brummett	Rita Heinen	Roberta Morse
Apr 19 - Jim Mahlberg	Kevin Nye	Diane Rodenburg

COMMUNION TO SHUT-INS

Mar 29 - Jennifer Fischer	Samantha Nye
Apr 5 - Jeannie Disalvo	Roberta Morse
Apr 12 - Norm Baker	Jeannie Disalvo
Apr 19 - Jennifer Fischer	Liz Lyons

PONTIFICAL GOOD FRIDAY COLLECTION: Pope Leo has asked our parish to support the Pontifical Good Friday Collection, which helps Christians in the Holy Land, where they are now less than 2% of the population. Your support is essential to help the Church minister in parishes, provide Catholic schools, and offer religious education. The Pontifical Good Friday Collection also helps to preserve the sacred shrines of Christianity, including in Jerusalem, Nazareth, and Bethlehem, to name only a few. When you contribute to this collection, you join with Catholics around the world in solidarity with the Church in the Holy Land. Please be generous!

ST. PATRICK SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION: St. Patrick Catholic Church of Neola, IA scholarship application is now available. Applicants will need to pick up and fill out two forms. Application and Sacrament information sheet must be obtained in person, by the applicant only, from only Father Julius. Forms are not available online and will not be mailed nor emailed out. Forms must be submitted in person, by the applicant only, to only Father Julius. Mailed, emailed, scanned or faxed forms will not be accepted. Forms must be submitted by the end of Mass on April 12, 2026. This scholarship is not associated with any other scholarships.

Calendar of Events:

Mar 29-31 - Holy Week Bible Study with Deacon Scott, 6:00 pm
Mar 31 - Communal Penance, St Patrick, 7:00 pm
Apr 2 - **Holy Thursday:** 7:00 pm, our two parishes join together at St Patrick Neola to celebrate the Mass of the Lord's Supper with washing of feet and Procession of the Eucharist followed by Exposition until 9:00 pm.
Apr 3 - **Good Friday:** 3:00 pm, our two parishes join together at St Columbanus Weston to celebrate the Lord's Passion: The Solemn Liturgical Service with Veneration of the Cross & Holy Communion. Mass is not celebrated on this day. (Collection for the Holy Land.) - Stations of the Cross begins at 2:30 pm.
Apr 4 - **Holy Saturday:** 8:00 pm, our two parishes join together at St Patrick Neola to celebrate the Easter Vigil Service with blessing of the new fire, Baptismal water and the Easter Candle.
Apr 5 - **Easter Sunday:** (Note Mass times)
8:00 am Mass at St. Columbanus
10:00 am Mass at St. Patrick's
No Faith Formation Sessions
Apr 6-10 - No Weekday Masses
Apr 8 - Confirmation Class, 7:00 pm
Apr 11 - Saturday Masses go to 5:30 pm for the summer
Apr 11/12 - Land of Peace at all Masses
Apr 12 - Children's Mass
Parish Family Faith Formation at the ballpark, after Mass
Divine Mercy Program, 2:00 pm (see next page)
Apr 14 - Pastoral Council Meeting, St Patrick, 7:00 pm
Apr 15 - Pastoral/Finance Council Meeting, St Columbanus, after Mass
Apr 16 - Foundation Meeting, 6:00 pm
Celebration of First Reconciliation, 6:30 pm
Apr 21 - Finance Council Meeting, St Patrick, 6:00 pm
Apr 22 - First Eucharist Rehearsal, 6:30 pm
Apr 26 - Celebration of First Eucharist, 9:30 am Mass

Offering Report **Last Weeks** **Fiscal Year to Date**

Sunday Envelopes	\$ 2,055.00	\$ 77,902.26
Open Offering	\$ 208.00	\$ 7,091.00
Children's Offering	\$ 22.00	\$ 688.86

Memorial Calendar

Mar 29 - National Vietnam Veterans Day
Apr 1 - April Fool's Day



DAYCARE: Tuesday night the confirmation class will be offering daycare for anyone wanting to attend Bible Study and/or Communal Penance. This will be held in the basement of the Faith Formation Building beginning at 5:45 pm.

HOLY THURSDAY: The following individuals have volunteered to have their feet washed on Holy Thursday:

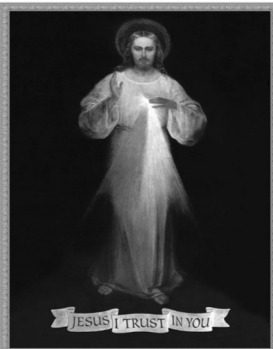
Max Kozeal	Vivian Gross	Kristen Carlson	Luanna Ring
Deb Hurd	Marsha Slobodnik	Tim Slobodnik	Fani Barajas
Geri Bjorling	Jenny Hall	Roger Hall	Diane Rodenburg

GOOD FRIDAY: 1) Reminder that Good Friday is a fast day for all Catholics ages 18-59, which means 1 regular meal, 2 snacks not equal to a meal, and no meat. 2) This year the Good Friday Service will be at St Columbanus Weston. 3) Stations of the Cross will be at 2:30 pm, followed by Good Friday Service at 3:00 pm.

EASTER SUNDAY MASSES: Please note the times:
St. Columbanus Weston: 8:00 am & St. Patrick Neola: 10:00 am

KATHY GRAEVE'S TURNING 75!

Sunday, April 19th (one day early) - RSVP to Kathy at 402.680.4370
12:30 pm rosary & 1:00 pm Mass at St Patrick Neola
Meal to follow in the hall; then presentation by Mary Mutti from MI

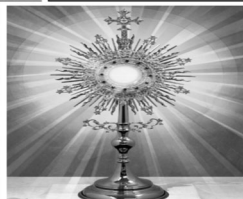


Divine Mercy Sunday Day of Mercy Program Sunday, April 12, 2026 St. Patrick's, Neola 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.

"Let us live this Jubilee intensely, begging the Father to forgive our sins and to bathe us in his merciful 'indulgence.'" -Pope Francis



Opening Prayer & Rosary 2:00 pm



Eucharistic Adoration with Reconciliation



The Chaplet of Divine Mercy 3:00 pm Benediction and Closing

Gabriel's Corner Pregnancy Center 20th Anniversary Celebration of Life Dinner

Friday, April 10, 2026
Corpus Christi Parish Hall 3304 4th Avenue
Council Bluffs, Iowa 51501

Keynote Speaker: Alicia Kowalski is a Catholic speaker, mother of three and founder of "His Grace Ministries." Drawing from her own personal journey and testimony of brokenness, redemption, surrender and healing, she speaks with honesty and compassion about God's grace, mercy and forgiveness, and the hope she found in Christ, even in suffering.



She invites hearts to encounter the transforming love of Jesus by trusting Him through difficult seasons.

Entertainment by *Friends of Gabriel's Corner*
Master of Ceremonies is *Jen Brown*

Wine & Cheese Social begins at 5:30 PM

Dinner by *Staley's Chicken* served at 6:30 PM
Fried Chicken, Mashed Potatoes with Gravy
Corn, Coleslaw and Macaroni Salad

Assorted cupcakes by *Debbie Fleming*

Speaker: Alicia Marie will talk at 7:30 PM

Dress Theme: **The Roaring 20's**

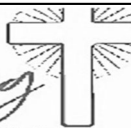
Call or text Kathy Plourde by March 13, 2026
for your reservations 402-690-1561

April 11, 2026
9 to 2:30
Doors open 8:30
SS Peter & Paul
Parish Center
Atlantic, Iowa

**DES MOINES COUNCIL
OF CATHOLIC WOMEN**

**97th
ANNUAL**

*Spring
Conference*



Kali Schneiders

Coming from a diverse background: modeling to pageants, corporate America to stay-at-home mom, our key speaker, Kali, will deliver an encounter filled with laughter, encouragement, inspiration, and Godly insight for women of all ages.

**Mass with Bishop Joensen at 11:00 AM
followed by lunch**

Pre-register using the link or QR Code:

<https://ticketstripe.com/DCCWSpringConference>

Cost: \$30

Deadline: April 1st

Questions:

email DesMoinesCCW@gmail.com



Ghana Medical Equipment

PANCAKE breakfast

SUNDAY, APRIL 19th, 2026 8:00am - 11:30am
St. Mary's Panama Parish Hall
200 N 2nd St. Panama, IA 51562

Please bring gently used Medical equipment.
{Wheelchairs, Walkers, Cains, etc.}
to send to Fr. Michael's hometown in Ghana.

Please contact Meg Dunlop at (712)-579-2270
to drop donations off on a different date.
Free Will Donations will go to Shipping!

April Birthdays

Marcy Petersen	1	Katie Patten	9	Landry Baxter	16	Jerzie Payne	25
Allie Thomas	2	Kim McDonald	9	Teresa Hoffman	17	Ben Fischer	26
Brecken Ehlers	2	Pat Sweeney	10	Carolyn McDermott	18	Matthew Vermeersch	26
Chloe Ryba	3	Jenny Hall	10	Sue Welbourne	18	Ashley Reid	27
Donnie Ring	3	Grace Konz	10	Cristy Daniel	18	Madison Wood	27
Ella Wingert	3	David Fischer	11	Julie McDermott	18	Margie Petersen	28
Kara Wingert	3	Sara Biel	11	Alex Stunkard	18	Morgan Lockman	28
Beau Jacobsen	4	Cole Pauley	11	Kim Esser	19	Gracelyn Goeser	28
Liz Redinbaugh	4	Noah Wollenhaupt	11	Ashley Leonard	19	Jim Masker	29
Nicholas Ravlin	4	Bodie Harman	11	Sandra Olofson	20	Jacob Reid	30
Jamie Ryba	5	Cliff Shudak	13	Dennis Wulff	20	Gabriel Reid	30
Charlie Brummett	5	Renee Williams	13	Kathy Graeve	20		
Maysen Lausen	5	Ronan Tigges	13	Katie Ausdemore	20	April Anniversaries	
Gina Huebner	6	Lyla Wells	13	Anna Goeser	20	Eric & Brittany Busch	2
Wendy Sub	6	Frank Kohel	14	Dani Michels	23	Ken & Kim McDonald	6
Rebecca Masker	7	Dennis Ausdemore	14	Ainsley Huebner	23	Steve & Dee Dollen	6
Mary Dargin	8	Jace Murphy	14	Donna Kloewer	24	Kevin & Pam Ring	17
Lucas Thomas	8	Terri Schnitker	16	Charlee Glime	24	Jeff & Brenda Anderson	20
		David Minahan	16	Rylie Ausdemore	24	Pete & Nikki Scriven	30
		Ann Taylor	16	Carson Cochran	25		

We welcome you into God's family! If you are interested in learning more about our church, or would like to join, please pick up a registration form at one of the entrances of the church, stop by the parish office, or call Father Julius for an appointment.

For information about Baptism, Sacrament of the Sick, Pastoral Visitations, Reconciliation, RCIA, Marriage, Adoration, or the Prayer Chain, please visit our website at <https://stpatricksneola.com/> or contact the Parish Office at 712.485.2750.

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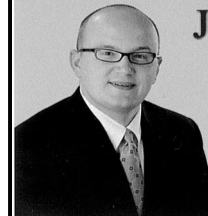
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HOLY THURSDAY

The day of Jesus' Last Supper and the first Mass! Jesus gives us his New Commandment: "Love one another as I have loved you." This is the night Jesus prays sorrowfully in the Garden of Olives and then is arrested.

TONE FOR OUR DAY:

Joy and thanksgiving for the great gift of the Eucharist

Sorrow in accompanying Jesus in his agony in the garden

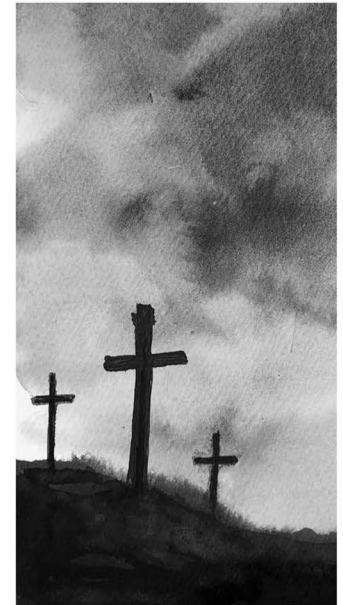


- **Go to Mass** as a family (special parts to watch for: the Gloria with bells, the washing of feet, the transfer of the Eucharist from the altar/tabernacle to an altar of repose.)
- If you are unable to go to Mass (it is not a holy day of obligation), **make a spiritual communion** or **pay a visit to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament at church** - during the day or during the evening adoration at the altar of repose.
- **Write specific ways of loving** those in your household, neighborhood, or extended family on slips of paper. Draw them out during the day and do them.
- Today we also celebrate the beginning of the priesthood. **Write a thank you note to your parish priest(s)** thanking him for his service, example, and love for God.
- **Wash each other's feet** - while meditating on Jesus' self-giving to his friends, to you, and his call to serve others.
- **Bake a loaf of bread** while talking about & reflecting on its place in the Passover and Jesus being our Bread of Life in the Eucharist. Share in the one loaf together at dinner, or save it for Easter.
- **Have a special dinner** with candlelight and china, remembering the Lord's Last Supper.
- During grace before dinner, **pray or sing the Gloria**. Maybe even ring some bells while you're doing it. This joyful prayer of praise is omitted during Lenten liturgies, but is sung with gusto at the solemn Mass of the Lord's Supper.
- **Set up an altar of repose**. Use houseplants, flowers, candles, linens, and a favorite image of Jesus. Take turns "watching" with Jesus, accompanying him during his agony in the garden.
- **Read a Gospel account** of the Holy Thursday events in the life of Jesus.

GOOD FRIDAY

The day Jesus is put on trial, scourged, crowned with thorns, sentenced to death, made to carry his cross, is crucified and dies - all for love of us.

- **Attend the Good Friday liturgy as a family**. (Special parts to watch for: altar stripped of all décor & tabernacle empty, silent entrance and prostration by ministers, minimal music, veneration of the cross, extended petitions, Communion—but not the prayers of consecration, everyone encouraged to leave in silence).
- In addition to fasting from food, try fasting from: TV, music, social media and all unnecessary use of digital devices to **maintain a spirit of silent reflection** throughout this solemn day.
- **Do a good examination of conscience and an act of contrition**. Consider quietly reflecting on how you've hurt each other, as family members. "Confess" these to one another - seeking, giving, and receiving forgiveness.
- **Take turns venerating a cross**, even lying prostrate before one (like the priests/deacons do at the start of the Good Friday liturgy.) Sing "Were You There" or listen to an appropriate song.
- **Pray the Stations of the Cross**. Have your kids **color the Stations** and post them throughout the house. Process with candles or a crucifix.
- The Good Friday liturgy includes extensive prayers of petition. **Write your own petitions and pray them together**.
- **Pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy** at 3:00 p.m., the hour Jesus died.
- **Read the account of the Passion** in the Gospel of John, chapters 18-19.
- **Construct and place a cross in your front yard** to witness to your neighbors and passers-by.
- **Have a simple, meatless soup supper, sharing:** a favorite Station of the Cross, "dying's and rising's" in your own life, or insights from your Lent.



TONE FOR OUR DAY:

Sorrow for our own sins that caused Jesus' suffering

Sadness, gratitude and love as we remember all that Jesus went through

A certain silent, serious reverence and reflection

HOLY SATURDAY

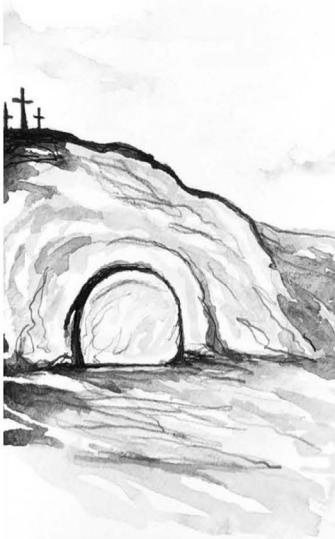
The day Jesus was in the tomb, dead. His friends locked themselves away, grieving and fearful of what might happen next.

TONE FOR OUR DAY:

This is a day of waiting – with the apostles and especially with the Blessed Mother, Mary.

We are grateful for what Jesus has done, still a little serious, but we know the rest of the story and are looking forward to it.

Soon and very soon Jesus will rise!



- **Observe a certain silence**, reflectively waiting with Mary, while you prepare your home for Easter – cleaning, getting decorations and eggs ready, name cards for the Easter dinner table, etc.
- **Pray the rosary**
- **Bake [Resurrection Rolls](#)**
- **Attend the Easter Vigil.** It is a beautiful, richly symbolic, truly powerful liturgy. It tends to be long and late, so if impractical for little ones in the family, maybe one parent (and the older siblings) can attend.
- **Pray an Easter vigil at home as a family.** If it isn't possible to attend a local Easter Vigil, considering incorporating elements of the vigil into your family's prayer for the evening.
 - In darkness, light a candle (possibly your family's baptism candles) and share the flame from candle to candle. Pray and respond: "Christ, our Light. Thanks be to God."
 - Read stories of Salvation History by candlelight (using [the Vigil readings](#) or children's Bible books for kids).
 - Pray or sing the Gloria with bells & turn on the lights!
 - Bless yourselves with Holy Water and process around, blessing your house.
 - Renew your baptismal promises
 - Sing along to your favorite "Alleluia" song!
 - Read [the Easter Gospel](#) story

EASTER SUNDAY

The day Jesus rose from the dead! *"This is the day the Lord has made. Let us be glad and rejoice in it!"*

- **Go to Easter Sunday Mass and invite someone to go with you.** (Special parts to watch for: the return of joyful "Alleluia's," sprinkling with holy water, a prayer before the Gospel called the Sequence, and the renewal of Baptismal promises.)
- **Fill a small bottle with the blessed Easter water** at church, to draw from for blessings at home.
- **Dress up!** The tradition of Easter clothes reminds us that we are a new creation. We have put on Christ.
- **Have an Easter egg hunt** (out in the yard if possible), recalling the women searching in the garden for Jesus who was no longer in the tomb.
- **Have a special meal** in the formal dining room with linens, china, candles, flowers – make it truly a feast.
- **Make a playlist of Easter- Alleluia songs** to listen to throughout the day.
- **Read the Easter story** – there are various accounts at the end of all four Gospels!
- **If you placed a cross in your yard on Friday, find a way to witness to the Resurrection** – drape it in a white cloth, add flowers, or the words "He is Risen." Invite your neighbors to contribute!
- As you encounter family members throughout the day, **say and respond: "Christ is risen. He is indeed risen!"**
- **Take a few minutes of silence** simply seeking to encounter the risen Christ in prayer and inviting him into your heart – with all of the power, peace, joy, and love that he brings.



TONE FOR OUR DAY:

Completely joyful and happy!

Jesus has won. He is with us!

He has opened heaven for us!

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Growing in FAITH™

Discovering **hope** and **joy** in the Catholic faith.

April 2026

St. Patrick's Church, Neola and St. Columbanus Church, Weston

Rev. Julius Itamid, Administrator

One Minute Meditations

St. Anselm of Canterbury

Born in Aosta, Italy, he attended a Benedictine school as a youth. After traveling around France and Italy for his studies, St. Anselm entered the Benedictine Order. When the current Archbishop of Canterbury died, Anselm, who by then was a Benedictine abbot, was promoted as Canterbury's new Archbishop. St. Anselm navigated church reforms, theological study, and political tensions. He was exiled for resisting the king's interference in Church matters but was allowed to return in peace.

Glorious wounds

Every Easter, we celebrate that Jesus definitively conquered sin, evil and death. God, not evil, has "the last laugh." Yet, He still has His wounds. The Resurrection transformed what were wounds of rejection into glorious trophies - proof of His love, power, and trustworthiness as our Savior. When we encounter difficulty, even great suffering, we can look to the glorious wounds of our Savior with hope. If we stay close to Him, we'll be victorious too.

"It comes down to this: If Jesus didn't rise from the dead, then Christianity is a fraud and a sham. If He did rise from the dead, then He is who He said He is, and our lives must change accordingly. There is no middle ground."

Bishop Robert Barron

Don't Just Celebrate Easter. Step Into It.

At the heart of Christianity is not just an idea or a rule of life, but an encounter with the Risen Christ and the new life of grace He offers. Easter invites us to step into that life more deliberately. Here are four simple ways to begin:

Encounter the Risen Christ. Mary Magdalene stood before Jesus and didn't recognize Him until He spoke her name (John 20:16), and her grief became joy. That encounter is possible for us. Come to Mass with intention. Don't just attend—arrive expecting to meet Him. Listen closely, pray honestly, and remember that in the Eucharist, Christ is truly present.

Practical step: Before Mass, pray, "Jesus, help me recognize You today."

Take an "Emmaus walk." Two disciples left Jerusalem discouraged, and Jesus met them on the road. He helped them to see God's faithfulness in their lives. He can do the same for you. Take time this Easter season for a quiet walk with Him. Speak openly about what's

on your heart, and listen for His voice.

Practical step: Ask, "Lord, where have You been at work in my life that I haven't seen?"

Choose mercy. Jesus gave His Apostles the power to forgive sins (John 20:21–23), ensuring His mercy would always be available. We're called to receive it—

"Do not be afraid. Open wide the doors for Christ." John Paul II

and extend it. Forgive, hold back harsh words, and choose patience.

Practical step: Identify one situation where you can offer a concrete act of mercy this week.

Be open to mission. The Resurrection sends us out. God still calls ordinary people for His work. Your mission may be simple: show patience, reach out, or step up where needed.

Practical step: Ask, "Where am I being nudged to act?" Then take one small step.

Easter isn't just celebrated—it's lived, one step at a time.

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics believe in the Resurrection?

The Resurrection is not only a matter of faith; it has also been examined through historical and forensic inquiry. The New Testament accounts draw on early eyewitness testimony, preserved with notable consistency compared to other ancient sources. The Shroud of Turin has likewise been widely studied, with some researchers noting

features consistent with a first-century Roman crucifixion, while the image's formation remains unexplained. Finally, despite intense early persecution, Christianity spread rapidly, reflecting the deep conviction of its first followers. Together, these considerations suggest the Resurrection is rooted in both faith and historical reflection.

After Lent, the work begins

Pope Leo XIV described Lent as a time to “place the mystery of God back in the center of our lives.” Yet the growth in holiness and renewal of faith that begins in Lent is meant to continue well beyond the season.

Keep custody of the heart. To guard the heart is to protect it from whatever disrupts our relationship with God. It means “allowing the word of God to touch our hearts and welcoming it with a docile spirit.” The habits formed during Lent can help sustain this: a daily Morning Offering, reading the Gospel, or setting aside time to visit the Blessed Sacrament. A healthy spiritual life depends on staying connected to the God who loves us most.

Keep custody of the tongue. This is a form of fasting that

lasts all year. Pope Leo urges us to “disarm our language,” avoiding harsh words and rash judgment. Refusing gossip and slander is an act of self-denial. Instead, we are called to measure our words and practice kindness and respect. This simple discipline can bring new life not only to our own hearts, but to those around us.

Keep custody of your time. What we give our time to shapes who we become. It’s easy to let our days fill with noise, distraction, and busyness that leave little room for God. Be intentional about how you spend your time. Protect moments for prayer, rest, and what truly matters—your family, your vocation, your relationship with the Lord. Even small choices, repeated daily, create space for grace to grow.

from **S**cripture

John 10:1-10, The Good Shepherd seeks us

In this passage, Jesus uses the image of a shepherd to reveal who He is, how He cares for us, and how He invites us to respond. But why a shepherd?

In Jesus’ time, shepherding was a demanding and often dangerous way of life. A good shepherd knew each sheep personally and remained constantly with the flock. Many sheepfolds had no gates; at night, the shepherd would lie across the entrance, becoming the barrier that protected the sheep from danger. If a sheep was lost, injured, or attacked, the shepherd would go after it, tending to its wounds and, if

necessary, risking his own life.

The meaning is clear. Without the steady care, guidance, and protection of the shepherd, the sheep would not survive. In the same way, we depend on God. Jesus, our Good Shepherd, knows each of us by name. He does not abandon us. He seeks us out when we are lost, heals us when we are wounded, provides for our needs, and protects us—even to the point of laying down His life.

In response, He asks for our trust, so that He may lead us safely home.

Feasts & Celebrations

April 2 – Holy Thursday. Today, we celebrate Jesus’ institution of the Holy Eucharist and the Priesthood to perpetuate it. Today, we celebrate He who remains really present to us in the Blessed Sacrament. Pray for priests.

April 12 – Divine Mercy Sunday. In 1931, Jesus appeared to St. Faustina and asked that the Sunday after Easter become the “Feast of Mercy.” Jesus promised special graces to those who honor Him as the King of Mercy and pray The Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

April 17 – St. Stephen Harding (1134). St. Stephen and two companions founded the Cistercian religious order in Citeaux. As abbot, he guided the community through many hardships. St. Bernard of Clairvaux and

several companions joined him and revived the order. St. Stephen founded twelve more religious communities throughout France.

April 20 – St. Agnes of Montepulciano (1317). At a young age, she begged her parents to let her enter the Franciscans. When she was thirteen, the pope asked her to found a monastery at Proceno. Inspired by a vision, she founded a Dominican order at Montepulciano.

April 30 – Pope St. Pius V (1572). Born to a poor family in Italy, Antonio Ghislieri became a Dominican, taught theology, and became Pope Pius V. As Pope, he established seminaries and hospitals, and published the Roman Catechism, Roman Breviary, and the Missal. He promoted the praying of the Rosary for the victory of Christian forces at the Battle of Lepanto (1571). He is also known for efforts to implement the Council of Trent.

Q & A Why Do Catholics eat bacon on St. Mark’s feast day?

The Feast of St. Mark the Evangelist (April 25) has become, for many Catholics, a fitting day to enjoy bacon. The Church has a long tradition of honoring saints through liturgical celebrations, local customs, and even particular foods—practices that help preserve our shared spiritual heritage and remember their heroic witness.

In 828, Venetian merchants transferred the relics of St. Mark from Alexandria, Egypt, to Venice, Italy. To pass safely through Muslim-controlled ports, they hid the relics beneath layers of pork, a meat considered unclean under Islamic law. According to tradition, port officials, repelled by the cargo, chose not to inspect it closely, allowing the relics to reach Venice safely, where they remain today. In remembrance of this event, some Catholics mark his feast day—or the anniversary of the relics’ arrival on January 31—by eating pork.

Honoring a saint’s relics is a tangible expression of reverence, much like placing flowers on the graves of fallen soldiers. It reflects respect for their lives, their witness, and their service to God. Ultimately, in honoring the saints, we honor the God who formed them.

Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

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