

OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL

**SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL
WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER**

Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord

March 31, 2024



Hades seized a body, and lo! it discovered God. It seized earth, and, behold! it encountered heaven. It seized the visible, and was overcome by the invisible. O death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory? Christ is risen and life is freed!

CHAPEL SCHEDULE

Weekday Mass: (Monday-Friday at 12 noon)

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

Holiday 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, March 30 *Solemn Vigil of the Lord's Resurrection*

7:00pm For the regular attendees of Our Lady of Providence Chapel

Sunday, March 31 *Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord*

7:30am +Julia & Gilbert Burke

4:00pm +Piera Ceste

Monday, April 1 *Monday in the Octave of Easter*

12:00nn For the health of a beloved sister

Tuesday, April 2 *Tuesday within the Octave of Easter*

12:00nn For the health of Maria Brophy

Wednesday, April 3 *Wednesday within the Octave of Easter*

12:00nn +Mariano Osorio, Jr.— recalling his birth

Thursday, April 4 *Thursday within the Octave of Easter*

12:00nn +John & Mary Murray by their family

Friday, April 5 *Friday within the Octave of Easter*

12:00nn +Maggie Lellman

Saturday, April 6 *Vigil of the 2nd Sunday of Easter*

4:00pm For blessings & peace upon Julie

Sunday, April 7 *Second Sunday of Easter—Divine Mercy Sunday*

7:30am +Mary Gray recalling her day of birth

4:00pm +Ronald & Mae Lareau by their daughter

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 Easter

The only testimonies to the astounding event of Christ's Resurrection were the empty tomb, along with the winding cloths and the face cloth or sudarium. These silent witnesses are the first to announce that something entirely new had happened. Oddly specific details, like the footprint between John the "beloved disciple," and Peter, for instance, seemingly serve no purpose other than to describe what happened as accurately as possible. Yet, John is the first to see with the eyes of faith and understand the message of the linen cloths and the sudarium. A few days earlier, he had been the courageous disciple who stood firm at the foot of the Cross, next to Mary. Now John is the disciple who runs the fastest to seek Christ. The same Apostle who stood patiently close by during the Lord's time of suffering, now moves the quickest in seeking to verify what happened. The Beloved Disciple is sustained by the same strength in both those situations: his love for the Lord and that love is rewarded. God grants him a special grace to read in the folded cloths the greatest message in history: Jesus is alive! But John isn't the only one who runs that Easter Sunday morning. Before that foot race, Mary Magdalene had run to tell the Apostles the astounding news. The strength of her love is also very intense. Love for the Lord Jesus had led her to rise early that morning and to do one last kindness for her Master, without expecting anything in return. Her reward is that she is the first to contemplate the Risen Lord in His glory and to proclaim to the Church that Christ is alive. Peter runs, too, though a bit slower in reaching the tomb. He has neither Mary Magdalene's impetuosity nor John's youthfulness. He reaches the tomb and is given the privilege of being the first to enter. He sees the signs of the Resurrection – the linen cloths and the face cloth – even if it takes Peter longer than John to see and believe, perhaps because the wound he carried was deeper. The pain of the Master's death is joined to the memory of Peter having denied Jesus during the Passion. Yet, despite everything, Peter too runs because his love, though still evident, just has to grow stronger. What seems clearest is the contrast between the Lord's Resurrection compared to the resurrection of Lazarus (Jn 11:44). Lazarus came from the tomb wearing his grave-clothes, the additional burial cloth still wrapped around his head. Jesus' resurrected body apparently passed through those grave-clothes, spices and all, in much the same way, when on that same evening of the first Easter, He appeared in the locked room. Thus, rising from the dead, Jesus passed through the grave-clothes, which makes perfect sense! John would have remembered Lazarus staggering out of the tomb, struggling to remove his linen cloths—and only able to do so with help. Jesus, by contrast, who has

Saint Cyril of Jerusalem — *Mystagogical Catechesis 14*

“Rejoice, O Jerusalem, and hold festival together, all you who love” Jesus, for He is risen; “rejoice all you who mourned before,”...For He whom they treated here with insult is risen again; and as the discourse on the Cross brought sorrow, so let the tidings of the Resurrection bring joy to all present. Let mourning be turned into gladness and lamentation into joy; and let our mouth be filled with joy and gladness because of Him who after His Resurrection cried: “Rejoice.” I realize the sorrow of Christ’s friends during the past days, our discourse ended with the death and burial without telling the glad news of the Resurrection, and so your mind was in suspense to hear what it desired to hear. Therefore the Dead is risen, He who was “free among the dead,” and deliverer of the dead. He patiently endured the shame of the crown of thorns; He has risen to crown Himself with the diadem of victory over death.

conquered death in a way that Lazarus did not, since Lazarus came back to life only to die again, the Risen Lord can miraculously leave those wrappings behind. In the case of Lazarus, it was Jesus’ command that he came out of the tomb still bound, with his hands and feet in bandages and head wrapped in a cloth. Now the linen wrappings from around the body of Jesus are lying in one place and the cloth from around His head is rolled up and in a place by itself. Lazarus had had to be freed in order to take up life again in this world, whereas Jesus’ own sovereignty over death is shown in the way He has left behind the wrappings associated with death. His rising is the astounding phenomenon: “the linen bands lying.” Nothing whatever had been done with them, they were merely lying. We are not to imagine that they had been unwound from the body as was done with the grave bands of Lazarus when he came to life. Neither had they been cut or stripped off in some other way. They lay, just as they had been wound about the limbs and the body, only the body was no longer in them and thus the wrappings lay flat. All the aromatic spices were exactly as they had been strewn between the layers of linen, and those layers, one wound over the other, were numerous, so that all those spices could be held between them. How difficult it was for the disciples to believe that Jesus had come back to life! And how difficult it can be for us to accept that Jesus upholds our own lives! Sometimes the power of the tomb seems to prevail: problems at work or at home, flaws in our own character, opposition to what the Church holds sacred in certain environments. But if you look closely at those situations, you can surely find signs of hope: other people who are tenaciously trying to do what is right and to defend the good, a solution to a difficult problem that suddenly appears unexpectedly. These are signs that are waiting for us to read with the eyes of faith, like those linen cloths on the morning of the Resurrection. To read the signs that God gives, you need to welcome the gift of faith. You, too, need the sincere eagerness to seek the Lord, also when it might seem that He has left you, which is what Mary Magdalene, John, and Peter did that Easter morning. They were still seeking Christ; they wanted to offer Him a final kindness, even though they thought He was dead. Our Lord rewards their faithful love with the joy of finding Him alive, with the luminous glory of Easter.

National Eucharistic Revival — Easter as the Supreme Eucharistic Feast and More

In the mind of the Church, the Easter Triduum is one continuous liturgy that must be read backwards to properly determine its meaning. The fear and confusion of Holy Saturday only have meaning on Easter. The trial, scourging, and crucifixion of Jesus on Good Friday only become meaningful in Easter. Likewise, the Last Supper has meaning only in Easter. Everything in the Christian life—every last detail of ritual, Scripture, morality, faith, and tradition, either finds its meaning in Easter or not at all. History itself exists only for Easter! The Resurrection of Christ is what God had in mind from the beginning. Thus, Easter is a Eucharistic feast. In fact, Easter is THE perfect Eucharistic feast. The Eucharist has no meaning apart from Easter and Easter is only understood in the Eucharist. If we think the Eucharist is a memorial meal, we are right; yet, it is much more. If we think Communion is nourishment for the journey, we are right. But it is more. If we think the Sacrifice of the Mass is Christ’s presence among us for all time, we are right. But it is more. If we think it is Christ’s way of dwelling in us and, through us, in the world, we are right. But it is still more. If we think it is Christ’s way of working through us for the salvation of the world, we are right. But it is still more. If we think it is the sacrifice that washes us free from sin, we are right. But it is still so much more. If we think it is the promise of eternal life, we are right. But it is still even more than that. The Eucharist is the consummation of God’s love for humanity! It is our intimate participation in the Easter Mystery! It is already our being swept up into the heart of the Trinity, where our every desire to love and to be loved is satisfied without ever being satiated! Like the burning bush, we are on fire with an ecstasy that does not burn out! When we forget about ourselves, then, we fall and keep falling, deeper and deeper into an infinite Heart that continues to give and receive Love, revealing the mysteries of Its infinite Self to us without end. Then, with each increasingly beautiful revelation, there is a deeper falling into Love itself. We are caught up in the dynamism of Divine Romance. We can think of nothing except our Beloved, and time ceases to exist. We are in eternity. In Communion, Love has defeated death forever! Christ is Risen!

Excerpted from Kevin Dowd. “Easter is the feast of the Eucharist”. www.bayardinc.com 16 April 2017



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

The period from Easter to Pentecost is a fifty-day period of joyous thanksgiving. While the Latin equivalent for fifty days is *quingagesima* that term can refer to the Sunday before Ash Wednesday or the time between Easter and Pentecost. In fact, such a festal period of rejoicing (Lat. *laetitia*) pre-dates Christianity and traces its origin to the Jewish practice of the feast of Weeks or Pentekoste (Gk. Πεντηκοστή) which was observed fifty days after the feast of Unleavened Bread. It was also one of the three pilgrimage feasts in which Jewish males were expected to go to Jerusalem and offer sacrifices. As one of the harvest festivals, coinciding with the harvest of wheat, the Book of Leviticus (Lev 23:16ff) required that grain be offered in thanksgiving. On the Day of Pentecost or the Feast of Weeks, the “firstfruits” of the Church were gathered by Christ as some 3,000 people heard Peter present the gospel after the Holy Spirit had simultaneously empowered and dwelt within the disciples as promised (Acts 3:41). With the promised indwelling of the Spirit, the first fruits of God’s spiritual harvest under the New Covenant began. In the *Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and Calendar*, this period is described like this, “The fifty days from the Sunday of the Resurrection to Pentecost Sunday are celebrated in joy and exultation (Lat. *in laetitia et exultatione*) as one feast day, indeed as one ‘great Sunday’” (*UNLYC*, n. 22).

Eastertide – An Octave and Fifty Days of Rejoicing

As a great octave (viz. a seven-week period or week of weeks), Eastertide begins with one of the two octaves in the liturgical cycle. It is an eight-day period that begins on Easter and concludes on the eighth day (Lat. *dies octava*) which is identified as the Second Sunday of Easter. Each of those intervening days are akin to Easter itself because each day is designated as a solemnity, which, according to official documents are this: “Solemnities are counted among the most important days... The celebration of the two greatest Solemnities, Easter and the Nativity, is extended over eight days” (*UNLYC*, nn.11-12).

Divine Mercy Sunday

Since Jubilaem 2000, the Sunday of the eighth day of the Easter Octave has also been known as Divine Mercy Sunday. Between 1930 and 1938 Christ appeared to Sister Faustina, a Sister of Mercy in Poland, who initiated the Divine Mercy devotion. She was canonized on April 30, 2000, the Sunday after Easter, the Feast of Divine Mercy. On Good Friday 1937, Jesus requested that Saint Faustina make a special novena before the Feast of Mercy, from Good Friday through the following Saturday. Jesus also asked that a picture be painted according to the vision of Himself as the fountain of mercy. He gave her a chaplet to be recited and said that it was appropriate to pray the chaplet at three o'clock each afternoon (the Hour of Great Mercy).

Period of Post-baptismal Catechesis or Mystagogy

This period, during the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, emphasizes the Paschal Mystery and, so, focuses

on those who were newly-initiated into the faith on Easter. In the early centuries of Christianity, those new members of the Church were neophytes and, during the time after rejoicing in their rebirth into Christ, they were more fully instructed into the mysteries of faith, particularly to deepen their understanding of baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist. Saint Cyril of Jerusalem described his preaching to them as mystagogical. The earliest examples of this nascent catechesis are these: The Easter homilies of Asterius, Saint Cyril’s five mystagogical catecheses, and two others from Saint Ambrose of Milan’s writings known as *De mysteriis* and *De Sacramentis*. According to Enrico Mazza, mystagogy is either the oral or written explanation of the mystery that is “hidden in the Scriptures and celebrated in the liturgy.” Mystery (Gk. μυστήριον) is not something unknowable as that term is often understood to mean as it is “that which awaits disclosure.” Originally the term *mystery* was used for the sacraments generally in both the East and the West, as shown from the writings of Ss. Cyril and Ambrose. In *Sacramentum caritatis*, the late Pope Benedict XVI described mystagogical catechesis as “an awareness that one’s life is being progressively transformed by the holy mysteries being celebrated” (*SC*, n. 64). Real transformation involves fundamental change – a conversion of heart that has taken root, coupled with God’s grace, it yields newness of life. The concept of time, in fact, has two distinct biblical descriptions – time as *chronos* and time as *kairos*. The former term yields chronology or the incremental passage of time, whereas *kairos* is the time of fulfillment when God is poised to act. *Kairos* is the ideal moment when faith allows the believer to look back and see that God was at work in a particular deed. The *kairos moment* occurred when the Virgin Mary said yes to Gabriel, the decisive moment when the Word-took-flesh in her womb or the Incarnation, and the fulfillment of the prophetic heritage of Israel in the life and preaching of John the Baptist – God decisively acted in those and other moments of salvation history. According to the RCIA, the post-Easter period of mystagogy is “a time for the [Church] and the neophytes together to grow in deepening their grasp of the paschal mystery and in making it part of their lives through meditation on the Gospel, sharing in the eucharist, and doing works of charity” (*RCIA*, n. 244). For the newly-baptized and for life-long Catholics, mystagogy entails ongoing instruction in the meaning of discipleship. Sharing in Christ’s life unequivocally takes place in the Eucharist. The Lord invites His disciples to the altar of sacrifice and, since Christ’s love is manifested there and prior to all other blessings, His love is guaranteed in Communion. Among like-minded disciples, heart and mind are brought together and, faith in Christ’s Real Presence deepens the bond between Savior and saved, and divine grace is readily available to the faithful in order to become what we receive – Christ’s Body made visible to the world.