

# Abiding Press

## *Abiding Presence Faith Community*

*A PARISH OF THE REFORMED CATHOLIC CHURCH  
AN INCLUSIVE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY  
MAKING GOD'S LOVE KNOWN IN CENTRAL FLORIDA*

**April 2025 VOLUME #5**  
**5330 Poinsetta Ave, Winter Park, FL 32792**  
**321-594-4922**  
Office [info@apfcwp.com](mailto:info@apfcwp.com)

***Vigil Mass is Celebrated at Saturday at 5:00 pm***  
***The Sanctuary Building of the First United Church of Christ***  
***4605 Curry Ford Rd, Orlando, Florida 32812***

### *Social Media*

Web Site [www.apfcwp.com](http://www.apfcwp.com)

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1386619738179316/?ref=bookmarks>

YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCP9i133esG31IRPfgk-Jn4w>

### *Clergy Serving the People of God*

**Pastor: Most Rev. William R. Cavins [pastor@apfcwp.com](mailto:pastor@apfcwp.com)**  
**Rev. Mr. Christopher M. Larsen**

### *Volunteer Staff Serving the Parish*

**Gene L. Thompson II – Technology [TechSupport@apfcwp.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:TechSupport@apfcwp.onmicrosoft.com)**  
**Keegan Glover - LGBTQ+ Liaison**  
**Dennis Last – JMB Crock Pot Ministry**  
**Klaus Stodtmann – Bread Baking [kstodtmann@apfcwp.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:kstodtmann@apfcwp.onmicrosoft.com)**

## Mass Intentions & Prayer Requests

If you would like to have someone remembered during Mass or added to our Prayer Lists, please email your request to the pastor. We also invite you to support our community through your generous donations, which are greatly appreciated and can be made at your discretion.

Additionally, we offer Mass Cards that you can send to loved ones to let them know they are being remembered in our prayers.

Thank you for your continued support and generosity.

### Upcoming Dates

April 1	Rebecca's Pantry 9:30 to 11:30 Formation Class – 6:30 PM Invitation Only
April 2	Joni's Treasures Thrift Shop 10:00 – 1:00 Solemn Evening Prayer 6:30 PM Bishop's Residence
April 4	Stations of the Cross YouTube Live 12 Noon
April 5	Divine Worship –Vigil Fifth Sunday of Lent 5:00 PM Intention: Repose of the Soul of James Taylor Lenten Soup Supper 6:00 to 7:00 PM
April 7	Crock Pot Class – 10 AM Dedicated Senior Medical Center 904 Lee Rd., Orlando Breaking Open the Word 7 PM Zoom
April 8	Rebecca's Pantry 9:30 to 11:30 Crock Pot Class – 10 AM Dedicated Senior Medical Center 4270 Aloma Ave, Winter Park Formation Class – 6:30 PM Invitation Only
April 9	Joni's Treasures Thrift Shop 10:00 – 1:00 Solemn Evening Prayer 6:30 PM - Bishop's Residence
April 11	Stations of the Cross YouTube Live 12 Noon
April 12	Divine Worship – Vigil of Palm Sunday of Lent 5:00 PM Intention: For All Those Persecuted because of their Faith Lenten Soup Supper 6:00 to 7:00 PM
April 14	At Home with the Word 7 PM
April 15	Rebecca's Pantry 9:30 to 11:30
April 16	Joni's Treasures Thrift Shop 10:00 – 1:00 Divine Worship – Chrism Mass 6:30 PM Intention: All Clergy of the Reformed Catholic Church Living and Deceased

**April 17** Divine Worship – Mass of the Lord’s Supper 7:00 PM  
Intention: For the People of the Parish

**April 18** Stations of the Cross – 12:00 Noon  
Divine Worship – Veneration of the Cross 3:00 PM  
Intention: People of the Parish

**April 19** Divine Worship – Easter Vigil 7:30 PM  
Intention: Special Intentions of the Pastor

April 22 Rebecca’s Pantry 9:30 – 11:30

April 23 Joni’s Treasures Thrift Shop 10:00 – 1:00  
Affirming Leaders Network 3-5 PM Church

April 25 Crock Pot Class – 10 AM Dedicated Senior Medical Center  
690 S Goldenrod Ave, Orlando

**April 26** Divine Worship – Vigil Second Sunday of Easter 5:00 PM  
Intention: The Neophytes of the Church

\*SCAP = Sunday Celebration in the Absence of a Priest

## Financial Update as of 3/30/2025

Total Income Year to Date: \$ 2638.4.  
Total Expenditures Year to Date: **3247.92.**  
Difference -**\$609.52.**  
Balance available on hand: \$ 1490.17.

## Make a Difference with Your Donation

You can now easily make donations online through our website! For the most efficient processing of your donation, we recommend using Zelle. If you choose a different payment method, please ensure that your donation is sent as if to an individual.

Thank you for your generosity and support! **Our email address for all donation platforms is: [bkpg@apfcwp.com](mailto:bkpg@apfcwp.com)**

## RED CARDS AVAILABLE

During these uncertain times US Citizens and Immigrants need to know their rights. We are making available the Red Card which lists what you should do should Law Enforcement or ICE come to your door. You may pick them up at Mass on the desk in the Narthex or by sending a stamped self-addressed envelope to the Parish Office. Those

requesting by mail are limited to 5 cards. Please indicate English/English or Spanish/English version. We are seeking a donor to help us cover the costs of publishing the cards in Creole/Haitian. If you have \$100 to spare it would be much appreciated.

## From the Bishop's Desk

### Active Hope and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

The concept of "active hope" is a powerful and transformative idea, especially when viewed through the lens of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Active hope is not merely a passive wish for things to get better; it is a dynamic and participatory process that involves taking concrete steps towards a desired future. This form of hope is deeply rooted in faith, action, and the belief that positive change is possible, even in the face of adversity.



The resurrection of Jesus Christ is a cornerstone of Christian faith, symbolizing victory over death and the promise of eternal life. It is a profound event that offers believers a source of hope and inspiration. The resurrection is not just a historical event to be remembered; it is a living reality that calls for an active response from those who believe.

Active hope involves three key components: vision, intention, and action. First, it requires a clear vision of what one hopes to achieve. This vision is often grounded in values and beliefs that give life meaning and purpose. For Christians, the vision is shaped by the teachings of Jesus and the promise of the Kingdom of God.

Second, active hope requires intention. This means setting clear goals and committing to the pursuit of the vision. It involves a deliberate choice to focus on what is possible rather than being paralyzed by fear or despair. Intention is about aligning one's thoughts, words, and actions with the desired outcome.

Finally, active hope necessitates action. It is not enough to simply hope for a better future; one must take steps to bring that future into reality. This might involve acts of kindness, advocacy for justice, or efforts to build community. In the context of the resurrection, it means living in a way that reflects the transformative power of Christ's victory over death.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is a powerful example of active hope. It demonstrates that even in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles, new life and new possibilities can

emerge. The resurrection is a testament to the power of God to bring about transformation and renewal.

For early Christians, the resurrection was a source of immense hope and courage. It empowered them to spread the message of Jesus, even in the face of persecution and hardship. The resurrection assured them that their efforts were not in vain and that God's ultimate victory was certain.

In contemporary times, the resurrection continues to inspire active hope. It calls believers to live in a way that reflects the reality of the risen Christ. This means working towards a world where love, justice, and peace prevail. It means standing against oppression and injustice and being agents of reconciliation and healing.

Living out active hope in light of the resurrection involves several practical steps. First, it requires a deep and abiding faith in the power of God to bring about change. This faith is nurtured through prayer, worship, and engagement with the scriptures.

Second, it involves a commitment to the community. Active hope is not a solitary endeavor; it is something that is lived out in a relationship with others. This means being part of a faith community that supports and encourages one another in the journey of faith.

Third, it requires a willingness to take risks and step out in faith. Just as the early disciples were willing to leave behind their old lives to follow Jesus, so too must believers today be willing to embrace new possibilities and opportunities for service.

Finally, living out active hope means being persistent and resilient. The journey of faith is not always easy, and there will be times of doubt and struggle. However, the resurrection assures believers that even in the darkest moments, God's light and life will prevail.

Active hope and the resurrection of Jesus Christ are deeply intertwined. The resurrection provides the foundation for a hope that is dynamic, participatory, and transformative. It calls believers to envision a better future, set their intentions towards that future, and take concrete actions to bring it into reality. Through active hope, the power of the resurrection is made manifest in the world, bringing new life and new possibilities for all.

In Christ's Love

+*William*

Pastor



# Transgender Day of Visibility

Keegan T. Glover

Delivered 3/29/2025 at the Mass for Transgender Community

Not supposed to get political, but we can't say trans without being political so I will take my pass for today and talk about some politics.

Gender is not a new issue. As long as society has had gender roles, we've had people who don't fit those roles, and ways to deal with us. So why do people keep saying this is some new, radical thing?? Well, politics.

Throughout scripture, the people we see highlighted are often not the ones who are acting exactly perfectly, right?

Jacob was cast as a troublemaker from the start, immediately identified as less manly than his twin brother, and loved less by their father (Isaac) because of that. Jacob has many sons, and favors the younger one, as he was not favored.

Joseph is creative, he has these dreams and he has this long fancy coat, and most of his brothers hate him for that.

Every woman who is mentioned by name in the genealogy of Jesus is touched by some kind of sexual scandal, from Rahab always being known as a prostitute, to Mary becoming pregnant before her marriage.

Not 1 for 1 the same, but the closest thing we have to today's gender non-conforming people in scripture is eunuchs. The biggest distinction is choice. Exiled Israelites being taken prisoner and castrated is absolutely different from someone allowing themselves the courage to be authentic, but what we have in common is for some reason, people insist on treating us differently based on parts of us that are nobody else's business.

When we talk about the eunuchs in scripture, it's not enough to just know what a eunuch is, we also need to know what they were then used for, and how they were treated. There were whole rules just about these people, the spaces they were allowed to access and how people should interact with them. Eunuchs were castrated so they could be servants in the households of the Babylonian elites and not threaten their bloodlines.

When they returned from that exile, though, the Israelites had this third class of gender that didn't fit their established rules. These people could no longer have children, and in a

small, heavily oppressed group, numbers really mattered. So they were shunned from society, they came home to no hope of a family or a future, and they weren't even allowed to participate in worship anymore. They had finally come home from exile, only to be exiled from the house by their own.

In 2023, the Florida legislature passed an anti-trans bathroom law that makes it criminal trespass to refuse to leave a restroom or changing facility that does not align with an individual's sex assigned at birth after being told to do so by a government employee. Fla. Stat. § 553.865. This year, they're trying to revise the states equal employment policies, to remove protections for trans and queer people and minority businesses in hiring practices, contract selections, even personal interactions within an office. It would be harassment for someone to insist on calling me "she" in the office, revising these laws would make it harassment for me to report someone for such direct bullying.

But those are the rules that people make. If we look back to the scripture, when we get into the prophets, what do they have to say about these issues? What does God think? Isaiah is prophesying peace, and he says: 'Do not let the eunuch say, "I am just a dry tree." For thus says the Lord: To the eunuchs who keep my sabbaths, who choose the things that please me and hold fast my covenant, I will give, in my house and within my walls, a monument and a name greater than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. .. Thus says the Lord God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel.'

God clearly does not want us excluded. God speaks right to us, about our names and our futures, those are the same things a lot of us trans folks worry about today. We have to fight for our names, we have to fight to have families, but God reminds the eunuchs and us that we are not forgotten, we are not cut off, and we are not excluded. Not only will God bring us into his house, but we will also be celebrated for who we are.

Jesus himself talks about eunuchs, and like he often does he expands our understanding of whatever he's talking about. He clarifies that eunuchs are not only those who have been made so by others, but some have become so of their own choice, and others even are born this way. He even said "this is going to be really hard for some of you to understand." Now let's visit one last eunuch in scripture, one of the very first converts after the resurrection, the Ethiopian. An angel sent Philip off into the wilderness, and Philip found an Ethiopian court official heading away from Jerusalem. They had traveled all that way to worship in Jerusalem, but we know that eunuchs weren't allowed in the temple, so this person was no doubt turned away at the gates of the temple and excluded from the worship they had traveled so far to offer and experience.

An angel sent one of Jesus' own into the wilderness after an outcast, someone from so far away, someone who didn't fit within the rules of what was "normal", God had that person

specifically sought out, and brought into the fold of God's love, because God excludes no one.

I have heard people say "God loves and welcomes everyone as they are, sin and all, but he loves them too much to let them stay that way." This phrase has always gotten under my skin, it's felt used as a way to say, you can show up queer, but we will expect you to change and conform.

To that phrase I say, I did show up one way, and I have been changed. In many, many ways, I have been changed by this faith I have been so lovingly accepted into. I learned what love, real love, true love is like. I've grown a lot since then, I've become my most authentic self. And I've only been able to understand Jesus better since then. Nothing about my gender has ever been a barrier for God, only for other people. I am, who I always have been, who God made me to be.

God excludes no one. We don't decide who is in or out, we have ample evidence in this wonderful book that God says, over and over, anyone and everyone can be in. In a time when many of us are feeling pushed back into the closet, into the dark, we have to always remember that none of that is how God feels about any of his beloved children. And at the end of the day, that's who we all really are.

## **An Offering of Letters**

As people of faith, we are called to give of our time, talent, and treasure for a greater purpose. Bread for the World invites you to use your voice to help end hunger.

Every year, Bread for the World organizes churches, community organizations, and people of faith from across the country to write letters and emails to their members of Congress who have the power to impact the policies and programs that can **end hunger**.

By taking part in **Bread for the World's 2025 Offering of Letters**, you will help support domestic and international nutrition programs that offer a hand up to families and a brighter future for children.

Your letter matters. Combined with others from your church, campus, or organization—and joined with the voices of thousands of advocates across the country—your letter or email is an expression of faith and hope, urging U.S. decision makers to pursue a world without hunger. God uses these letters to change hearts and minds, and again and again, Bread for the World wins help and opportunity for our neighbors who face hunger. Join Bread for the World in pursuing a world without hunger.



Please take a few minutes to write your members of Congress. Urge them to help families and children experiencing hunger and poverty—no matter where they live. Scan the QR code to email Congress. Sample letters can be found to print or send by email at [bread.org/offering-letters](http://bread.org/offering-letters).

### **How to participate in an Offering of Letters**

#### **Join Bread for the World in pursuing a world without hunger.**

Please take a few minutes to write your members of Congress. Urge them to help families and children experiencing hunger and poverty—no matter where they live.

**Click the link email Congress: <https://go.bread.org/page/78158/action/1>**

Sample letters can be found to print or send by email at [bread.org/offering-letters](http://bread.org/offering-letters).

We will be writing our Letters on April 5 after Mass. You will also be able to use your cell phones to email representatives.

### **Prayer of the Day**

*God of love,  
We gather this day to worship you;  
to hear your word proclaimed,  
to pray for our neighbors,  
near and far,  
and to offer the gift of our voices  
-and our words  
so that children around the world  
have enough nourishing food  
that they will thrive.  
Amen*

### **Are you looking to become more involved in our parish?**

We have a variety of opportunities for you to contribute and make a difference throughout the week. Here's how you can get involved:

- **Saturdays:** Join us in a range of roles including readers, technical support, musicians, singers, altar servers, and Eucharistic Ministers. Your participation enriches our worship experience.

- **Mondays and Tuesdays:** Help us with our Crock Pot Classes. If you're interested in presenting, please reach out to Dennis Last for more information.
- **Tuesdays:** Volunteer at Rebecca's Pantry in the morning. Your assistance can make a significant impact on those in need.
- **Wednesdays:** Contribute to our Thrift Shop. We need enthusiastic helpers to support this valuable outreach.
- **LGBTQ+ :** Contact Keegan Glover for information.
- **Ongoing:** We are also establishing a new ministry for Special Ministers to the Sick. This role is a wonderful opportunity to provide comfort and support to those who are ill.
- **Immigration:** We are seeking individuals who would be willing to **accompany** immigrants to court or other appearances.

So much to choose from! Reflect on how you might be called to serve and make a difference. What is God inviting you to do?

If you are interested in any of these opportunities or have questions, please contact [appropriate contact person/office] for more details. We look forward to your involvement and contributions to our parish community!

## Easter Duty

The Easter Duty is a fundamental obligation for Catholics, emphasizing the importance of the sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation. According to the precepts of the Church, Catholics are required to receive Holy Communion at least once a year, specifically during the Easter season. This period typically extends from Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday, although some regions may have slightly different time frames.

In addition to receiving the Eucharist, Catholics are also encouraged to go to Confession, especially if they are aware of having committed any mortal sins. The sacrament of Reconciliation is essential for spiritual renewal and prepares the faithful to receive the Eucharist worthily.

The Easter Duty underscores the significance of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and the central role of the Eucharist in Catholic life. It serves as a reminder of the need for ongoing spiritual growth and the importance of participating in the sacramental life of the Church.

By fulfilling the Easter Duty, Catholics renew their commitment to their faith, strengthen their relationship with God, and participate more fully in the communal celebration of the

Paschal Mystery. This practice fosters a deeper understanding of the transformative power of Christ's resurrection and its implications for daily living.

## **Prayer for Vocations**

*Gracious God, we give thanks for your call to both women and men to serve in Christ's Kingdom as priests, deacons, and consecrated persons. We ask that you send your Holy Spirit to inspire and guide others to respond with generosity and courage to your call. May our community of faith nurture and support vocations rooted in sacrificial love, especially among our youth and young adults. Through our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

## **A Prayer for Those in Formation**

*Almighty God, we lift up all those in formation, preparing to serve with hearts full of faith and dedication. Grant them wisdom, strength, and discernment as they grow in their journey. Guide their minds, strengthen their spirits, and fill them with your love. May they always walk in humility and grace, ready to serve others and follow the path you have set before them. We ask this in Your holy name. Amen.*

Current candidates in diaconal formation include Zach Baker, Ken Gladding, and Kody Hall, All for the Diocese of St. John XXIII.

## **The Blue Triangle**

Have you seen the Blue triangle being worn by Bishop Cavins and other members of the parish? Have you wondered what it represented?

During World War II, blue triangles were used to identify foreign forced laborers and emigrants in Nazi concentration camps. This included stateless people and refugees from countries occupied by Nazi Germany.

Bishop Cavins has repurposed its meaning to that which indicates a person who is supportive of immigrants and welcomes them in the name of Christ. If you would like a blue triangle you can get one by requesting them through the mail and including a small donation to cover the costs of producing them. Send a self-addressed and stamped envelope to Blue Triangle Project, Abiding Presence Faith Community, 5330 Poinsetta Ave., Winter Park, FL 32792-7234.

# **Supporting Immigrants: A Call for Compassionate Volunteers**

## **Immigration Ministry: Seeking Court Companions**

In today's world, the journey of an immigrant is often fraught with challenges and uncertainties. Navigating the legal system can be particularly daunting, especially for those who are unfamiliar with the language, culture, and procedures of their new country. Recognizing this, our Immigration Ministry will be dedicated to providing crucial support to immigrants during their most vulnerable moments.

We are actively seeking compassionate individuals who are willing to accompany immigrants to court or other official appearances. This role is not just about being a physical presence; it is about offering emotional support, guidance, and reassurance. Many immigrants face significant anxiety and fear when attending court hearings, and having a friendly, supportive companion can make a world of difference.

Your involvement as a court companion can have a profound impact on the lives of immigrants. By volunteering your time, you help ensure that they do not face these intimidating situations alone. Your presence can provide a sense of security and confidence, helping them to better understand the proceedings and make informed decisions.

Our ministry will provide comprehensive training to all volunteers, ensuring that you are well-prepared to assist immigrants effectively. You will learn about the legal processes, cultural sensitivities, and the specific needs of the immigrant community. Additionally, we offer ongoing support and resources to help you in your role.

If you have a heart for helping others and a desire to make a tangible difference in your community, we invite you to join our team of court companions. Your support can help immigrants navigate their legal challenges with dignity and hope. Together, we can create a more compassionate and inclusive society.

For more information or to volunteer, please contact our pastor. Your kindness and dedication can change lives.

# **A Call to Love Our Neighbors: Florida Sign On Letter**

**A Christian call in solidarity with the immigrant community. Let us join our voices together in this sign-on letter! We must unite as a moral voice for justice and compassion & stand in solidarity with immigrant families in our state & country.**



**FAITH IN ACTION**

# **Family Faith Activities**

## Courtesy of LTP's At Home with the Word 2025.

**April 6, 2025**

**Fifth Sunday of Lent**

### **Activities**

- ◆ Race your child to the end of the block or let two children race. Don't look back! When all are tired, point out that growing up and getting closer to God is like a race. Regardless of what lies behind, you keep charging forward. St. Paul says, "Forgetting what lies behind, but straining forward to what lies ahead, I continue my pursuit toward the goal." Let's race again!
- ◆ After Mass, read Isaiah 43:19–21 again. Invite your child to draw a picture of the jackals and ostriches honoring God and the water in the desert for the people to drink.
- ◆ Make a plan for Holy Week and discuss it with your child. Lent ends before the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Thursday of Holy Week and the Triduum begins: Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Easter Sunday. This is the holiest time of our Christian year! Will your family be able to attend the services on these days? If Friday and Saturday services are too long for your child, Holy Thursday is a good place to begin, with its foot washing and procession of the Blessed Sacrament. Explain it to your child beforehand.

### **Questions**

- ◆ Before you leave for Mass, open your Bible to Isaiah 43 and read verses 19–21 to your child. This is a part of today's first reading. Enjoy the colorful images. Ask your child to listen for the jackals and ostriches and the water in the desert when the passage is read in church. Talk about the wonderful ways that God makes new things happen and helps us see new life where there didn't seem to be any.
- ◆ Sometime when your child is crying, ask, "Do you ever feel like today is the worst day of your life? What is the worst thing about what happened?" Let the child express the misery. Then suggest that tears can be like rain, watering the earth and making things grow. The Israelites were very sad when they were exiled, but God brought them back. God can bring good things from bad. Read Psalm 126, today's responsorial psalm, the song of the exiles, and summarize it for your child. Perhaps you can even recall the melody for the refrain sung at Mass today.
- ◆ At a quiet moment, ask your child, "Have you ever done something you regretted at school or at home?" You might open this discussion with a regret of your own. What happened? Was there punishment or some other consequence? Were you able to undo your action? What does Jesus say about this in today's Gospel? He does not condemn anyone, but says, "do not sin anymore."



**April 13, 2025**

## **Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord**

### **Activities**

- ◆ Ask your child to picture Jesus entering Jerusalem accompanied by the disciples and followed by a crowd. Jesus is triumphant, but he's riding a donkey. Does this look strange — a king on a donkey? Perhaps draw the image of Jesus, victorious but still humble, with the crowd waving palms and spreading cloaks on the path before him. Jesus says if the crowd stopped shouting, the stones would cry out. Can you draw the stones cheering Jesus?
- ◆ Did you bring palms home from church? Learn how to weave the palm into a cross and do it with your child (instructions that can be found on the internet). Leftover palms will be burned next year to make the ashes for Ash Wednesday. Tell your child about this as you weave. Like the sun rising each morning or the sequence of seasons, our annual Lenten practices give a rhythm to life that can convey God's faithful love to the child.
- ◆ Tomorrow begins, the holiest week of the year. Talk with your child about how you can create a holy atmosphere in your home during Holy Week and Triduum. Discuss plans for the week.

### **Questions**

- ◆ After Mass, ask your child, "How did it feel to carry palms today?" If there was a procession outside or into the church, ask if the child waved the palms or wanted to dance. Did she sing? Was it a little like a parade? Why did people seem so solemn at today's Mass?
- ◆ Today is the last Sunday of Lent. Ask your child, "How do you feel about the end of Lent? Glad or sad? Did Lent do our family some good? Other people?" How will the family move on from here? What plans could you make for the fifty days of Easter?
- ◆ The reading of the passion in church today was very long. Ask your child, "Do you remember anything from that story?" Any detail that he noticed is praiseworthy. If your child remembers nothing, perhaps prompt with something you remember, such as the cock crowing three times or the casting of lots for Jesus' clothes. If there was music or singing during the reading, you or your child might recall that.

**April 20, 2025**

## **Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord**

### **Activities**

- ◆ Help your child act out, perhaps with dolls or other figures, the events of John 20:1–9. First Mary Magdalene arrives at the tomb and is devastated. She says, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him." Then Peter and John

head for the tomb, running side by side. John races ahead, bends down, and sees the empty wrappings. Peter arrives and enters. John follows, sees, and believes that Jesus is risen.

◆ Easter flowers, decorated eggs, marshmallow chicks, and chocolate rabbits can all be related to fertility and new life; they can be integrated into a religious celebration of Easter. Seeds produce flowers, from eggs chickens hatch, and rabbits develop—all are signs of Easter's new life. Ask your child, "Where do you see new life?" Perhaps grass is greening or bulbs blooming. Maybe a seed you planted has sprouted. Is there a new interest, new friend, or new skill? Has your child learned something new, eaten something new, said something new?

◆ With your child, fill the empty spot in the center of your table with anything that celebrates renewal: flowers, fruit, dyed eggs, a stuffed or edible rabbit, or a decoration the child has made from construction paper or other material. Plan to keep the centerpiece fresh for the whole Easter season.

### **Questions**

◆ After Mass, ask your child, "What was different in church today from the many weeks of Lent? What different colors? What flowers or banners? Why was everyone so happy? What kind of songs did we sing? Did you hear the Alleluia?" Happy Easter!

◆ If you and your child attended any of the services of the Triduum, ask your child, "What did you notice about that service? How was it different from today?" Help your child remember light or darkness, use of color, special vestments and actions of the priest celebrant or the assembly.

◆ Ask your child, "What happened on the morning of the first day of the week after Jesus was laid in the tomb? How did his followers feel? Sad, disappointed, hopeless? Astounded, unbelieving? Joyful, enthusiastic, renewed? How do you feel on this Easter morning?"

**April 27, 2025**

**Second Sunday of Easter (Octave of Easter)**

### **Activities**

◆ Caring for a pet is a good way for children to learn mercy. Take your child to visit an animal shelter to see how animals are rescued and cared for. If it is possible for you, consider fostering a kitten. Or if an animal is too demanding, a child can show mercy to a plant, watering it and watching it grow.

◆ If there is a food you restricted during Lent, bring it to your table during Easter Time with joy and relish. Let your child help prepare it and thank God for it as you serve and eat it.

◆ Encourage your child or children to develop a mealtime prayer you will use throughout the Easter season. You could base it on, "This is the day the Lord has made, let us be glad

and rejoice in it," possibly adding a tune and gesture. Repeating it daily can make each meal a heartfelt celebration

### Questions

- ◆ After Mass, ask your child, "What do you think Jesus meant when he appeared to the disciples after Easter and said, 'Peace be with you'? What do we mean when we say it to each other in church? How is it different from saying, 'Have a good day'? Is the peace of Christ a special kind of peace?"
- ◆ In the same Gospel, Jesus says, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." Ask your child, "What does it mean to be sent? Whom is Jesus sending? Is he sending you or me? All of us? What might we be sent to do?"
- ◆ Today is sometimes called Divine Mercy Sunday. Ask your child if there is someone or something to which she could show mercy. It could be a friend, a relative, a stranger, or an animal. Showing mercy is a way of being sent.

## Amazing April Saints

April is a month rich in saints' feast days in the Reformed Catholic Church, many of whom are celebrated for their holiness, devotion, and significant contributions to the faith. Here is a list of Catholic saints commemorated in April:

**April 1: St. Hugh of Grenoble** - Known for his reform efforts and dedication to the Church, St. Hugh was a bishop who played a significant role in the Gregorian Reform.

**April 2: St. Francis of Paola** - Founder of the Order of Minims, St. Francis was renowned for his humility and miraculous healings.

**April 2: St. Mary of Egypt** - A former prostitute who became a hermit, St. Mary is celebrated for her profound repentance and ascetic life.

**April 3: St. Richard** - An English bishop known for his piety and dedication to the poor, St. Richard is often invoked for healing.

**April 3: St. Luigi Scrosoppi** - An Italian priest who founded the Sisters of Providence, St. Luigi is remembered for his work with orphans and the poor.

**April 4: St. Isidore of Seville** - A scholar and bishop, St. Isidore is considered one of the last great Latin Fathers and is known for his encyclopedic works.

**April 5: St. Vincent Ferrer** - A Dominican preacher who traveled extensively, St. Vincent is known for his powerful sermons and conversion of many.

**April 6: St. William of Eskilsoe** - A Danish monk and bishop, St. William is remembered for his efforts to reform the Church in Denmark.

**April 7: St. John Baptist de la Salle** - Founder of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, St. John is a patron of teachers and educators.

**April 8: St. Julia Billiart** - Founder of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, St. Julia is known for her dedication to education and the poor.

**April 9: St. Mary Cleophas** - Traditionally believed to be one of the women who witnessed the resurrection of Jesus, St. Mary is honored for her faithfulness.

**April 10: St. Fulbert** - Bishop of Chartres, St. Fulbert is known for his contributions to the development of the cathedral school.

**April 10: St. Magdalena of Canossa** - Founder of the Daughters of Charity, St. Magdalena dedicated her life to serving the poor and educating children.

**April 11: St. Stanislaus** - A Polish bishop and martyr, St. Stanislaus is celebrated for his courage in standing up to injustice.

**April 11: St. Gemma Galgani** - An Italian mystic known for her deep spirituality and visions, St. Gemma is often invoked for healing.

**April 12: St. Julius I** - Pope Julius I is remembered for his defense of orthodoxy against Arianism and his support for the Nicene Creed.

**April 12: St. Zeno** - Bishop of Verona, St. Zeno is known for his pastoral care and efforts to combat paganism.

**April 13: Pope St. Martin I** - Martyred for his defense of the faith against heresy, Pope St. Martin I is honored for his steadfastness.

**April 13: Blessed Margaret of Castello** - A blind and disabled woman who became a Dominican tertiary, Blessed Margaret is celebrated for her holiness and compassion.

**April 14: St. Lydwine of Schiedam** - A Dutch mystic who suffered greatly, St. Lydwine is known for her patience and devotion despite her physical ailments.

**April 15: St. Hunna of Strasbourg** - Known as the "Holy Washerwoman," St. Hunna is celebrated for her humble service to the poor.

**April 16: St. Benedict Joseph Labre** - A French mendicant known for his asceticism and pilgrimage; St. Benedict is a patron of the homeless.

**April 16: St. Bernadette Soubirous** - Visionary of Lourdes, St. Bernadette is known for her encounters with the Virgin Mary and her unwavering faith.

**April 17: St. Stephen Harding** - Co-founder of the Cistercian Order, St. Stephen is remembered for his contributions to monastic reform.

**April 17: St. Kateri Tekakwitha** - Known as the "Lily of the Mohawks," St. Kateri is celebrated for her deep faith and dedication despite persecution.

**April 18: St. Apollonius the Apologist** - A Roman senator and martyr, St. Apollonius is known for his eloquent defense of Christianity.

**April 19: St. Leo IX** - A reforming pope, St. Leo IX is remembered for his efforts to combat simony and enforce clerical celibacy.

**April 20: St. Agnes of Montepulciano** - A Dominican prioress known for her visions and miracles; St. Agnes is celebrated for her holiness.

**April 21: St. Anselm of Canterbury** - A theologian and archbishop, St. Anselm is known for his writings on the existence of God and the nature of faith.

**April 22: St. Adalbert of Prague** - A missionary bishop and martyr, St. Adalbert is honored for his evangelization efforts in Eastern Europe.

**April 23: St. George** - A martyr and soldier, St. George is celebrated for his bravery and is a patron saint of many countries and causes.

**April 24: St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen** - A Capuchin friar and martyr, St. Fidelis is known for his missionary work and defense of the faith.

**April 25: St. Mark the Evangelist** - Author of the Gospel of Mark, St. Mark is honored for his contributions to the early Church and evangelization.

**April 26: St. Cletus** - The third pope, St. Cletus is remembered for his leadership and martyrdom.

**April 27: St. Zita** - A humble servant known for her piety and miracles, St. Zita is a patron of domestic workers.

**April 28: St. Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort** - A French priest known for his devotion to the Virgin Mary and his writings on Marian consecration.

**April 29: St. Catherine of Siena** - A mystic and Doctor of the Church, St. Catherine is celebrated for her theological writings and influence on the Church.

**April 30: St. Pius V** - A reforming pope known for his role in the Council of Trent and the implementation of its decrees.

**These saints each have unique stories and contributions that continue to inspire the faithful. Is there a particular saint you'd like to learn more about?. Do any of these saints hold special significance for you? Post about them on our Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1386619738179316/?ref=bookmarks>**

## April Recipes

### *Cousin Billie Jack's Crock Pot Mac & Cheese*

#### Ingredients

- 1 (16-oz.) package elbow macaroni
- 1 1/2 cups of heavy cream
- 1 (12-oz.) can evaporated milk
- 4 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/2 cup of butter, melted
- 1 1/2 teaspoons table salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 4 cups (16 oz.) shredded extra-sharp Cheddar cheese, divided
- Vegetable cooking spray

#### Instructions

1. Cook macaroni according to package directions. Stir together cream, next 5 ingredients, cooked macaroni, and 2 1/2 cups cheese in a large bowl.
2. Pour macaroni mixture into a lightly greased (with cooking spray) 6-qt. slow cooker; sprinkle the remaining 1 1/2 cups cheese over macaroni mixture.
3. Cover and cook on HIGH for 3 hours; reduce slow cooker to LOW and cook 1 hour.

## ***Grandma Harriet's Potato-And-Ham Hock Soup***

### **Ingredients:**

- 4 1/2 lbs. russet potatoes, chopped (about 10 cups)
- 2 lbs. smoked ham hocks (about 3 ham hocks)
- 2 cups chopped yellow onion (from 1 medium onion)
- 1 cup chopped celery (from 3 stalks)
- 2 Tbsp. minced garlic cloves (about 4 garlic cloves)
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh thyme
- 2 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- 5 cups chicken broth
- 1 cup heavy cream
- Chopped fresh chives
- Hot sauce (Optional)

### **Directions:**

1. **Add items to slow cooker crock:** Place potatoes, ham hocks, onion, celery, garlic, thyme, salt, and pepper in a 7-quart slow cooker; add broth, and stir to combine. Cover and cook on HIGH until potatoes are tender, 4 hours.
2. **Remove ham hocks:** Remove ham hocks, and place on a plate to cool 15 minutes.
3. **Puree soup:** Puree soup in slow cooker with an immersion blender until it's creamy but whole pieces of potato are still visible. Add cream, and stir.
4. **Add ham:** Once ham hocks are cool enough to handle, remove all meat and chop; discard fat and bone. Add meat to soup, and stir to combine.
5. **Garnish and serve:** Ladle soup in bowls; top with chopped chives and a dash of hot sauce (optional).



## ***Brenda's Spinach-And-Broccoli Bread Pudding***

### **Ingredients**

- 1 (10-oz.) package fresh baby spinach
- Cooking spray
- 1 lb. loaf Cuban bread, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 (10-oz.) package frozen broccoli florets, thawed
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh chives
- 1 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 (12-oz.) can evaporated milk
- 1 cup milk
- 12 large eggs
- 3 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/4 tsp. ground red pepper
- 2 cups (8-oz.) shredded sharp Cheddar cheese

### **Directions:**

1. Place spinach and 1 Tbsp. water in a large microwave-safe bowl. Cover with plastic wrap. Microwave at HIGH for 1 minute and let stand, covered, until spinach is wilted. Drain well and chop.
2. Lightly grease a 6-qt. slow cooker with cooking spray. Layer half of bread and all spinach, broccoli, and chives in slow cooker. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Top with remaining bread cubes, pressing down gently to fit.
3. Whisk together evaporated milk and next 5 ingredients until frothy. Pour evenly over bread. Top with shredded cheese. Cover and cook on Low for 3 to 4 hours or until set. Remove lid and cook for 10 minutes.