

Sacred Heart Parish

120 Jefferson Street ~ Swedesburg, Pennsylvania, 19405

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Pastor

frdimaria@shswedesburg.org

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Pastor Emeritus

Rev. James J. Shea, Sch. P.

Weekend Assistant

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Parish Services Director

[srmayanne@shswedesburg.org](mailto:srmaryanne@shswedesburg.org)

Linda Moser

Coordinator of Religious Education

lmoser@shswedesburg.org

Leo Brady

Sacristan

Holy Mass:

Saturday: Anticipated Mass 4:00 pm

Sunday: 8:00 am & 10:15 am

Monday through Friday at 8:00 am

Sacrament of Penance:

Sunday: 9:30 to 9:50 am

Wednesdays:

7:30 to 7:50 am & 6:30 to 7:00 pm

Saturday: 3:00 to 3:45 pm

FOCUS Missionary:

Caitlyn Sechuk

csechuk@shswedesburg.org

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vdifilippo@shswedesburg.org

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Carl Gedeik

*Director of
Liturgical Music*

Joe & Jeff Houseal

*Directors of Parish
& Cemetery Facilities*

SUNDAY, MARCH 24, 2024

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

Dear Friends in Christ:

The icons of the Eastern Orthodox Church depict in visual form multiple layers of theological meaning all in one image. They seek to incorporate in their inspired imagery the wholeness of the Scriptures as well as the vast scope of the Christian spiritual tradition. This is part of why they are both fascinating for study and fruitful for prayer.

The icon that depicts Palm Sunday is no exception. As one encounters it one finds most prominently the obvious features of the event: the Lord, seated on a beast of burden, entering Jerusalem. Behind the Lord and the donkey are the disciples discussing among themselves the meaning of these events, an ongoing manifestation of the misunderstanding of Jesus they have displayed from the start. The Lord looks at them as if weighing the question of who is going to remain with him all the way to the bitter end that he has now foretold. Ahead of the donkey are the people of Jerusalem who are also ambivalent. Some of them welcome him. Others are concerned about the visitor and the shouts of “Hosanna” (“come and save us!”) that he is receiving.



Truly interesting are the children in the icon. Most icons have at least one child up in the tree cutting olive or palm branches with a knife. Some icons have the children spreading the cloaks on the ground before the donkey. Some icons have a child feeding palm branches to the donkey. In many icons the children wear white to represent their innocence and the purity of their welcome, a sentiment which is conveyed by their free movement and the playfulness of their gestures.

A few icons offer what at first glance is something odd: a child, on the ground, removing something from his foot. What is the meaning of this? The child is removing a painful sliver that he got from climbing the olive trees to cut branches for the royal welcome. His presence in the image is meant as a reminder of the coming wood of the cross that is painful, and of the pain of discipleship that in this life inevitably is mixed in with the joy of knowing the Lord. Even the most innocent of followers and believers cannot escape in this fallen world the sting of pain, sin, and death itself. It intrudes on even the most joyful of circumstances. Palm Sunday by its nature is a mixed event of both joy and death.

It is not difficult to find ourselves in this same scene as we enter Holy Week and as we make our way through life. We seek to follow the Lord all the way to the bitter end, but we hesitate as we realize that doing so means our own death, too. We would like to welcome him into our hearts, lives, and world with outstretched hands, however we are alarmed at the implications of such a move, knowing that it means allowing him to be in charge. It would be our first choice to only have festive joy in life, yet we know that because this is not heaven, we cannot avoid painful slivers. It is the reality that we must accept if we are to have any peace in this life at all.

Central to the prayerful exercise of placing ourselves into this icon scene, and of Holy Week itself, is the need to keep our gaze on the scene’s most prominent figure: Christ. No matter where one finds oneself in the scene, the fact is that Christ is in the middle of it. He leads us through Holy Week. He leads us through life. He leads us through death and into the fullness of life. Blessed Holy Week!



The Immaculate Heart Sisters and Sacred Heart Convent

For several years the Sister, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary have worked at St. Patrick Church in Norristown. The Sisters have worked primarily with the Spanish speaking people of the parish and until they moved to Sacred Heart were living in a few different convents some distance from their work. The Sisters wished to live closer to their apostolate in Norristown and expressed an interest in residing in our convent after it was vacated by the Sacred Heart Sisters in 2017.

When much needed updating and refurbishing of the building had been completed, the IHM Sisters began to reside in our parish convent during the summer of 2018. It was an arrangement that worked well for the Sisters and for us. Additionally, from the beginning of their time here, one Sister was assigned to pastorally assist us at Sacred Heart. For two years Sr. Eileen McGuigan was with us in that capacity and when she retired to Camilla Hall, Sr. MaryAnn Bolger joined us and has been a wonderful asset to our staff.

Recently the Superior General of the IHMs met with me to inform me that their congregation was withdrawing from St. Patrick's Church effective July 1, 2024. With their departure from St. Patrick, there will no longer be a need for the IHMs to use our convent.

Regrettably, the Sisters will be closing their convent here and departing for other missions at the end of July. This necessarily means that Sister MaryAnn Bolger will also be leaving us. We will be especially sorry to see her leave for another mission.

To contextualize the Sisters' departure from St. Patrick's and this parish, it is necessary to understand that religious sisters who once numbered 180,000 members in the USA in 1965, have dwindled to 42,000 members presently. This represents a 76% decline in membership within religious congregations in this country. Given that fewer than one percent (1%) of nuns are under the age of forty (40) and the median age of American women religious is eighty (80), analysts anticipate that within fifteen to eighteen years, there will be fewer than one thousand religious Sisters left in our country.

The religious women of the 19th and 20th centuries left a tremendously beautiful and fruitful legacy in our country. The Sisters of yesteryear built hospitals, schools, nursing homes, orphanages, and engaged in many specialized apostolates to serve God's people. Those of us who were educated by the Sisters in parochial schools have many fond recollections of these resolute women.

Our community has been blessed with the dedicated examples of Sr. MaryAnn Bolger, Sr. Rosemary DePaul, Sr. Dolores Joseph, and Sr. Eleonore Joseph who faithfully live the IHM charism. We will cherish the remaining time the Sisters have with us and wish them God's blessing as they take on their new work.

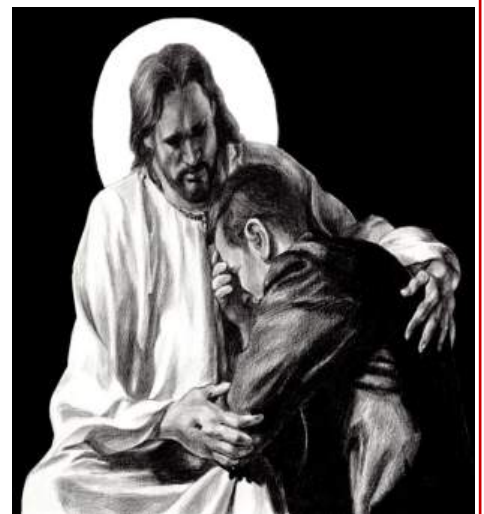
Experience the Lord's Mercy

The Sacrament of Penance was given to us by Our Lord for the forgiveness of sins committed after baptism. In this sacrament we give voice to the evil which we have done, and we seek reconciliation with the Father of Mercies who alone has the power to grant us His peace.

Too few Catholics confess their sins with any regularity in the Sacrament of Penance and as a result they experience obstacles to their growth in holiness and virtue. Included in today's bulletin is an insert with an excellent examination of conscience. Please use it to properly prepare to celebrate God's mercy in the sacrament of confession.

There are multiple scheduled times for confession this week.

The Lord awaits you!





MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, March 23

4:00pm Daniel & Dorothy Burke

Requested by Son, Tom & Cindy Burke

Sunday, March 24

8:00am For the People of Our Parish

10:15am Cary Turner

(Birthday Remembrance, March 25th)

Requested by Brother, David & Brenda Turner

Monday, March 25

8:00am Annunziata DiNenna

(Birthday Remembrance)

Requested by Her Family

Tuesday, March 26

8:00am For the Intentions of Peter D'Alessandro

Requested by Joanne

Wednesday, March 27

8:00am Barbara Bores

Requested by Elisa Pagnotti

Thursday, March 28

7:00pm Mass of the Lord's Supper

Friday, March 29

2:00pm Liturgy of the Lord's Passion

Saturday, March 30

7:00pm Easter Vigil

Sunday, March 31

8:00am The Deceased Members of the Perretta Family

Requested by Carl & Kass Perretta

10:15am Eugene Pera

(1st Anniv. Remembrance, March 30th)

Requested by Wife, Children & Grandchildren



Mass of the
Resurrection
of the
Lord



Let Us Serve The Lord With Gladness!

The following Ministers are scheduled for our Parish Masses.

Holy Thursday, March 28:

7:00pm

Lector: Connie Capaldo

Good Friday, March 29:

2:00pm

Lectors: Connie Capaldo & Sal DiNenna

Saturday evening, March 30:

7:00pm

Lectors: Elisa Pagnotti & Daniel Fahy, Jr.

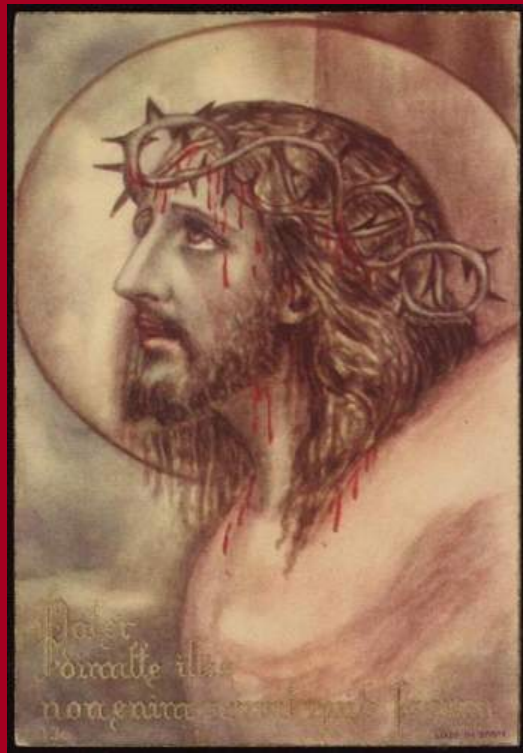
Sunday morning, March 31:

8:00am

Lector: Eileen Bralski

10:15am

Lector: John Keidel



Weekly Report

March 16 - 17, 2024

\$6,246.00

Thank you for your support of Our Parish!

SACRED HEART PREP Interactive Stations



REGISTRATION
IS OPEN NOW!
DON'T WAIT!

PREP Summer Session for 2024
will run June 17–21 from 9:00 am to
2:00 pm.

For additional information, please
contact the PREP Coordinator, Linda Moser at:
lmoser@shswedesburg.org



*Please Pray For All Who Protect Our
Country, especially...*

John F. K. Benedict (Major, USAF ANG), son of Christine & Vince Benedict; **Anthony C. Brandt** (CW3 Warrant Officer, U.S. Army Reserves), son of Eileen Brandt; **Zachary T. Brandt** (Sergeant U.S. Army), grandson of Eileen Brandt; **Matthew J. Capaldo** (Commander, U.S. Navy) son of John & Connie Capaldo; **Michael DeStefano, Jr.** (Sergeant U.S. Army) grandson of Jack & Sue DeStefano; **Michael Gutkowski** (Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Navy), grandson of Pat Gutkowski; **Samuel Hoey** (LCpl, U.S.M.C.), grandson of Leona Cottone; **Noel Irizarry** (Specialist, U.S. Army), son of Patricia Epright; **Shane Jones** (Sergeant U.S. Marines), grandson of Fran Toth; **Matthew McNulty** (Chief Warrant Officer 4 U.S.M.C.), son of Irene McNulty; **Rick McVoy** (Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Navy) son of Rich McVoy; **Greg Philips** (Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Navy); **Jessica Prostack** (CW2 Warrant Officer, U.S. Army), daughter of Richard Prostack; **Jeffrey Seamans** (Captain, U.S. Army), son-in-law of Dolores Burton; **Stephanie Zugay** (National Guard), granddaughter of Greg & Grace Zugay.



Tom Kavanagh
Michael Martin
Theresa Seiders
Kerry Link
Betty Lilick
Margaret Halas
Ronald Halas
Marge Leszczynski
Dolores Burton
Fran & Rob Worrall
Rose Coscia
Marion Raup
Joseph Saboe
Irene Elliott
Stanley Leszczynski
Ayden Boone
Butch Rodenbaugh
Nicholas Janicki
Catherine Bankowski
Michael Myers
Melissa(Myers) Sillah
George Estock
Helen Bednar
Barbara A. Burkert
John Smoczylo
Laurie Ronan



Lenten Eucharistic Adoration & Stations of the Cross



Join us this Wednesday for Eucharistic Adoration starting at 6:00 pm and ending with Stations of the Cross and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament at 7:30 pm.



holy week

Confessions:

Tuesday, March 26	1:00 pm - 1:30 pm
Tuesday, March 26	6:30 pm - 7:30pm
Wed., March 27	6:30 pm - 7:30 pm
Good Friday, March 29	10:00 am - 11:00 am

Holy Thursday

Mass of the Lord's Supper 7:00 pm
The Church will remain open until 11:00 pm for visits to the repository

Good Friday

Liturgy of the Lord's Passion 2:00 pm
The Church opens at 8:00 am for visits to the repository

EASTER MASS SCHEDULE



Holy Saturday
Easter Vigil 7:00 pm

Easter Sunday
8:00 am & 10:15 am

Sacred Heart Pro Life Holy Hour

All are welcome to join us at **12:00 noon each Wednesday** to gather in prayer to ask for God's help on issues affecting our nation and families.



Swedesburg Fire Co's Lent Dinners

Join us this Friday, March 29

5:00 to 8:00 PM

Swedesburg Fire Co's Social Hall

TO ORDER CALL 610.272.9853



EASTER DECORATING

Volunteers are needed to help decorate the Church for Easter. We will assemble in the Church at 7:00 pm on Good Friday to decorate. Many hands make light work!



BLESSING OF EASTER FOOD

HOLY SATURDAY
March 30 @ 1:00 PM
SACRED HEART

Monday Night Rosary

There will be a public recitation of the rosary in church each Monday at 7:00pm.

EASTER KOLACHKY Pre-Orders can be picked up in the Rectory garage before or after all Masses **this weekend**.



First Saturday Devotions

We invite you to join us on Saturday, April 6 for the 8:00AM at Mother of Divine Providence parish in King of Prussia to continue our usual First Saturday Devotions as requested by Our Lady at Fatima. Some of us who regularly recite the Rosary after Mass on First Saturdays will be attending the 8:00 a.m. Mass at MDP on April 6 to join their parishioners in praying the Rosary following Mass and Miraculous Medal Novena prayers. We hope to see you there!

Any questions? Please contact:
lindaskorpel@gmail.com

March 24, 2024

*PALM SUNDAY
OF THE PASSION
OF THE LORD*



Reflection by Rev. Leonard N. Peterson

The overhead camera work used on a televised football game has something in common with an item needed for a family group photo. Both need perspective. The kind that can only come when the photographer steps back from his subject so that the viewer catches the whole scene.

I believe we can gain a better appreciation of the Lord's Passion account if we figuratively "step back" from the milieu our minds produce. Consider the many homilies we have heard over the years; the many movie versions of the events, and even the well-written New Testament commentaries we may have read, and how they influence our imaginations as we hear the words every Holy Week.

Why pull away from one or more of those? In order to gain a personal perspective of the well-known events. To be spiritually and physically alone in their presence, as if you were the only observer. Mark's version that we hear today is the major part of his shortest of the four gospels.

The whole gospel can be read in less than an hour. But what matters is your reaction just to the Passion account. Various lines will pop out, so to speak, and compel you to pause for reflection.

For me, there is a line that comes early on, when Jesus addresses His disciples by saying: "The poor you will always have with you, and whenever you wish you can do good to them, but you will not always have Me." Of course He meant His physical presence, with no reference to His miraculous presence in the Holy Eucharist. Yet we can wonder what His physical presence might mean. When we hopefully reach heaven we shall be blessed with it. But in the meantime wouldn't it be consoling? I think of saints like Mary Magdalene, or Sr. Faustina, all of whom had the privilege.

Something to think about as we step back from our ordinary pondering of the words that we read or hear this week.

Meanwhile we await the message of the event on the Third Day, trusting that our decision to live as He asked us to will yield the moment when He steps forward to give us a hug of welcome to eternal joy.

God love you and give you His peace.

Keith J. Murphy
Supervisor
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