



S.M.A.R.T. NEWS

Saint Mary's Active Religious Teens
Saint Mary's Parish Iowa City, Iowa APRIL 2018
Web Site: <http://youth.icstmary.org>



Dear Friends,

After living what he felt was a "decent" life, the man's time on earth came to an end. The first thing he remembered was sitting on a bench in the waiting room of what he thought to be a court house.

The doors opened, and the man was instructed to come in and have a seat by the defense table. As the man looked around, he saw the "prosecutor." He was a villainous looking person who snarled as he stared at the man. He definitely was the most evil-looking person the man have ever seen.

The man sat down and looked to his left. There sat his attorney - a kind and gentle-looking man whose appearance seemed so familiar; he felt he knew Him.

The corner door flew open and there appeared the judge in full flowing robes. He commanded an awesome presence as he moved across the room. The man couldn't take his eyes off of him. As the judge took his seat behind the bench, he said, *"Let us begin."*

The prosecutor rose and said, *"My name is Satan, and I am here to show you why this man belongs in hell."* He proceeded to tell of lies that the man told, things that he stole, and times when he cheated others. Satan told of other horrible actions in the man's life, and the more he spoke, the further down in his seat the man sank. He was so embarrassed that he couldn't look at anyone - even his own attorney - as the devil told of sins that even the man had completely forgotten about. As upset as the man was at Satan for telling all these things about him, he was equally upset at his attorney who sat there silently not offering any form of defense at all. He knew he had been guilty of those things, but he had done SOME good in his life - couldn't that at least equal out PART of the harm he'd done?

Satan finished with a fury and said, *"This man belongs in hell, he is guilty of all that I have charged, and there is not a person who can prove otherwise."*

When it was His turn, the man's attorney first asked if He might approach the bench. The judge allowed this over the strong objection of Satan and beckoned him to come forward. As the attorney got up and started walking, the man was able to see his attorney in his full splendor and majesty. He realized then why his attorney seemed so familiar - this was Jesus representing him, his Lord and his Savior.

Jesus stopped at the bench and softly said to the Judge, *"Hi, Dad,"* and then he turned to address the court.

"Satan was correct in saying that this man had sinned. I won't deny any of these allegations. And, yes, the wage of sin is death, and this man deserves to be punished."

Jesus took a deep breath and turned to His Father with outstretched arms and proclaimed, *"However, I died on the cross so that this person might have eternal life, and he has accepted me as his Savior, so he is mine."*

The Lord continued with, *"His name is written in the book of life and no one can snatch him from me. This man is not to be given justice, but rather mercy."* As Jesus sat down, He quietly paused, looked at his Father and said, *"There is nothing else that needs to be done. I've done it all."*

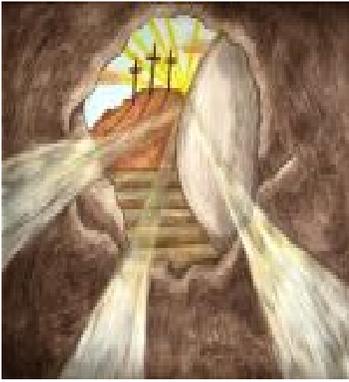
The Judge lifted His mighty hand and slammed the gavel down. The following words bellowed from His lips... *"This man is free. The penalty for him has already been paid in full. Case dismissed."*

As the Lord led the man away, Satan could be heard ranting and raving, *"I won't give up, I will win the next one."*

The man, in tears of gratitude, turned and asked Jesus, *"Have you ever lost a case?"*

Christ lovingly smiled and said, *"Everyone that has come to Me and asked Me to represent them, has received the same verdict as you: "PAID IN FULL."*

God proves His love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8



LIVES OF THE SAINTS

By Jacinta Hamilton

Junior - Homeschooled

April 1st is when we will celebrate Easter this year, the Resurrection of Jesus from His death on the cross. The historical and spiritual significance of this event cannot be overstated. While the secular Easter is full of Peeps chicks, fluffy bunnies, and plastic eggs, the origin of the Feast day is so much more.

In the days of the Jewish people, they were given the promise of a Messiah, someone who would heal our broken world of the sin that had befallen it.

This was necessary because Adam said no to God and yes to his own pride. For hundreds of years the Jews waited and prepared their lives for this time. They messed up a lot on the way but fortunately for us that did not change God's plan, it only made it more evident and necessary.

Jesus Christ, the Messiah, was born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem. Though He was fully human like us, He was fully God, eternal and perfect. From humble beginnings came forth greatness and it was beyond anything anyone could have imagined.

The plan of the Messiah all along was to heal us of our transgressions. How that would exactly happen was not understood by the people that lived during the time of Jesus. They wanted someone on a white horse to come in and sweep them off their feet. Eliminate all the earthly enemies of the Jews and rule over them as an invincible king. No mistaking that He *was* a king, Jesus told the people many times that His kingdom was not of this world.

Why would God choose to suffer terribly and die the most horrendous form of death? Why was *this* the way he would heal us of our transgressions? What did this have to do with Resurrection? Jesus gave us the most perfect example of suffering when His human body was afflicted with pain and His spirit was burdened with the torture of our sins toward God. That's why, He did it, so we didn't have to. If you think of going to Confession as a sacrifice it is the least we can do in comparison to the extreme price paid for us with the shedding of the innocent blood of God.

But it didn't end here. Death did not have the last laugh because that was not the fullness of the fulfillment. After three days of lying in a sealed tomb Jesus, because He is not only man but also fully God, rose from the dead. Let me say that again, after being *totally* dead for three days Jesus Christ rose from the dead alive and glorified. He defeated sin and the uncertainty of death, because He opened up the gates of Heaven and He gave us the means to attain Heaven while He was on earth. That means is the Catholic Church which has been an unbroken line for 2000 years.

Should the Apostles have known that Jesus was going to rise after being dead for three days. Yes and no, the miracle in itself was beyond the imagination of any person and was totally impossible for a human. Jesus *was* fully human, but He *was* fully God. In the normal scope of things this was crazy, but it had been hinted from Christianity's earliest days. The prophets foretold it in the Old Testament and Jesus Himself explicitly talked of it. One of these accounts was when Jesus told the people and His Apostles that no sign would be given them except the sign of Jonah. It makes sense for us here now, living 2000 years after the miracle of the Resurrection unfolded. But the fact that Jesus' triumph over sin and death and the opening of the gates of Heaven had a parallel with Jonah's three days time in the belly of a whale and that Jonah was the precursor of the Messiah was not understood until after the Resurrection. Jesus did not directly tell His Apostles but told them in a clear enough way that when the time came that He would be crucified and dead they would remember what He had said and come to the realization on their own accord that this was all very real and miraculous. Would you have immediately believed if the Messiah told you that the master plan of God was to be tortured, die, and then rise from the dead after three days of being completely dead? This is why Jesus prepared His Apostles the way He did, so that ultimately, they would have Jesus' words to look back on. Jesus knew the events before they unfolded, he was able to fulfill the prophecies, and this is yet another way that He was telling the Apostles that He is God.

- Continued -

The miracle of the Resurrection and the miraculous course of events linked to it changed history and always deserve a closer look. A miracle is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as a “marvelous event due to some supernatural agency”. That is most definitely the Resurrection. It broke the barriers of natural phenomena, but it was a miracle for our spiritual welfare not shock value.

The Resurrection has been subject to assaults from every side which have been *thoroughly* and *accurately* refuted for the last 2000 years. The attacks appear in numerous shapes and forms. There is no trickery involved on the part of the Catholic Church and as with every single heresy that the Church has been subject to since her institution, the formula of the heresy is the same and the heresy itself is the same but presented in a different form to appeal to people of a certain time. This shouldn't scare us because for every good thing, evil wants to fight back. We can always find answers and should not be afraid by what we don't know. Ignorance is not bliss, but all is not lost because we *must* be willing to seek out the answers that the Catholic Church has put forward for our formation. Our Catholic Faith is a priceless gift and is worth fighting for, we must hold on to it.

As Catholics, we can focus on the *fact* that Jesus rose from the dead on Easter Sunday to raise *us* up from the dead state of sin in our souls. Easter which takes place in spring, symbolizes the restoration of our souls by the very nature of the season itself with the rebirth of everything that lives. Coincidence, I think not. :)

Easter, the Resurrection of Jesus should center us around the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass first and foremost because around this central event was when the Sacrament was initiated. Once our priorities are in check and we understand the significance of Easter, go enjoy a Peep and have an Easter egg hunt and know you've been saved by a God who *really* loves you!

Happy Easter!

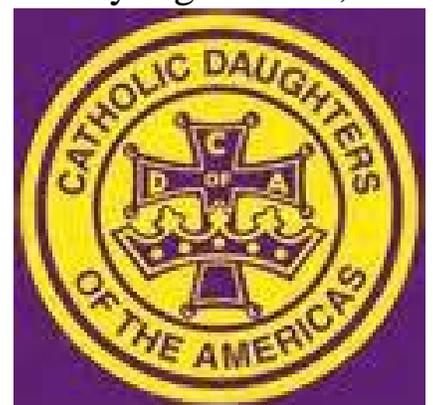


ATTENTION
HIGH SCHOOL
SENIOR GIRLS!

CATHOLIC DAUGHTER SCHOLARSHIP

The Catholic Daughters of Americas Court Craigie #94 of Iowa City will award a **scholarship of \$500** for the 2018-2019 college/university years. The applicant must be a practicing Catholic senior girl graduating from high school this year (2018) and be a member of one of these parishes: St Mary's, St Patrick's or St Wenceslaus, Iowa City; St. Thomas More, Coralville, St Joseph's Hills; St. Mary's Oxford; of St. Peter's, Cosgrove. She must be a graduate from a Johnson County high school, or an Accredited Home School.

Scholarship money will be applied to tuition of any two year or four year college or university or vocational school. **Deadline for submitting applications is April 30.** Applications can be obtained from your parish office.





**ATTENTION GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL
ST.MARY'S SENIORS FROM CITY HIGH, REGINA,
WEST HIGH, WEST BRANCH,
CLEAR CREEK AMANA!!!**

Each year, a special graduation breakfast is served at St. Mary's in honor of our high school graduates. All graduating high school seniors from St. Mary's Parish and their parents are invited. Please RSVP to the office at 337-4314 if you are planning to attend.

WHEN: Friday May 11th, 2018 7AM
WHERE: St. Mary's Parish Hall



**AND WHILE WE'RE ON THE SUBJECT OF
YOUR FUTURE...**



Have you ever considered a call to the priesthood or religious life? It truly is a privilege to communicate the presence of God to people through the sacraments.

For help in discerning, call Fr. Thom Hennen, Fr. Jeff Belger, Sister Agnes, or Patti



The harvest is plenty, but laborers are few. Come with me into the fields. (Matthew 9:37)



DO YOU LIKE TO COOK?

On the third Thursday of every month, join other youth from each high school and junior high as we collaborate together in St. Mary's parish hall and make four or five casseroles and cookies for the Free Lunch program. This month's "cooking class" will take place on Thursday, April 19th from 3:30-4:30PM. The casseroles created will be served the next day, Friday, April 20th, at the Free Lunch program. All youth are invited to participate!



PARISH SPRING CLEANING DAY

Youth helpers are needed to assist
with cleaning the inside and outside of St. Mary's Church.

With a lot of help, it won't take long
to get our spiritual home looking even more pristine! 😊

Youth workers would certainly be appreciated! 😊 😊

WHEN: WATCH THE BULLETIN!

TIME: 8:00AM- Noon

WHERE: At the church!



UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL

April/May	PARISH SPRING CLEANING	8:00AM - Noon
April 6 th	Holy Hour for Vocations – in the church after 12:10PM Mass	
April 11 th	City High Cathedral Concert	7:30PM
April 19 th	Casserole-Making for Free Lunch	4:00-5:00PM
April 30 th	Deadline for Catholic Daughters Scholarship	

MAY

May 4 th	Holy Hour for Vocations - in the church after 12:10PM Mass	
May 11 th	High School Graduation Breakfast	7:00AM
May 13 th	Mother's Day (kisses and hugs to all Mom's)	
May 17 th	Casserole-Making for Free Lunch	4-5PM
May 19/20	Graduation Blessing at all Masses	
MAY-JUNE	Graduations (City High, West High, Regina, West Branch, West Liberty, Tiffin)	



NIGHTFEVER



NIGHTFEVER

Special

— IOWA CITY —

Saturday, April 28, 2018

5:00 pm Holy Mass

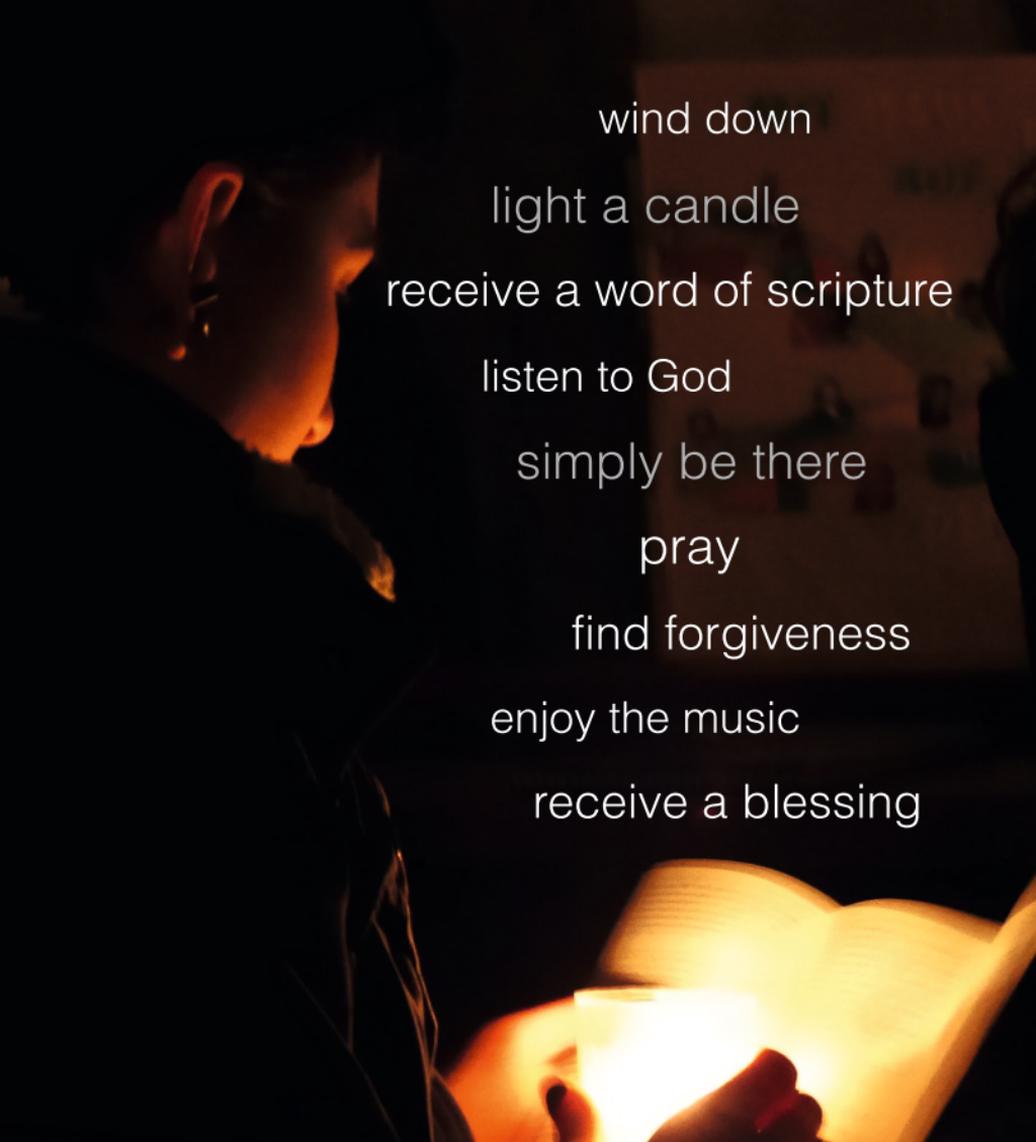
6:30 – 10:00 pm Nightfever

Prayer, Music, Conversation

10:00 pm Night Prayer

St. Mary of the Visitation Catholic Church
302 E. Jefferson St. Iowa City, IA 52245

www.nightfever.org

A person is shown in profile, reading an open book. The scene is dimly lit, with the primary light source being a candle held in their hand, which casts a warm, golden glow on the pages and their face. The background is dark, with some faint, out-of-focus lights.

wind down
light a candle
receive a word of scripture
listen to God
simply be there
pray
find forgiveness
enjoy the music
receive a blessing

You are invited!
Feel free to come and leave as you want!
www.nightfever.org

APRIL 1, 2018



EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD



ACTS 10:34A, 37-43

PSALM 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23

COLOSSIANS 3:1-4 OR 1 CORINTHIANS 5:6B-8

VICTIMAE PASCHALI LAUDES

JOHN 20:1-9 OR LUKE 24:13-35

REFLECTION

We read the Gospel stories already knowing the ending. We listen to the Passion narrative during Mass on Palm Sunday and during the liturgy on Good Friday and barely bat an eye as Jesus endures unimaginable betrayal, torture, and death . . . and then we stop reading just as he is placed in the tomb. We catch the disciples in their lowest, most desperate moment—the moment they have come face-to-face with the reality that the one in whom they have placed their trust for the last three years has been killed. The finality of it all has begun to set in. Their hope is gone. They are scared of what comes next. But for us as readers, somehow this drama isn't so . . . well, *dramatic*. Why? Because we know how the story ends. Jesus rises from the dead! Life triumphs over death! Love wins! But is it really the end of the story?

ACTION

As Catholics, we believe that the Paschal Mystery—the life, Death, and Resurrection of Christ—is still at work in our lives today. Not just the Resurrection part, but the life (process) and the death (pain). We look around and see many places in our world that yearn for resurrection. We see astronomical poverty rates, people displaced by the effects of climate change, families separated by divorce and unjust immigration laws, friends who have turned to self-harm in the midst of their helpless despair. So even after we have entered the empty tomb with Mary Magdalene, Peter, and the beloved disciple in today's Gospel reading, it can be hard for us to believe. "They did not yet understand the scripture that he had to rise from the dead" (John 20:9). In many ways, we don't understand either. But it's true—Christ *had* to rise from the dead . . . and so do we! We are charged with sharing the Good News with a broken world. We become agents of change—heralds of the Resurrection. We continue writing the Gospel story in our day, and in our time. Alleluia!

JOURNALING QUESTIONS

- When have you experienced the Paschal Mystery? How has God turned death into resurrection for you?
- How might God be inviting you to write the Gospel story in your life or the lives of others this week?

APRIL 8, 2018



SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

SUNDAY OF DIVINE MERCY



ACTS 4:32-35

PSALM 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24

1 JOHN 5:1-6

JOHN 20:19-31

REFLECTION

This Sunday, we hear about “doubting Thomas.” Poor Thomas—he tends to be remembered this way, which seems a little unfair. When Peter and John first heard that Christ had risen, they had to run to the tomb to see for themselves. We don’t call them “doubting” for that, do we? According to the Gospel account, a full week had passed between Thomas hearing about the Resurrection and actually seeing the Risen Christ for himself. What was he still doing hanging around? If people told you something so unbelievable, how long would you wait in order to see if it were true? I find part of the doubting Thomas story to be really challenging. Jesus Christ says, “Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed” (v. 29). This makes it sound like we are meant to never doubt or seek evidence. But there is a tension between a faith that follows blindly, and a faith that follows while still questioning. Sometimes our Christian faith tells us things that seem too good to be true. It is natural to be suspicious; to doubt what we can’t see or hear or touch. But that is what is so powerful about faith. Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed. The ability to believe, to trust something that we can’t verify ourselves, is very hard.

ACTION

Can you recall a time when somebody told you something that was too good to be true? When you find yourself doubting or asking questions of faith, ask yourself: How these questions could be leading me more deeply into the mystery of God? If you stay with your questions and pray your questions, then like Thomas, you will touch the wounds of Christ. Your questions may lead you to doubt and pain. However, in the end, faith tells us that like Thomas, we will proclaim, “My Lord and my God” (John 20:28). Alleluia!

JOURNALING QUESTIONS

- What sort of doubts or questions do you have when it comes to faith?
- To whom could you bring these questions? Do you really want to hear their answers?