

MONTHLY BULLETIN

April 2026

At Home with the Lord

Things took a curious turn when the Lord got up from supper, tied a towel around his waist, and washed the Apostles' feet. It seems like something Jesus decided to do on the fly.

Usually, a servant would wash a guest's feet upon arrival—a Biblical way of putting out the welcome mat. Peter called Jesus "Master," not his servant, but our Lord wanted the Disciples to see things differently.

Watching Carefully

With eyes of faith, we may notice God's creative plan unfolding in ways that others fail to see. Look at a dragonfly, for instance.

Born in water, dragonfly larvae emerge and cling to reeds. Transformation takes place, and a dragonfly tries its newly unfolded wings.

Although dragonflies look similar, each one has an individual pattern on its wings. At His baptism in the Jordan River, Jesus showed His willingness to uniquely

God Looks Around

share our humanity, and the Holy Spirit came upon Him. We receive newfound grace of the Holy Spirit in Sacramental Baptism.



Fr. Mark Payne
Chaplain

Back to the dragonflies, outsized eyes allow an excellent view of their surroundings. People had gotten wide-eyed at the sight of miraculously multiplied loaves and fish, but the next day, they asked for another sign. They could not see Jesus as the Bread of life.

Hovering Over Us

At supper, surrounded by the Twelve, Jesus knew what betrayal by Judas would set in motion. Going out to the Garden of Gethsemane, He

showed His friends the need to pray. Through prayer to do the Father's will, Jesus overcame intense, human fear.

Dragonflies can hover, helicopter style. Like Jesus, we get scared or distressed and seek help from the heavenly Father unfailingly hovering over us.

Jesus had friends nearby in the garden, but they fell asleep—even though He had foretold His Passion and death. He loved them, just as He still loves us when we let Him down.

Turning Lives Around

Dragonflies can fly in a vertical ascent, upside down, and backwards. They can zoom by at 20 m.p.h. or more.

Crucifixion seemed to put the forward momentum of Jesus' ministry into reverse. His death upended the Apostles' lives, but we rejoice on Easter because Jesus quickly came back. Saint Peter preached, "God raised up His Servant," giving believers hope in reaching eternal life.



Mother's Day Spiritual Bouquet

Please use the enclosed spiritual bouquet request card to send the names of your mother, grandmothers, and other special mothers for remembrance when Heart of the Nation's chaplains celebrate Mass on May 10. To send your request online, visit www.HeartoftheNation.org/mothers-day-memorials.

“Your music touched my heart and brought tears to my eyes.”

– Jerry



“I work in a maximum-security prison. I want to thank you for your Mass. I know it has made the difference in at least one prisoner’s life.”

– Courtney

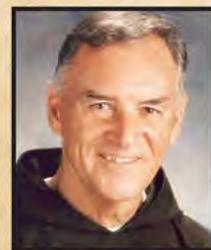


“I have watched this Mass for many years. How many times I’ve said in my mind or even out loud, ‘You’re good, God.’”

– Julia

Opportunity Knocks

Jesus’ Crucifixion. An empty tomb. Some women had seen a vision of angels proclaiming Jesus alive, but it seems that two disciples who headed to Emmaus didn’t put enough faith in the report to stay in Jerusalem. They knew that Jesus had died. Emmaus translates as “hot springs,” a good place to get away from all that had occurred.



Fr. Tony Scannell
Chaplain

When a young man named Baldassare Forestiere left Sicily in 1901 to make a new life for himself in America, he brought along his Catholic faith and not much else. Like the Twelve who had left their old lives to follow Jesus, he had high hopes.

Arriving on the East Coast, Baldassare earned some money as a subway tunnel digger and then headed to California. He bought land, intending to grow citrus trees.

Hard Knocks

In Fresno, betrayed by the land beneath his feet, Baldassare discovered hardpan under a layer of topsoil too shallow for citrus trees to take root. Next, a heat

wave brought the temperature outside to 115 degrees. We can imagine his withering hopes.

Saving Grace

Whatever strides Saint Peter had made as an Apostle turned to dirt scuffing when he denied even knowing Jesus. Fear had overwhelmed him.

Baldassare knew that he wanted future refuge from summer heat. Putting his tunneling experience to use, he dug a cellar as a place to cool off.

By 1923, he would tell a newspaper reporter that what he came to envision nearly overwhelmed him—but in a good way.

Contemplating the road ahead, Baldassare had proceeded to dig a subterranean home with skylights and a

water system. Good soil below the hardpan enabled him to plant underground gardens with fruit trees. He vastly expanded, including excavating a chapel, and pictured opening a resort.

Meeting Up

Jesus joined the two disciples going to Emmaus, explained things to them, and stayed until they finally recognized Him. By the time the travelers returned to Jerusalem, the Risen Lord had already appeared to Peter, too.

No matter how things look on the surface, our Lord knows when we experience hard times. Today, the Forestiere Underground Gardens inspire through one man’s building on deep faith.

SPRING FUND DRIVE

Scripture on the Easter Vigil describes God bringing forth the first light over the world (Genesis 1). On Easter, we celebrate the Risen Lord and His life-sustaining Light of spiritual hope in resurrected life with Him.

Your gift or monthly pledge during the Spring Fund Drive will help to support Heart of the Nation’s TV Mass, publications, and prayer line. Like the sunlight essential for the emergence of new life each spring, your generosity will shine as faith grows in individual hearts and in the world.

Easter Prayer

At the dawning of this new day, please renew in me the certainty that You desire for each a place with You for all eternity.

In the light of Easter morning, please reawaken Your love in me. Your compassionate care outpouring, let me show to others in need.

In the Divine plan unfolding, may heaven's glory I envision remain always in my heart to hold, for You have lived, died, and Risen! Amen.



Thank You!

With gratitude, Heart of the Nation includes perpetual prayers for Circle of the Heart members in every Sunday TV Mass. Joining Circle of the Heart by becoming a monthly donor shares spiritual hope through TV Mass, free publications, online resources, and Heart of the Nation's new prayer line (see page 4).

Prayer & Worship Guide

Seven issues yearly provide readings and liturgical text for Sunday TV Mass, reflections, and seasonal prayers. For a free subscription, please send the recipient's name and address to Heart of the Nation.



Ready for Challenges

Fr. Justin Lopina grew up in Wisconsin, graduated from a Wisconsin college, and decided to go to West Africa. As a college graduate thinking about priesthood, he joined the Peace Corps.

"I was unsure about my future. Although my discernment toward the priesthood was progressing, that was not the real reason I signed up," Fr. Justin added. "I was also ready for some adventure—to get out of my comfort zone for a while." Two years later, back home in August 2008, he felt ready to apply to the seminary.



Heart of the Nation began producing TV Mass in 2009 at Saint Francis de Sales Seminary. Fr. Justin worked behind the scenes as junior sacristan, arranged chairs in the chapel, and sometimes served as an acolyte. TV Mass viewers over the years also saw him as a lector, deacon, and priest.



"I'm deeply grateful to be a part of Heart of the Nation."



Fr. Justin has ministered in suburban parishes but broadened his horizons when assigned to serve two churches in rural Wisconsin. "I had a lot of farmers to minister to, and I came to love farm and animal blessings. That was a non-stop delight. We had tons of hikers, fishers, hunters, and snowmobile riders among our ranks."

After using his high school French in Africa, Fr. Justin took up Spanish. He now studies Japanese and has traveled to Japan, as well as Colombia, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, France, and Spain. His next vacation will take him to Italy. "I'm working on a bit of Italian," he said. "It's far more satisfying to encounter other cultures on their terms, rather than mine."

Combining travel and his enjoyment of bicycling, Fr. Justin recalled his trip to southwestern Spain. Historical conflicts in the region had resulted in cities built on hills or cliffs—"Every. Single. City," he emphasized. "Every day ended with me cycling up a cliff or tall hill. Looking back, I'm kind of amazed that I managed it!"

Also an avid reader of Catholic and other literature, Fr. Justin commented, "I read a little bit of everything, but I've always had a soft spot for sci fi. If a science fiction story also has a positive religious element to it, I'll probably gobble up every page."

To fit the half-hour time frame for TV Mass, Fr. Justin enjoys preparing concise homilies. "I believe that such a challenge makes me a better preacher overall," he concluded. "TV Masses are a joy to me."

Slaying More Than Dragons

Memorialized on April 23 as a martyr in the early Church, Saint George became more widely known as the dragon slayer in a tale of rescuing a princess and her town from a deadly, ravenous beast. Sin eats at us, but Our Savior truly slays its power. On the Second Sunday of Easter (or Sunday of Divine Mercy), Catholics seek extraordinary forgiveness that includes the partial or complete erasure of punishment on Earth or in purgatory for past sins.



On April 12, ask God an unlimited number of times to grant **partial indulgences** for yourself or souls in purgatory. While free from mortal sin, state your desire for the indulgence, and pray with a contrite heart, "Merciful Jesus, I trust in You!"

In special provisions for the homebound, seeking **full pardon** (generally only one request allowed per day) has the following additional steps:

- 1) Be detached from all sin, meaning full willingness not to sin;
- 2) Before a devout image of the merciful Lord, after "Merciful Jesus, I trust in You," pray an Our Father and the Creed;
- 3) If possible, within about 20 days before or after April 12, receive Sacramental Confession and the Eucharist. If unable to do so, have the intention of receiving the Sacraments as soon as you can, unite yourself spiritually with those fulfilling Divine Mercy devotions beyond requirements for the homebound, and offer a prayer to the merciful Lord, including offering up your sufferings and difficulties;
- 5) Pray an Our Father and Hail Mary for the Pope's intentions.

Beyond the doctrine of indulgences, Catholics have the freedom to believe in Divine Mercy revelations to Saint Faustina Kowalska that the Lord will grant full pardon to those who prepare through Sacramental Confession and, on the Sunday of Divine Mercy, receive Holy Communion. (Lacking access to the Sacraments, pray an Act of Spiritual Communion, and ask with great trust to receive the Lord's extraordinary mercy.)

An Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen. — *Saint Alphonsus Liguori*



MASS SCHEDULE

Sunday, April 5, 2026
Easter Sunday



Sunday, April 12, 2026
Second Sunday
of Easter (or Sunday
of Divine Mercy)

Sunday, April 19, 2026
Third Sunday
of Easter

Sunday, April 26, 2026
Fourth Sunday
of Easter
(World Day of Prayer
for Vocations)

Online Mass on Sundays
and Holy Days:
Available all day at
www.HeartoftheNation.org



Heart of the Nation.
CATHOLIC MASS

For local time and TV
channel information,
please visit

www.HeartoftheNation.org

or

Contact Us:

Heart of the Nation
P.O. Box 14428
Milwaukee, WI 53214
(855) 855-6277

Mail@HeartoftheNation.org

Prayer Line:
(414) 475-4700