

Important Update:

For reasons of reverence and respect, and safety, there should be at least two people present at all times during adoration.

Unfortunately, Holy Thursday adoration will end at midnight tonight (not 9:00am tomorrow morning) for two reasons: First, we did not have enough people sign up. Second, The Church says adoration ends at midnight. (Perhaps because Jesus was arrested during the night on Holy Thursday and the disciples all fled.)



Father Paul's Weekly Email - March 28, 2024

Philip was 9 years old in a class of 8-year-olds. The kids in his class were mean and unkind to Philip. They would not talk to him or let him play with them. Philip suffered from a condition called Downs Syndrome, so his face looked a little different and his thinking and talking were slower than the other children's. During the week of Easter, the teacher gave each child a plastic egg that they could open. Then she sent them outside to find a symbol of new life, such as a seed or leaf, to put inside the plastic egg.

Sometime later all the children gathered around their basket of eggs and watched as the teacher began to open them. One child had put a flower inside her egg. All the children thought it was a great symbol of new life. In another egg was a butterfly that all the girls said was beautiful. Finally, the teacher opened the last plastic egg and there was nothing inside it. One child said, "That's dumb!" Another kid said, "That's not fair!" Then the teacher felt someone pulling her hand. It was Philip. He looked up at her and said: "It's my egg. I left it empty because Jesus' grave is empty. That's why I have new life." The whole class was silent. From that day on, Philip was accepted as part of the class. Whatever had made him different was not important or mentioned again.

While this may not have actually happened, it is a wonderful story with an important message. It has been pointed out by many people, the Egyptian pyramids are famous because they contained the mummified bodies of ancient royalty. Mohammed's tomb is noted for the coffin and the bones it contains. In London's Westminster Abbey lie the bodies of English nobles and notables. Arlington cemetery in Washington, DC is revered for the honored resting place of many outstanding Americans. But the garden tomb of Jesus is famous because it is

empty! Jesus Christ, who suffered and died for us, is risen from the dead and promises to be with us always.

During the Sacred Triduum (Three Days) we celebrate and share in great graces. We remember on Holy Thursday Jesus' gift of the Eucharist, his washing the feet of his follower, and time in the garden awake, praying. At noon on the Friday called "Good," we walk with the Lord as our youth lead us in the Stations of the Cross. At 6pm we hear once more the Song of the Suffering Servant and the Passion according to John, venerate the cross, and receive holy communion consecrated during Holy Thursday's Liturgy. The 8:30 pm Easter Vigil begins in the dark, fire is blessed and shared, we listen to the story of Salvation History from Creation to this very night, renew our Baptismal Promises, rejoice in the Profession of Faith, Confirmation, and First Holy Communion of John & Janie Adkins and Judy Bailey. We, too, receive with Easter joy, the Body and Blood of Christ.

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Parish website <https://www.blessedsacramentwv.org>
Faith in West Virginia <https://faithinwv.org/latest-bulletin/>
This Sunday's Readings <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/033124.cfm>
Wednesday Bible Handout: <https://blessedsacramentwv.org/download/april-3-2024/?wpdmdl=1698&refresh=66043c29e0b261711553577>
This Sunday's Bulletin <https://blessedsacramentwv.org/download/easter-march-31-2024/?wpdmdl=1704&refresh=6605b0e8342cf1711649000>

Did You Know

- ... Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil is one Liturgy over three days?
- ... the origin of how we celebrate these began in Fourth Century Jerusalem?
- ... the Washing of Feet is optional, but the Eucharistic Procession and Adoration is not?
- ... the Easter Vigil is the most solemn and beautiful Liturgy the Church Celebrates?
- ... [due to smaller numbers](#), [empty seats inside the sanctuary on Christmas Eve](#), [the difficulty of opening the wall](#), [and excellent camera work](#), [the overflow crowd \(if any\) will be in the Parish Hall and shown on the Big Screen?](#)
- ... Father Paul has invited Fr. John to preach & preside Easter Sunday at 11:30 am?

Blessed Sacrament Symposium +

- April 14 - 10:15 am - The Problem and Mystery of Suffering I - in the church/streamed
How Christians Need to Discuss the Topic, Bad Solutions and So-so Solutions
- April 21 - 10:15 am - The Problem and Mystery of Suffering II- in the church/streamed
More So-so Solutions

April 28 - 10:15 am - The Problem and Mystery of Suffering III- in the church/streamed
Towards a Solution and the Christian Response to Suffering

EASTER HOMILY by SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM (c. 347-407)

Let all pious people and all lovers of God rejoice in the splendor of this feast; let the wise servants blissfully enter into the joy of their Lord; let those who have borne the burden of Lent now receive their pay, and those who have toiled since the first hour, let them now receive their due reward; let any who came after the third hour be grateful to join in the feast, and those who may have come after the sixth, let them not be afraid of being too late; for the Lord is gracious and He receives the last even as the first. God gives rest to him who comes on the eleventh hour as well as to him who has toiled since the first: yes, the Lord has pity on the last and He serves the first; He rewards the one and praises the effort.

Come you all: enter into the joy of your Lord. You the first and you the last, receive alike your reward; you rich and you poor, dance together; you sober and you weaklings, celebrate the day; you who have kept the fast and you who have not, rejoice today. The table is richly loaded: enjoy its royal banquet. The calf is a fatted one: let no one go away hungry. All of you enjoy the banquet of faith; all of you receive the riches of his goodness. Let no one grieve over his poverty, for the universal kingdom has been revealed; let no one weep over his sins, for pardon has shone from the grave; let no one fear death, for the death of our Savior has set us free: He has destroyed it by enduring it, He has despoiled Hades by going down into its kingdom, He has angered it by allowing it to taste of his flesh.

When Isaiah foresaw all this, he cried out: "O Hades, you have been angered by encountering Him in the nether world." Hades is angered because frustrated, it is angered because it has been mocked, it is angered because it has been destroyed, it is angered because it has been reduced to naught, it is angered because it is now captive. It seized a body, and, lo! 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 you are abolished. Christ is risen and the demons are cast down. Christ is risen and the angels rejoice. Christ is risen and life is freed. Christ is risen and the tomb is emptied of the dead: for Christ, being risen from the dead, has become the Leader and Reviver of those who had fallen asleep. To Him be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.

AN EASTER PRAYER

We thank you
that Easter is not about
a people,
but all people,
that your love
and your Salvation
are for all who confess

with voices, hearts and lives
that the tomb is empty
because Jesus is risen,
that we might know
forgiveness,
that lives might be
reborn
and your name
glorified
now and for eternity.

Lord of life
We pray for all who bring your word of life
As a light to those in darkness
For those who bring your word of peace
To those enslaved by fear
For those who bring your word of love
To those in need of comfort
Lord of love and Lord of peace
Lord of resurrection life
Be known
Through our lives
and through your power
Christ the Lord is risen to-day Alleluia!
— John Birch [<https://www.faithandworship.com>]