

APRIL 2, 2023

**PALM SUNDAY & HOLY WEEK**

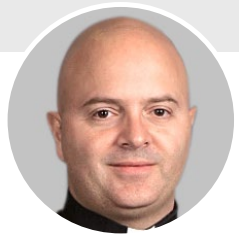
NOOL.US | (303) 469-5171



**NATIVITY**  
OF OUR LORD



## THE LAST SEVEN WORDS OF OUR LORD



For centuries, the Seven Last Words of Our Lord have been used in various forms of devotion for the consideration and consolation of the Christian people, especially on Good Friday. When Jesus was crucified, he didn't die immediately. It probably took between two and three hours. During this time, he spoke seven times. These seven sentences are the last things that he said to us before dying and therefore they are objects of veneration.

Many saints, theologians, and faithful have been inspired by these words. These words were certainly meant for the people who were present there when Jesus was on the Cross, but at the same time, they are also saying something to everyone else who hears them. Here are the words:

### "FATHER, FORGIVE THEM, FOR THEY DO NOT KNOW WHAT THEY DO." (LK 23:34)

Jesus knew that the people who were killing him weren't really aware of the mistake they were making. For this reason, he wants the Father to forgive them. Jesus is our Advocate. He didn't die on the Cross so that we may go to Hell. He wants us to be saved and therefore he would use even our ignorance to save us.

At this time, the women who were there gave him some wine mixed with myrrh. Myrrh was given to reduce the pain. But Jesus refused it because he had to suffer to the fullest and because he was not going to drink wine until the sacrifice was complete.

### "TRULY, I SAY TO YOU, TODAY YOU WILL BE WITH ME IN PARADISE." (LK 23:43)

He saves the Good Thief. He is showing us that the parable of the Workers in the Vineyard is something true. The Good Thief was granted Heaven because he repented in the last moments of his life.

### "WOMAN, THIS IS YOUR SON." "THIS IS YOUR MOTHER." (JN 19:26-27)

Jesus is worried about Mary's future and wants to find someone to entrust her to. At the same time, he loves John and wants him to learn from Mary. Jesus is also entrusting the whole Church to Mary. She is no longer only his mother, but became Our Mother too.

### "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?" (MT 27:46)

Jesus feels lonely and abandoned. Jesus experienced the deepest misery of the human condition. In this moment, though, he knows that his Father is still present, even if he doesn't feel him close. We have to do the same and recognize, through faith, that he is always present.

### "I THIRST." (JN 19:28)

He was dehydrated and needed to drink. Jesus is giving his life for our sake and wants to draw everyone to himself, so that we may be saved. His thirst is especially for our souls. After he said these words, they gave him a sponge soaked in a sort of sour wine. Finally, he was about to die and he could drink the fourth cup of wine.

### "IT IS FINISHED." (JN 19:30)

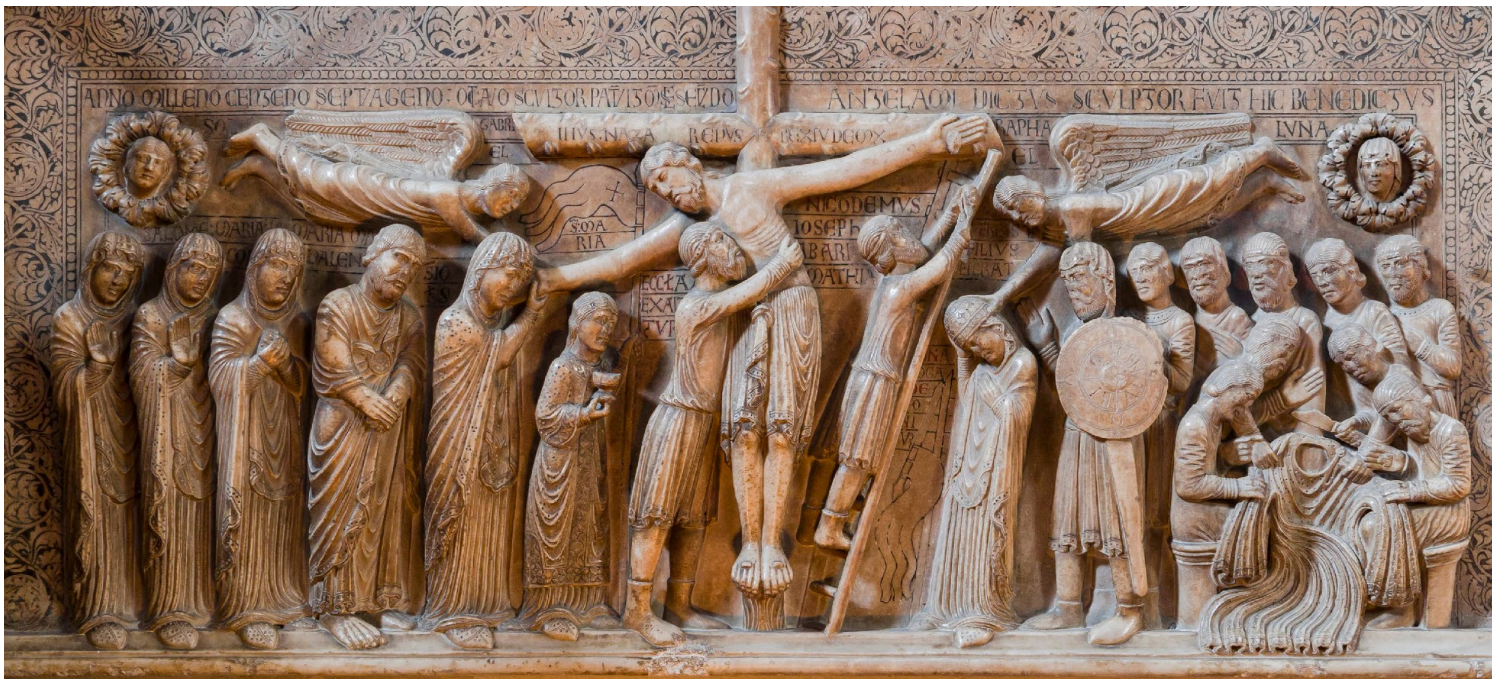
There is nothing else that Jesus can do, he is about to die. The Passover is fulfilled.

### "FATHER, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMEND MY SPIRIT." (LK 23:46)

He is dying. He came from the Father and he is going back to him. We too should die with the same certainty.

Fr. Accursio Ciaccio

Benedetto Antelami, *Deposition*, 1178, Duomo di Parma, Italy





NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

# HOLY WEEK & EASTER 2023

APRIL 2–9, 2023

## APRIL 2

### PALM SUNDAY

4:30 pm (anticipatory)

7:30 am

9:30 am | **Mass with Procession**  
**Gather 9:15 am**  
at the Midway Blvd. entrance

11:30 am

5:00 pm

## APRIL 6 | HOLY THURSDAY

8:00–9:30 am | **Confession**

9:30 am | **Morning Prayer**

7:00 pm:

### THE MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER (live-streamed)

8:15 pm–7:00 am

**SILENT ADORATION THROUGH THE NIGHT**

10:00 pm | **Compline**

## APRIL 7 | GOOD FRIDAY

8:00–9:30 am | **Confession**

9:30 am | **Morning Prayer**

12:00 pm | **Way of the Cross Outdoor**

*(beginning at Brunner Farmhouse)*

*A shuttle bus will be available at Nativity  
starting at 11:15 am to take you to the  
Farmhouse parking lot.*

12:00 pm | **Stations of the Cross in Church**

3:00 pm:

### LITURGY OF THE LORD'S PASSION (live-streamed)

## APRIL 8 | HOLY SATURDAY

8:00–9:30 am | **Confession**

9:30 am | **Morning Prayer**

3:00 pm–6:00 pm | **Confession**

8:00 pm:

### EASTER VIGIL (live-streamed)

## APRIL 9

### EASTER SUNDAY

Masses at

7:30 am

9:30 am

11:30 am

No Mass at 5:00 pm

(live-streamed)

## DAILY READINGS

### SATURDAY, APRIL 1

1st Reading: Ez 37:21-28

Psalm: Jeremiah 31:10, 11-12abcd, 13

Gospel: Jn 11:45-56

### PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 2

Gospel at the Procession with Palms:

Mt 21:1-11

1st Reading: Is 50:4-7

Psalm: 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24

2nd reading: Phil 2:6-11

Gospel: Mt 26:14–27:66

### MONDAY OF HOLY WEEK

#### APRIL 3

1st Reading: Is 42:1-7

Psalm: 27:1, 2, 3, 13-14

Gospel: Jn 12:1-11

### TUESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

#### APRIL 4

1st Reading: Is 49:1-6

Psalm: 71:1-2, 3-4a, 5ab-6ab, 15 and 17

Gospel: Jn 13:21-33, 36-38

### WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

#### APRIL 5

1st Reading: Is 50:4-9a

Psalm: 69:8-10, 21-22, 31 and 33-34

Gospel: Mt 26:14-25

### HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 6

#### Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper

1st Reading: Ex 12:1-8, 11-14

Psalm: Ps 116:12-13, 15-16bc, 17-18.

2nd Reading: 1 Cor 11:23-26

Gospel: Jn 13:1-15

### GOOD FRIDAY OF THE LORD'S

#### PASSION, APRIL 7

1st Reading: Is 52:13–53:12

Psalm: 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-16, 17, 25

2nd Reading: Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-9

Gospel: Jn 18:1–19:42

## PARISH CALENDAR

### SUNDAY, APRIL 2

8:00 am | CL  
8:30 am | John Lay Book Presentation  
10:00 am | RCIA  
6:00 pm | High School Youth Group (GS)

### MONDAY, APRIL 3

10:00 am | ENDOW  
1:00 pm | CGS 1 Mon Level I and II  
3:15 pm | Chess Club  
4:00 pm | CGS 2 Mon Level II  
6:30 pm | Biblical School  
6:30 pm | New Springtime Prayer Group  
6:30 pm | Spanish Prayer Group  
6:45 pm | St. Joseph Men's Prayer Group

### TUESDAY, APRIL 4

10:00 am | CGS 3 Tues Level I Sess 1  
4:00 pm | CGS 4 Tues Level I Sess 2  
6:30 pm | RE  
6:30 pm | Venturers of the Star  
7:30 pm | CLU (CL University Students)

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5

5:30 am | St. Joseph Men's Prayer Group  
8:15 am | ENDOW  
9:30 am | TOFF  
4:30 pm | RE  
6:15 pm | Boy Scouts Tr. 766  
6:15 pm | Divorce Support Group  
6:30 pm | RCIA rehearsal

### THURSDAY, APRIL 6

Front Desk/Office Open

### FRIDAY, APRIL 7

Front Desk/Office Closed

### SATURDAY, APRIL 8

Front Desk/Office Closed

## OFFICE/FRONT DESK CLOSURE DURING HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

Please note that the office/front desk will be closed on:

April 7, Good Friday  
April 8, Holy Saturday  
April 10, Easter Monday

All the classes and other community activities will be CANCELED.

## ALTAR SERVERS NEEDED FOR HOLY WEEK!

Experience the beauty of Our Lord's Passion and Resurrection while serving during Holy Week and Easter! Please keep in mind that for Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Vigil, all the servers serving at each liturgy must attend specific and mandatory training. Register at:

[NOOL.FLOCKNOTE.COM/SIGNUP/116883](http://NOOL.FLOCKNOTE.COM/SIGNUP/116883)

SIGN UP



## MASS INTENSIONS

### SATURDAY, APRIL 1

9:30 † Robert Janka  
4:30 Lori Zamora Birthday Blessings  
by Lindsay Smith

### PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 2

7:30 † Shane Fross by Fross Family  
9:30 People of the Parish  
11:30 † Henry Hebert  
by Mike & Roberta Hebert  
5:00 Bedoya Family

### MONDAY, APRIL 3

7:00 Rebekah Hevener by Ray & Diane  
9:30 Successful surgery of Lolit  
Borleo-Snow by Bill Snow

### TUESDAY, APRIL 4

7:00 † Joe Blazon by Jerome Blazon  
9:30 † Tom Fattor by Donna Farrell

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5

7:00 † Gerald & Mary Coufal  
9:30 Special intentions of Ryan  
Longfield by John Richards

### THURSDAY, APRIL 6

7:00 pm | Priestly Fraternity  
of St. Charles Borromeo

### FRIDAY, APRIL 7

No Mass  
3:00 pm | Liturgy of the Lord's Passion

### SATURDAY, APRIL 8

Easter Vigil Mass  
8:00 pm | Newly Baptized

### EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 9

7:30 † Kyle Watson by John Richards  
9:30 People of the Parish  
11:30 † Dominic Petrocco  
by Lew & Betty Garner

### SACRISTY LAUNDRY

Cyndi Beckingham

### COLLECTION COUNTERS

Monday, 4/3 | 10:00 am

Bob Johnson  
Susan Martinez  
Victoria Villegas  
Deborah Mittleman

## FOLLOWING THE CROSS WITH MARY



## THE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES ROSARY REFLECTIONS

The Virgin felt that the creature she was carrying in her womb would have, one day, to die (every mother feels this, even as she tries not to think about it), but she did not feel that He would rise again. This is the event which is uniquely comparable to the mystery of the beginning. Just as the seed took shape within her womb, so, in the fullness of time, He would rise again; that Man would rise again. But she didn't know this. "Let it be done to me according to Your word," on the Virgin's lips, is the same as, "Lord, Your will be done," on the lips of Christ. The correspondence between the Angelus and the Cross lies in the fact that both say, "Let it be done to me according to Your word." This is the gesture of obedience in its pure essentiality. Its pure essentiality makes you tear away from something that God asks- to then pass through a cross and resurrection from which a limitless fecundity springs forth, a fecundity whose boundary is the boundary of God's plan. Fecundity springs forth from virginity. Virginity can be conceived of only this way.

## 1. JESUS' AGONY IN THE GARDEN

"Now my soul is sorrowful; and what must I say, 'Father, save me from this hour [faced with the thought of sacrifice, the thought of death, of



self-denial...]? But it is for this that I have come to this hour [for this, for this condition have I been chosen, called, lovingly taught by the mystery of the Father, by the charity of the Son, by the warm light of the Spirit. Now my soul is sorrowful and what must I say, 'Father, save me from this hour'? 'Take away this condition, Father, take away this condition.' Must I say this? But it is precisely for this that I have come to this hour!]." Thus I can say at the end, "Father, glorify Your name [glorify Your will, bring about, realize Your plan], which I do not comprehend [because He did not comprehend the great injustice]. Father, glorify Your name in front of which I stand in fear and trembling, in obedience—that is to say, in love. My life is Your plan, it is Your will." How many times—praying to the Spirit and the Virgin Mary—will we have to reread this passage in order to identify with the most lucid and fascinating instant in which the consciousness of the Man Christ, Jesus, expressed itself. We can come upon this by surprise, from its deepest recesses to the highest peaks of His example of love for Being, of respect for the objectivity of Being, of love for His origin and His destiny, and for the contents of the plan of time, of history. "Father, if possible, let me not die; however, not my but Your will be done." This is the supreme application of our acknowledgment of Mystery, adhering to the Man-Christ kneeling and sweating blood from the pores of His skin in His agony in Gethsemane—the condition for being true in a relationship is sacrifice.

## 2. THE SCOURGING OF JESUS AT THE PILLAR

The companionship of the God-Man in our life has become inconceivable, unimaginable tragedy, one that defies anyone's imagination. In all the centuries



of history there cannot be imagined—not even in play, like a fairy tale—a tragedy greater than this: the companionship of God-made-flesh was forgotten, outraged by man; a tragedy that arises from the cynicism of our pursuit of our instincts. Around this "wood" coagulate the evil of man who fails the call of the Infinite and the disasters caused by this crime, so that the death of the God-Man is the sum and symbol of all these disasters. And, at the same time, here too is met the irresistible power of God, because just that supreme disaster and that evil become the instrument for its conquest and redemption. This is the enigma that God maintains in life, because this great plan of goodness, wisdom, knowledge, and love must be a trial, must put into action the idea of trial. Why a trial? Because the world is in evil, the world lies in the Evil One.

## 3. JESUS CROWNED WITH THORNS



That little head which Mary, like every mother with her newborn child, would have enfolded close to her without squeezing it, and caressed delicately as every mother does, and looked at in wonder and admiration, would one day have to wear a crown of thorns. *Salve caput cruentatum*. How the Virgin felt echoing inside her this evil of the world, without details and without accusations, but as an already boundless grief that would culminate in watching her Son die!

## 4. JESUS ON THE WAY TO CALVARY

God who came among men goes to the scaffold: defeated, a failure; a moment, a day, three days of nothingness, in which everything is finished. This is the condition, the condition of sacrifice in its most profound meaning: it appears to be a failure, it appears not to succeed, it appears that the others are right. Remaining with Him even when it seems that everything is finished or has finished; staying next to Him as His Mother did—only this faithfulness brings us, sooner or later, to the experience that no one outside the Christian community can have in this world, the experience of the Resurrection. And we can leave for another love this Christ who moves into death to deliver us from evil so that we may change, so that the Eternal Father may regenerate in us what the crime of forgetfulness has outstripped! This man throws himself onto the cross to brandish it, to embrace it, to be nailed on it, to die, to be one with that wood: "Will we leave him for another love?" This Man pours out his blood for us and shall we leave him for another love?



## 5. JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

We are sinners, and Christ's death saves us. Christ's death turns any past of ours into good, but our past is full of darkness that is called sin. And it is



Christ's death that saves us. We cannot acknowledge Christ on the cross without immediately understanding and feeling that this cross must touch us, that we can no longer object to sacrifice; there has no longer been room for objection to sacrifice since the moment when Christ died. Precisely through our gaze fixed on the cross—where hangs the One who looks at us with the fixed gaze of eternity, fixed with pity and the will to save us, having pity on us and our nothingness—through the gaze fixed on the cross, what would be something so foreign as to seem to us abstract, arbitrarily created, becomes the experience of redemption. It is by fixing our gaze on the cross that we learn to perceive experientially the invading Presence and the unavoidable need for grace that gives our life perfection, and gives it joy. It is in Mary that the adoration of our heart finds its example and its form. For the condition of the cross was not just for Christ;

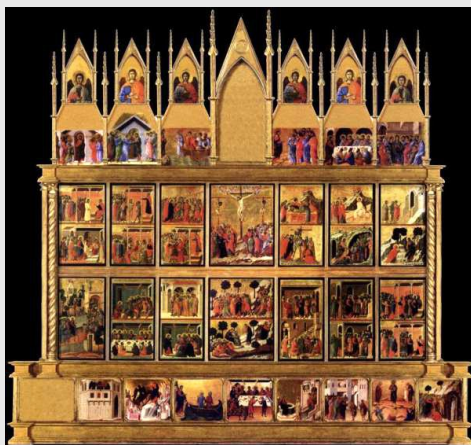
### FOLLOWING THE CROSS WITH MARY

Christ's death on the cross saves the world but not in isolation. It is not alone that Christ saves the world, but by the adherence of each and every one of us to suffering and the cross. St. Paul says it: "In my own body I make up all the hardships that still have to be undergone by Christ, in His Cross and Passion."

With you, o Mary, we recognize that the renouncement that is asked of our life is not a punishment, but the condition for its salvation, for its exaltation, for its increase. Mary, make our offering, the offering of our lives, help the poor world, this poor world, to be enriched in the knowledge of Christ and to rejoice in Christ's love.

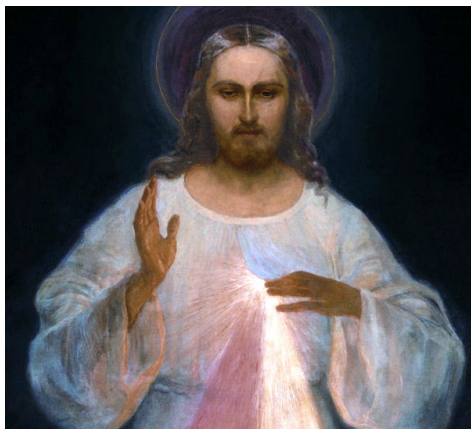
Rosary reflections: Fr. Luigi Giussani

Featured images: Duccio di Buoninsegna (1255–1319), *Maestà* Altarpiece panels (verso); tempera on wood; Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in Siena



## DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY AT NATIVITY – SAVE THE DATE APRIL 16, 2023 | 2:30–3:30 PM

Fr. John will offer a reflection at 2:30 pm and the Divine Mercy Chaplet will be recited at 3:00 pm. Confessions will be heard throughout the hour.



## GOOD FRIDAY SPECIAL COLLECTION

On Good Friday, there is a special Pontifical Collection for the Holy Land. Your generosity allows the Franciscan Friars in the Holy Land to continue their work of maintaining the sacred shrines and providing hope to Christians. The collection supports ministers to parishes, provides formation and education in the communities and schools, and cares for the basic needs of people in the Holy Land. It also assists the Congregation for the Oriental Churches to sustain the Eastern Rite Catholic Churches in the region. Through this collection, you join the Catholics around the world to stand in solidarity with the Church in the Holy Land, and you become an instrument of peace in a troubled land. We are giving to this collection as part of our tithe, but if you would like to give an additional amount to this "second pocket" giving opportunity, please use the envelopes in the gathering area or donate online at

[PPAY.CO/162BBVJHWYO](https://ppay.co/162BBVJHWYO)



## SUPPORT OFFERED BY STEPHEN MINISTRY AT NATIVITY

An important theme of the Lenten season is the humanity of Christ. In Jesus, God became human and fully experienced the wide range of emotions we all encounter in life. Jesus experienced times of loneliness, sadness, hurt, anger, disappointment, grief, and abandonment. That is part of being human. Another part of being human is needing help from each other. God never intended us to be completely self-sufficient. Part of God's plan is for each of us to turn to others for help when we need it.

So when you are experiencing difficult times, don't struggle alone. Our parish Stephen Ministers will walk with you, listen to you, encourage you, pray with you, and provide confidential one-to-one care to help you through tough times. Stephen Ministers can bring the love of Jesus back into your life.

To speak to a Stephen Minister, please call our helpline at 303-469-5171 x 113. Our Stephen Ministers are ready to care for you!



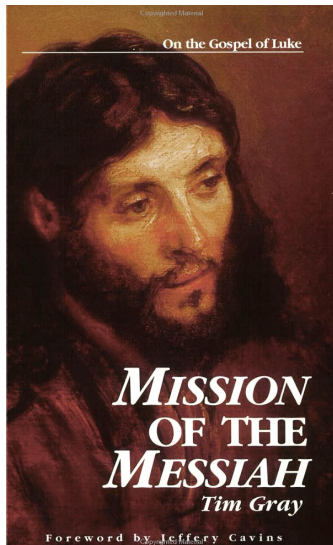
**RALLY FOR LIFE: APRIL 4 | 10 AM-12 PM**

Colorado Capitol West Steps

Pro-Life Colorado coalition is hosting a rally on the one-year anniversary of Colorado’s abortion law, the Reproductive Health Equity Act (RHEA), that has claimed the lives of thousands more children in our state in its first year since enactment. This is an opportunity for Coloradans to let the General Assembly know we do not want RHEA 2.0! At this rally, there will also be an announcement of Pro-Life Colorado’s partnership with National March for Life to launch the inaugural Colorado March for Life beginning April 2024.

**EASTER EGG HUNT**  
**SATURDAY, APRIL 15TH**  
**10:30AM**  
**FOR AGES 0-12**

Our Knights of Columbus Council is sponsoring an Easter egg hunt for all children ages 0-12. Bring your own Easter baskets and join us at Nativity to participate in the fun. The event is free but a canned food donation is requested!



**TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY**  
**NEXT SESSION**

THE CLASS STARTS  
**TUESDAY, APRIL 11**

Time: 1:00-2:30 pm

Newman Room at Nativity

Topic: *Mission of the Messiah*  
 by Tim Gray

The book is a compelling new study of the Gospel of Luke that presents the messianic mission of Jesus as the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy.

The review questions at the end of each chapter provide fresh material for individual reflection or group discussion. This book

is a must for anyone whose heart is burning to know and love Christ more profoundly. The book is available in the parish bookstore for approximately \$12.00. Register here:  
[NOOL.CCBCHURCH.COM/GOTO/FORMS/68/RESPONSES/NEW](http://NOOL.CCBCHURCH.COM/GOTO/FORMS/68/RESPONSES/NEW)

For more information, please contact  
 CYNDI BECKINGHAM  
 at [dcbeckingham@msn.com](mailto:dcbeckingham@msn.com)



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**REGISTER**

**GRADES 1-6 | JUNE 26-30, 9 AM-2:30 PM**  
**GRADES 7-12 | JUNE 25-29, 7-9 PM**

Totus Tuus (Latin for 'Totally Yours') is a summer youth program dedicated to sharing the Gospel and promoting the Catholic faith through catechesis, Christian witness, and a ton of fun!

**HOME WANTED!**

**FOR A PARISH MOM AND HER TWO TEENAGE CHILDREN**

Looking for low-income housing or a house to share.  
 Need to move in July 2023.

Please contact: Melissa Massy (425) 223-1667



**NATIVITY**  
FAITH & REASON

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Catholic school is one of the central ministries of our parish; it supports parents in their mission to raise their children within the faith.

We offer many options to make sure that cost is not an obstacle to a Catholic education.

Please reach out to school via website or phone for more information or to schedule a tour.

**Sebastian Calvino,**  
principal



Photos: Academic Decathlon Blue Team prepared for the National Competition

With questions about admission or to schedule a tour, contact **Shanon Spinuzzi**  
[s.spinuzzi@nool.us](mailto:s.spinuzzi@nool.us)  
303-466-4177



[school.nool.us/enroll](http://school.nool.us/enroll)

# OPEN ENROLLMENT

CALL TODAY  
303-466-4177

## 2023-2024

From *Knight Times Newsletter*  
March 24, 2023

Dear Nativity Parents,  
The beautiful weather of Spring this week has brought smiles to students and teachers alike, especially out during recess. Coming back from Spring break, there has been a renewed focus throughout the school and I have noticed consistent improvement in the order and focus of the classes during my walkthroughs of the school. On Thursday, I had the privilege of joining the 5th graders for the annual archdiocese 5th grade mass at the Basilica with the Bishop. This is a special moment each year for the students and our school as it brings the whole archdiocese together and allows us to clearly join together in prayer and purpose.

This weekend and next week, we feature a number of key events for the school. Our Decathlon team will be competing Saturday in the National competition after winning our regional competition a few weeks ago. Please keep all our decathletes in your prayers. On Monday, we have our annual Middle School science

fair with viewing for the public in the afternoon after school. This capstone project for our students is always a highlight of their education journey as students explore the real applications of science in their lives. I always enjoy walking through to see the many unique projects and encourage the school community to do the same.

In this Lenten season, I am continuously reminded that God is at work in this school. I have felt the temptation to take on the weight of responsibility for the school out of pride. This only leads to worry, stress, or undue ego inflation. The reading from Mass on Thursday spoke of the Israelites serving false idols instead of God. While it is cliché, I know that the idols in my life of success or recognition easily creep into my pursuits. I was reminded this week though, the challenge of Christianity is not the believing in God, but in committing to the idea of “Thy will be done.” It is not my school, or even our school, but God’s school. The joy and beauty that we experience, as well as the challenges, are gifts from him. In this springtime, we can find joy as we see that the weather, the school, our families, and everything in our life are ways that God is working to love us.

Sebastian







**“I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.” (Lk 22:15)**

## HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

“I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer” (Lk 22:15). With these words Jesus began the celebration of his final meal and the institution of the Holy Eucharist. Jesus approached that hour with eager desire. In his heart he awaited the moment when he would give himself to his own under the appearance of bread and wine. **He awaited that moment which would in some sense be the true messianic wedding feast: when he would transform the gifts of this world and become one with his own, so as to transform them and thus inaugurate the transformation of the world.** In this eager desire of Jesus we can recognize the desire of God himself - his expectant love for mankind, for his creation. A love which awaits the moment of union, a love which wants to draw mankind to itself and thereby fulfil the desire of all creation, for creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the children of God (cf. Rom 8:19). Jesus desires us, he awaits us. But what about ourselves? Do we really desire him? Are we anxious to meet him? Do we desire to encounter him, to become one with him, to receive the gifts he offers us in the Holy Eucharist? Or are we indifferent, distracted, busy about other things? From Jesus’ banquet parables we realize that he knows all about empty places at table, invitations refused, lack of interest in him and his closeness. For us, the empty places at the table of the Lord’s wedding feast, whether excusable or not, are no longer a parable but a reality, in those very countries to which he had revealed his closeness in a special way. Jesus also knew about guests who come to the banquet without being robed in the wedding garment - they come not to rejoice in his presence but merely out of habit, since their hearts are elsewhere. In one of his homilies Saint Gregory the Great asks: Who are these people who enter without the wedding garment? What is this garment and how does one acquire it? He replies that those who are invited and enter do in some way have faith. It is faith which opens the door to them. **But they lack the wedding garment of love.** Those who do not live their faith as love are not ready for the banquet and are cast out. Eucharistic communion requires faith, but faith requires love; otherwise, even as faith, it is dead.

[...] From Luke, and especially from John, we know that Jesus, during the Last Supper, also prayed to the Father - prayers which also contain a plea to his disciples of that time and of all times. Here I would simply like to take one of these which, as John tells us, Jesus repeated four times in his Priestly Prayer. **How deeply it must have concerned him! It remains his constant prayer to the Father on our behalf: the prayer for unity.** Jesus explicitly states that this prayer is not meant simply for the disciples then present, but for all who would believe in him (cf. Jn 17:20). He prays that all may be one “as you, Father, are in me and I am in you, so that the world may believe” (Jn 17:21). Christian unity can exist only if Christians are deeply united to him, to Jesus. Faith and love for Jesus, faith in his being one with the Father and openness to becoming one with him, are essential. This unity, then, is not something purely interior or mystical. It must become visible, so visible as to prove before the world that Jesus was sent by the Father. Consequently, Jesus’ prayer has an underlying Eucharistic meaning which Paul clearly brings out in

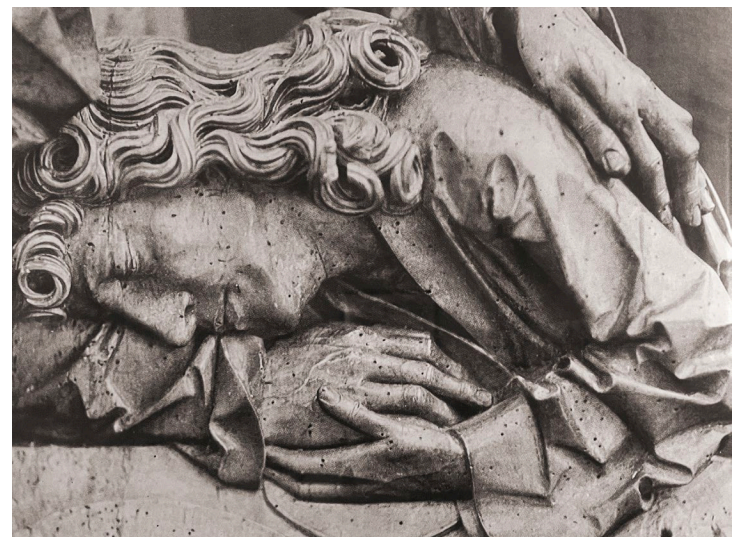
the First Letter to the Corinthians: “The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one bread” (1 Cor 10:16ff.). With the Eucharist, the Church is born. All of us eat the one bread and receive the one body of the Lord; this means that he opens each of us up to something above and beyond us. He makes all of us one. **The Eucharist is the mystery of the profound closeness and communion of each individual with the Lord and, at the same time, of visible union between all. The Eucharist is the sacrament of unity.** It reaches the very mystery of the Trinity and thus creates visible unity. Let me say it again: it is an extremely personal encounter with the Lord and yet never simply an act of individual piety. Of necessity, we celebrate it together. In each community the Lord is totally present. Yet in all the communities he is but one. Hence the words “*una cum Papa nostro et cum episcopo nostro*” are a requisite part of the Church’s Eucharistic Prayer. These words are not an addendum of sorts, but a necessary expression of what the Eucharist really is. Furthermore, we mention the Pope and the Bishop by name: unity is something utterly concrete, it has names. In this way unity becomes visible; it becomes a sign for the world and a concrete criterion for ourselves. [...]

**“I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you.” Lord, you desire us, you desire me. You eagerly desire to share yourself with us in the Holy Eucharist, to be one with us. Lord, awaken in us the desire for you. Strengthen us in unity with you and with one another. Grant unity to your Church, so that the world may believe. Amen.**

Source: [https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2011/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_hom\\_20110421\\_coena-domini.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2011/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20110421_coena-domini.html)



Tilman Riemenschneider, *Altar of the Last Supper*, c. 1500, Rothenburg, Germany. Detail: John the Apostle with head resting on the arm of Christ.



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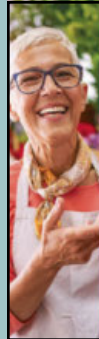
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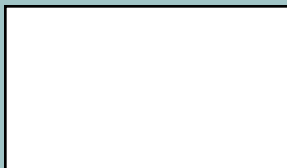
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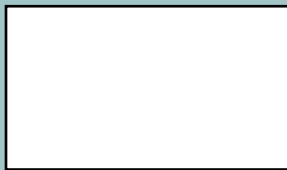


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