



*Then the other disciple also went in,
the one who had arrived at the tomb first,
and he saw and believed.*

JOHN 20:8

Life without a Blankie

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

F aith can have the look of high dives and learning to ride a bike without training wheels and life without one's "blankie." All are confrontations with the specter of death asking us to have faith. From youth to old age, our lives seem to be laced with the loss of control, and unless we embrace such moments, not only will we never really grow up, neither will we ever become people of faith who live in the resurrection.

The Easter Gospels are about women and men who arrive at the tomb but hesitate going in; it is the home of death. Yet they become believers after they have entered that home of death and discover it to be abandoned. Over the years, I have become convinced that the only way to become a believer in the resurrection is to walk into the tomb yourself and there discover that where you thought death

was present now has been abandoned. That is the pattern of coming to faith.

Usually such moments do not have the look of faith. They tend to seem more akin to death than any promise of new life—like having to move to a new city or a new school, or abandoning an addiction, or confronting a problem through counseling, or aging, or grieving over lost love. They all can have the look of tombs yet they are also where we find the beginnings of new life. Risk it often enough and so discover new life, and we begin to believe in the reality of resurrection—Jesus' and ours. ●

Reflect

***Have you ever experienced life flowing
from what appeared to be a death?***

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH

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 Deacon Paul J. Hiryak, Deacon James A. Bardi
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 Parish Religious Education/CCD610 582-3880
 Parish Preschool610 404-8645
 Parish Website.....www.icbvm.org

Immaculate Conception Academy.....610 404-8645.....www.icaberks.org
 Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator: Wendy S. Krisak, M.A. NC, LPC, 800-791-9209
 Diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator: Pamela Russo, MSW, MS, 610-871-5200, Ext 2204
 Diocese of Allentown website.....www.allentowndiocese.org
 Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service: If you have an allegation of abuse against a bishop, please contact the Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service at www.ReportBishopAbuse.org or by calling 800-276-1562

EASTER SUNDAY – MARCH 31, 2024

The Sanctuary Lamp Burns in Memory of Stephen A. Mammarella, in Memory of Josie and Gus Fredriksen & in Memory of Gerald Wright

★★MASS INTENTIONS★★

SAT	8:00 PM <i>Easter Vigil Our Parishioners</i>	THUR	7:00 PM <i>Stella Powaski</i>
SUN	7:30 AM <i>Easter Flowers Memorial Envelopes</i>	FRI	7:30 AM <i>Ron Schwendt</i>
	9:00 AM <i>Easter Flowers Memorial Envelopes</i>	SAT	5:15 PM <i>Linda Bardi</i>
	11:00AM <i>Easter Flowers Memorial Envelopes</i>	SUN	7:30 AM <i>Charles Wagner</i>
MON	No Mass		9:00 AM <i>Our Living & Deceased Parishioners</i>
TUES	7:00 PM <i>Stephen A. Mammarella 6th Anniversary</i>		11:00 AM <i>Gerald Wright</i>
WED	7:30 AM <i>Giok Chua Ciu</i>		

The Second Collection Next Week is the Church Building & Parish Maintenance Collection

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Remember in your prayers the sick of our parish: Madge Butto, Deb Petras, Pat Fessler, Rita Ferry, Sunny Motta, Curt Miller, Loretta Hitchens, Dante Stetina, Barbara Ruby, Kara Morrison, Arlene Shirley, George Ruby, Harriet Yeager, Marjorie Hansen, Jason Leman, Ann Washko, Geri Barth, Dominic Strock, Anthony Scaglione, Aaron Gulla, Maryanne Emery, Pam Amos, Miriam Leman, Marianne Sutton, John Mingione, Henry J. Wade, Lois Muldowney, Terry Swisher, Arlene Schaeffer, Shelly Weiler, Christopher Shirk, Joe Nowotarski, Steven Blanyar, Jennifer Gazda, Gruber, Adele Nieckoski, Shawn Kaeser, Catherine Mueller, Regina Marie Brown, Tanya Sanders, Louis & Renee Cutillo, Ralph Rapposelli, Joe Dantas, Debbie Watson, Simcock, Judy Jones, Wanda Palmieri, Msgr. Nevin Klinger, Barbara Wright, Charlotte Glacken, Beppy McGee, David Mollura, Mary Louise Myers, Mary Ann Uivary, Michael Bobb, John Kusznir, Joseph Ondo, Rose White, Nova Puszczkowski, Karl Husbands, Magdalene Babiarz, Dante LaScala, Michael Gulla, Alex Lopacki, Angelina Swisher, & Geraldine Christ.

Please pray for the deceased Florence Watts

Our parish church is open each day of the week from 8am to 3pm for private prayer and visits to the Blessed Sacrament.

Each Sunday, the 11am Mass is live-streamed on our Facebook page for those who are sick and homebound. Access the live-streaming Mass from our parish website at

www.icbvm.org

OUR PARISH OFFICE IS OPEN WEDNESDAY,
THURSDAY AND FRIDAY, 11AM-3PM. IF YOU CALL
THE PARISH OFFICE AND NO ONE ANSWERS YOUR
CALL, PLEASE LEAVE A DETAILED MESSAGE AND YOUR
CALL WILL BE RETURNED 610-582-2411

PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT THERE WILL BE
NO MASS ON EASTER MONDAY, APRIL 1ST

The first step in helping Immaculate Conception Church assess our greatest strengths and opportunities is to complete the **Disciple Maker Index (DMI) survey today!** Share your perspective now to help strengthen Immaculate Conception Church and better prepare us for the future – as we seek to grow in missionary discipleship! If you have any questions, please contact Deacon James Bardi at jxb21@psu.edu. Please visit this link to take the Next Generation Diocese survey. <https://portal.catholicleaders.org/dmi/survey/byd935>. You can make a paper copy of the survey and place it in the Next Generation Diocese Box located in the narthex.

Order for Christian Initiation OCIA
Expand your knowledge of our Catholic faith or encourage someone who is curious about it to attend. Visit our website at www.icbvm.org for program information or contact the church office.

April 1st Discipleship
Church Office Lower Level Mtg Room, 7-8:30pm

For those grieving the death of a loved one, it can be difficult and overwhelming. Our parish **GRIEF SHARING GROUP** will meet **Tuesday, April 2, from 7-8pm**. For more info or if you plan to attend, call or text Toni 610 404-1389. **ICC Men's Group, Esto Vir, will meet in the meeting room in the lower level of the church office on Saturday April 6th at 8:30 am.** The presentation will be the Eleventh (New Moses, New Covenant) in a series of 12 from the St Paul Center for Biblical Theology on the Bible from Genesis the Jesus. What is the Bible, where did it come from, and what is its purpose? Coffee and donuts will be available starting at 8 am. The meeting will start at 8:30 am and will end at 10 am. A reminder that we will be cleaning the church starting at 10:30 am after the Esto Vir meeting. If you are physically able to help, it would be appreciated. We should be finished by noon. If you can help please go to the church social hall .

The Women's Society thanks all the people who helped make & packaged our delicious Easter Eggs, as well as all those who supported us by purchasing the delicious creations. It was a great success with the proceeds going directly to the church. Wishing all of our parish families a happy, healthy, and blessed Easter. The Women's Society will meet **Wed., April 17th at 7:00 p.m.** in the social hall. Meeting will begin with recitation of the Rosary, followed by a business meeting.

Parish Giving

† SIGN UP FOR ELECTRONIC GIVING †

Through Parish Giving, you are able to make your Sunday Offering, along with special diocesan and other contributions online!

The number of families contributing online has increased dramatically since the onset of the pandemic. Thank you for your commitment to our parish family and its Mission to proclaim the good news of the Gospel!

Won't you join us? It's easy, safe and secure. And YOU have control over your online account.
How?

- † You determine when the money is withdrawn; weekly or monthly
- † Use your Credit/Debit card or your own checking account
- † At any time, you can see your year-to-date contributions
- † Best of all, you don't have to worry about missing a Sunday Collection even if you are away for any reason!

Go to www.icbvm.org and click the Parish Giving link on the lower left-hand side of the home page.

Your generosity to Immaculate Conception is greatly appreciated!

Please keep parishioners Shawn and Michol Kaeser and their family in your thoughts and prayers. Shawn is in end stage kidney failure and is in need of a transplant. Shawn is currently receiving dialysis and is on the transplant list. Please pray that a donor may soon be found. If anyone is interested in learning more about organ donation, please contact Shawn at 610-906-2833 or skaeser1969@icloud.com. The Kaeser family thanks you for your prayers and support. For additional information about becoming a living donor, please call 610-402-8506 or visit www.lvhn.org/livingdonor.

On April 6 & 7, 2024, Our Lady's Missionaries of the Eucharist (OLME) invites you to join us for Divine Mercy Weekend with Bishop Alfred A. Schlert (Bishop of Allentown) and the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist. Doors open at 6:15 pm on Saturday, April 6th, and at 9:15 am on Sunday, April 7th. Registration is required. Visit our website: www.olme.org

Living as a Joyful Daughter of God", a Women's Retreat with Maggie Riggins will be held at the McGlinn Conference and Spirituality Center adjacent to Alvernia College. The Ladies Auxiliary of St. Mary's Kutztown invites you to join them on Saturday, April 27, 2024. The cost for the day is \$30 and includes continental breakfast and lunch. Contact Jane Bennett at 724-920-2032. Registration deadline is April 14.

Dear Padre,

**Where did the idea of an Easter bunny come from?
What about the Easter egg?**

The Easter bunny is really a hare which, according to an Egyptian legend, is a symbol of the moon. Easter falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon that occurs after the twenty-first day of March. Put this together, and we have an Easter bunny.

Early Christians gave new meaning to the Roman proverb *Omne vivum ex ovo*, which means, "All life comes from an egg." A hatching chick represented the risen Christ emerging from the shell of a tomb on Easter morning. Consequently, eggs were prohibited during the Lenten fast and were reintroduced at the Easter meal and also shared as decorated gifts. In 1610, a prayer by Pope Paul V blessed the egg "that it may become a wholesome sustenance to Thy faithful servants, eating in thankfulness to Thee, on account of the Resurrection of Our Lord."

In some parts of the world, children carry baskets and torches and sing Easter carols as they go from place to place. They are given brightly colored eggs to put in their baskets. In other places, eggs are carried to church and blessed by the priests. The eggs are taken home and placed in the center of the table as the main dish at the Easter feast. Visitors to the house during Easter week are offered this sacred food of the resurrection. Happy Easter! ●



SVITLANA MARTYNOVA / SHUTTERSTOCK

The Redemptorists / DearPadre.org

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
April 1	April 2	April 3	April 4	April 5	April 6	April 7
<i>Octave of Easter</i>	<i>Octave of Easter</i>	<i>Octave of Easter</i>	<i>Octave of Easter</i>	<i>Octave of Easter</i>	<i>Octave of Easter</i>	<i>Second Sunday of Easter</i>
Acts 2:14, 22-33 Mt 28:8-15	Acts 2:36-41 Jn 20:11-18	Acts 3:1-10 Lk 24:13-35	Acts 3:11-26 Lk 24:35-48	Acts 4:1-12 Jn 21:1-14	Acts 4:13-21 Mk 16:9-15	<i>(Sunday of Divine Mercy)</i> Acts 4:32-35 1 Jn 5:1-6 Jn 20:19-31

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A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

In the light of the Risen Lord, our sufferings are now transfigured. Where there was death, now there is life. Where there was mourning, now there is consolation. In embracing the cross, Jesus bestowed meaning on our sufferings and now we pray that the benefits of that healing will spread throughout the world.

URBI ET ORBI MESSAGE, ROME, APRIL 4, 2021

**Our Lady's Missionaries of the Eucharist
invites you to join us for**

Divine Mercy Weekend

The Eucharist: the Fire of Divine Mercy and Love

Saturday, April 6:

Holy Hour at 6:30 pm with Evening Prayer/Confessions

Conference at 7:45 pm by Sr. Basil Marie, OP

*"One Heaven for Another: What is the Eucharist and How Does it
Transform Our Lives?"*

Sunday April 7:

Holy Hour at 9:30 am with Divine Mercy Devotions/Rosary

Holy Mass at 11:00 am with

The Most Reverend Alfred A. Schlert,

Bishop of Allentown

Conference at 12:45 pm by Sr. Mary Ignatius, OP

"Entering into the Paschal Mystery at Mass"



Registration is required. Space is limited.

Please go to www.olme.org/events.

Event Location: 640 E. Main Street, Birdsboro, PA 19508

Designer Bag Bingo

We would like to extend our sincerest gratitude to all of the players, volunteers, donors, and sponsors whose support was invaluable in making Designer Bag Bingo a resounding success!

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