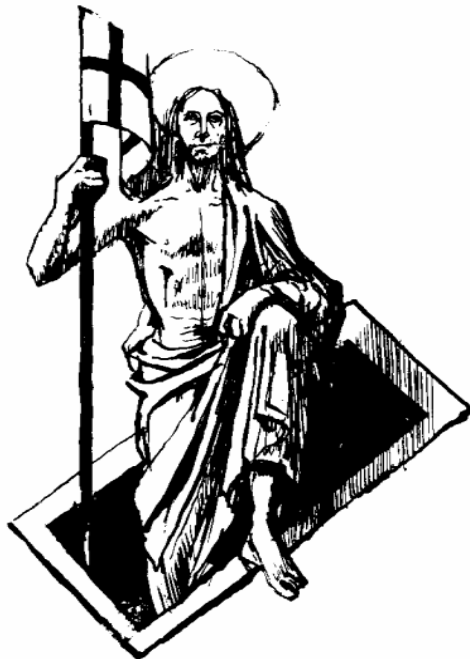


OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL
SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL
WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER
Easter Sunday—Solemnity of the Resurrection of the Lord
April 9, 2023



Christ is risen! He is truly risen, alleluia!

CHAPEL SCHEDULE

Weekday Mass: (Monday-Friday at 12 noon)

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

Holy day 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, April 8 *Holy Saturday: Solemn Vigil of the Lord's Resurrection*

7:00pm +Mary Gray by her daughter

Sunday, April 9 *Easter Sunday: Solemnity of the Resurrection of the Lord*

7:30am +Sr. Theresa Khen Doan by a chapel-friend

4:00pm Seeking God's help & protection for a traveler

Monday, April 10 *Monday within the Octave of Easter*

12:00nn For the proper college for a beloved son

Tuesday, April 11 *Tuesday within the Octave of Easter*

12:00nn +Jana Griffin — 8th anniversary— by Lauren Maldonado

Wednesday, April 12 *Wednesday within the Octave of Easter*

12:00nn +Stephen L'Esperance by his family

Thursday, April 13 *Thursday within the Octave of Easter*

4:00nn +Edwin "Ed" Lopes by his friends

Friday, April 14 *Friday within the Octave of Easter*

12:00nn +Mary Sacchi

Saturday, April 15 *Vigil of the 2nd Sunday of Easter*

4:00pm +Edward Jablonski—12th anniversary—by his children

Sunday, April 16 *Second Sunday of Easter—Divine Mercy Sunday*

7:30am +Lucjan, Stanislaw, & Edward Janeczak

4:00pm In gratitude for the outpouring of God's divine mercy by JL

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 memorial¹ or an optional memorial².*

Toward a Better Understanding the Gospel of Easter Sunday

The Gospel on Easter Sunday begins with a reference to "the first day of the week," which in the Semitic way of thinking is not only the Sunday of the Lord's Resurrection, but it also serves as a reference to the beginning of creation. So, Christ's rising from the dead is revealed as a new creation or beginning. Unlike the Synoptic Gospels, Saint John's account is a simple sign: namely, the stone moved and the tomb empty. More than the other evangelists, Saint John quickly deals with Mary of Magdala's discovery at the tomb. Seeing the stone removed, her first thought was that the body of Jesus had been taken away – to some unknown place. Right away, she left the tomb and "went to Simon Peter and the other disciple whom Jesus loved" to tell them what she had seen. From the outset, then, Peter had priority and, by her doing so, the apostles were acknowledged as the legitimate witnesses to the Resurrection. Hearing the news, both Peter and an unnamed disciple raced to the tomb. The evangelist notes that Peter was accompanied by "the other disciple whom Jesus loved," but absent any indication as to the disciple's identity. Some scholars believe this disciple to be John the Evangelist or, conceivably, the ambiguity serves as an invitation for the listener—those who hear the Gospel—to imagine themselves as that anonymous disciple. Though John arrived first, he waited until Peter reached the tomb and allowed his elder to go in first. There is a certain gracefulness on the part of the beloved disciple in waiting. The enthusiasm of the young disciple, thus, waits for the wisdom of the older one and affords him respects. John bends down, after looking in, the Evangelist says that he "saw (Gk. βλέπει means "to clearly see a material object") the burial clothes there, but did not go in." Finally getting there, Peter entered the tomb and, in addition to also seeing "the burial clothes," Simon Peter also sees "the cloth that had covered his head" or the sudarium, which was "not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place." Mary Magdala's suspicion that the body had been stolen was refuted by the evidence in the tomb. Then, the Beloved Disciple enters the tomb and such evidence or, better yet, those signs point to something else – "he saw (Gk. εἶδεν = to understand, to perceive the significance) and believed." Thus, the Beloved Disciple believes by seeing that the tomb was empty. Such a sign of absence or emptiness becomes the sign of the passage of the Lord. John hasn't see the resurrection, he hasn't yet seen the Lord, the only thing that he sees are the traces left behind. For the one who doesn't discern those traces, who are not looking for what is not there through the eyes of faith, the empty tomb is merely that an empty tomb. For the beloved disciple, it is far more. The ability to recognize something even as a sign requires understanding, which is informed by faith. A faith prompted by signs arises when someone sees and believes the supernatural nature which God reveals to human eyes. God does so without overwhelming the perceiver with a dis-

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.

play of divine power that would coerce belief. The Johannine theology of signs, while being indispensable to belief are of such a nature that seeing evokes believing – an empty tomb with shroud and veil neatly rolled up are signs that elicit an act of faith. As yet those two disciples did not understand the Scripture. Such a lack of spiritual insight means that the sign of the empty tomb becomes the key to reading the Scripture and the door into faith. There is an intimate relationship between the sign which is seen and the sacred writings. Peter and John knew that Jesus had professed that He would rise. Yet, without those prior Passion predictions, the empty tomb would be a conundrum for them. Easter invites us to pause before the mystery of the Resurrection. For the Christian, as Saint Paul reminds us, the truth of Christ’s resurrection is foundational. It is that truth on which everything else is built: without the resurrection of Christ, our faith is devoid of meaning (1 Cor 15,14).

The Fifty Days of Easter to Pentecost

While the three days of the Paschal Triduum have concluded, it takes a certain amount of time for periods of deep festivity to be adequately understood. From the first half of the second century, Eastertide was celebrated for seven weeks—a festal period of fifty days. In fact, it was considered a *great octave*—seven weeks long—that culminates in Pentecost (Gk. πενηκοστή or “fiftieth day”). This Greek name was originally given to the Jewish Feast of Weeks that fell on the 50th day after Unleavened Bread or Passover. The eight days immediately following Easter are often known as the *little octave*; yet, the real fruit of the paschal mystery is the visible outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the “fiftieth day.” **The Octave of Easter:** The term octave applies both to the eighth day after a feast as well as to the whole period comprising those eight days. In its latter sense, an octave means that, for certain feasts, each day is observed as if it were Easter. These eight days derive their tone not only from the paschal mystery—the passion and resurrection of Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit—but also from the focused attention upon the newly initiated members who fully joined the Church during the great Vigil of Easter. In the daily celebration of the Eucharist, those neophytes receive the Body and Blood of Christ, but are to be more deeply instructed into the sacred mysteries of faith they received. These classic homilies have been labeled *mystagogical catecheses* and the best known fourth century examples are from St. Cyril of Jerusalem (c.315-387). As a complement to the nineteen orations that form Cyril’s Lenten catecheses for those about to be baptized, there are five mystagogic catecheses, delivered toward the end of his episcopate to the newly baptized that offer a full and very illuminating picture of the preparation for Baptism during that period. They also provide subsequent generations with a wealth of material for understanding the liturgy in use at that time. The first two catecheses treat “sobriety and vigilance following baptism” and the second of those two is a “reflection on the inner mysteries of baptism, and the significance and symbolism of the movements of the rite.” These works testify to the unequivocal value and efficacy of Baptism, including its anointing, various renunciations, the washing away of sin, and the laying on of hands. Afterwards, St. Cyril comments on the Eucharist, while he does not mention the Words of Institution, he does stress Christ’s Real Presence in the Eucharist. Another example of the spiritual instructions given to the newly-initiated comes from the hand of St. Ambrose of Milan (c.339-397), whether his *De mysteriis*—A Treatise on the Mysteries (or sacraments) or the short liturgical treatise on the sacraments entitled *De Sacramentis*, composed of six homilies. Like those newly-admitted to life in Christ, the whole Church should observe these eight days following Easter by reflecting on the meaning of what we have observed. Then and now, the term *mystagogia* implies continuing instruction in the mysteries of faith, following baptism during Eastertide. While aimed at the newly-initiated, all believers can benefit from the help of a *mystagoge* (or spiritual guide) who knows the landscape of the Catholic faith and leads even those fully-initiated into the deeper knowledge required to effectively move about in the new life that Easter brings. At whatever age baptism takes place, the rite visually represents that transition of the infant, child, teenager or adult from the old life of sin to new life in Christ. For all who at the Easter Vigil joined the Church, the sacraments of initiation or being received into full communion with the Church took place on the night we commemorate Christ’s passage from death to life. Thus, all that the Church does for this octave witnesses to the death and resurrection of Christ which alone makes possible the transition from earthly, finite life to heavenly and eternal life. Such a process, not only frees the baptized from sin, but it also creates a new kind of human being. Dying with Christ in baptism, such a death produces new life in those washed clean. This change is so monumental that the newly baptized is given an entirely new identity, in God’s eyes. The old sinful creature no longer exists and, hence, is no longer subject to prior obligations. Freed from sin by Christ and, now living in Christ, all the baptized are no longer slaves from the past and can share in the fruits of Christ’s death, resurrection and ascension back to the Father. In the waters of baptism, a personal union develops so that Christ’s past becomes ours and the benefits of what Christ did, on the first Easter, becomes our spiritual inheritance.

EASTER - PASCHA

Around the year 56 AD, during the season of Passover, Saint Paul, in writing to the church in Corinth, said, “Christ, our Passover has been sacrificed” (1 Cor 5,7). By those words, Paul sought to interpret Christ’s death on the Cross by means of the Passover metaphor. In subsequent centuries, the term paschal mystery (Lat. *mysterium paschale*) grew in importance and became the preferred way of speaking about what God had done in Christ. The traditional Jewish Passover and its unfolding lasted for fifty days or a week of weeks (7x7+1), culminating in *Pentekoste* (Gk. πεντηκοστή) or the fiftieth day. This annual Jewish memorial, even to the present day, celebrates their going forth (or exodus) from the land of Egypt and Yahweh’s conferring of the covenant at Mount Sinai. The English words *paschal* and *mystery* are derived from the biblical (or Koine) Greek in which the New Testament was originally written. The adjective paschal (Gk. πάσχα) is derived from the Hebrew word for Passover or *pesach*. Even the word pascha had to be newly-coined by the Greek translators of the Septuagint (or LXX) which was a third-century BC translation of the Bible from Hebrew into Koine Greek. It was needed in order to make accessible for Greek-speaking Jews in Alexandria the sense of the Hebrew word *pesach*, since neither classical nor conversational Greek of that period had any word to identify that foundational religious event of the Hebrew Scriptures. *Pesach* incorporates a journey from bondage in Egypt to eventual freedom in the land of Canaan which began when the angel of death passed over the houses of the Israelites, marked with the blood of those lambs that had been sacrificed for the first Passover. Such blood effectively saved the Israelites from the certain death of their first-born (Ex 12:21-36). Later on, Christians came to see the Blood of Christ, shed on the Cross, as similarly salvific. The noun *mystery* (Gk. μυστήριον) was generally associated with the worldview of Platonism, long before the New Testament writers used the word *mystery* to describe what God was doing in Christ. For Platonic philosophers, sensible realities were understood as participating in and pointing toward invisible or heavenly realities. So, the created order that is perceptible to the senses requires *contemplatio* in order for the physical world to be understood intellectually. As Platonism further developed that symbolic understanding was extended and, eventually, Platonic thought came to incorporate the spiritual interpretation of historical events. Thus, events that were chronologically prior were perceived to be either a preparation for or seen as a foreshadowing of future events—put succinctly, as *promise awaiting fulfillment*. In the second century of the Christian era, Saint Melito of Sardis preached an Easter homily entitled in Greek as Περὶ Πάσχα or *On*

the Pascha, which was only translated in the middle of the twentieth century. While Melito, as Bishop of Sardis, does not explicitly use the term paschal mystery, he rejoices that Christ is the fulfillment of the earlier redemptive acts of God. His chief concern, though, was interpreting a passage selected from the Book of Exodus, namely, “how the lamb was sacrificed, how the people were saved.” Melito begins with this declaration, “The sacrifice of the Lamb, and the celebration of the Pasch, and the letter of the Law, have been fulfilled in Christ.” This use of the imagery of the Passover yielded a paschal understanding of the events surrounding Christ’s death. As a result, the initiation of new members into Christ through Baptism and the signing of their foreheads with the Cross came to be understood as analogous to the Blood of the Paschal Lamb which marked the doors and lintels of the Israelites. So, as that sign had saved the Chosen People from imminent death in Egypt, the water and the Cross marked out those destined to be saved by Christ from the prospect of unending death through Baptism. The eating of the Passover lamb also foreshadowed the messianic banquet of heaven to which all the baptized are invited and which the Eucharist is its anticipation and the foretaste of the paschal feast of heaven. Then, the understanding of the Eucharist as a sacrifice drew upon the identification made between Christ and the Passover (or paschal) lamb. There are two images at the heart of the Book of Exodus: In chapter 12 there you find the image of the lamb slaughtered and its blood becoming the source of salvation or the second image in Exodus chapter 14 which is focused upon the Israelites passing safely through the waters of the Red Sea. While standing amid waters that were seemingly threatening to their own survival, instead the wall to their right and to their left became the miraculous path of their salvation through the sea and held out eventual death for the Egyptians. These two typologies or the process of uncovering religious meaning by sustained ecclesial exploration of *type* (the Passover event) and *antitype* (the Jesus event) —evoked what came to be known as *mystagogical catechesis* or the reflective form of teaching offered to those who had been newly-initiated into the mysteries of faith in the weeks following Easter and their undergoing baptism, confirmation and receiving Communion. The most well-known examples of this type of catechesis are from the second-half of the fourth century which are attributed to Saint Cyril of Jerusalem (viz. five mystagogical catecheses) and Saint Ambrose of Milan—*De mysteriis* and *De sacramentis*. Mystagogy is defined in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* this way, “From the visible to the invisible, from the sign to the thing signified, from sacraments to mysteries” (CCC, n. 1075).