

Easter Blessings!

April 5, 2026

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

The Resurrection of the Lord

Acts 10:34a, 37-43 | Col 3:1-4 | Jn 20:1-9

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

Today we celebrate the Lord's resurrection, the pinnacle of the Church's entire liturgical year. As disciples, we know that Christ's resurrection is not something that happened to him alone; his resurrection offers us the promise that all who believe in him will one day rise with him. But the new life Christ promises is not something we have to wait for the next life to experience! Everything we have been doing throughout Lent to prepare for today's celebration also gives us a foretaste of the fullness of life we will share with him at our own resurrection. By God's grace, we have been inwardly renewed by Lenten prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Our minds and hearts have been lifted from the things of earth to the things of heaven. As disciples of the risen Christ, let us continue to "seek what is above," deepening our own participation here and now in the life he won for us through his cross and glorious resurrection.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

The scene in today's Gospel offers us a helpful insight for evangelization. Peter and John run to the empty tomb. While John gets there faster, he waits outside and allows Peter to enter first. We can think of Peter as symbolic of faith (he is the one, after all, who confesses Jesus as the Christ (Mt.16:16)), and John, as symbolic of love (in our Gospel, John is referred to not by name, but as "the other disciple whom Jesus loved.") Although Peter and John see the empty tomb and believe, our Gospel reading ends with this interesting detail: "For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead." I think what the text is showing us is that *love* and *faith* often precede *understanding*. In our efforts of evangelization, apologetics and theology have their place. But we must not forget that sometimes inviting someone to love and trust in the Lord - before they have all the answers worked out - is more effective than trying to help a person reason their way to faith by perfect explanations. Love and faith draw us to encounter the risen Lord, and understanding comes later.

CELEBRATE

"This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad" our psalm tells us. Today is the Solemnity of solemnities, the Feast of all feasts! Take some time to rejoice and give thanks for all that God has done for us through his death and glorious resurrection. Today nothing else should be on our "to do" list other than to celebrate well!



John Run to the Sepulchre, Online Collection of Brooklyn Museum; Photo: Brooklyn Museum, Public Domain

Church of the Ascension

ascensionsaratoga.org | 408-725-3939

Masses: (Sat) 5p; (Sun) 7a, 9a, 11a, 5p

(Mon-Fri) 8a; (Sat) 9a

Confessions: (Sat) 4p - 4:45p

Roll away the Roadblocks

Today we are blessed to welcome a host of new Catholics who became part of the church at (the Easter Vigil). Whatever obstacles that stood in the way have been rolled away. These new Catholics have entered freely into (a) community of believers and have committed to be followers of the Way of Jesus. They bring new life and energy to our fellowship. What gets in the way of your believing more completely? The message of Easter is: In every moment, Christ lives. *-Takefiveforfaith.com*

Easter Egg Hunt

The Fil-Am Association will be hosting the Easter Egg Hunt and Coffee & Donuts on April 5, 2026.

Parish Office Closes Easter Monday, April 6.

Men's Club

Meeting in the Hall Lounge, Friday, April 10, 6:00pm.

Divine Mercy Devotion - April 12

2:30pm: Spiritual Message by Fr. Maurice

3:00pm: Holy Hour with Eucharistic Exposition, Divine Mercy Chaplet, Rosary, Confession, Benediction, Blessing of Oil, Veneration of the Divine Mercy Image.

4:00pm: Fellowship with refreshments.

For details on the Novena leading to the Divine Mercy Sunday, check the flyer in church.

Capital Campaign Report

Stay tuned for updates next week.

Please pray for the success of our Campaign, which will benefit the Pastoral Plan.

Consider a Special Easter Gift

A **special Easter offering** is a powerful way to support our church beyond regular giving. We also appreciate your contribution to the **Flowers Fund**.

WEEKLY OFFERING - March 29

-Total: **\$11,087** (\$9,945, including a **donation of \$4,000** + online: \$1,141). Goal: \$6,800.

-YTD Sunday: **\$271,216**. Budget: \$265,200.

-Flower Fund: **\$565**.

-Catholic Relief Services: **\$165** (YTD: \$2,816).

Thank you for your generosity.

Consider an **IRA to Charity Contribution**: individuals aged 70½ or older can transfer to a church up to \$108,000 annually without increasing taxable income.

MASS INTENTIONS

Apr 04	Sat	08:30pm	<i>Easter Vigil</i>
Apr 05	Sun	All Masses	<i>Easter Sunday</i>
Apr 06	Mon	08 am	Cecilia Phung +
Apr 07	Tue	08 am	Elsie Tiggner (L)
Apr 09	Thu	08 am	Dana Burley (L)
Apr 11	Sat	09 am	Carol McLafferty (L)

He is risen! Truly he is risen!

*"Christ is risen from the dead,
trampling down death by death,
and upon those in the tombs bestowing life!"*

(Orthodox paschal troparion)

Happy Easter!

Fr. Hao & the Parish Staff

Easter Joy Amid Uncertainty

A new survey by the National Retail Federation reveals that despite economic uncertainty, Americans are projected to spend a record \$24.9 billion on Easter this year, averaging \$195.59 per person and surpassing the previous record of \$24 billion set in 2023. While economic concerns persist, consumers remain focused on major celebrations like Easter.

For us Christians, Easter is more than just a celebration or holy day — it's the cornerstone of our belief, making the Church a living community proclaiming hope. Even amid uncertainty and fear, Easter remains relevant and inspiring, echoing the journey of the disciples who moved from despair to joy at the Resurrection of Christ.

Our faith and hope are not grounded in worldly optimism but in our trust in the risen Lord, who continues to be present with believers just as he was with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, offering comfort and guidance even when not recognized.

- Fr. Hao

Easter on FORMED.org

Visit FORMED.org, a Catholic resource, to explore the holy season of Easter. Our parish is subscribed to this resource. Just enter "Ascension" or our church zip code.



Holy Father's April Prayer Intention

Let us pray together for priests going through moments of crisis in their vocation, that they may find the accompaniment they need and that communities may support them with understanding and prayer.

Pope Leo's Good Friday Phone Calls

On Good Friday, Pope Leo XIV leads the faithful at the Way of the Cross by carrying the Cross throughout the Colosseum in Rome.

On the same day the Holy Father spoke by phone to Israeli President **Isaac Herzog**, and also to Ukraine's President **Volodymyr Zelensky**. The conversations focused on the need to put an end to these serious conflicts, and to open all channels of dialogue to bring about a just, lasting peace.

Interested in Stephen Ministries?

Stephen Ministers are lay members of the church trained to provide one-to-one care to those experiencing a difficult time in life, such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, or relocation. If you are interested, please call Fr. Hao at 408-725-3939.