

Fourth Sunday of Lent – March 11, 2018

The Passover of the Lord- Rejoice it is near!

This Sunday in Latin is called Laetare (Rejoice!) Sunday--the color Rose is worn, a color of joy and the early rise of the morning sun. The passover of the Lord is the Passion Death and Resurrection of our Messiah. This week we begin to anticipate. But, why did God allow the ancient Jews to return to Jerusalem after their exile, as we heard in the 1st Reading? They were the ones who had been unfaithful to his friendship. They had started worshipping other gods, breaking the commandments, and disobeying God's prophets. They "mocked the messengers of God, despised his warnings, and scoffed at his prophets." That's pretty ungrateful. And as a result of their sin, they suffered the consequences - they were conquered and exiled by the Babylonians; sin always does damage, both to us and to those around us. While in exile, many of them completely forgot about God and his promises - as today's Psalm implies. But even in the face of this colossal ingratitude, God still didn't give up on them. He sent them even more prophets to give hope, promised to restore them, when the time was right, he did restore them. He brought his unworthy people back to Jerusalem and allowed them to rebuild the Temple, a sign of lasting peace and prosperity.

Why? Why would he be so unreasonable? Because God's love, God's fidelity, God's mercy doesn't depend on our worthiness. *He doesn't love us because we are perfect; he perfects us because he loves us. This is the Good News! "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life."* We are the blessed ones: we know that God loves us, that we are infinitely valuable in his eyes, no matter what, in spite of our sins, failings, and weaknesses. This is why every year, right in the middle of this penitential season, on the Fourth Sunday of Lent, the Church invites us to rejoice. We have had 4 weeks to meditate on our weaknesses and sinful tendencies. Now we are able to appreciate more deeply just how full and unconditional God's love is - that while we were "dead in our transgressions" as St Paul put it, God reached down and rescued us. But what about all those people who don't know it? What about those people all around us, our friends, family members, colleagues, teammates - the ones who underneath a respectable appearance are searching desperately

for a solid foundation? We all know someone like Nicodemus, who even though he was successful in the eyes of the world, was searching and unsatisfied in his heart. Christ wants that person to discover the joy that only God can give.

And how will they discover it? If we tell them about it. We are Christ's messengers - imperfect, clumsy, ignorant messengers, but that's OK. Even fragile, simple, and misshapen clay vases can hold beautiful flowers.

This week, let's show Christ how grateful we are for his unconditional love by telling someone else about it, so that the sunrise of Christ's love can illuminate their hearts too.

Father Blake Evans, Pastor

ATTENDANCE REPORT

3/4/18

Attendance: 427 souls

Offerings & Tithes: \$9,772

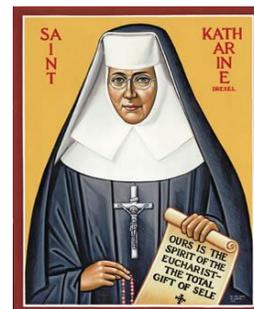
Spanish Mass: \$515

Utility fund: \$160

NO Bible Study on Monday, March 12th.

Spring Forward! The Vigil Mass for Sundays returns to its usual time of 5:30 pm on Saturday net week March 17th.

Wild Winds! Damages to the Rectory roof and the roof and siding of the Youth Center were documented last week. Catholic Mutual Insurance is covering the damages, the parish will have to cover deductible charges.



Saints of March: Among our Saints of March we find American St. Katherine Drexel, a nun, a rich relative of Jacquie Bouvier Kennedy (wife of Pres. JFK). St. Katherine gave up a life of comfort and spent decades teaching and defending the dignity of every person especially children of color. She is a Patroness for racial justice.

She died in 1955, was born 1858, canonized 2000 by Pope St. John Paul 2nd. She was heir to a huge banking fortune she gave it up to serve USA's African American and Native American children. Pray for us!



Mass Intentions



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

Keane Council #353

March 10 - 17, 2018

Sat. 3/10	8: 00a	Nativity Youth
	4:30p	Nativity – The Elect
Sun. 3/11	8:00am	Benjei Byers (birthday)
	10:00a	Miles Xavier Willis (thanksgiving)
	1:00p	The People of the Parish
Mon. 3/12	Noon	Aida Alvarez (healing)
Tue. 3/13	Noon	+Jose Antonio Ferreira
Wed. 3/14	Noon	+Jose Antonio Campos
Thu. 3/15	Noon	+Kenneth H. Weaver
Fri. 3/16	Noon	Rohini Perera
Sat. 3/17	8:00a	+Katheleen Wofsy
	5:30p	Ellen Diogo Family (thanksgiving)

Stations of the Cross

Our stunning "Stations" were donated by Mr. Mrs. Adam Weschler in 1925. Please offer a prayer for their repose and in thanksgiving. Stations of the Cross are prayed twice daily at Nativity during Lent, after noon Mass and during the 6pm-7pm holy hours Fridays in the Great Upper Church.



Church Repairs/Changes: Fr. Evans is investigating changes to the lower level of the Crypt to close the lower sacristy and create another meeting room. The Music room may be remodeled to be more of a meeting/2 room conference space.

Latin for the Masses: As requested by parishioners Latin will be sung at some of the Masses in Spanish during Lent and other holy seasons. Thanks to Coro Natividad for their beautiful music.

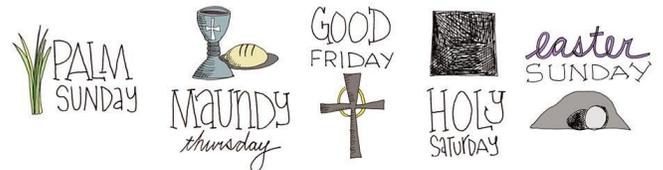
Thank you! Thank you to Keane Council of Knights of Columbus who meet at Nativity for the wonderful Sunday breakfast for the parishioners and their ongoing Fish Fry.

Fish Fry! Come for fish fry and social time with your friends and parishioners. 7pm on Friday after the Holy Hour. Thanks to the Keane Council of Knights of Columbus for their hard work proceeds benefit Nativity & St. Gabriel parish.

Lenten Fish Fry. Starting on February 16th at 6 pm in the Lounge. This event will occur every Friday during Lent except Good Friday. Dinners are \$10, sandwiches \$5. Proceeds provide grants, scholarships, and awards for parish activities. More information call Bob Newman 301.892.2713 or Peter Gervais 202.494.7347

We are going to see "Jesus" The Knights of Columbus is sponsoring a bus trip on June 9th. to the "Sight and Sound" Theatre in Lancaster, PA to see the Biblical play "Jesus." Price of \$125 includes cost of ticket and transportation to and from the theatre. \$50 per person deposit is due by March 15, 2018. Full payment due by May 9th, 2018. We will stop for lunch and dinner at the Tanger Outlet. For more information contact: Chairman Thomas Ayala 202.882.2527 or Amado Alvarez 240.381.9276. Come join us and bring the family, it's going to be a lot of fun.

The Saint John Paul II National Shrine invites you and your family to a Pre-Founders Day Mass and Reception on Wednesday, March 21, 2018 at 6:30pm. The Celebrant and Homilist for the Mass will be Fr. Jonathan Kalisch, O.P., who serves as the Director of Chaplains for the Knights of Columbus. Mass will conclude with veneration of a relic of the founder of the Knights of Columbus, Venerable Fr. Michael J. McGivney. Following Mass will be a reception and talk by Fr. Gabriel O'Donnell, O.P., Vice Postulator for the Venerable Fr. Michael McGivney. Admission is free



Sun. 3/24	Palm Sunday
Thu. 3/29	Holy Thursday 8:00 a Morning Prayers 7:00 p Liturgy
Fri. 3/30	Good Friday 8:00 a Morning Prayers Noon Stations of the Cross 3:00 p Devine Mercy Chaplet 7:00 p Liturgy
Sat. 3/31	Holy Saturday 8:00 a Morning Prayers 8:00 p Vigil
Sun. 4/1	Easter Sunday 10:00 a Mass