



**Sts. Peter and Paul Ecumenical Catholic Church+USA
808 N. Mason Road
Creve Coeur, Missouri 63141-6306
(314) 270.2452**

April 2017 Parish Bulletin

Parish Web Site: www.sspp-eccusa.org

Church Web Site: www.ecc-usa.org

CLERGY MASS SCHEDULE

All Mass Times 4:00 PM unless otherwise noted

April 2, 2017:	Fifth Sunday of Lent	Fr. Bill
April 9, 2017:	Palm Sunday	Fr. Tom
April 16, 2017:	Easter Sunday	+Fr. Carl
April 23, 2017:	Second Sunday of Easter	Fr. Bill
April 30, 2017:	Third Sunday of Easter	Fr. Bill

***Quarterly Healing Service at this Mass**

Pastoral Staff:

Pastor: +Fr. Bob Catlett, 314.800.3456, pastor@sspp-eccusa.org

Associate Pastor: Fr. Bill LaGrand, 314.650.2914, associate@sspp-eccusa.org

Presiding Bishop: +Fr. Carl Swaringim, 636.240.7839, domcarl@ecc-usa.org

Prayer Intentions

If you would like us to remember a special intention for you at Mass, please contact one of our priests.

If you or someone you know is in need of spiritual assistance (prayers, Sacrament of the Sick, etc.), please contact one of our priests.

Inquiries regarding the administration of Sacraments or services (Baptisms, First Communion, Marriages, and Funerals) are welcomed.

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

Fr. Bill LaGrand, M.A.

April 2, 2017 – 5th Sunday of Lent: Like Lazarus, we have another chance to rise from the spiritual death of sin to new life by God's love and mercy. How will we use this new opportunity? Will we allow God's mercy to free us from spiritual death?

April 9, 2017 – Passion (Palm) Sunday: In the passion narrative, Jesus could be viewed as a failed prophet; yet we are challenged to walk with him even to death on the cross. We must persevere even in the face of overwhelming difficulty.

April 16, 2017 – Easter Sunday: The tomb is open. Jesus is raised from the dead. Let us welcome him. He is life. Let him help us to open our own tombs of fear, sin, worries, and difficulties. Let us be filled with hope.

April 23, 2017 – 2nd Sunday of Easter: The wounds of Jesus represent the triumph of vulnerability over power, force, or retribution. It is when we are most vulnerable that we are closer to the healing grace of Jesus Christ.

April 30, 2017 – 3rd Sunday of Easter: The story of the journey to Emmaus reveals to us not only something about who Jesus is, but also how he opens our eyes to see him for who he truly is and how we can come to know him.

From the Bishop's Desk

+Fr. Carl T. Swaringim, Ed.D., Presiding Bishop

The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist

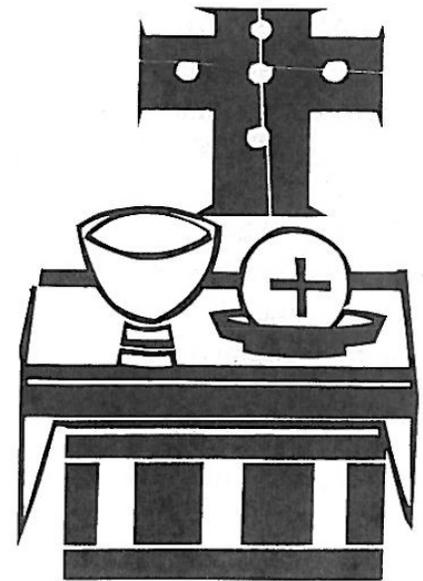
Since Thursday, April 20, is Holy Thursday and Holy Thursday commemorates Jesus Christ's institution of the Sacrament of His Body and Blood, I will focus my reflections this month on Mass and the Holy Eucharist.

The following dialogue from the Gospel according to Matthew is the focal point of the Celebration of Mass when the priest recites the words by which the bread and wine are changed into the very Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." (Matthew 26: 26-28)

Jesus gave this Holy Sacrament to us, His followers, as food and drink to unite us to Himself. Further, this Holy Sacrament provides the means and the grace through which we can live truly Christian lives and receive from God the Father eternal happiness. While the Holy Eucharist is certainly a gift of unique privilege to us now, it is also a means to the end: eternal life in the presence of God.

In fact, in the Gospel of John, Jesus said to his disciples, *"Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you."* (John 6:53) Those words of Jesus are telling us that the Holy Eucharist is a means to salvation of which we must partake.



Saint Paul in his writings stresses the dispositions of worthiness for a person who receives Holy Communion. Certainly, the question of adequate worthiness is part of the Catholic Faith Tradition. The Ecumenical Catholic Church+USA adds the following considerations to "worthiness" when it invites everyone to receive Holy Communion at Mass.

The first consideration is that no human being is ever truly worthy to receive the Lord's Body and Blood. Surely Jesus knew that when he gave us this wonderful gift. However, the Eucharist was not given to us as a reward for being good; it was given as a source of grace and the means to become a better Christian. We don't receive Holy Communion as a reward for what we have done, or what we are spiritually, but rather we receive as sinners who want to better configure themselves with Jesus and to live a life worthy of being a child of Almighty God. Therefore, our Church invites all to receive Holy Communion at our altar.

The second consideration is that while we believe with all of our faith and theological understanding that the Eucharistic Bread and Wine is truly the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, we do not require that anyone holds a particular understanding of "how" Jesus is present under the appearance of bread and wine.

Some Christian Churches teach that Jesus' presence is merely symbolic; we reject that as not based on Catholic Faith Tradition. Others teach that only the significance (meaning) of the bread and wine is changed; we reject that as not based on Catholic Faith Tradition.

The Roman Catholic Church (RCC) teaches the Doctrine of Transubstantiation as defined (i.e., must be believed) doctrine. In the Transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, the external appearances (taste, shape, smell) of bread and wine remain unchanged, but the substance, the underlying "bread-ness" or "wine-ness", are changed into the substance of the body and blood of Jesus. Transubstantiation is based on the philosophy of Aristotle and the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas and was defined as an RCC article of faith by the Council of Trent (1564 AD). Most people who were raised Roman Catholics fully accept the Doctrine of Transubstantiation.

For those persons not of the Roman Catholic tradition, our Church accepts and offers the Orthodox Church's understanding of the real presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. Orthodoxy explains the change as a trans-formation or simply a change. "Orthodox believers do not dwell overly on how

precisely the bread and wine change into the Body and Blood of Christ. It is enough for them to believe in the omnipotence of God and in this dread and incomprehensible divine mystery.”¹ Simply put, the “how of Jesus’ presence” is a “Great Mystery.”

The take-away for all of this is that Jesus has given us the Great Mystery of his Real Presence in the Holy Eucharist. “It is right and just, proper and helpful toward salvation”² that we both treasure and partake of this His real presence in our lives.

Blessings,

+Father Carl

¹ Metropolitan Nektarios at Second Open Ecumenical Seminar, 2016.

² Opening phrases in many Prefaces of the Eucharistic Canons at Mass.

From the Pastor’s Desk

+Fr. Bob Catlett, M.Div.

Congratulations! Congratulations to our parishioners who have a special reason to celebrate this month!

Birthdays: Jan Williamson – 4/9
 Rudy Schmid – 4/12
 Emily Jacobi – 4/19

Anniversaries: +Carl & Rosann Swaringim – 4/3

Prayer Request: Please remember me in your prayers while I am away attending the FBI National Academy from April 3 to June 9, 2017, as I will keep you all in my thoughts and prayers daily! I hope to be back in time for mass on June 11, 2017!

New website and church phone number: Our webmaster, Bishop Carl, has been working very hard on our new website, www.sspp-eccusa.org. Also, please make note of our new church telephone number, (314) 270-2452, which is forwarded to one of the priests’ cell phones at all times.

Thank you, +Vilatte Institute! For those who were at mass on Sunday, March 26, 2017, you noticed the priests wearing rose colored vestments. There are only two (2) Sundays during the liturgical year when these vestments are worn: Laetare Sunday (the Fourth Sunday of Lent) and Gaudete Sunday (the Third Sunday of Advent). So what is the difference of these Sundays in comparison to the other Sundays of Lent and Advent? The word Laetare (rejoice) opens the traditional introit for the Fourth Sunday in Lent: “Laetare Jerusalem,” “Rejoice, O Jerusalem.” The church is called to joyful anticipation of the victory to be won at Easter...an opportunity to lighten the penitential emphasis of Lent, if only for a day. Also known as mid-Lent and Rose Sunday, flowers, customarily not used during the season in many parishes, may appear at the altar, and Priests are given the option to wear rose-colored vestments in place of the violet vestments normally worn during Lent. Laetare’s counterpart, Gaudete, the Third Sunday of Advent, is represented by a rose-colored candle in the Advent Wreath. Very few parishes use rose-colored vestments for two rather practical reasons: they are only used twice a year (the fourth Sunday of Lent and the third Sunday of Advent), and though very beautiful, they are very expensive. Bishop Carl and I have discussed this for many years and chosen not to expend parish monies for the rose colored vestments. However, through the generosity of Bishop Carl’s ministry, +Vilatte Institute, our parish now has a set of rose colored vestments! Thank you, Bishop Carl and the +Vilatte Institute for your generosity and thoughtfulness!