

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

(Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston)

524 Holley Street, St Albans, WV 25177 304-727-3033

www.stfranciswv.org parish@stfranciswv.org www.facebook.com/stfrancisofassisisaintalbens



APRIL 27, 2025

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

OUR MISSION

-In the spirit of Saint Francis, we, the church family, strive to discover Christ's peace in us and in each aspect of creation by welcoming and walking hand in hand with our brothers and sisters on our faith journey-



"IF GOD CAN WORK THROUGH ME, HE CAN WORK THROUGH ANYONE." - SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

A WARM WELCOME TO SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI PARISH!

To register as a new or returning member of the parish, please contact the parish office at 304-727-3033. The parish community will be indeed delighted to have you.

SUNDAYS READINGS P. 1081 YEAR C

*Jesus,
I Trust in You.*



Divine Mercy Sunday is April 27th. The Divine Mercy Chaplet is a Catholic prayer that implores God's mercy, often recited using a rosary, will be said after the 11:00am Mass on Sunday, April 27th

<u>28 Monday</u>	<u>29 Tuesday</u>	<u>30 Wednesday</u>	<u>01 Thursday</u>	<u>02 Friday</u>	<u>03 Saturday</u>	<u>04 Sunday</u>
Acts 4:23-31 Jn 3: 1-8 (2670)	Acts 4: 32-37 Jn 3: 7b-15 (268)	Acts 5: 17-26 Jn 3: 16-21 (269)	Acts 5: 27-33 Jn 3: 31-36(270)	Acts 5: 34-42 Jn 6: 1-15 (271)	1 Cir 15 1-8 Jn 14: 6-14 (561)	Acts 5: 27-32, 40b-41 Rv 5: 11-14 Jn 21: 1-19

PARISH INFORMATION

Date	Mass Time	Mass Intention	Lector	Extraordinary Minister(s)	Altar Servers	Rosary Leader
SAT APR 26	5:00 pm	Intentions of the people of the parish	Fred Heindl	Leslie Huffman (X) Midge Butler (C) Helen Musrock (C)	Volunteers	Midge Butler
SUN APR 27	11:00 am	Fr. Patrick McDonough By Nilda Ramella	Tom Williams	Paul Niedbalski (X) Mary Sanney (C) John Carnell (C)	Ethan Knapp Mairin Knapp Fischer Bramble	Tamara Buel
MON APR 28	—	—	—	—	—	—
TUE APR 29	6:00 pm	Sam Arose By Kim Kieffer	Pat Romanosky	Midge Butler (C)		
WED APR 30	8:15 am	Marie Oxley	School Students	Tom Liberatore	School Students	
THU MAY 01	8:15 am	—	—	—	—	—
FRI MAY 02	6:00 pm	Pete Palmer By Sarah & Jack Palmer	Dawna Kessler	Midge Butler (C)		
SAT MAY 03	5:00 pm	James Venturino By Bob & Mary Sanney	Jacque Switzer	Midge Butler (x) Leslie Huffman (C) Helen Musrock (C)	Volunteers	Helen Musrock
SUN MAY 04	11:00 am	Intentions of the people of the parish	Dawna Kessler	Shaun Lopez (X) Mark Muchow (C) Bill Tabor (C)	Mary Pauley Reagan Buscher Jonah White	Tom Williams

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Saturday

Rosary: 4:30 pm

Mass: 5:00 pm

Sunday

Rosary: 10:30 am

Mass: 11:00 am

Weekdays

Tue: 6:00 pm

Wed: 8:15 am

Thurs: 8:15 am

Fri: 6:00 pm

Adoration

For rental of church facilities (parish center, gym, cafeteria), please contact:

Mary Nichols
304-727-9832

St Francis of Assisi Parish And School Staff

Father Sojan Xavier, Pastor..... (304) 435-4342 / sxavier@dwc.org
 Parish Secretary..... (304) 727-3033 / parish@stfranciswv.org
 Gwen Muchow, Bookkeeper..... (304) 727-3033 / gwenbmuchow@stfranciswv.org
 Nanette Martin, Music Director..... (304) 727-3033 / nmartin@stfranciswv.org
 Sandi Hudson, Religion Director.....(304) 549-4009 / shudson@stfranciswv.org
 Erin Sikora, Principal..... (304) 727-5690 / esikora@sfsww.com
 Kelly Oxley, School Office Manager..... (304)727-5690 / koxley@sfsww.com
 Paul Niedbalski, Knights of Columbus.....(304)545-5100 / ginoooffice@aol.com
 Shaun Lopez, Pastoral Council President.....(681)439-0421 / shnlopez@gmail.com
 Fred Heindl, Property Manager.....(304) 415-5942

Pastoral Availability

Father Sojan is available any time of day or night for spiritual guidance. If you or a family member is sick / homebound & require Communion or Sacrament of Anointing, contact him (304-435-4342) or the parish office.

Marriage Preparation

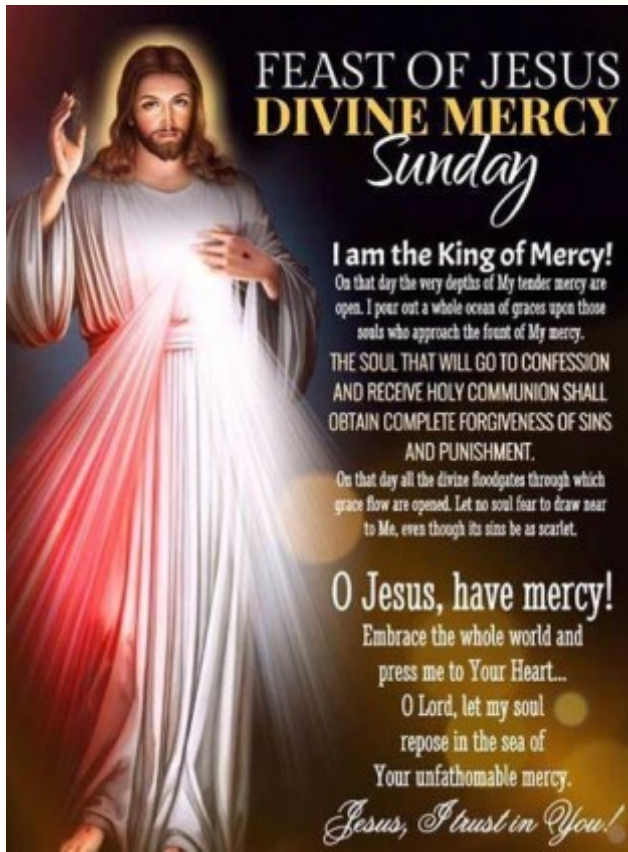
Engaged couples planning to marry at St. Francis should be practicing Catholics & are required to participate in a Marriage Preparation Program. 6 months notice is required. Contact the office to discuss date of marriage.

Order of Christian Initiation

Children ages 7-17& adults who have not been baptized or baptized but not confirmed go through a faith formation program before they are admitted to the sacraments.

Parish Office Hours Tues-Fri 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY—CHRIST'S EXPRESSION OF HIS COMPASSION, FORGIVENESS AND LOVE FOR ALL HUMANITY



On the second Sunday of Easter the Church celebrates the Divine Mercy Sunday. It is the celebration of the profound mystery of Divine Mercy. Instituted by Pope St. John Paul II in the year 2000, Divine Mercy Sunday draws us deeper into the heart of the risen Christ—into the very depths of His compassion, forgiveness, and love for all humanity.

In today's Gospel, we encounter the risen Jesus appearing to His disciples. He comes not with rebuke or reproach, even though they had abandoned Him during His Passion. Instead, His first words are: "Peace be with you." These are not just comforting words; they are words that bring healing to wounded hearts, words that restore broken relationships, and words that reveal the very nature of God—Mercy.

Jesus then shows them His hands and His side—the wounds of the Crucified, now glorified. These wounds are not erased in the Resurrection; they remain as eternal signs of His mercy. They are the proof of a love that went to the very end, a love that forgives, heals, and restores.

And then He breathes on them and says, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven." This is a pivotal moment—the institution of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Divine Mercy is not abstract.

It is real, tangible, and sacramental. Jesus entrusts His Church with the ministry of mercy—to forgive, to reconcile, to heal.

Then we meet Thomas—the doubter, the one who demands proof. How many of us have been like Thomas? Wounded by life, confused by suffering, hesitant to believe? But notice what Jesus does: He meets Thomas where he is. He doesn't condemn him. He invites him: "Put your finger here... do not be unbelieving, but believe." And Thomas responds with one of the most powerful declarations of faith in Scripture: "My Lord and my God!"

This is Divine Mercy: A God who meets us in our doubts, who enters our locked rooms of fear, and who patiently draws us into faith. Mercy is not weakness. Mercy is God's power to break through our walls, to raise us from sin, and to restore us to life.

So, what does this mean for us?

- **Receive His Mercy:** Many carry guilt, shame, or burdens from the past. Divine Mercy Sunday is a reminder that no sin is greater than God's mercy. Come to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Let Him breathe peace into your soul.
- **Be an Instrument of Mercy:** Just as we receive mercy, we are called to give it. Who in your life needs forgiveness? Whom do you need to reconcile with? Mercy isn't just a devotion—it's a way of life.
- **Trust in Jesus:** The image of Divine Mercy bears the words: "Jesus, I trust in You." In times of fear, anxiety, or trial, repeat this prayer. Let it become the anchor of your heart.

Dear parish family, today we stand with the disciples in the upper room. We see the wounds of Christ, we hear His words of peace, and we receive His Spirit. Let us echo the words of Thomas, not in doubt, but in deep faith and trust: "My Lord and my God!" And may the mercy we receive today transform us, so that we may become witnesses of that mercy to the world.

Jesus, I trust in You. Amen.

THE DIVINE MERCY DEVOTION



The **Divine Mercy devotion** is a Catholic spiritual practice centered on the infinite mercy of God, revealed through **Jesus Christ** to a humble Polish nun, **Saint Faustina Kowalska**. This devotion has since become one of the most beloved expressions of modern Catholic spirituality, especially in light of the 20th century's global suffering and moral confusion.

Origin and Inspiration: The roots of the Divine

Mercy devotion trace back to the 1930s in **Kraków, Poland**, where **Sister Faustina Kowalska** of the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy received mystical visions and messages from Jesus. In her **spiritual diary**, now known as "*Diary: Divine Mercy in My Soul*", she recorded these revelations at Jesus' command. According to her writings, Jesus appeared to her in a radiant vision, clothed in white, with rays of **red and pale light** streaming from His Heart. These rays symbolized the blood and water which gushed forth from His side at the crucifixion — representing **Mercy, Baptism**, and the **Eucharist**. Jesus said to her: "*Paint an image according to the pattern you see, with the signature: 'Jesus, I trust in You.'*" I desire that this image be venerated throughout the world."

The Message of Divine Mercy: At the heart of this devotion is a message of **trust in God's mercy** and the call to be **merciful to others**. The message can be summed up in three main points:

1. **Ask for Mercy** – through prayer, confession, and the Eucharist.
2. **Be Merciful** – by showing love and forgiveness to others.
3. **Completely Trust in Jesus** – the source of all mercy.

Jesus made it clear to Faustina that **mankind will not have peace until it turns with trust to His mercy**.

Devotional practices are associated with the Divine Mercy devotion:

- **The Divine Mercy Image** – As revealed to Faustina, the image of Jesus with red and white rays and the inscription "Jesus, I trust in You."

- **The Divine Mercy Chaplet** – A powerful prayer given to Faustina to be recited using ordinary rosary beads, imploring God's mercy on the world.
- **The Hour of Mercy (3:00 PM)** – The hour Jesus died on the cross. He asked for special reflection and prayer at this time.
- **The Novena to Divine Mercy** – A nine-day prayer beginning on **Good Friday**, leading up to Divine Mercy Sunday.

Institution of the Feast of Divine Mercy: One of Jesus' most urgent requests to Faustina was the establishment of a **Feast of Mercy**: "*I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and shelter for all souls... On that day, the very depths of My tender mercy are open.*" (Diary 699). After years of theological investigation and the canonization of Saint Faustina by **Pope John Paul II**, the feast was officially instituted.

- **Divine Mercy Sunday** is celebrated on the **Second Sunday of Easter**, the first Sunday after Easter.
- It was formally established by **Pope John Paul II on April 30, 2000**, during Faustina's canonization **Mass**.
- The Pope declared that the Second Sunday of Easter would henceforth be known as **Divine Mercy Sunday** for the Universal Church.

The Importance and Impact: The Divine Mercy devotion is deeply relevant in our time, marked by war, suffering, division, and spiritual confusion. It speaks to the **universal need for forgiveness, hope, and healing**, regardless of one's past. It emphasizes God's **loving desire to save souls**, not to condemn them. Pope John Paul II, a devout promoter of the Divine Mercy message, saw it as central to his pontificate, stating: "*There is nothing that man needs more than Divine Mercy.*" He passed away on the eve of **Divine Mercy Sunday** in 2005, further affirming his connection to this spiritual mission.

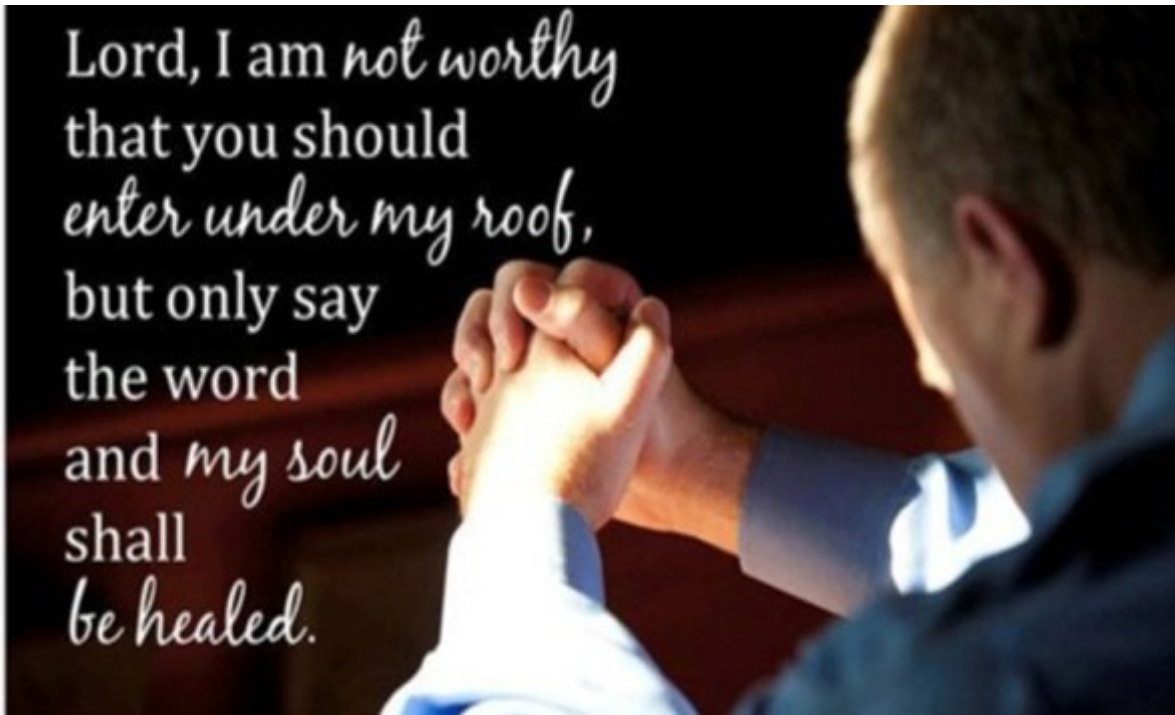
Conclusion: The Divine Mercy devotion is not just a set of prayers or images; it is a **way of life**, centered on **God's endless mercy** and our call to **reflect that mercy** to others. It brings hope to the broken, peace to the suffering, and a clear path to grace for all souls, especially those most in need of God's mercy. As Jesus promised to Saint Faustina:

"The greater the sinner, the greater the right he has to My mercy."

CATECHETICAL CORNER

COMMUNION THE PRAYER

“LORD, I AM NOT WORTHY” BEFORE HOLY COMMUNION



Before receiving Holy Communion, we humbly pray: “*Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.*” This prayer is deeply significant, as it expresses both our unworthiness and our faith in Christ’s healing power. It is a direct reference to the words of the **Roman centurion** in Matthew 8:5-13.

The Centurion’s Faith: A Model for Us:

In the Gospel, a Roman centuri-

on—an officer of the occupying army—approaches Jesus with a plea: “*Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, suffering dreadfully.*” Jesus responds, “*I will come and heal him.*” However, the centurion, recognizing Jesus’ authority, humbly replies: “*Lord, I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof; only say the word and my servant will be healed.*” (Matthew 8:8)

Jesus marvels at his faith, saying, “*Amen, I say to you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith.*” The centurion, despite his high status, acknowledges his unworthiness and trusts completely in Jesus’ power.

Our Own Approach to Holy Communion: Like the centurion, we, too, are unworthy to receive Jesus under the “roof” of our soul. We are sinners, and God is infinitely holy. Yet, just as Jesus did not turn away from the centurion, He does not turn away from us. Instead, He calls us to Himself and offers us the gift of His very Body and Blood in the Eucharist.

This prayer teaches us two key attitudes we should have when approaching Communion:

1. Humility: We recognize that we are not entitled to receive Christ—we are unworthy. Our sins, weaknesses, and failings make us unfit to welcome the Lord into our hearts. Yet, in His mercy, He invites us to His banquet.

2. Trust in Jesus’ Healing Power: Like the centurion who believed Jesus could heal from a distance, we trust that Jesus can heal the wounds of our souls when we receive Him in the Eucharist. Communion is not just a ritual—it is an encounter with the Divine Physician, who strengthens, cleanses, and renews us.

The Eucharist: Jesus, the Most Intimate Guest of Our Soul: When we receive Holy Communion, Jesus enters into the depths of our being. He is not a distant God; He becomes the most intimate guest of our soul. Just as He healed the centurion’s servant with a word, He heals us—restoring our hearts, deepening our love for Him, and giving us the grace to follow Him more faithfully.

Thus, as we pray, “*Lord, I am not worthy,*” let us do so with deep humility and great confidence, knowing that Christ comes to heal us and make us whole.

NEWS AND UPDATES



Holy Thursday—
Washing of the Feet



Youth Group re-enacted the Stations of the Cross on Good Friday



Welcome into the Church: Shirde Wartenburg II, Bethany Pauley, Samantha Velazques and Giovanna Velazques



NEWS AND UPDATES



Dear Parish Family, as we reflect on the beauty and grace of our Holy Week and Easter celebrations, I want to extend my deepest and most heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you for your whole-hearted participation and generous contributions.

The liturgies we shared were deeply moving and spiritually enriching—and they were made possible by so many of you offering your time, talents, and hearts in service to our parish community.

A special word of appreciation goes to our **choir**, whose music lifted our spirits and helped lead us in deeper prayer throughout the Triduum. To the **priests who assisted with confessions**, thank you for being faithful instruments of God's mercy and healing.

I am especially grateful to our **Youth Director and youth team**, and to the young people who so prayerfully and powerfully presented the **Live Stations of the Cross**. Your re-enactment touched many hearts and brought the Passion of Christ vividly to life.

A sincere thank you to **Mary Nichols** and **Mary Dilley**, whose creativity and care in decorating the church helped create a sacred and beautiful space for worship. Every detail—from flowers to liturgical décor—reflected your love for the Church.

To **Denny Kessler** and our devoted **altar servers**, thank you for your reverent and faithful service at the altar. To **Tom Liberatore** and **Pat Romanosky**, who coordinated the **Lectors and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion**, your behind-the-scenes efforts ensured everything flowed with grace and dignity. Our **ushers and greeters** also deserve heartfelt thanks for their warm welcome and assistance throughout the celebrations.

I cannot forget **Tamara Buel's Ballet Dancers** who gave a beautiful performance at the beginning of Easter Sunday Mass. Thank you girls.

A very special thank you to **Liz Liberatore**, who worked tirelessly to create the **worship aids and service materials** that helped guide us through each liturgy with clarity and prayerful focus.

And of course, to the **countless others**—those whose names may not be listed here but who gave of themselves in so many generous ways—please know how truly grateful I am. Whether your role was seen or unseen, large or small, your contribution helped make our celebration of the Paschal Mystery grace-filled and inspiring.

May the joy of the Risen Christ continue to fill your hearts and homes. May God bless you abundantly for all you have given and for the spirit of love and unity that shines so brightly in our parish.

With gratitude and Easter joy,
Fr. Sojan Xavier

CHURCH NURSERY

We will now have a nursery for our 11am mass. If you have a child that is 5 or younger (not started kindergarten yet) you may drop them off before mass and pick them up after. It will be 1 adult and 1 teen helper. It will be in the pre-school class near the water fountains. Please see Jennifer Lopez if you would like to be an adult volunteer.

PLEASE NOTE

Kindly note that the main gate to the church premises will remain closed on school days (Monday to Friday) from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm for everyone's safety and security.

However, the walk-in gate will remain open during this time. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation.

BLESSING BOX

St. Francis Blessing Box is located at the corner of 6th Avenue and Park Street. Your donation is a gift to someone in need. A blue bin has been placed in the back of church to collect donated items. Items greatly needed are canned goods, noodles, peanut butter, jelly, bread, and soups



"Lord, hold our troops in Your loving hands, especially those associated with St Francis of Assisi parish."

Daniel Huffman

-Uphold them in your prayers-

David DeLuca, Jay Dlugos, Suzanne Farley, Nona Fields, Jo Fletcher, Debbie Flinger, Liz Gadd, Barbara George, Alaina Rae Gilbert, Robin Gothard, Aubrie Hebb, Donna Hebb, Nancy Hillen, Diane Holley-Brown, Jane Howley, Max Huck, Kenny Huck, Virgil Huck, Bud Humphreys, Carmelina Kessler, Dawna Kessler, Tooter Kirk, Barbara Lambert, Larry Lerosé, Madison Lopez, Susan Lopez, Nanette Martin, Sue Martin, Brent Marsteller, Mary McNeely, Joe McQuaide, Lillian Matheny, Kim McBurney, Mario Mendez, Jack Myatt, Susan Robinson, Diana Rossi, Patricia Ruddle, Scarlett (child), Lillian Schilling, Michael Scott, Peggy Shelton, Matt Sowers, Becky Vannatter Smith, Elizabeth Stonestreet, Joseph Swanson, Valerie Tabit, Pat Tabor, Colleen Ullmer, Joyce Weiskircher, Roberta VanHorn, Pat Vannatter, Robbie Vannatter, Barbara Yeager, Jack Myatt, Gordon Holbrook, Kraig Stutes, Allison Jones, Ralph Holland, Darlene Holland

Immediate Prayer needs:

Chad Wilbanks	Anna Ng	Mary Sanney
Nanette Martin	John Carnell	Michele Stugeon
Alaina Rae Gilbert	Josephine Fletcher	Patty Young
Rick Robinson	Matt Sowers	Peggy Shelton
Terry DeLuca	Dave Lucas	
Margaret McEvoy	Pearl Thompson	

NEWS AND UPDATES

Sharing our Treasure

Listed below are collections for April 18 - April 20, 2025

Collection for Church Operation.....	\$5,771.00
School.....	70.00
Diocese.....	282.00
Votive Candles.....	105.00
Easter Flowers.....	5.00
Total.....	\$6,233.00

Weekly Mass Attendance
Good Fri—92 Sat —80 Sun —204
Total —376



Pope Francis
1936-2025

We join the world in mourning the passing of our beloved Holy Father, Pope Francis. May his Soul Rest in Peace.

"God loves us as we are: no sin, fault or mistake can make Him change His mind. ~Pope Francis

Collections for Church Operations



Collections for Church Operations as of April 20, 2025



Christ's Kitchen Food Pantry
 Collection: 2nd weekend of each month but accepted any time.
The Pantry is in need of Peanut Butter, Vienna Sausages, Pop Tarts, Bags of Noodles and Tea Bags.
 Thank you for your unwavering support of this critical outreach!

Adoration

Friday, May 2, 12 pm—6:00pm



"Look upon the hour of adoration assigned to you as an hour in paradise".

If you would like to participate in Adoration on Friday's, please contact Pat Tabor at 304-552-8614

Safe Environment Reporting Statement

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston maintains an Office of Safe Environment in accordance with the USCCB's Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. **To Report Suspected Cases of Sexual Abuse of Children:** The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston encourages reporting to civil authorities first and foremost if a crime has been committed. We also encourage utilizing www.reportbishopabuse.org to make a report about any bishop in the U.S. If you have reason to believe that a bishop has engaged in sexual misconduct, please contact civil authorities in the applicable jurisdiction and visit www.reportbishopabuse.org. **To Report to Civil Authorities:** Contact your local law enforcement; numbers will vary based on your location. If you believe someone is in immediate danger, call 911. **To confidentially report any incidence of suspected child abuse or neglect, including sexual abuse,** contact the West Virginia Bureau for Children and Families' Child Protective Services by calling the Child Abuse Hotline at 800.352.6513. **To Report to Diocesan Authorities:** In addition to civil authorities, the diocese encourages reporting to the appropriate church authorities. **To report suspected cases of sexual abuse of children by personnel of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to the Diocese,** contact one of the following designees at 1.888.434.6237 or 304.233.0880: Mr. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Mr. Tim Bishop, ext. 353; Sr. Martha Gomez, ext. 264. Or you may call Rev. Don Higgs, 304.685.2367, the Office of Safe Environment at 304.230.1504, or Victims Assistance Coordinator Erin McFarland at 304.559.6742. In addition to the methods listed above for reporting sexual abuse, the Diocese also has partnered with Navex Global to offer the **EthicsPoint** platform to report other, additional concerns, such as suspected financial, professional, and personal misconduct of a priest, deacon, religious, or lay employee of the Diocese or any Catholic parish or school in West Virginia. The EthicsPoint platform can be accessed via www.dwc.org, under "Accountability", then "Report Misconduct" or by calling 844.723.8381. EthicsPoint is a third-party reporting system that reports to civil authorities where applicable and Diocesan authorities, and the identity of the person reporting is protected.