

RE Newsletter

St. Peter Catholic Church, 219 Adams Ave., Montgomery, AL

The end is near!



Hmm...my break from the newsletter was longer than I thought, sorry for missing the month of March! Here's a doubleheader to make that up!

Our Lenten Journey is drawing to a close and soon will our Religious Education year as well. We will not meet on Easter Sunday and after that, we will have **four** more classes before we part for the summer break.

Please mark your calendars for May 7 and plan to attend First Communion Mass that Sunday! Last year we did not have any first communicants, but we are certainly making it up this year with six!! George Beale, Hanna Davis, Benjamin Gadea, Merritt Peden, Louella Reynolds and Ana Thurman have worked very hard and are very excited to be receiving Jesus for the first time in a few weeks. Later this month, I am going to ask all of you and the entire parish to join together in praying a novena for them, that they may be ready to welcome Our Lord, Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity, into their hearts and that we too may learn to love Him more.

But for now, let's focus on the important days ahead, the *Triduum*, where we remember Jesus' institution of the Holy Eucharist, his passion, death, and more importantly his resurrection! I wish you a great Holy Week!

Marinella Davis, Parish Catechetical Leader



Way of the Cross

Join us for this annual event on Good Friday starting at 12pm.



In the Spotlight

Divine Mercy Sunday is April 11. The Novena starts on Good Friday.



Family Sunday

Our last Family Sunday for the year will be April 30th. Please make plan to attend.

Gloria and Alleluia soon to be back!

I absolutely love the Easter Vigil liturgy!! The smells, the sights, the gestures, the words we hear throughout the night in song and prayer, everything speaks of the sacred and beautiful, and everything obviously speaks of Christ's incredible feat: the conquering of death through His resurrection. If you have never been to an Easter Vigil Mass, you have to go at least once in your lifetime, it is gorgeous! My favorite part (spoiler alert here) is when we go from darkness to light and all the bells start ringing with joy. I always get goosebumps (I'm getting them even now as I write this!) because this is the definitive moment of our Lenten journey, but above all our of faith. Yes, because darkness has been conquered as "Jesus wiped clean the record of our ancient sinfulness," "broke the prison-bars of death and rose victorious from the underworld." These words come from the *Exultet*, the Easter proclamation we sing at the beginning of the liturgy. Not only it's a very beautiful chant, it's also a crash course in salvation history, packed with meaning and explanations!!! It is glorious in its simplicity. If you are not going to make it to this year's Easter Vigil Mass, or have never heard the *Exultet* before, please listen to it in your own home with your children, maybe by candlelight or in a room with dimmed lights, you are not going to regret it. It will make you appreciate even more the sacredness of this night and the beauty of our Catholic faith. Here are links to

the proclamation, the first one is a sung by a cantor, the second by a choir.

If you feel crafty and want to go an extra length after dying your Easter eggs, you can make your own paschal candle at home! Here is a link with a 2023 design and an explanation of what the priest says and does as he blesses the candle: <https://www.familyfeastandferia.com/quick-paschal-candle/>

I hope to see many of you in the next few days at the Mass of the Lord's Supper (Thu, 6pm), on Good Friday (Way of the Cross at 12, Stations at 3, Service at 6pm), and maybe at the Easter Vigil (Sat, 8pm). If you are unable to attend some of these events, I hope you will spend some time at home discussing the importance of these days with your children. Here are a few resources to help. They were published two years ago during the lockdowns but the content remains updated and always relevant: <https://sophiainstituteforteachers.org/holy-week-at-home-2021>

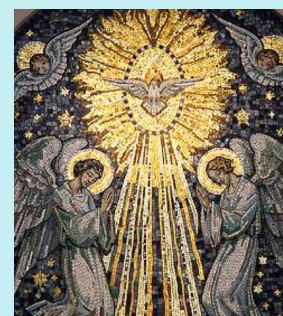
Last but not least, I don't know you, but I can't wait to sing the Gloria and the Alleluia again!

Divine Mercy Sunday

Lent may be over but our Liturgical Year continues and so do the celebrations, solemnities, and devotions that we honor week after week. One of these special feasts is Divine Mercy Sunday which is celebrated the Sunday after Easter. This year it will be on April 11.

OVERVIEW OF THE MONTH: THE HOLY SPIRIT

The month of April is dedicated to the **Holy Spirit**. To believe in the Holy Spirit is to profess that the Holy Spirit is one of the persons of the Holy Trinity, consubstantial with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is the Person of Love in the life of God. He is also like a breath, an aspiration of infinite Love, from which we draw the breath of life. On the day of Pentecost the Divine Spirit communicated such an abundance of life to the whole Church that to symbolize it "there came a sound from heaven, as of a violent wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they (the Apostles) were sitting." But it is also for us that the Holy Spirit has come, for the group in the Cenacle represented the whole Church. The Holy Spirit came to remain with the Church forever. This is the promise of Jesus Himself. He dwells in the Church permanently and unfailingly, performing in it without ceasing His action of life-giving and sanctification. He establishes the Church infallibly in the truth and makes her blossom forth with a marvelous supernatural fruitfulness. (Source: Catholic Culture)



What is the Feast of Divine Mercy? Here's a little description from Catholic Culture:



"In February 1931 Jesus appeared to a Polish nun, Sr. Faustina Kawalska, and asked that the Sunday after Easter be celebrated as a Feast of Mercy and be preceded by a novena beginning on Good Friday. Jesus promised that those who go to confession and

communion on that day will obtain a complete remission of all sin and all punishment due to sin. The novena begins on Good Friday and ends on the Sunday after Easter. In 2000 Pope John Paul added Divine Mercy Sunday to the calendar as a feast. He canonized Sr. Faustina on April 30, 2000, the Feast of Divine Mercy."

You can find the entire novena at this link:
<https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/prayers/view.cfm?id=1032>

If you prefer to have a paper copy, you can find it in the vestibule of the church.

Book Corner

Since I missed the March newsletter, here are two booklists, one for March and one for April. Enjoy them!

March

- ❖ *St. Katharine Drexel, Friend of the Oppressed* by Ellen Tarry
- ❖ *Saint Ciaran: The Tale of a Saint of Ireland* by Gary D. Schmidt
- ❖ *St. John Bosco and Saint Dominic Savio* by Catherine Beebe
- ❖ *Longinus (More Once Upon a Time Saints)* by Ethel Pochocki
- ❖ *Saint Patrick and the Peddler* by Margaret Hodges
- ❖ *St. Patrick's Summer: A Children's Adventure Catechism* by Marigold Hunt
- ❖ *Good Saint Joseph* by Father Lovasik



- ❖ *Mary and Joseph: Models of Faith and Love* by Barbara Yoffie
- ❖ *The Ravens of Farne: A Tale of St. Cuthbert* by Donna Farley

April

- ❖ *Benedict of San Fradello (Once Upon a Time Saints)* by Ethel Pochocki
- ❖ *St. Magnus, The Last Viking* by Susan Peek
- ❖ *Bernadette: Our Lady's Little Servant* by Hertha Pauli
- ❖ *Joseph and Chico: The Life of Pope Benedict XVI as Told by a Cat* by Jeanne Perego
- ❖ *Max and Benedict: A Bird's Eye View of the Pope's Daily Life* by Jeanne Perego
- ❖ *Saint George and the Dragon* by Margaret Hodges
- ❖ *St. Mark (Saints and Angels)* by Claire Llewellyn
- ❖ *Zita (More Once Upon a Time Saints)* by Ethel Pochocki
- ❖ *Lolek: The Boy Who Became John Paul II* by Mary Hramiec Hoffman
- ❖ *Karol from Poland* by Leonora Wilson
- ❖ *St. Louis De Montfort: The Story of Our Lady's Slave* by Mary Fabyan Windeatt
- ❖ *St. Catherine Of Siena: The Story of the Girl Who Saw Saints in the Sky* by Mary Fabyan Windeatt
- ❖ *Lay Siege to Heaven: A Novel about St. Catherine of Siena* by Louis de Wohl
- ❖ *Blessed Marie of New France: The Story of the First Missionary Sisters in Canada* by Mary Fabyan Windeatt

MARCH WAS THE MONTH OF ST. JOSEPH

The Church encourages us to be devoted to **St. Joseph** because he was a model in the heroic practice of all the virtues. The example of virtuous living that he gave in the exact fulfillment of the duties of his state of life is worthy of our reflection. Time and again the Church has made it clear that Joseph is not a saint for only a certain number of souls, but that he can help *all* men. St. Joseph is invoked as patron for many causes: he is the patron of the Universal Church, of the dying (because Jesus and Mary were at his death-bed), and also of fathers, of carpenters, and of social justice. St. John Paul II said, "Because St. Joseph is the protector of the Church, he is the guardian of the Eucharist and the Christian family. Therefore, we must turn to St. Joseph today to ward off attacks upon the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and upon the family." (Catholic Culture)