

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Parishioners,

Last Saturday morning we celebrated a special Mass for families that have experienced the passing of a child. I always find these Masses very moving. I am moved by the love that the parents & families continue to show for their children years after they have passed. I am also moved by their faith and hope that they will be reunited with their children when they too are called home to the Lord. As I said to the families at the Mass, while it is common to speak about our "loss" when someone passes, the person who is making that journey is not lost. They and we are always in the hands of our loving Lord.

With my prayers,

Fr. Conley

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I Believe in the Resurrection of the Dead

by Evan Harrington *Aleteia* online Magazine

"I believe in the resurrection of the dead." I have prayed those words an uncountable number of times, during the Mass, at the beginning of rosaries, in religious education. It appeared, however, that I never actually paid attention to the words I was praying, because when a Protestant member of my high school Bible club mentioned a future where our souls will be reunited to our bodies, all I could think was, "Do Catholics believe that?"

We do. In fact, it's a very important aspect of our faith, so much so that we repeat it at Mass every week. The truth of the matter is that there is a common misconception about eternal life that neglects and undermines the amazing truth and hope found in the resurrection of the dead.

The misconception I am speaking of is the idea that our final destination as Christians is an eternity in an ephemeral, cloud-based heaven, where our souls sail about unencumbered by our bodies and basking in the spiritual glory of God. The Church tells us that this image is simply not the case. Our eternity isn't to be spent in a perpetual, out-of-body experience.

To understand this teaching, let's backtrack to the account of the resurrection of Christ. That Christ gave himself on Good Friday to save us from our sin is made known through the Gospels; meanwhile, tradition tells of how Christ descended into hell and liberated the newly sanctified souls, leading them to heaven. And then the story continues. Christ rises from the dead, and in so doing manifests our destiny to be ourselves raised from the dead.

Remember, of course, that God isn't just going to pop us in a copy of our current bodies. Instead, our rising from the dead will be a rising unto glorified bodies. Christ illuminates this truth for us as well. Remember how Mary Magdalene didn't recognize Jesus? How the two disciples on the way to Emmaus

couldn't either? It's not merely that they were dumb or blind or Jesus thought it would be fun to wear a disguise. Rather, His disciples couldn't recognize him because Christ had revealed himself in his glorified body. It was different; it was perfected; it was the human body supernaturally perfected and free from death. It was Jesus, risen from the dead, but somehow unrecognizable as glorified. In his resurrection appearances, Christ revealed not only his new glorified life but also our future with him — life eternal, with a glorified body and soul, living on the face of a renewed earth.

By being raised bodily from the dead, we will be fully united, body and soul, with God. This truth is described in the Catechism: "At the end of time, the Kingdom of God will come in its fullness. After the universal judgment, the righteous will reign for ever with Christ, glorified in body and soul. The universe itself will be renewed."

Though this may seem like a small, silly distinction, eternity embodied or not, it really is a significant tenet of the Christian faith. Lumen Gentium states that the Church "will receive her perfection only in the glory of heaven, when will come the time of the renewal of all things." This line describes the perfection of the Church, and all her members, as being wholly fulfilled only at this renewal of all things which we call the creation of a new earth. Until then, the Church awaits her full perfection.

Our perfection after death, therefore, comes not as mere souls divorced from our bodies, but as new creations. At the end of time, we will live fully in God's presence, but will do so bodily as well as spiritually. We will retain our nature as children of Adam and Eve, who were made to walk in the garden with God. But we will be glorified in body and soul, as the Incarnate Word himself after his resurrection. This truth is an important one to contemplate because it strengthens our hope by reminding us that we are made for more than this world, and that we are made for more than an ephemeral concept of "heaven." We are made for life with the Risen Christ, sharing a life like his, in a renewed creation he is preparing for us right now.

FRIDAY IS THE FIRST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH. We will have adoration of the Blessed Sacrament following the 9:30 AM Mass and concluding with benediction at 8 PM. Volunteers are needed to sign up for adoration between the hours of 3 and 7 PM. The sign-up sheet is in the foyer.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS ADOPT- A- FAMILY PROGRAM - The Social Concerns Christmas Adopt-A- Family Angel Tree is located in the rear of the church. Details of the program are provided next to the tree.

ST. MARY'S HEALING PRAYER MINISTRY

The mission of our healing prayer ministry is to help people to have a personal encounter with the Lord and experience his healing love. We do this by praying with people who are seeking physical, emotional and spiritual healing. Our healing prayer ministry is founded on our confidence in God the Father, who was given us every spiritual blessing in the heavens; Jesus Christ the Son who has redeemed us by his blood; and the Holy Spirit who fills us with the fire of his love. Persons seeking prayer from the healing prayer ministry will be given the opportunity to make an appointment with a prayer team for one or two confidential prayer sessions. To make an appointment to meet with one of our healing prayer teams, please contact Kaye Oliver at 240-682-0646 or Sam Oliver at 301-848-3206. Email can be sent to Samuel_Oliver @comcast.net.

ONLINE CONTRIBUTIONS-GREAT FOR

EVERYBODY! Would you like to make your donations electronically? We utilize web bill pay, set up through your individual bank for online donations at St. Mary's, because there are no hidden costs or fees associated with giving for the donor or for the church. For more information on how to set up online donations through your bank, please contact our Parish Accountant [Lisa Shumaker](mailto:Lisa.Shumaker) by phone at 301-870-2220 Ext. 11 or by email @ smbacct@comcast.net.

THIRD ANNUAL PRO-LIFE SYMPOSIUM

The 3rd Annual Pro-Life Symposium is coming to St. Joseph's in Pomfret next month! Please join the Holy Family Respect Life Committee and Charles County Right to Life next Saturday, December 1 for a packed schedule of pro-life representatives preaching and teaching on this year's theme: Make an Impact! The keynote speaker this year is Steve Wagner, Executive Director of Justice for All.

For registration and the most up-to-date list of speakers, please visit www.tinyurl.com/somdprolife. Find us on Facebook/Instagram at @charlescountyrighttolife.

*Please Note: a First Saturday Mass will be offered for Catholics wishing to partake in the devotion during the 8:30am registration period.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR

SPONSORED BY THE SODALITY AT SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH, LA PLATA, in the Friendship Room next Saturday, December 1, from 9 AM to 2 PM. Vendor tables are still available! For more information, call Maria at 817-821-8137.

LOYOLA ON THE POTOMAC, A JESUIT RETREAT HOUSE IN FAULKNER, MD IS SEEKING A PART-TIME BOOKKEEPER.

Responsibilities include payroll, accounts receivable, accounts payable, benefits management and bank reconciliation. Experience with QuickBooks required. Experience with data base management and budgeting preferred. Loyola on the Potomac is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Competitive salary.

Part-time position working 24 hrs. per week. Apply on or before 11/26/2018. Submit your resume to the Executive Director via email @ director@loyolaretreat.org.

ANGEL'S WATCH SHELTER FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN HUGHESVILLE is in desperate need of comforters, sheets and pillows. We are moving soon to Waldorf. All our beds will be bunk beds, top twin and bottom full size. It would be greatly appreciated if we can receive new or gently used comforters for our shelter residents. If you have any questions please contact Kathy Clark at 301-274-0682.

RELIGIOUS GOODS STORE NEEDS HELP

We need some help to work after the 12 Mass. Please call Ellen Walls at 301- 579-2557 or Fay Adriani at 301-645-3531.

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THIS WEEK:

SUN: 8am Joe Gardiner, Jr., 10am Jennifer Long,
12N: Parishioners, **MON:** 8am All Souls,
TUES: 8am Gary Edward Williams, **WED:** 8am Patricia Housley, **THURS:** 8am All Souls, **FRI:** 9:30am All Souls, **SAT:** 9am Patricia Jean Padgett, 4pm Paul Istvan.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR DAILY

PRAYERS: Stephen Balenger, Anna Bankins, Mary Bowes, Deacon Gene Burroughs, Brenda Callahan, Joe Cross, Agnes Curtis, Chuck Davis, Susan Welch Day, Kendall Farrell, George Fassel, Keith Van Gadson, Arlene Gandolfi, Martha Gehring, James Gibson, Zynae Green, Irma Johnson, Angie Kalnasy, Regina Kijesky, Lillian Komar, Susie Logan, Larry Miller, Joseph Mona, Wayne Mullings, Mary Reeves, Sylvene Savoy, William Leon Savoy, Edna Sweeney, Jean Turner, Eva Washington, Beth Weise, Pat Werner, Brice Zimmer.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION LAST WEEKEND:

\$8,473.30. The unidentified donations totaled \$633.30. We received \$36.00 for our School Support.