

OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL
SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL
WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER
Sixth Sunday of Easter
May 5, 2024



The heart is our hidden center, beyond the grasp of our reason and of others;
only the Spirit of God can fathom the human heart, and know it fully

CHAPEL SCHEDULE

Weekday Mass: (Monday-Friday at 12 noon)

Weekend Masses: Saturday: 4:00pm - Sunday: 7:30am & 4:00pm

Holyday Mass Schedule: afternoon prior at 4:00pm

Holy day proper at 12 noon and 4:00pm

Confessions: First Saturday of every month at 3:30pm

Department Telephone: 508.363.6246

Chapel Website: www.ourladyofprovidence.net

MASS INTENTIONS — LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Saturday, May 4 *Vigil of the 6th Sunday of Easter*

4:00pm For the intentions of a friend by Lou

Sunday, May 5 *Sixth Sunday of Easter — Orthodox Easter*

7:30am For John Gallinagh and family

4:00pm For the intentions of the Rizzuto family and Madison

Monday, May 6

12:00nn For Barbara & Bob and Eileen M. & Kaye B.

Tuesday, May 7

12:00nn For John M. & Mary and Patrick James, et al.

Wednesday, May 8

12:00nn +Kathryn O'Brien

Vigil of the Lord's Ascension

4:00pm Asking God for special graces for those baptized on this day

Thursday, May 9 *Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord*

12:00nn For the souls in purgatory

4:00pm For the intentions of CD

Friday, May 10 *Saint John of Avila, priest & doctor*² — *St. Damien of Moloka'i, priest*

12:00nn +Hana Rizzalla and Keith Rakowski

Saturday, May 11 *Vigil of the 7th Sunday of Easter*

4:00pm For the intentions of Joan Mockel

Sunday, May 12 *Seventh Sunday of Easter - Mother's Day*

7:30am For the particular intentions requested

4:00pm +Lois Sheeran, Marion White, and Evelyn Foley

The Key to Understanding the Day's Liturgical Significance: **Sunday** is the day that the Church celebrates the Paschal mystery—the Lord's Day—which, according to apostolic tradition, is the day of Christ's Resurrection. The Sundays of Advent, Lent, and during the Easter Season take precedence over other celebrations. **Solemnities** honor significant religious events, beliefs or saints of the greatest importance and universal in their observance that begin at Vespers (or Evening Prayer) the day before. **Feasts** must be observed, though, less important than solemnities, hence, feasts are only observed on the natural day. **Memorials** are of two types: Either the observance is an **obligatory memorial**¹ or an **optional memorial**².

Toward a Better Understanding of the Gospel of Eastertide

Like the branch of a vine, firmly attached to the root-stock, the disciples of Jesus who match that description are guaranteed to live fruitful lives and, by doing so, they give glory to God the Father. Now, facing His fateful hour, Jesus makes the image of a spiritually productive life more concrete. Situated within the Farewell Discourse (Jn 14-17), this week's Gospel conforms to the spiral pattern of thought characteristic of those chapters: a revelation takes place and, then, Jesus returns to a central idea from which something else that is crying out to be revealed arises. You could think of this technique in terms of time-lapse photography within which, in a rapid succession of images, a bud becomes a flower in full blossom before your eyes. Unlike the inevitable bud-to-bloom sequence, though, the Lord's train of thought is not predictable. Whether reading or listening to the Gospel, you get the sense that He has exhausted a topic, but then Jesus back-tracks and not only repeats what He had just said, but in altogether different terms and ends up revealing something entirely new and unexpected. Those seemingly unconnected pieces come together and form a thorough revelation. The superficial reading of these Johannine passages makes little sense because that spiral technique requires re-reading and meditation in order to better appreciate the levels of meaning and their interrelationship. At every turn in that development Jesus speaks about love. Pride of place is assigned to the Father's love which is the starting point for what is called the economy of salvation (CCC, n. 1103) or God's creation and management of the world, particularly His plan for salvation accomplished through the Church. Thus, out of love for His Son, the Father sent the Word from heaven to become flesh in order to save the world. Remaining obedient, even unto death, as the Christ, Jesus was exalted and made Lord in order to give glory to God the Father (Phil 2:6-11). And, so, Jesus dwells (or remains) in the Father's love. The love that Jesus had for the Father, because He also shares God's love for the created world, results in His willingly paying the ultimate price to save the world from slavery to sin and death. Prior to any indication on our part, Jesus chose to befriend humanity and He became the full manifestation of everything that the Father wanted to be revealed. The fullness of revelation is summarized this way – *Deus caritas est*: God is love. The hoped-for response

Pope Saint Gregory the Great - *Homily 27*

All the sacred words of the gospel are filled with the Lord's commandments. Why, then, does the Lord say that love is his commandment? "This is my commandment: love one another." Because every commandment flows from love alone; all his precepts are really one, and their sole foundation is that of charity. A tree's branches all come from the same root: so are all the virtues born of charity alone. The branch of a good work cannot stay green, if it is separated from the root of charity. Therefore, the Lord's commandments are at the same time many and one: many in the diversity of their works, one in the root of love. How can we keep this love? The Lord himself tells us: in most of the precepts of his gospel, he orders his friends to love one another in him, and to love their enemies because of him. Whoever loves his friend in God and his enemy because of God possesses true charity.

that Jesus wants is faithfulness to His commandments – "I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another" (Jn 13:34). On the night before the fateful day when Jesus would die, He give His friends the ultimate sign of His love by washing the feet of His apostles. After doing so, He told them, "I have given you a model (Gk. *ὑπόδειγμα* = an example to be imitated) to follow, so that as I have done for you, you also should do" (Jn 13:15). Jesus is the divine pattern for what it means to be authentically human and, thereby, share in divinity. Those wishing to reach God must conform to this pattern regardless of who they are or what label is attached to them. This pattern is love, humble service, and openness to the transcendent and holy. Serving one another embodies what Christ has done and, by imitating Him, true greatness in the Father's eyes will be the result. Active charity, regardless of someone's state in life or the form such a charitable act assumes, doing so is every believer's obligation. Taking into account your state in life: married, single, or member of the clergy or living a religious vocation, coupled with the means at your disposal, active charity is the embodiment of the Lord's command to love one another. The charity that Christ demands is not a feeling, but concrete action. Sharing the Lord's aims or solidarity through, with, and in Him unites the doer to Christ and does so for anyone and everyone because Christ died in order to make salvation available to all. This vibrant spiritual life is possible because Jesus shares all that He is and has with His disciples through the gift of the Spirit. He said, "... whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father" (Jn 14:12). Such an astounding promise Jesus made, yet there is an important prior requirement to its fulfillment and that is every disciple must "abide" in Jesus. The Greek verb *menó* (Gk. *μένω*) appears a multitude of times in the image of the vine in chapter 15. This image of the vine is similar to that of the body of Christ in Saint Paul's writings. The image indicates that we are totally dependent on Christ for our spiritual power and sustenance. Once cut off from Him, we wither and die, although we may not realize it immediately. In closing, Jesus noted that whenever one of His disciples bears fruit of the kind that He has described, then, the Father will receive the prayers and petitions of those who do so because they are doing the Father's will as He did. A disciple abides in Christ by means of love. Several verses in this chapter (vv. 12, 15, 21, and 23) spell how to abide or remain in Christ: If you love me (conditional) you will keep my commandments (Jn 14:15). It is then that Jesus and the Father will take up residence in the believer's heart and soul. It describes a mystical union that is a way of life rather than a brief experience.

National Eucharistic Revival — The Vine & the Branches

Devotion to the Heart of Jesus and receiving Communion consists in two essential facts: love and atonement. This act of love is highly sanctifying. By uniting you intimately to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, love will make you share in His virtues and give you the strength to practice them in spite of all obstacles. Love is the first and foremost of these duties. Love is the Lord's first and greatest commandment, the bond of perfection. God asks for our love because He wishes to be the God and Master of our hearts through love. Sacrifice is but a means to prove our love and loyalty. Our Lord has loved us with an infinite love, even unto death, and still loves us without limit. He



wants to be loved by us. He appeals to our hearts and bids us love Him in return. To know and love Jesus Christ is your highest gain both for time and eternity. No sacrifice can be too great to attain it. You have true wisdom, holiness, and happiness insofar as you know and love Jesus Christ. The second essential act of devotion to the Heart of Jesus is atonement and reparation.

This act of atonement is highly sanctifying. Atonement will further enkindle your fervor by enabling you to sympathize with the sufferings of Christ. It will help you to endure all the trials that God may send you; for love of Him and in union with His sufferings, it will bring peace to the world – blending love and sacrifice. According to the late Dominican Father Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, "The Eucharistic Heart of Jesus yearns to attract our souls to itself. This Heart is often humiliated, abandoned, forgotten and yet it is the Heart that loves our hearts, the silent Heart that would talk to souls to teach them the value of the hidden life and the value of the ever more generous gift of self. The Word made flesh came among his own, and his own received him not. Blessed are those who receive all that his merciful love deigns to give them and the graces which should radiate through them upon others. Blessed are they who, after they have received, follow the example of our Lord and give themselves ever more generously by him, with him, and in him."

Easter 7 Weeks x 7 Days + 1 = Fifty Days of Rejoicing

Introduction

The Apostles' Creed (Lat. *Symbolum Apostolorum*) declares the following to be an article of faith that "[Jesus] ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father." Thus, the Ascension is the final element in the Father's plan for the world's redemption and that feast marks the Lord's glorification. This observance, in other words, completes the paschal mystery: the Lord's suffering, His crucifixion and death on the cross, the resurrection from the dead and His bodily Ascension into glory. From the day when Christ ascended back into heaven until now, the Church turns her attention away from the initial aspects of redemption and she stands in awe of the exaltation which Christ now has at God's right hand.

Christ's Exaltation & Welcome Back into Heaven

The Language of Exaltation

The exaltation of Jesus means that humanity is bound to God in God's glory. The Ascension of Jesus is therefore a promise, a sign, and a first-fruit of our human destiny. Psalm 110 is frequently quoted in the New Testament and, as it appears in the Letter to the Hebrews, that psalm concludes a series of quotations from the Old Testament, which all allude to the exaltation of the Messiah, whom we believe to be Jesus, the Son of God. Jesus, too, quoted the same psalm. The psalmist's emphasis, then, is focused on understanding Christ to be the high priest after the order of Melchizedek. Thus, while seated at the right hand of the Father, Christ continues to work in the world as high priest. The earthly powers, reduced to being the Messiah's footstool, are the foes opposed to God's reign, whether in heaven or on earth. The earthly opponents of Christ are assimilated into the spiritual powers that are arrayed against the divine purpose of creation—Satan and the fallen angels. As Lord of both heaven and earth, Christ is sovereign and from that exalted position, He has promised to return at the end of time to judge the world — the Parousia.

Post-resurrection Appearances & Ascension

Having been raised from the dead, the Risen Christ appeared to His disciples and, eventually, their faith that Jesus was really enlivened and such faith became the solid foundation upon which the apostolic Church was built. From the first Easter until the Ascension, a series of post-resurrection appearances took place. During those forty days, the Risen Lord "ate and drank" with His friends, which served to eliminate all doubt that the crucified Jesus, now better identified as the Christ, was no ghost or phantom; no, He was truly alive. As resurrected, Christ had a glorified body that had to be veiled, in order for the apostles to behold Him; nevertheless, while the Lord's body was eternally glorified, it was also real and tangible to human perception. It was in just such a body that Christ ascended into heaven and unveiled His glory.

Resurrection of the Body

We not only believe that the human soul is immortal, but that the human body is also destined to rise immortal from the grave, too. By nature, spiritual substances like the soul cannot die and, so, the soul is forever immortal by its own nature. While the human body is obviously mortal by nature, according to the original plan of creation, death was not part of the Father's plan. Death and sickness are the consequences of the original sin of Adam and Eve, who lost the divine gift of bodily immortality. The belief that Christ has bodily ascended back into the heavenly glory—a state that He has always possessed and never lost, foreshadows our own entrance into Heaven, not simply as souls, but as glorified bodies. At the end of time, when Christ returns, following the resurrection of the dead and as a consequence of the final judgment, He will physically raise all those who have died, giving them back the same bodies that were lost at death. However, these bodies will be immortal and for the souls judged worth, they will be glorified, freed from suffering and pain. The eternally condemned will also be reunited with their bodies, yet consigned to the everlasting pains of hell. In redeeming mankind, Christ not only offered salvation to our souls but began the restoration of the material world itself to the glory that God first intended.

Qualities of the Risen Body

Saint Paul notes four defining aspects of the risen body that have become known as these; (1) impassibility (a body no longer subject to pain or inconvenience), (2) brightness (the body will shine like the sun, though common to all risen, the degree of brightness will vary), (3) agility (freedom from material burdens and ease of movement), and (4) subtlety (perceptibility and with extension, as glorified, such a body is controlled by the spirit and rendered obedient to the soul). Now as exalted, Christ is seated at God's right hand; yet, He reaches down to earth and shares His divine life with us, as a foretaste of what is yet to come! the Pauline interpretation of the resurrection. In his General Audience, Pope Saint John Paul II, "According to Paul, this image of the body of historical man, so deeply realistic and adapted to the universal experience of men, conceals within itself not only the "bondage of decay," but also hope, like the hope that accompanies labor pains. That happens because the Apostle grasps in this image also the presence of the mystery of redemption. Awareness of that mystery comes precisely from all man's experiences which can be defined as the "bondage of decay." It comes because redemption operates in man's soul by means of the gifts of the Spirit: "We ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies" (Rom 8:23). Redemption is the way to the resurrection. The resurrection constitutes the definitive accomplishment of the redemption of the body" (1 February 1982).
