

PRAYERS IN THE PEW™ MONTHLY

FAITH IN ACTION CALENDAR / HIGHLIGHTS

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|--------------------------|------------------------|
| SUNDAY APRIL 4 | EASTER SUNDAY |
| SUNDAY APRIL 11 | DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY |
| THURSDAY APRIL 29 | St. Catherine of Siena |

Faith Formation Companion to Prayers in the Pew™

→ MONTHLY SYNOPSIS ←

April 2021 – The month of April begins in the middle of Holy Week, where we contemplate the mysteries of our salvation in a profound way. The rest of the month is a celebration of Easter. Let us adore Christ and embrace the full mystery of the Catholic faith, from time into eternity.

THE ANIMA CHRISTI

Although it is not commonly known, there are more ordained priests in the Church's calendar of saints than any other class of saint. Holiness is not limited to priests, by any means, but there is probably a reason for such uncommon priestly sanctity. Because of their sacramental ministry, priests remain close to the Divine Mysteries all their lives.



St. Ignatius Loyola

Among all the prayers that priests have composed throughout the centuries, one of these prayers stand out. The Spanish priest, St. Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556), was founder of the Jesuit order and a man who spent his life teaching people the value of their souls. His spiritual treatise, *The Spiritual Exercises* is a common manual for retreats even to this day. Ignatius gave his religious order the sacred Name of Jesus because of his intense devotion to the Lord.

St. Ignatius' most famous prayer, the *Anima Christi*, is a marvelous spiritual reflection on the Passion of Christ. The title is Latin, translated as "Soul of Christ", which is the first phrase of the prayer.

ANIMA CHRISTI

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.

Body of Christ, save me.

Blood of Christ, inebriate me.

Water from Christ's side, wash me.

Passion of Christ, strengthen me.

O good Jesus, hear me.

Within Thy wounds hide me.

Suffer me not to be separated from Thee.

From the malicious enemy defend me.

In the hour of my death call me.

And bid me come unto Thee.

*That I may praise Thee with Thy saints
and with Thine angels.*

Forever and ever. Amen.

Notice that the prayer touches on the entire sacred humanity of Jesus: His Body and Soul, as well as the Blood and water that flowed from His side. These elements symbolize the Eucharist and the whole sacramental life of the Church.

The *Anima Christi* is also a very personal prayer to Jesus that anyone can pray with heartfelt devotion. Together with St. Ignatius, we ask Him to save us from the power of the evil one and to lead us through the problems of life to the Kingdom of God, where we hope to share eternity with Him.

This prayer is short enough to be memorized. Let this be your challenge in the Easter Season!

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE

The Easter Season is a time to focus the eyes of our hearts on the Resurrection and remind ourselves that Christ is the Lord of the living and the dead. I challenge you to attend the Holy Week liturgies and meditate on Four Last Things this month and make sure you are prepared for that moment when you are called from this life to the next.

- California State Chaplain, Fr. John Neneman



Daniel 12:2 Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, others to reproach and everlasting disgrace.

Matthew 25:31-33 When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive recompense, according to what he did in the body, whether good or evil.

FAITH FUNDAMENTALS



Four Last Things

The Church always tells us what we need to hear, not always what we want to hear. This is especially true of the doctrine of the Four Last Things: Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell. The Church wants us to think about what comes after this earthly life now before we actually come face to face with these realities at the end of our earthly lives.

Death is a certainty for all mortal beings. It is not just a physical reality but also a spiritual passage. It is that moment when our souls separate from our bodies and our spiritual destiny is fixed for all eternity.

Next comes Judgment. There is the immediate judgment of our souls, which the Church calls the "particular judgment". This is followed by the "general judgment" at the end of time where Christ will come "to judge the living and the dead" as we profess in the Creed.

At the moment of death, each of us will make one of two choices that will determine our eternal fate: either Heaven or Hell. Humans are endowed with free will, and our eternal destiny is fixed by our own choice. Where will you choose to spend eternity?

CALENDAR OF FAITH | APRIL

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| APR 1, Thu | | HOLY THURSDAY (Mass of the Lord's Supper) |
| APR 2, Fri | | GOOD FRIDAY (Liturgy of the Passion) |
| APR 3, Sat | | HOLY SATURDAY (a.m.) and THE EASTER VIGIL (p.m.) |
| APR 4, Sun | | EASTER SUNDAY |
| APR 11, Sun | | DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY |
| APR 21, Wed | | St. Anselm, Bishop and Doctor of the Church |
| APR 25, Sun | | St. Mark, Evangelist |
| APR 28, Wed | | St. Louis Marie de Montfort, Priest |
| APR 29, Thu | | St. Catherine of Siena, Virgin and Doctor of the Church |
| APR 30, Fri | | St. Pius V, Pope |



1037 God predestines no one to go to hell; for this, a willful turning away from God (a mortal sin) is necessary, and persistence in it until the end. In the Eucharistic liturgy and in the daily prayers of her faithful, the Church implores the mercy of God, who does not want "any to perish, but all to come to repentance".

1007 Death is the end of earthly life. Our lives are measured by time, in the course of which we change, grow old and, as with all living beings on earth, death seems like the normal end of life. That aspect of death lends urgency to our lives: remembering our mortality helps us realize that we have only a limited time in which to bring our lives to fulfillment.

THE SCHOOL OF SAINTS



"When once you have departed this life, there is no longer any place for repentance, no way of making satisfaction. Here life is either lost or kept. Let no one be kept back either by his sins or by his years from coming to obtain salvation. To him who still remains in this world there is no repentance that is too late."

~ St. Cyprian of Carthage

"It is not Death that will come to fetch me, it is the good God. Death is no phantom, no horrible specter, as presented in pictures. In the catechism it is stated that death is the separation of soul and body: that is all! Well, I am not afraid of a separation which will unite me to the good God forever."

~ St. Therese of Lisieux

"It is of faith that Heaven exists for the good and Hell for the wicked. Faith teaches that the pains of Hell are eternal, and it also warns us that one single mortal sin suffices to condemn a soul forever because of the infinite malice by which it offends an infinite God." ~ St. Anthony Mary Claret

– FAITH IN ACTION –
FEATURED PROGRAM

GOOD FRIDAY FAMILY PROMOTION

Good Friday is a very special day for all Catholics. As part of the High Holy Days of the Church's Holy Week, we reflect on the Passion and Death of our Lord Jesus which is reflected by the red vestments worn by the celebrants. We are touched in mind and heart with God's infinite love for us. To think that Jesus died on a cross – we are overpowered by God's compassion and mercy.

We encourage all Catholics to attend the Good Friday liturgy as a family instead of as individuals. The Knights of Columbus have a special care for Christians in the Holy Land so the Good Friday Collection for the Holy Land is crucial for helping the Christians living there survive. In spite of Christians being a persecuted minority in the Holy Land, their communities survive but our help is crucial to their survival.