

MARCH 23, 2025

SAINT JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH • HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA

**He himself bore our sins
in his body upon the cross,
so that, free from sin,
we might live for
righteousness.
By his wounds
you have been healed.**

1 Peter 2:24

LENT



A PARISH OF THE DIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM IN ALABAMA

Mass Intentions

SATURDAY, MARCH 22

8:00am: Ezra Morris
5:00pm: +Ella Mae Claridy

SUNDAY, MARCH 23

8:15am: For the Parish
+Steven Kantoniemi
11:15am: +John Dimmock

MONDAY, MARCH 24

7:00am: +Mr. & Mrs. Earl Wilson

TUESDAY, MARCH 25

7:00am: +Mr. & Mrs. John Harriety

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26

7:00am: Ana Tellez

THURSDAY, MARCH 27

7:00am: Lisa Citrano
9:00am*: Jack Dickinson

FRIDAY, MARCH 28

7:00am: Mark & Patty Gerry

SATURDAY, MARCH 29

8:00am: +Father, Mummy & Peter
5:00pm: +Victor Pesqueira

SUNDAY, MARCH 30

8:15am: +Paula Whitthaus
11:15am: For the Parish
+Viviana Uribe Torres

*HFS School Mass

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

I was reflecting how we have been teased by the weather these last few weeks with the hint of Spring. The daffodils are blooming, and the trees are starting to bud. So, this week I received a reflection from the Center for Action and Contemplation. I thought it was very timely and a wonderful reminder of God's power, magnificence and creativity. I hope you will find it refreshing.



God's Sacred Book of Nature

Richard Rohr believes that nature has been revealing God long before the Bible and Church came to be: Nature itself is the primary Bible. The world is the locus of the sacred and provides all the metaphors that the soul needs for its growth.

If you scale chronological history down to the span of one year, with the Big Bang on January 1, then our species, Homo sapiens, doesn't appear until 11:59 p.m. on December 31. That means our written Bible and the Church appeared in the last nanosecond of December 31. I can't believe that God had nothing to say until the last moment. Rather, as both Paul and Thomas Aquinas say, God has been revealing His love, goodness and beauty since the very beginning through the natural world of creation (**Romans 1:20**). "God looked at everything God had made and found it very good" (**Genesis 1:31**).

Acknowledging the intrinsic value and beauty of creation, elements, plants and animals is a major paradigm shift for most Western and cultural Christians. We limited God's love and salvation to our own human species, and even then, we did not have enough love to go around for all of humanity! God ended up looking quite miserly and inept, to be honest.

Read, instead, the **Book of Wisdom**: How dull are all people who, from the things-that-are, have not been able to discover God-Who-Is, or by studying the good works have failed to recognize the Artist.... Through the grandeur and beauty of the creatures we may, by analogy, contemplate their Author (**13:1, 5**). [1]

Author Barbara Mahany reads God's sacred Book of Nature in her own backyard and throughout creation: "I read intently the Book of Nature, even here in my humble plot of earth ... where a rambunctious tucked-away garden offers me respite and a place for genuflection... Into its pages I step in the murky hour just before the dawn, before the rising sun stages its rehearsal, bleeding pink into the edge of night. It's where you might find me, nose pressed to the glass, when the softening winter sky at last exhales and the first tumble of snowflakes fall, blanketing the world in a quiet like no other. Or, at twilight, the in-between hour when day dissolves into darkness, when on a summer's eve I surrender to the rising surround sound of crickets and keep watch till the star keepers trot out the stars....And so, the beautiful, the majestic, the intimate and the sweeping is pressed onto the pages of the *librum naturae*, the Book of Nature." [2]

Mahany shares this observation from Evelyn Underhill (1875–1941), an English theologian and mystic: The very meaning of Creation is seen to be an act of worship, a devoted proclamation of the splendor, the wonder and the beauty of God. In this great Sanctus, all things justify their being and have their place. [3]

References: [1] Adapted from Richard Rohr, *Essential Teachings on Love*, selected by Joelle Chase and Judy Traeger (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2018), 30-31. [2] Barbara Mahany, *The Book of Nature: The Astonishing Beauty of God's First Sacred Text* (Minneapolis, MN: Broadleaf Books, 2023), 15, 16. [3] Evelyn Underhill, *Worship* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1937), 5. Quoted in Mahany, *Book of Nature*, 18.

You are in my daily thoughts and prayers. I hope that you have a blessed week.

Always in the Savior, Fr. Joe

PRAYER REQUESTS

We are here to pray for you!



Barbara Brodeur, Carolyn Wingenter, Zanetta Brown, Rachel Johnson, Faye Fletcher, Batchelder Family, Stachura Family, Sayre Family, Maddie Clearly, John Rourk, Jr., Cindy Morales, Linda Dimmock, Josephine Stratton, Ralph & Helen Kissel, Judi Trygg, Marianna Young, Cecilia Hall, Deacon Mike Rooney, Jane and Dena Bell, Marie Basta, Richard Brown, Jena Lanszell, Charlotte Johnson, Emma Lang, Matthew M., Selena M., Jackie Weems, Bob Strang, Jacqueline Meador, Adrianna Hilburm, Jason & Jaxson Rivera, Therese Thomas, Mary Bell, Art Sandridge, Chris Karlson, Mary Vandergraft, Jeff Baldwin, Ben Sunde, Anna Wilks, Bill Boehme, Claude Davis, Mary Flatt, Kennita Turner, Eva Nave, Judy Blanche, Anna Belander, the Price family, Gail Johnson, Sally Cox, Mary Andrus family, Bruce Jansen, Mary Jean & Ron Travis, Jean Arndt, Mil White, Fr. Tim Pfander, Bobbie Quintana, Jr., Ezra Morris, Mark Manning, Larry Barnett, Susan Sheehy.

Note

If you wish to add someone to the prayer list, please contact the parish office. When that person recovers, please call again to remove their name so that others can be put on the list. **Thank you, Fr. Joe**

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday	2 Kings 5:1-15b Ps 42:2, 3; 43:3, 4 Luke 4:24-30	Friday	Hosea 14:2-10 Ps 81:6c-8a, 8bc-9, 10-11ab, 14, 17 Mark 12:28-34
Tuesday <i>Annunciation of the Lord</i>	Isaiah 7:10-14; 8-10 Ps 40:7-8a, 8b-9, 10, 11 Hebrews 10:4-10 Luke 1:26-38	Saturday	Hosea 6:1-6 Ps 51:3-4, 18-19, 20-21ab Luke 18:9-14
Wednesday	Deuteronomy 4:1, 5-9 Ps 147:12-13, 15-16, 19-20 Matthew 5:17-19	Sunday <i>4th Sunday of Lent</i>	Joshua 5:9a, 10-12 Ps 34:2-7 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 Luke 15:1-3, 11-32
Thursday	Jeremiah 7:23-28 Ps 95:1-2, 6-9 Luke 11:14-23		

FAST AND ABSTINENCE

Lenten fast and abstinence is a call to a deeper spirit of penitential conversion. Ideally, this personal penance should reach out to the rest of the world through acts of charity and mercy. The real purpose of the fast and abstinence is “to develop the inner freedom to resist.”

Abstinence means not eating meat (beast or fowl). All Catholics, age 14 and older, are obliged to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, all Fridays of Lent, and the Paschal fast of Good Friday. Fasting means not eating as much as usual. This means only one full meal with two smaller meals (the sum of which is less than the full meal) and no solid food snacks.

All Catholics between the ages of 18-59 inclusive are obliged to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

Exceptions: The sick and infirm and those for whom these rules do not meet their real physical needs (not just desires) may adjust their fast as necessary. For clarification and other exceptions, contact the parish office.

ST. JOHN PAUL II CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL ADMISSIONS for the 2025-2026 school year are open. Applications will be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis.

Contact our admissions office at 256-430-1760, ext. 117 or visit www.jp2falcons.org/admissionsprocess for more information.

2025 ST. JOSEPH LENTEN ACTIVITIES

Adoration & Stations of the Cross

All Fridays during Lent
11:00 a.m. & 12:00 p.m. Church

Lenten Communal Anointing

Saturday & Sunday, March 22/23
After all Masses Church

Lenten Communal Reconciliation

Wednesday, April 2
5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Church

Fish Fry

Friday, March 14/March 28/April 11
5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. Fr. Messmer Center
\$15 adults, \$6 ages 5-12

Enchiladas/Beans/Rice

Friday, March 7/March 21/April 4
3:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m. Fr. Messmer Center
\$10 per plate

Parish Seder Meal

Palm Sunday, April 13
5:30-7:00 p.m. Fr. Messmer Center

CURRENT WEEKLY OFFERING

Regular Collection	\$ 16,312.19
Other Designated Funds	\$ 1,550.00

LITURGICAL MINISTERS SCHEDULE

MARCH 29-MARCH 30, 2025

ALTAR SERVERS

5:00pm: Henry Franco
8:15am: Dawson Amos
11:15am: Emma Taylor

LECTORS

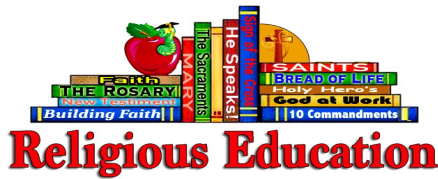
5:00pm: Maritza Lopez Holland, George Holland
8:15am: Connie Abbott, Don Gregory
11:15am: Jake Petraszewsky, Ryan Petraszewsky

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS

5:00pm: Sherri Lynn Ross*, Marian Kilgore, Gus Smith,
Geri Donnelly, Ben Sundry
8:15am: Kevin Nash*, Michelle Nash, Alicia Owens,
Jamie Stewart, Ellen Styles
11:15am: Gerald Wocken*, Donnis Aragon, Jane Dodds,
Bernita Briggs, Brenda Brown

Religious Education

Formation and Catechesis



FORMATION CALENDAR

March 23	RE 9:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Holy Family School/St. Francis Hall OCIA 9:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Parish Office Building
March 30	RE 9:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Holy Family School/St. Francis Hall OCIA 9:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Parish Office Building

THE GOLD CHALLENGE We are looking for scrap gold and silver items to be sold for cash. Proceeds will go to the Holy Family School Capital Campaign.

Acceptable items include:

- ◆ Crimped or broken chains and bracelets
- ◆ Single earrings
- ◆ Rings with missing stones
- ◆ Cuff links and tie tacks

They must be of 10K gold or better, or solid sterling silver—no plated items.

To submit, place your donations in a plain envelope to go in the offertory at Mass, or deliver to the parish office. For more information, please call 256-534-1480.

JOYFUL WORKERS ANNUAL PLANT SALE This spring's plant sale, sponsored by the Joyful Workers, will be April 26/27 in St. Francis Hall from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. If you have plants to share, please contact Judy Morgida at 256-479-8981 or jamorgida@gmail.com.

STOCK THE BAR TRIVIA NIGHT March 29 in St. Francis Hall, after the 5:00 p.m. Mass. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. and trivia will begin around 7:00 p.m. Event includes a nacho bar, dessert and beverages. Play 50/50 raffle with \$1 per chance. Must be age 21+ to attend. Cost is \$10 or a bottle of alcohol of equal or greater value. All proceeds and bottles collected will go to prizes at the Holy Family School Soirée Casino Night on May 3.

RSVP to mary.mcgraw@gmail.com.

HUNTSVILLE AREA 2025 LENTEN RECONCILIATION SERVICES

St. Joseph	April 2 @ 5:00 p.m. *
St. Paul/Athens	April 2 @ 6:30 p.m. **
St. Mary of the Visitation	April 5 @ 10:00 a.m. **
St. John/Madison	April 7 @ 5:00 p.m. *
Mercy Parish/Madison	April 10 @ 6:30 p.m. **
Holy Spirit	April 15 @ 7:00 p.m. **
St. John/Madison	April 17 & 18 @ 9:15 a.m. & 3:00 p.m. *

* = Confessions

** = Penance Service

Please verify date and time with the individual parish

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED for our nursery service during both Sunday Masses, and for the bi-weekly Liturgy of the Word with Children at the 11:15 a.m. Mass. If you are available and would like to help, please contact Elaine Rowell at 256-694-8065.

SARAH HART BENEFIT CONCERT April 9, 2025 for the Holy Family School Capital Campaign. Join us for a night of reflection and relaxation to her songs celebrating God's presence in our lives. We hope to see you there. Tickets are \$25 each (children under age 18 are free) and available at all weekend Masses in March and in the parish office.

Here Is What's Happening This Week

MONDAY, MARCH 24

5:00pm: HFS Capital Campaign (LMR)

TUESDAY, MARCH 25

10:00am: Parish Staff Meeting (LIB)

6:00pm: Boy Scouts

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26

6:00pm: St. Vincent de Paul (LMR)

6:00pm: 11:15am Mass Choir (SJC)

7:00pm: 8:15am Mass Choir (SJC)

THURSDAY, MARCH 27

9:00am: Rosary Makers (LMR)

5:00pm: Joyful Workers (LMR)

6:00pm: Adult Formation (LMR)

FRIDAY, MARCH 28

11:00am: Eucharistic Adoration (SJC)

12:00pm: Stations of the Cross (SJC)

5:00pm: Lenten Fish Fry (FMC)

SATURDAY, MARCH 29

HFS Prom Dress Sale 10:00am-2:30pm (FMC)

10:00am: Damson Baptism (SJC)

SATURDAY, MARCH 29

12:00pm: Alexandria Baptism (SJC)

6:00pm: Stock the Bar (SFH)

SUNDAY, MARCH 30

9:30am: RE/OCIA (HFS/SFH/LMR/LIB)

Facilities Key

FMC = Messmer Center/Gym

SJC = St. Joseph Church

SFH = St. Francis Hall

LMR/LIB = RE Center

STA = St. Thomas Aquinas Chapel

BRZWY = Breezeway

VBC = Von Braun Center