

THE ORATORY OF SAINTS  
GREGORY & AUGUSTINE



TRADITIO

REVERENTIA

COMMUNITAS

## Welcome to the Oratory of Saints Gregory and Augustine

The Oratory of Saints Gregory and Augustine is pleased to welcome you. We are an apostolate of the Archdiocese of Saint Louis faithful to the teachings of the Church and striving to grow as a family of faith through the celebration of the Traditional Latin Mass and other Sacraments.

In the First Book of *The Confessions*, the other great St. Augustine (of Hippo) wrote the following: “Thou hast made us for Thyself and our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee.” Whether you are curious about the traditional Latin Mass and interested in exploring its beauty, searching for a parish community where you and your family will feel at home, or seeking rest for your heart, we hope that the Oratory of Saints Gregory and Augustine can provide that respite for you.

Our bulletin serves to provide information about the weekly activities occurring here at the Oratory. Along with our website ([www.stlouislatinmass.com](http://www.stlouislatinmass.com)), the bulletin is your point of contact with the ever-increasing activities at the Oratory. I hope this will give you some sense of the grace of God, the love of Jesus Christ, and work of the Holy Spirit in our midst. I am delighted that God has brought you here! *Oremus pro invicem!* ~ The Very Reverend Monsignor C. Eugene Morris, Rector

### MASS AND SACRAMENTS

#### Sunday Masses

- 6:30 am (Low Mass)
- 8:00 am (Low Mass)
- 10:00 am (High Mass)

#### Weekday Masses

- Monday thru Friday: 6:30 am & 12:15 pm
- First Friday: 6:30 pm
- Saturday: 8:15 am

#### Confession

- Sunday: 7:30 am – 10:30 am
- Monday thru Friday: 11:00 am – 12:00 pm
- Wednesday: 5:00 pm – 6:00 pm
- First Friday: 5:00 pm – 6:00 pm
- Saturday: 7:00 am – 8:00 am

#### Adoration

- Wednesday: 5:00 pm – 6:00 pm
- First Friday: 1:00 pm – 6:00 pm (starting 2/6/26)

#### Divine Office

- Sunday: Prime @ 7:20 am; Terce @ 9:40 am; Vespers @ 2:30 pm
- Monday: Vespers @ 6 pm; Compline @ 6:30 pm
- Tuesday & Thursday: Compline @ 6:30 pm
- Wednesday: Vespers @ 6 pm; Compline @ 6:30 pm

**Infant Baptism** – Baptisms are normally scheduled on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays of the month beginning at 10:00 am. Families expecting newborns and anticipating that they will be baptized here at the Oratory should schedule their baptism at the earliest convenience by contacting the Oratory office.

**Adult Baptism** – If you are interested in becoming Catholic or if you are an adult Catholic not yet confirmed, please contact the Oratory office for more information about adult catechesis.

**Matrimony** – Please contact the Oratory office at least six months prior to the desired date for the rite of marriage. The date is reserved after consultation and confirmation from the Rector of the Oratory.

**Extreme Unction/Visitation of the Sick** – Contact the Oratory to arrange the sacrament either at home or in the hospital.

### STAFF/ORGANIZATIONS

- **Rector:** Msgr. C. Eugene Morris  
[rector@oratorysga.org](mailto:rector@oratorysga.org)
- **Vice-Rector:** Fr. Michael Rennie  
[vicerector@oratorysga.org](mailto:vicerector@oratorysga.org)
- **Deacon:** Deacon Steve Pieper, MD  
[deacon@oratorysga.org](mailto:deacon@oratorysga.org)
- **Administrative Assistant:** Donna Mueller  
[office@oratorysga.org](mailto:office@oratorysga.org)
- **Facilities Manager:** Ben Schubert  
[facilities@oratorysga.org](mailto:facilities@oratorysga.org)
- **Auxiliary:** Anna Kalinowski  
[auxiliary@oratorysga.org](mailto:auxiliary@oratorysga.org)
- **Almonry of Ss. Gregory & Augustine:**  
[almonry@oratorysga.org](mailto:almonry@oratorysga.org)
- **Altar and Rosary Society:**  
[altarandrosary@oratorysga.org](mailto:altarandrosary@oratorysga.org)
- **Altar Servers:**  
[servers@oratorysga.org](mailto:servers@oratorysga.org)
- **Choir:**  
[choir@oratorysga.org](mailto:choir@oratorysga.org)
- **Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD):**  
[ccd@oratorysga.org](mailto:ccd@oratorysga.org)
- **Co-Op:**  
[co-op@oratorysga.org](mailto:co-op@oratorysga.org)
- **Events:**  
[events@oratorysga.org](mailto:events@oratorysga.org)
- **Knights of Columbus:**  
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- **Ushers:**  
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- **Young Adults:**  
[youngadults@oratorysga.org](mailto:youngadults@oratorysga.org)
- **Online Giving:**  
<https://www.osvhub.com/st-louis-latin-mass>

### CONTACT US

314-644-2144 / [stlouislatinmass.com](http://stlouislatinmass.com)  
7230 Dale Avenue, Richmond Heights, MO 63117

FROM THE RECTOR

Haec dies quam fecit Dominus: exsulemus et laetemur in ea! These beautiful words from the Gradual for Easter Sunday succinctly express the profound joy and gratitude that rests in our hearts this Easter day. We rejoice with the whole Church at the new life that has been given to us by the power of the Cross of Christ. We also rejoice with the whole Church in welcoming the many neophytes, newly baptized, who now join us at the wedding banquet of the Lamb. Finally, we rejoice as a community of faith at the manifold blessings God has bestowed upon the Oratory of Ss. Gregory and Augustine. With each passing year, the Oratory continues to experience the fruit of fidelity and the glories that await those who suffer with the Lord. As Rector, I am particularly grateful for all those who collaborate with me on a daily basis to serve well the faithful entrusted to us. The selfless generosity of so many people make it possible for me and my brother priests to respond to the spiritual needs of the those who approach us for God’s grace. The glories of new life celebrated today provide the continued strength to remain with the Lord. As we die with Christ, so too, we live with Him. Consequently, today of all days we are required to be a people of hope because vindication is manifest in our midst and salvation has come to our homes. Seek the intercession of our Blessed Mother and our patrons, St. Gregory and St. Augustine to assist you in keeping the flame of faith alive in your hearts throughout this Easter season. It is hoped that through the grace and power of both the Cross of Christ and the glories of our Risen Lord, as a community faith we will be provided the opportunity to rejoice and celebrate together for many, many years to come. Know that all the faithful of the Oratory are in my daily prayers as I rely upon yours for me.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, 6 April:

- OFFICE CLOSED
• Vespers @ 6:00 pm
• Compline @ 6:30 pm

Tuesday, 7 April:

- OFFICE CLOSED
• Compline @ 6:30 pm
• Choir practice @ 7:00 pm

Wednesday, 8 April:

- Adult Catechesis @ 4:00 pm
• Adoration/Confessions @ 5:00 pm
• Vespers @ 6:00 pm
• Compline @ 6:30 pm

Thursday, 9 April:

- Compline @ 6:30 pm

Friday, 10 April:

- No Events Scheduled

Saturday, 11 April:

- Buckley Baptism @ 10:00 am

Sunday, 12 April:

- Prime @ 7:20 am
• Confessions @ 7:30 am
• Terce @ 9:40 am
• Coffee Hour @ 11:30 am
• Girls’ Guild Sale – Baked Goods & Hand-Painted Decorative Easter Eggs @ 11:30 am
• Vespers @ 2:30 pm

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PILGRIM VIRGIN MARY STATUE 2026

Table with 2 columns: Dates and Names. Rows include Agnew (03/22-03/29), Buyle (03/29-04/05), Grizzle (04/05-04/12), Haulard (04/12-04/19), Jones (04/19-04/26), Kelly (04/26-05/03), Carapella (05/03-05/10), and Holman (05/10-05/17).

Drop off and pick up the statue in the vestibule (back of church). Place the statue bag on the floor, under the pew, to left of the

double doors. To join or to be removed from the schedule please contact Sharon Alexander saalex@sbcbglobal.net.

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MASS INTENTIONS

Monday, 6 April – Octave of Easter
12:15 pm: Shane Kiser (d)

Tuesday, 7 April – Octave of Easter
12:15 pm: David C. Elmore (d)

Wednesday, 8 April – Octave of Easter
12:15 pm: Anne Stader (d)

Thursday, 9 April – Octave of Easter
12:15 pm: Kim Morgan

Friday, 10 April – Octave of Easter
12:15 pm: Matthew Byrne (d)

Saturday, 11 April – Octave of Easter
8:15 am: Kristin Kalinowski

Sunday, 12 April – Low Sunday
6:30 am: Pro Populo
8:00 am: Melba Wilmarth (d)
10:00 am: Rita Ohlman

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Table with financial summary: ~ 03/29/2026 ~, NOT AVAILABLE AT TIME OF PUBLISHING, Weekly Collection Total \$, Online Giving \$, Total \$, Needed \$ 16,800.00, Year to Date Total \$.

# Easter Sunday

5 April 2026

## IN THANKSGIVING

A profound word of gratitude to everyone who assisted in making our celebration of Lent, the Sacred Triduum, and Easter Sunday truly beautiful gifts of praise to God. For all those who assisted in veiling our statues and preparing the Altar of Repose; for the musicians, men and women’s scholas and the choir; for the servers, Masters of Ceremony; the Head Sacristan and those who assisted him; the sacred ministers who assisted as deacon and subdeacon; for those who helped clean the Church and the Knights of Columbus for the work as ushers. May God reward your generosity!

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## ORATORY CO-OP IS LOOKING FOR A CATECHIST

The OSGA True, Good and Beautiful Homeschool Co-op is looking for help. We offer both a Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program for 3-5 year olds and a supplemental Art, Music, and Literature program for 6-14 year olds. We are in need of a CGS Level 1 Catechist for Thursday morning. If you are trained and would like to volunteer your time for one morning a week, OR if you would like to be trained, a local training is beginning for the school year. The co-op is willing to fund this training in return for leading our Thursday CGS program. If you are interested or know of anyone who is, please contact Cory Grizzle at [co-op@oratorysga.org](mailto:co-op@oratorysga.org)

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## BLESSING OF EASTER FOOD BASKETS

On Holy Saturday, 4 April, promptly at 9:00 am, the traditional blessing of Easter Baskets will take place in the church. All families are encouraged to bring samples of their Easter feast in a decorated basket to be blessed. There will be a designated table set up at the front of the church for baskets. The blessing will take fifteen minutes. Families should stay in the church to witness the blessing. Upon completion of the blessing, families should take their baskets back home. **NOTE: Due to the extensive duties of all church staff and clergy on this day, baskets left behind at the blessing will not be returned. Be sure to re-claim your basket immediately upon the conclusion of the blessing.**

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## EASTER VIGIL CELEBRATION

The Oratory would like to invite all members to join us in celebrating the Resurrection of the Lord at a picnic feast immediately following the Easter Vigil liturgy on Saturday, 4 April 2026. The celebration will be held at McMahon Field (directly across the street from the Church on Dale Avenue). We invite you to enjoy burgers, barbecue, and most importantly fellowship. Please bring lawn chairs for your family and a side or dessert and your drink of choice but don’t let empty hands prevent you from joining us. We look forward to seeing you there!

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## OFFICE HOURS: EASTER WEEK

The offices **will be completely closed** the Monday (4/6) and Tuesday (4/7) of the Octave of Easter. If there is an emergency and one of the priests is needed, please call 314/606-2461. Normal business hours will resume on Wednesday, 8 April 2026.

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## OCTAVE OF EASTER

The Oratory will celebrate High Mass every day during the Octave of Easter. Everyone is encouraged to attend to truly celebrate well the Resurrection of Our Savior. The schedule will be as follows: (Monday – Friday) Holy Mass will only be

celebrated at 12:15 pm with the normal time of 11:00 am for confessions.

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## GIRLS' GUILD SALE OF HAND-PAINTED DECORATIVE EGGS AND BAKED GOODS

The Our Lady of Walsingham Girls' Guild will hold an Easter **bake-sale following the 10 am Mass on Sunday, 12 April**. In addition to baked goods, the girls will also be selling hand-painted decorative eggs for use as Easter decorations at home (goose and chicken available). Look for the station between the church and the school or in the St. Joseph Room in the event of rain. All proceeds go to future Girls' Guild activities. Cash and Venmo accepted.

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## EASTER EGG HUNT

Please join us for our Annual Low Sunday Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, 12 April. We will meet at the ball field across from church 15 minutes after the conclusion of Holy Mass. There is no admission fee and all ages are welcome. Children will be sorted by age.

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## SOCIAL ENGAGEMENTS FOR THE RECTOR

In years past, I have found it spiritually profitable to limit my social engagements during the Lenten season and will do so for this Lenten season as well. Obviously, I am available to the faithful for spiritual counseling and matters related to faith but will limit social engagements and dinners until after the Octave of Easter. **If you do need to contact me for any reason, please do not hesitate to email or call.** I look forward to visiting, blessing homes, and other opportunities for us to socialize together after the completion of the great Lenten retreat.

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## CELL PHONES

There has been an increasing number of cell phones ringing during Holy Mass. Please be sure to silence your cell phones before entering Church. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

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## ST. LOUIS MARIAN CONFERENCE

The 27<sup>th</sup> Anniversary St. Louis Marian Conference is 15-17 May 2026 at the Renaissance St. Louis Airport Hotel. Everyone is welcome and parking is FREE. The cost is only \$60 for 3 full, dynamic days of inspiring talks, Holy Mass, Adoration, Confession, a large selection of vendors, beautiful music, and fellowship with Catholics from all over the country (20 states so far). The hotel group rate is \$119 per night (1-4 people).

Confirmed speakers: His Eminence Raymon Leo Cardinal Burke; Fr. Mitch Pacwa, S.J.; Fr. Bill Casey, CPM; **Msgr. Eugene Morris**; Sr. Gianna Casino, LIHM; Patty Schaefer; Susan Tassone; Ken and Mary Ann Duppong (parents of Servant of God, Michelle Duppong); and Eric Genius.

For more information, to register, or to book your hotel room please visit us at [www.stlmc.org](http://www.stlmc.org) or call 314-850-7718.

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## SUMMER SCHEDULE

While this is several months away, to allow the faithful of the Oratory to plan accordingly, the Oratory will implement a summer schedule again. Beginning on 29 June 2026 and concluding on 14 August 2026 the Oratory will have daily Holy Mass at 12:15 pm (NO 6:30 am) with Confessions at 11:00 am. The Saturday and Sunday schedules will remain the same. The offices hours during this time will be Monday through Thursday from 8:00 am until 2:30 pm. The offices will be closed on

Fridays. These scheduling changes allow the priests of the Oratory to take vacation and more importantly to make their canonical retreats. So too, the changed office hours will allow our dedicated staff time for vacation.

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**BLESSING OF ITEMS: NEW PROCEDURE**

Going forward, the blessings of religious items will take place after the 8:00 am Holy Mass at St. Joseph Altar. This will happen on the Second Sunday of each month. In this way, items can be blessed and retrieved in a more timely manner. This process will replace bringing items to the rectory to be blessed. **ALL ITEMS TO BE BLESSED MUST BE BROUGHT TO THE ST. JOSEPH ALTAR ON THE 2<sup>nd</sup> SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH BEFORE HOLY MASS.** Those who desire to have items blessed should bring them to the St. Joseph Altar before the 8:00 am Holy Mass with their names clearly marked on the items to be blessed. These items should be left on the St. Joseph Altar. If there are a large number of items, they can be placed around the altar but should not impede the distribution of Holy Communion. Two blessings will be given: one for rosaries and one for all other items grouped together. There is no need to take items from their packaging. **This new process began Sunday, 8 February 2026, therefore the rectory is no longer accepting items to be blessed (as of 9 February).**

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**FIRST FRIDAY EUCHARISTIC ADORATION**

It has long been a desire of mine as rector to have more Eucharistic Adoration at the Oratory of Ss. Gregory and Augustine. Our hope is that Adoration will take place every First Friday afternoon going forward to honor the Sacred Heart of Jesus. As a reminder: faithful are needed to adopt an hour of adoration to ensure that the Blessed Sacrament is never left alone. To sign up for an hour, please email Anthony Jones at [events@oratorysga.org](mailto:events@oratorysga.org).

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**ADULTS SEEKING THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION**

We welcome those interested in becoming Catholic. To get started in that process within the OSGA community, please email one of our priests for an introductory meeting. Their contacts are available in the bulletin. After this, candidates for Initiation at the Oratory will be directed to complete a registration form with our Administrator.

Catechism classes are held in the St Joseph Room (rectory basement) generally on a bi-monthly basis on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays from 4:00-5:15 pm.

The content surrounds a set of topics central to Catholic teaching, as set forth by Msgr. Morris. Deacon Pieper moderates most meetings through a question-and-answer format and hopes to promote sincere dialogue with the candidates regarding those topics and/or related questions. The intent is to communicate Christ and His Church. Sacraments are offered on an individual basis, on a rolling schedule throughout the year, after mutual discernment by the candidate, our deacon, and priests.

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**RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION**

For those in our community who are new to the Traditional Latin Mass, when you approach the altar rail for holy communion it is the custom to begin filling in the altar rail at the far right near St. Joseph’s altar and fill in the rail until its end at the Marian altar. This practice is not impacted by which side of the Church you are seated. You are allowed, and encouraged, to switch sides in order to keep the communion line moving. This is particularly

important when there are two sacred ministers distributing Holy Communion. So too, do not overly delay approaching the rail waiting for others to return to their pews. If everyone moves with attention to what is happening, there should be a flow of movement between those departing the altar rail and those approaching the altar rail. Also, for daily Holy Mass: please kneel at the rail only where the houseling cloth has been prepared for communion. Please keep in mind that we should not keep the Lord waiting but moving with grace and deliberation to the altar rail to receive our Eucharistic Lord.

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**BAPTISMS (January – March 2026)**

*(In alphabetical order)*

- Joseph William Bateman (Robert & Kathryn)*
- Leo Robert Corbalis (Benjamin & Gianna)*
- Lucy Agnes Dannenberg (Devran & Erin)*
- Andrew Michael Douglas (Shannon & Sarah)*
- John Paul Ray Elfrink (Joseph & Lauren)*
- Flora Magdalene Grizzle (Gregory & Amanda)*
- Josephine Maria Hartmann (Michael & Ashley)*
- Hubert Louis Hofmann (Grant & Alicia)*
- Thomas Edward Holmes (Charles & Emily)*
- Michael Fulton Hussey (Lance & Anna)*
- John Claudio Kellermann (Philip & Gabrielle)*
- Oliver Joseph Kenney (Christopher & Isabel)*
- Henry David Maret (Jacob & Stephanie)*
- Louis David Mason (Samuel & Gianna)*
- Cillian Michael McMahon (Michael & Anastasia)*
- Agnes Mary O’Toole (Brian & Bailey)*
- Lucia Marie Rich (Bryan & Paulina)*
- Mary Joseph Schenk (Nicholas & Elaine)*
- Anastasia Marie Schumacher (Keith & Sarah)*
- Joel Edward Stinehart (Connor & Rachel)*
- Seraphina Clementine Terry (Jacob & Amy)*
- Christopher Paul Joseph Mary Werner (Nicholas & Rebekah)*

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**NEW FAMILIES for MARCH (alphabetical order)**

A warm welcome to our new parishioners!

- Miranda Burkhart
- Jim Davies
- The Hayes Family ~ Joe & Anna, Louis, Marty, and Stanley
- Jack Gutting
- The Moore Family ~ Andrew & Emily, and Genevieve
- The VanDrew Family ~ Nick & Giselle, Joey, Sofia, Oliver, Benjamin, Addison, and Penelope

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**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK**

In your charity, please pray for the following members of the Oratory who are ill: Mary Jane Bolte; Amanda Camarillo, daughter of Gregory & Nancy Latham; Heath Cheaney, son of Michael & Jaime; Jeanmarie DeCoster; Donna Hagan; Dotty Kuhlmann, mother of Donna Mueller; Mary McMahan; Kim Morgan; Michael Norfleet, son of Marsha Norfleet; Elizabeth Ryan; Mary Joseph Schenk, daughter of Nicholas & Elaine; Patrick Schneider; Sylvester Soldinie; Caleb & Sheila Ten Eyck; Lara Trudell, daughter of Sharon and Jim Alexander; Renee Weidner; and Msgr. Witt.

# Easter Sunday

5 April 2026

## PRAYERS FOR THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

- Robert Anthony, father of Jeanmarie DeCoster
- Sheryl Ann Gibbs, wife of Jeff Gibbs
- Andrew Richard “Andy” Gilfoil, brother of Joe Gilfoil
- Shane Kiser, husband of Maggie Kiser
- Joan Rita Short, aunt and godmother of Gregory Latham
- David M. Smith, brother-in-law of Carol Smith

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## USHERS’ SCHEDULE

### Holy Thursday, 2 April

5:00 pm Mark Scheer\*, Brandon Roberts, Owen Bruns, Jesse Hermann

### Good Friday, 3 April

3:00 pm Jim Alexander\*, Jeff Logullo, Ken Jones, Ken Catalano

### Holy Saturday, 4 April

2:00 pm Sam Ashlock\*, Jim Alexander, Cory Conway, Jordan Hermann

### Easter Sunday, 5 April

6:30 am Bill Saccente\*, Jeff Logullo  
 8:00 am Kip Babington\*, Ken Catalano, Michael Nelson, Ethan Lamons

10:00 am Ben Schubert\*, Owen Bruns, Jesse Hermann, Cory Conway

### Sunday, 12 April

6:30 am Ben Schubert\*, Ken Jones  
 8:00 am Kenny Buyle\*, Terry Conway, Greg Rheinheimer, Mike Blum  
 10:00 am Joe Thomas\*, Robert Morgan, Grant Hofmann, Adam Rolwes

### Sunday, 19 April

6:30 am Evan Adair\*, Bill Saccente  
 8:00 am Kenny Buyle\*, Terry Conway, Greg Rheinheimer, Jeff Martin  
 10:00 am Robert Morgan\*, Grant Hofmann, Adam Rolwes, John Simmons

### Sunday, 26 April

6:30 am Chris Bauman\*, Brayden Bauman  
 8:00 am Terry Conway\*, Greg Rheinheimer, Jeff Martin, Kip Babington  
 10:00 am Grant Hofmann\*, Adam Rolwes, John Simmons, Joe Thomas

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BULLETIN COVER: Christ Appearing to His Mother – Juan de Flanders

## + Altar Server Schedule: April 2026 +

Date	Time	MC at High Mass / Acolyte at Low Mass	Thurifer	Acolyte 1	Acolyte 2
5 April 2026	6:30	Matthew Pickert	TBD	TBD	TBD
	8:00	Paul Thomas Blaxton	Matthew Rheinheimer	Paul Keys	Leo Indelicato
	10:00	Sebastian Petrick	Thomas Koschmeder	Elijah Garvey	William Hayes
12 April 2026	6:30	Ben Schubert			
	8:00	Matthew Rheinheimer			
	10:00	Joseph Noble	Paul Keys	Jude Kelly	Sean Kenney
19 April 2026	6:30	Michael Norfleet			
	8:00	Peter Blum			
	10:00	Paul Thomas Blaxton	Joseph Fowler	Kolbe Grizzle	Joseph Sinak
26 April 2026	6:30	Jack Ryan			
	8:00	Michael Blum			
	10:00	Avery Blaxton	Thomas Koschmeder	Charles Fowler	August Gottschalk

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## WELLSPRING OF TRADITION: ALLELUIA IS OUR SONG

We recently (12 March) celebrated the feast of Pope St. Gregory the Great, co-patron of our Oratory. In the lessons of the 2nd Nocturn on that day we read that it was he who ordered the Alleluia to be sung at Holy Mass but not in the period from Septuagesima until Easter. And so, in the introductory formula of each Hour in the Divine Office, the Alleluia after the Gloria Patri is replaced by *Laus tibi, Domine, rex aeternae gloriae* (‘Praise to thee, O Lord, King of eternal glory’). In Holy Mass, the Alleluia chant is either replaced by a Tract or omitted. During the medieval period, there grew up a variety of more or less elaborate ceremonies for the burial or *depositio* of the Alleluia on the eve of Septuagesima as a solemn and emotional note of saying farewell to the most beloved of Christian songs. Despite the fact that Pope Alexander II had ordered a very simple and somber way of depositing the Alleluia, a variety of elaborate rituals grew up in many places. Bishop William Durandus voiced the sentiments underlying these in his well known 13<sup>th</sup> century commentaries on the Divine Office: ‘We part from the Alleluia as from a beloved friend, whom we embrace many times and kiss on mouth, head and hand, before we leave him.’

On the eve of Septuagesima, the Office was sung with extra solemnity, and additional Alleluias were inserted in the liturgical texts, sometimes in large numbers. The custom also inspired some tender poems in honor of this sacred word, the best known of which is the 10<sup>th</sup> century *Alleluia, dulce carmen* (‘Alleluia, Song of Gladness’ in J.M. Neale’s famous translation found in English hymnals). In some churches, choirboys officiated at this quasi-liturgical ‘Burial of the Alleluia’ in the presence of the congregation, without the clergy. One description of it is in the 15<sup>th</sup> century statute book of the church of Toul:

On Saturday before Septuagesima Sunday all choirboys gather in the sacristy during the Office of None, to prepare for the burial of the Alleluia. After the last ‘Benedicamus’ [i.e., at the end of the Hour] they march in procession, with crosses, candles, holy water, and thuribles; and they carry a coffin, as in a funeral. Thus they proceed through the aisle, moaning and mourning, until they reach the cloister. There

they bury the coffin; they sprinkle it with holy water and incense it; then they return to the sacristy by the same way.

In Paris, a straw figure bearing in golden letters the inscription "Alleluia" was carried out of the choir at the end of the service and burned in the church yard. In other places it was a more modest addition to the liturgy. The special texts (hymns, responsories, antiphons) used on that occasion were taken mostly from Holy Scripture, and are filled with pious sentiments of devotion, like this personification from a farewell service of the Mozarabic liturgy (9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> century Spain):

Stay with us today, Alleluia, and tomorrow you shall part.  
When the morning rises, you shall go your way.  
Alleluia, alleluia.

The mountains and hills shall rejoice, Alleluia, while they await your glory.  
May the way you go be blessed, Alleluia; until you shall return with joy.  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

For most of us living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, words are commonplace, used in innumerable ways in multiple media every day, to the point of overload. It may be difficult for us to grasp how a single word could command such affection and awe, and how its removal from the daily language of worship could cause such a deeply emotional sense of loss. Yet such has been the role of the word Alleluia in the life of the Church. It has been the Church's announcement of the Resurrection and a call to salvation since our earliest days.

The Hebrew word *Halleluya*, meaning 'praise God,' is a mystical word found in the Old and New Testaments, particularly in the Psalms. Early Christians adopted it for several purposes. Informally, it was an expression of joy, of gratitude for salvation, and of their faith in the triumphant return of the Lord. Formally, they adapted it for their own emerging liturgies from its use in the Temple, where priests sang it as part of the 'hallel' psalms (Pss. 112-117), the last of which which may well have been the 'hymn' that Matthew and Mark tell us Jesus and the apostles sang after the Last Supper. As Christian liturgical forms became more solidly established, the use of the Alleluia as a psalm response and/or a greeting for Gospel became the norm. And so we find it in the ancient Greek Liturgy of St. James and the prototype of the Maronite liturgy, and in the ancient Liturgy of St. Mark. From very early days it was used more heavily from Easter to Pentecost, perhaps because the the *hallel* psalms were chanted by Jews at Passover.

Outside of the liturgy, Tertullian wrote in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century that the faithful of his time used to insert many alleluias in their private devotions. A century later, St. Jerome praised the pious farmers and tradesmen who used to sing it at their toil and the mothers who taught their babies to pronounce Alleluia before any other word. In the Roman Empire the Alleluia became the favorite prayerful song of oarsmen and navigators. Saint Augustine alluded to this custom, saying, 'Let the Alleluia be our sweet rowing-song!' The Roman poet and bishop Sidonius Apollinaris wrote how the river banks and shores of Gaul resounded with the Alleluia song of the rowing boatmen. Roman soldiers fighting against pagan barbarians used it as battle cry and war song. In his history of England, the Venerable Bede reported an 'Alleluia victory' won by the Christian Bretons over the Picts and Scots in 429. St. Thomas Aquinas said 'We should be an Alleluia from head to toe.' In the early Middle Ages, the expression 'Alleluia, the Lord is risen' became the general greeting of Christians for Easter, as it still remains in the East today.

The earliest references to the Alleluia as a separate element of the Mass formulary in the Roman rite are as a form of the Gradual psalm. Later, the heavy influence of the Alleluia in Byzantine liturgies led to the Alleluia becoming a responsorial chant separate from the Gradual. This happened first in the East, and then migrated to Rome. At first, the Roman singers often simply translated the Greek texts into Latin. They also borrowed some of the Greek melodies, but then elaborated them with the addition of a *jubilus* (described below). Some of the more prominent examples came to be used not only in the Mass but also in an especially splendid form of Vespers celebrated at Rome during the Easter octave. After Pope St Gregory the Great extended the singing of the Alleluia to Sundays other than in the Easter season, the Roman schola cantorum eventually developed a repertoire of Alleluias that broke away from Byzantine borrowing. In some of these, they even introduced verses that were not from the psalms.

The Alleluia chant in the Roman Gradual opens with the cantor singing 'Alleluia,' after which the choir and/or the congregation repeat it, and add a long *melisma* or extended melody on the final vowel. This particular *melisma* is known as a *jubilus*. And it is indeed a 'joyful melody' as befits the singing of this word that proclaims the cardinal reality of our Christian faith: Christ is risen from the dead. The cantor then sings the main part of the verse, the choir joins in on the final line, and then all repeat the Alleluia. The musical style of the Alleluia is quite ornate, but often within a fairly narrow range and usually includes repetition of identical melodic elements. The use of melodic formulae in familiar patterns gives the singer a general view of the whole composition, affording him a self confidence that supports the spirit of prayer. In medieval times, Alleluias were frequently 'troped' by having other text sung to some of the notes in the *jubilus*, perhaps giving rise to early Sequences.

+++++

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Ss. Gregory and Augustine, pray for us!***

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