

Divine Mercy Sunday



Why We Do What We Do

The use of incense gives us a visible, tangible reminder that our prayers are going "up" to God. We are reminded that He is receiving our prayers and will answer them according to His will and His plan. Incense also adds to the reverence, dignity, and festiveness of our highest celebrations.

The use of incense goes back to our Jewish roots. It was often used in the Temple and in people's homes. Incense is one of the ways that we involve all of our senses in our liturgical celebrations. For Easter we also have "living water" flowing in our sanctuary that attracts our attention through our ears and eyes. The water reminds us of the new life Christ gives us.

We are called to "full, active, and conscious participation" in the Mass. Not to be spectators or observers but participants actively engaged who fully enter into worship. We have been created to praise God. The Mass is the highest form of praise. (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*)

Incense also is a reminder of the things that are blessed or holy. We incense the altar, the tabernacle, crucifixes, the Easter candle, the Book of Gospels (containing the Word of God), and we incense the people (who are called to be holy). At funerals, we incense the casket or urn that contains the person who has died. We are lifting up our prayers for that person and we are incensing the person who by his/her baptism was given the grace needed to live a holy life (hopefully they did).

Incense also has been used historically for practical reasons. In ancient times people did not bathe on a regular basis. Even today, bathing habits are not the same in all places. Thus perfumed incense provides a pleasant smell to counteract other smells. In the Middle Ages they also thought it would kill germs and prevent the plagues and other diseases spreading further.

"Let my prayer arise before you like incense; my uplifted hands an evening sacrifice." (Ps 141:2)

DEATH

The reality of death is challenging and complicated for all of us.



Especially for our teenagers. The death of Francisco "Paco" Vasquez, 16, on Good Friday made that day much more "real" and personal for all of us. The death of a young person forces us to look at death, to look at where we stand with Christ and others, and to deal with our fears, our doubts, and our beliefs about death and what happens after death.

In November 2007, I met with about 40 of our teens at Calhoun High School, a few days after the death of Adelina Carmela Vasquez, 16. We talked and I shared some thoughts and reflections. Then the Holy Spirit prompted me to ask the following question: "If you died tomorrow, how many of you believe you would go to Heaven?" Only one out of 40 teens raised their hand. There was THE ISSUE.

We as Catholics believe in a loving God. In a good God. A God who sent His only Son to die for us on a cross and to open the doors to Heaven. A God who wants us to be with Him when we die, not in any other place.

We believe that we have to consistently, consciously reject Christ to not go to Heaven. A moment of rejection could be

problematic if it is our last moment. But most people who are not in Heaven rejected Christ over and over again by words and actions that they knew rejected Christ. They chose eternal death and separation from Christ. Repeatedly.

Even the Catholic belief of Purgatory—revealed to us in the Scriptures and by the revelation of Tradition—is a belief based on hope. Purgatory is inside the gates of Heaven and is a place of purification for those needing some "cleaning up" before they enter the eternal banquet. Purgatory is a review of our lives through the eyes of Christ that shows us His mercy and love.

Christ comes to give us the "fullness of life." (Jn. 10:10) The fullness of life is eternal life—living out of that gift and promise now through baptism and receiving that gift completely when we die. If we truly believe in eternal life, we will, in this life, live a life of love, service, thanksgiving, and avoiding temptation thru God's grace. And resist the attractions of temporary earthly pleasures—the vices and addictions that lead away from God. Our focus must be on Christ and on Heaven and we will have nothing to fear.



I have used this prayer before, but it is worth repeating:

"In him, who rose from the dead, our hope of resurrection dawned. The sadness of death gives way to the bright promise of immortality. "Lord, for your faithful people life is changed, not ended. When the body of our earthly dwelling lies in death we gain an everlasting dwelling place in heaven." (*Christian Death I*)



"2010" Weekly Budget	\$5,350.00
Offertory collected March 28 th	\$6,157.50
Difference	+\$ 807.50
Offertory collected April 4 th	\$6,956.62
Difference	+\$1,606.62
Second Collections	
Second collection March 28 th "Holy Land".....	\$1,019.16
Second collection April 4 th "Archdiocesan Seminarians".....	\$ 885.77
Extra Collections	
Miscellaneous Easter Flowers.....	\$ 129.00
Holy Thursday collection April 4 th	\$ 280.67
Holy Saturday "Veneration of the Cross".....	\$ 500.00
Third collection April 4 th "Building Fund".....	\$1,816.88
Campaign '10 Pledges:	
Total donations made (from pledges) as of 03/21/10.....	\$91,753.33
March 28 th and April 4 th collections.....	\$ 0
New Campaign total donations from pledges.....	\$91,753.33

Next Week's Second Collection

Next week's second collection will be for the Right to Life fund.

U.S. CATHOLIC HISTORY



On Tuesday (April 6), Archbishop Jose Gomez of San Antonio was named co-adjutor archbishop of Los Angeles. He becomes automatic successor to Cardinal Roger Mahoney who retires next February. Archbishop

Gomez will work with Cardinal Mahoney for the next 10 months, allowing a smooth transition as he prepares to lead the largest diocese in the United States. The Archdiocese of Los Angeles has more than five million Catholics; New York is second with 2.5 million. Gomez already is the highest-ranking Hispanic bishop in the United States. The last Hispanic bishop in charge of Los Angeles was Francisco Mora y Borrell (1878-96) when it was the diocese of Monterey-Los Angeles.



Join us Saturday, April 17th at 6:45 p.m. for popcorn and a movie. This month we will air "The Mission" starring Robert De Niro & Jeremy Irons. All are welcome.

Divine Mercy Sunday

April 11, 2010

First Reading: Acts 5:12-16

More than ever, believers in the Lord, great numbers of men and women, were added to them.

Second Reading: Revelation 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19

I was dead, but now I am alive forever and ever.

Gospel: John 20:19-31

Eight days later Jesus came and stood in their midst.

Living the Paschal Mystery

Our greeting of others must also be one of peace since we, too, share in the Lord's risen life. As with the disciples, Jesus allays our fears and offers us a whole new relationship with him-not one where we need to touch his wounds but one in which we utter with joyful conviction, "My Lord and my God!" We also enter into a whole new relationship with each other as we continue the works of Jesus that lead others to believing. These works include forgiveness, yes, but also caring for others, accepting them for who they are, easing pain and suffering. Any good we do brings new, risen life to others our ministry of goodness brings salvation. We are empowered to do so through the Holy Spirit. All we need do is surrender to God's action within us. We have these fifty days of Easter to come to greater belief, deepen our relationships, forgive, and spread peace. We have our whole lifetime to manifest the good works of our belief.

~Living Liturgy

Stewardship Thought

"Blessed are they who have not seen and yet believed," Jesus says in today's Gospel. For those who have not seen to believe, however, we must be good stewards of our faith, living it joyfully and sharing it generously. Then, in our time too, "men and women in great numbers" will be "added to the Lord."

Saturday April 10, 5:30pm.....Jacob C. Fritz (RIP)
Sunday, April 11, 8:30am..... Our Parish Family
Sunday, April 11, 10:00am.....(Spanish Mass) Our Parish Family
Sunday, April 11, 11:30 am.....Cecilia Kolterman (Baptism)
Sunday, April 11, 1:00pm.....(Spanish Mass) Our Parish Family
Sunday, April 11, 7:00pm..... (Spanish Mass) Our Parish Family
Monday, April 12, 12:15pm.....Communion Service (TBD)
Tuesday April 13, 12:15 pm.....Communion Service (TBD)
Wednesday, April 14, 12:15pm.....Communion Service (TBD)
Wednesday, April 14, 6:30 pm.....Rosary
Thursday, April 15, 12:15 pm.....Communion Service
Friday, April 16, 7:00pm.....Prayer Group/ Adoration
Saturday April 17, 5:30pm.....Faye Tate (RIP)
Sunday, April 18, 8:30am..... Michael McGuffey (Baptism)
Sunday, April 18, 10:00am.....(Spanish Mass) Our Parish Family
Sunday, April 18, 11:30 am..... Our Parish Family
Sunday, April 18, 1:00pm.....(Spanish Mass) Our Parish Family
Sunday, April 18, 7:00pm.....(Spanish Mass) Our Parish Family

SPIRITUAL WARFARE



Easter time is a time of celebrating Christ's resurrection and preparing for Pentecost. As we prepare for a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit, we must also be aware of the ongoing spiritual battle that happens inside us and in our world. It is the battle between good and evil, between Christ and Satan. It is the inner struggle to resist temptation and do what we know is right rather than give in to temptation.

We must remember that giving in only makes things worse. Once Satan causes a person to fall, he will do even more to lead that person further and further away from Christ and His Church.

One of Satan's weapons is despair. A person can be going through a hard time and Satan will try to make it seem as bad as possible. That there is no hope and that God will not help us. He will come up with more obstacles, influence situations in a negative direction, do whatever he can to distract and lead a person into more misery.

Not everything negative is directly connected to Satan, but he will use anything negative to his advantage. Negative events can lead to negative thinking. Satan can influence a person to remember only the negative and to see everything in a negative light. The person stops thinking of God, stops praying, stops going to Church, stops reading the Bible and they are headed for despair. Christ comes to break through, but we must let Him in.

A person dies and everything else becomes negative. We think of problems with family members, with friends, at school, at work, everywhere. Suddenly we can think of nothing positive, nothing good.

We can do this to ourselves, but Satan also will contribute to a person's fall into despair. The solution is to invite Christ into any sadness, any difficulty, any bad situation, and to lean on Him. "Relieve the troubles of my heart; bring me out of my distress. Put an end to my affliction and suffering. . ." (Ps 25:17-18)

Please pray for the people who are suffering:



Donna Thibault - respiratory illness, Barbara Smith-cancer, Marty McKinnon- ovarian cancer, Cayla Johnson-hydrocephalus, Joe Campbell-follicular lymphoma, Tonya Isham-tumor, Curtis Lunt-ill health, Melissa Silva-health, Juanita Rochester-cancer, Chuck Terry- prostate cancer, June Macejkovic-heart condition, Fr. Denis

Kolumber-health, Ernie -leukemia, Maria Farias- breast cancer, Jeanne Walraven-health, Jean Seitz-cancer, Angie Defalco-health, Erna Wyatt-health, Jim Rorer-special intention, Michael Llop-brain tumor, Erik Bigelow-special intention, Janice Miller-health, Lou Brown-brain cancer, Jaden Bates-health, Roy Davies- safety, The people of Haiti & Chile-health & safety, Chris Wable-health, Jim Wable-lung cancer, Marilyn Clayton-health, Ashlie Warren-health, Pearl Turner-health, Jenna Proctor-health, Jeff Elder-health, Serge Kastorsky-cancer, Terry Alan-bladder cancer, Lisa Clark-failed surgery, Betty Maddox-health.

STEWARDSHIP



Thank you to everyone who helped with Holy Week from musicians, to those in the Good Friday Via Crucis (Way of the Cross), to those who helped with decorating the church on Holy Saturday, to so many more helpers. You stepped up in the midst of a difficult week with two deaths and others needing spiritual support.

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 1, 5:30 p.m.: First Communion Mass (English)

May 16, 11:30 a.m.: Graduation Mass (English)

1:00 p.m.: Graduation Mass (Spanish)

May 22 and 29 (varying times): First Communion Masses (Spanish)

May 23, 5:00 p.m.: Confirmation with AB Gregory

May 28, 5:00 p.m.: Parish Picnic @ Calhoun REC Center

Archdiocesan News

Let April be the month you "Shower" your Marriage with the blessings of a **Marriage Encounter Weekend**. Join us April 23-25 at the Atlanta Marriott Norcross. You can register or learn other dates at www.wmeatlanta.org or call Bob & Joy Lambie at 770-587-1506. We also offer Spanish weekends. Call Esteban & Gloria Nolasco at 770-425-1328 for those dates.

~World Wide Marriage Encounter - Making Good Marriages Great