

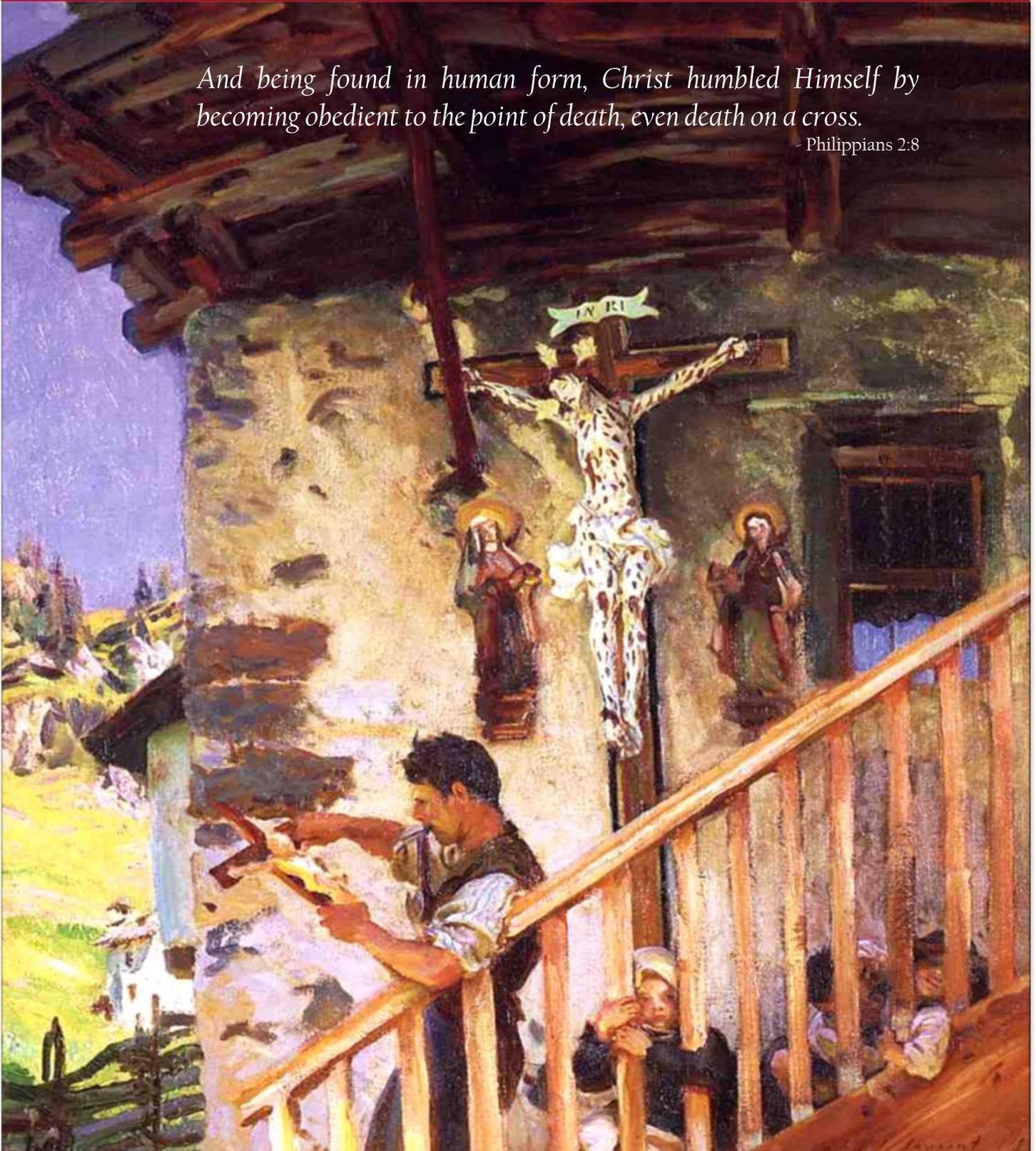


WITTENBERG WAY

April 2023

And being found in human form, Christ humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

- Philippians 2:8



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Dear Grace Family,

We have entered the holiest time of year for Christ's Church. It's the thing we have been preparing for during the season of Lent. The big finale. Or in the words of the 1986 rock song by the awful band, Europe, it's "the final countdown." I've included a "what to expect" during Holy Week in this edition because I realize that not everyone grew up using the church calendar, so these services may be foreign to some. Suffice it to say, we will pray a lot, praise a lot, hear a lot of scripture read, and contemplate the final days of our Lord that led to Him securing our salvation in a totally unexpected way.

I recently heard someone say that Christ's Kingdom is an upside-down kingdom where the last is first, the humble are honored, and the undeserving are given the same love and acceptance as everyone else. In other words, it's the polar opposite of how we expect kings and kingdoms to operate.

The American painter, John Singer Sargent, was often hired to paint portraits of the rich and famous of his day, but in his 1915 watercolor *Tyrolean Crucifix*, (on the front cover), we see a carpenter from a small region of the Austrian Alps carving a crucifix. His child watches on the steps. Above is another much larger crucifix, Christ looking down humbly, mercifully on this everyday domestic scene. It's beautiful, but also pretty common and ordinary looking. I share this because this is also true of our Lord and the ministry He has given us at Grace Lutheran Church. As we move through Lent and into Holy Week and Easter, we see our humble, merciful Christ, tempted just like us, riding on a simple donkey, eating simple meals with his friends, and dying as a common criminal. When He dies, He's so poor He's

buried in a borrowed tomb. And even after He rises from the dead, if you were in the garden by that tomb, you might miss him if you blinked. Apparently, He looked just like the gardener.

It's not exactly the sort of drama and excitement we have come to expect from contemporary films with heroes that seem impervious to bullets. I'm talking about you, John Wick! Even in the first century, Jews found this Good News scandalous and the Greek's pure foolishness (1 Cor 1:22ff). To be frank, the Holy Week and Easter Services won't look so different from the rest of the year. And even in 2023, they don't look or sound so different than they would have in the 3rd or 4th centuries. Words from the Bible are read and proclaimed by rather ordinary men (wearing white medieval bathrobes called albs). Water, bread, and wine are used as the means of God's effective grace. Yet it is through these very ordinary and unexpected means that our extraordinary King makes His entry for the forgiveness, life, and salvation of sinners like you and me.

The Good News is that God is not playing a game of hide and seek with His grace. Despite all appearances to the contrary, it is here that we find His grace and love locatable, hearable, and tangible. It is here that the Bread of Life feeds our weary souls. It is here that the fountain of God's love pours abundantly to quench our spiritual thirst. Who's hungry? Who's thirsty? I know I am.

Prayerfully Yours,

Pastor Thomas



HOLY WEEK SERVICES

- ✧ **Maundy Thursday @ 6 pm**
- ✧ **Good Friday @ Noon and 6 pm**
- ✧ **Easter Vigil @ 9 pm**
- ✧ **Easter Morning @ 8 and 10:30 am**



Anselm of Canterbury

April 21

Time Period 11th century AD

Who was he?

A theologian, bishop, and writer.

Did you know?

- He was a monk under the Rule of St. Benedict and was made Archbishop of Canterbury in 1093.
- He fought to preserve the church's internal authority.
- He is especially remembered for his book *Why God Became Man*, in which he teaches the reason for the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus, who is the Son of God.
- His many prayers and meditations continue to be a source of blessing and encouragement for Christians.

2023 GIVING

March Actual Offerings	\$ 17,173
March Budget	<u>\$ 19,760</u>
Shortfall	\$ 2,587
YTD Actual	\$ 56,885
YTD Budget	<u>\$ 64,220</u>
Shortfall	\$ 7,335

HOW TO GIVE

- Your offering envelopes or those in the pews
 - Online from your bank website
 - Scan the QR code here
 - Text the amount to 84321
- The Giving Page at grace.sandiego.com
 - Time and Talents



HOLY WEEK: WHAT TO EXPECT

During Lent, we prepare to observe our Lord's death and celebrate His resurrection. It is a time of spiritual discipline as we contemplate His sacrifice on the cross. We repent of our sins, recognizing that our God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love" (Joel 2:13). The season and its mid-week services are moving to the crescendo of Holy Week, where we will focus with renewed intensity on the death of Christ for us.

Holy Week begins with **Palm Sunday**. Following a tradition that began in the fourth century A.D. in Jerusalem, we will process into the church bearing palms as we remember our Lord's entrance into Jerusalem. The readings for this Sunday will provide a "roadmap" of the events we will be observing in the coming week.

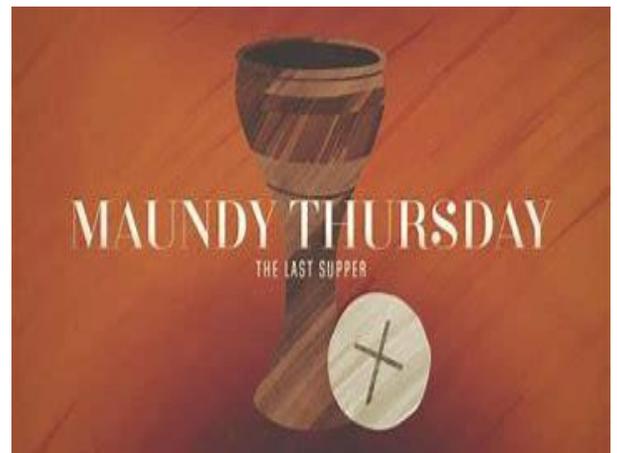
Holy Week provides us with the high point of the Christian year during the *Triduum* (the three days). It refers to the last three days before Easter Sunday: Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Vigil of Easter on Holy Saturday. These services are in fact considered to be one service that takes place over the course of three days.

Maundy Thursday derives its name from the Latin word for "commandment" (*mandatum*). This word is a reference to our Lord's statement at the Last Supper, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you" (John 13:34). At this service we will again contemplate Christ's gift of the Sacrament of the Altar which He instituted at the Last Supper. We are reminded that through this miraculous meal, our Lord gives us the benefits of Good Friday.

The service consists of four parts: the Service of Corporate Confession and Absolution, the Service of the Word, the Service of the Sacrament, and the Stripping of the Altar. The Service of Corporate Confession and Absolution signals the end of the Lenten preparations with the absolution and peace of Christ that stand at the center of the Triduum. The Service of the Word focuses on Christ's humble service demonstrated in His washing of His disciples' feet. This servanthood was enacted on the Cross and its benefits are bestowed in the Lord's Supper. The Divine Service culminates with the Lord's ministry to His people through the Sacrament of the Altar.

The depth of Christ's servanthood is demonstrated as the altar is reverently stripped in preparation for the Church's observance of Jesus' death. In this service, the Church begins the journey through the three days of Christ's Passover as she passes from death to life and from captivity to freedom. The Divine Service does not conclude with a Benediction, since the service of the Triduum continues the next day.

On **Good Friday** we pause and consider our Lord's death on the cross. Crucified between two criminals He took our sins upon Himself and died in our place. The darkness and earthquake that accompanied that event (Matt 27:45, 51) demonstrate the cosmic significance of Christ's death as part of God's end-time action. The Passion of Our Lord according to St. John is read and we conclude with the Strepitus, the sound of the tomb slamming shut.



HOLY WEEK: WHAT TO EXPECT

The **Vigil of Easter** on Holy Saturday is a celebration of the Resurrection of Our Lord and a remembrance of our baptism. Jesus remained buried in the tomb on Holy Saturday. The apostle Paul says in Romans 6:3-4 that when we were baptized, we were buried with Christ into death. Because of the connection between Holy Baptism and Christ's death, the early Church began the practice of baptizing new Christians on Holy Saturday. On this day when Christ was buried in the tomb, Christians were buried with Christ into His death through the waters of Holy Baptism.

At the same time, Holy Saturday stands on the verge of Easter Sunday and is celebrated as the first service of the resurrection. In the Jewish reckoning of time used in Jesus' day, a new day began at sunset. The church in its liturgy has adopted this as well, and therefore Saturday evening begins the celebration of Easter. Baptism on the evening of Holy Saturday reminded Christians that as Paul says in Romans 6:5, their own baptism provided the guarantee that they would also share in Christ's resurrection when He returns in glory on the Last Day.

The Vigil of Easter falls into six parts. In the Service of Light, the Paschal Candle is lit and processes into the nave of the darkened church. The light that pierces the darkness and emanates out among the people represents the resurrection of Jesus Christ that has pierced the darkness of death and brought the hope of resurrection and everlasting life to all who believe in Him.

In the Service of Readings, we recount God's saving acts in the Old Testament that prefigured and pointed forward to Christ's great victory that He shares with us through Holy Baptism. In the remembrance of Holy Baptism, we hear Romans 6 read and then renew our baptismal vows. In the Service of the Word the Easter Gospel is read and we hear the first news of our Lord's resurrection, which points us forward to the full and joyous celebration that will follow in the morning on Easter. Finally, in the Service of the Sacrament, the risen Lord comes to us in His true body and blood as He gives us a share in His death and resurrection for the forgiveness of our sins.

Then, on **Easter Sunday** we will celebrate the Feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord. After observing His death for us and the means through which Christ gives us a share in that death, we will then rejoice in His resurrection from the dead and celebrate the fact that through His resurrection we have the assurance that He will raise us up on the Last Day.

Unfortunately, many Christians want to focus on Easter and ignore those services leading up to Easter Sunday. But I would argue that we are only prepared to celebrate our Lord's resurrection if we have walked the way that led to Easter Sunday. I would encourage you to view the *Triduum* – Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday – as one service and attend it accordingly. The services on these three days will deepen our appreciation of our Lord's sacrifice during Holy Week and will strengthen us in the faith. Then, after observing these great events of the Great Week, we will celebrate the victory of our Lord's resurrection together.





SPENCER HUNTLEY

Spencer was voted on by the coaches as the 2023 SCIRF Player of the Year in Varsity High School rugby. He led the 10-team SoCal league in total scoring, as his Cathedral Catholic team were undefeated and won the SCIRF Championship.

Spencer is currently a Sophomore at Cathedral Catholic, plays U18 club rugby for the San Diego Mustangs (#3 in the nation in 2022) and has also been invited into USA's U18 team.

VOTERS MEETING

We will hold a Voters Meeting on Sunday, April 16th, between the services from 9:15-10:15 a.m. to vote on moving forward with a solar power proposal our church council has been researching. An email summary of the project will be sent to all voting members prior to the meeting to make our time more efficient. Church council members are standing by to field whatever questions or concerns you may have.



*You are Invited to the Grace Lutheran
Annual Easter Sunday Breakfast*

April 9th

9 – 11am

Fellowship Hall

He is Risen!



Worship and Celebrate a Blessed and Happy Easter!

Sign up sheet to help is at the Welcome Desk!

Sidewalk Counseling: Peaceful, Prayerful, Loving & Legal

By Shannon Carreiro

Last month I attended the two-day annual LCMS Life Conference online. The next few Pro-Life Advocate columns will introduce you to some of the remarkable speakers I heard, beginning with Lauren Muzyka, founder, president and CEO of Christ-centered Sidewalk Advocates for Life. SAFL is America's largest sidewalk advocacy organization with 235 locations nationwide, in Puerto Rico and in Mexico.

Lauren Muzyka is a licensed attorney with over 20 years of sidewalk outreach experience. She participated in the first 40 Days for Life campaign and went on to advise that organization as a strategist. In 2014, she founded Sidewalk Advocacy for Life (SAFL) to train, equip and support communities in sidewalk counseling.

What is Sidewalk Advocacy?

Sidewalk advocacy is a form of crisis intervention on a public right-of-way, typically at a legal distance from an abortion facility entrance. Pro-life advocates contact clients entering or leaving the facility and offer to provide information about pro-life resources (such as CAPS) for pregnancy testing, ultrasound, pre- and neonatal healthcare, and support.

The tactic first gained traction in 1985 with the publication of Joseph Scheidler's book "Closed: 99 Ways to Stop Abortion." In the first chapter, Scheidler called sidewalk advocacy the "single-most valuable activity a pro-life person can engage in." Pro-life activists embraced it, but all too often they employed overly aggressive methods designed for shock value. "People would show up dressed like the Grim Reaper with giant signs showing aborted fetuses," Muzyka said.

Getting the Priorities Right

Muzyka explained that as the pro-life movement matured, so did its methods. Instead of pushing a political agenda, sidewalk counselors sought to reach a woman's heart and gain her trust. "Our focus at SAFL is always 'woman first, then baby, then God.'" She emphasized that, "the approach should always be peaceful, prayerful, loving and legal."

Does It Work?

The SAFL vision is, "To be present outside every abortion and abortion-referral facility—in the U.S. and beyond—redirecting all to life-affirming alternatives, thereby ending abortion." Currently, SAFL is operating in almost every state.

In states where abortion is now restricted, SAFL teams are deploying outside facilities that refer women out of state for abortions, providing women with life-affirming resources before they travel across state lines.

How effective are they? According to Muzyka, cancellation rates as high as 70% occur when a sidewalk advocate is present. The SAFL website claims they have served over 19,000 women and their babies, and helped close 31 abortion facilities.

Future Challenges

It's true that abortion clinics across the country are closing down, partly because of new laws enacted in pro-life states, but also because chemicals (e.g. pills) are replacing surgery for 53% of abortions. How is sidewalk advocacy adapting to that challenge? "One way is by placing our teams outside of drugstores that dispense the pills. If we can intercept women, even after they've taken the first of the two-pill regimen, the baby can be saved. We're also training teams to comb through online chat rooms and guide women seeking information on abortion to life-affirming resources." Muzyka added that they're hoping to establish a presence on college campuses.

Lauren Muzyka, SAFL CEO and 2022 Pro-Life Women's Conference Pro-Life Woman of the Year. Learn more about Lauren and SAFL at <https://sidewalkadvocates.org/>

"The pro-life movement celebrates women and womanhood. The power to create and nurture a brand new life – that's an absolute miracle. And only a woman can do it." – Lauren Muzyka





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Church Secretary
Gretchen Jordan
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Sunday Divine Service
8:00 am & 10:30 am
Sunday School
9:30 to 10:15 am
Nursery available

JOHN HANSEN
Council President

RICHARD SEGARRA
Treasurer

SHANNON CARREIRO
Secretary

HEATH RUSSERT
Trustee

KELLEY SCHMIDT
Fellowship/Activities

JOHN BARBER
PHILIP HAWTHORNE
Members-at-Large

CARL LEHMAN
Education

TED NILSEN
Head Elder

JEREMY FULLAM
STEVE HOLLMAN
JASON HUNTLEY
DARYL NEWTON
TRAVIS WHEELER
Elders

PRAYERS

PRAYERS FOR STRENGTH AND HEALING

Joyce, Dave, Bill, Phil, Edward, Colter, Connor, Mary, Daniel, Larry, Taj, Charlotte, Pr. Burkey, and the Ramey Family, family & friends of Mary Jane Robinson

PRAYERS FOR OUR MISSIONARIES

Rev. Tyler McMiller, Joshua Salas, Lorenzo Murrone, Luiz Lange, Michael & Nance Morizio
(Lutheran Church planters & seminarians in Italy)

PRAYERS FOR OUR MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS

John Campisi, Tajy George, Jack George, Jr., Jeff and Jordan Gruetzmacher, Philip Hawthorne, Josh Martin, Matthew Morgan, Nathan Farish, and Elliott Perko

PRAYERS FOR THOSE UNABLE TO ATTEND SERVICES

Joyce Rochester

BIRTHDAYS

APRIL

1- Bobbi Roberts
2- Jason Huntley
6- Kariff Gomez
9- Tony Fillius
10- Steve Hollman
14- Linnette Hollman
20- Barbara Angelo
22- Rev. Yong Mo Lee
26- John Hansen

MAY

4- Valda Houts
10- Solomon/James Shed
19- Paul Himmelberger
24- Kimberly Newton
27- Leslie Yoder
28- Michelle Thompson
29- Jeremy Belgau

UPCOMING SCHEDULE

Palm Sunday

Sun. April 2 @ 8 & 10:30 am

Maundy Thursday

Thur. April 6 @ 6 pm

Good Friday

Fri. April 7 @ Noon & 6 pm

Easter Vigil

Sat. April 8 @ 9:00 pm

Easter Sunday

Sun. April 9 @ 8 & 10:30 am

Voters' Meeting

Sunday April 16 @ 9:15 am
Fellowship Hall

Bible Study

April 19 @ 10:00 am
St. Mark's Classroom

Sunday School

April 22 @ 9:30 to 10:15 am
St. Mark's Classroom

Taco Sunday with Thrivent

Sunday May 7 @ 11:30 pm
Courtyard Fellowship

CONNECT WITH US

