



St. Rita Catholic Church

**89-318 Farrington Hwy.
Nanakuli, Hawaii 96792**

**Parish Office: (808) 668-7833
Website: <http://www.stritananakuli.org>**

Pastor:	Rev. Paulo Kosaka, OFM Cap	
Deacon:	Deacon Harold S. Levy, Jr.	
Office Manager:	Mele Ahuna	
Bookkeeper:	Lalla Andres	
Religious Education:	Karen Victor	808-672-5437
O. C. I. A.	Don Gerry	860-908-5954
Youth Minister:	Ivan Okuda	808-3086261
Knights of Columbus:	Bill Kozak	609-381-1193
Outreach Coordinator:	Carlin Ujimori-Kaeo	808-668-7833
Outreach/Facsimile/Prayer-line		808-668-7716

SUNDAY MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday at **5:00 PM**

Sunday at **7:00 AM, 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM**

Confessions: Saturday from 3:15 to 4:00 PM *at the church* or by appointment

Infant Baptism: Contact Parish Office

Sacrament of Matrimony: Contact the Pastor 6 months before the wedding date for an appointment.

Funerals: Contact the Pastor before going to the Mortuary

We, the people of God of St. Rita Parish in Nanakuli, are united in our belief and in our commitment to Jesus Christ. In the spirit of aloha we respond to Christ's mission of love and freedom with our care, concern and communal action. This is expressed in the stewardship of our treasure through tithing and in the gift of our time and talents through shared ministries.

As a fast growing rural parish with a large Hawaiian population we feel a special calling to stand together in truth and justice for indigenous people of this land. As part of the universal Church, our outreach extends beyond our boundaries to the global community and we affirm the human dignity of all peoples.

As a parish family we enthusiastically participate in bringing about God's reign of peace. We continue to evangelize, welcome and invite all of God's people to St. Rita Parish.

IF YOU ARE NEW TO THE PARISH HAVE A NEW PHONE NUMBER
 HAVE A NEW ADDRESS NEED OFFERTORY ENVELOPES

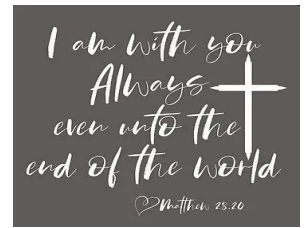
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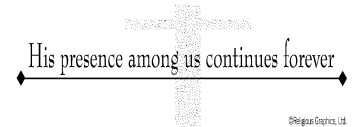
**The Solemnity of the
Ascension of the Lord**

PARISH CALENDAR

Saturday, May 16 5:00 p.m.	Mass
Sunday, May 17	..... 7:00 a.m.	Mass
	..... 9:00 a.m.	Mass (Live Stream)
	..... 5:00 p.m.	Mass
Monday, May 18	..... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Communion Service
Tuesday, May 19	..... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Communion Service
Wednesday, May 20	..... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Communion Service
	.. 9:30am -11:30 am	Food Pantry Open
Thursday, May 21	..... 8:00 a.m.	Communion Service
Friday, May 22	..... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Communion Service
	..... 6:30 p.m.	Novena St. Rita Feast Day
	..... 7:00 p.m.	Mass - Saint Rita Feast Day
Saturday, May 23	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass
	..... 3:15-4:00 p.m.	Confession - Church
	..... 5:00 p.m.	Mass



May 17, 2026

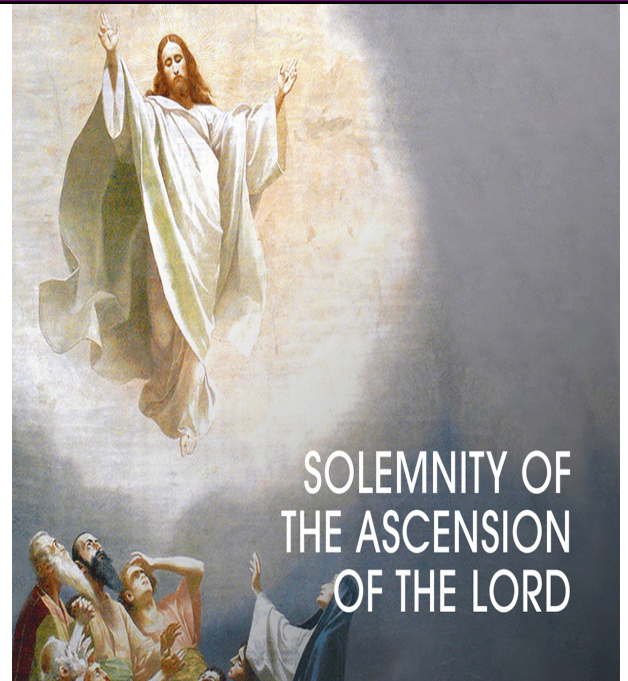


NEXT SUNDAY READINGS:

Acts:2:1-11 (63a): On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was sent to the disciples in the form of fiery tongues. They began to speak in different tongues, “as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim.”

1 Cor: 12:3b-7, 12-13: The apostle Paul wrote that there are many gifts but the same Spirit, different ministries but the same Lord.

Jn:20:19-23: Jesus appeared and told the disciples, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you. . . Receive the Holy Spirit.”



JESUS
 ✠ IS LORD ✠
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GO AND TEACH ALL PEOPLE
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORD OF LIFE: “The Lord says to us, “Do not fear: I am with you” (Isaiah 41:10). He speaks these words not as one who merely observes our pain, but as one who experienced immense suffering. And the very wounds that bear witness to his suffering indicate the essence of our identity and worth: we are loved by God. Reflecting on the healed wounds of the Risen Christ, we see that even our most difficult trials can be the place where God manifest his victory. He makes all things beautiful. He makes all things new.”

USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, “Be Not Afraid” NABRE© 2010 CCD Used with permission

WEEKLY READINGS

May 17 Sun: Ascension Sunday

Acts:1:1-11; Ps:47; Eph:1:17-23; Mt:28:16-20

May 18 : Mon: Easter Weekday

Acts:19:1-8; Ps:68:2-3ab, 4-5acd, 6-7ab; Jn:16:29-33

May 19 : Tue: Easter Weekday

Acts:20:17-27; Ps:68: 10-11, 20-21; Jn:17:11b

May 20: Wed: Easter Weekday

Acts:20:28-38; Ps:68; 29-30, 33-35a, 35bc-36ab; Jn:17:11b-19

May 21 Thur: Easter Weekday

Acts:22:30; 23:6-11; Ps:16: 1-2a, & 5, 7-8-9-10, 11; Jn:17:20-26

May 22 Fri: Saint Rita of Cascia, Religious

Acts:25:13b-21; Ps:103:1-2,11-12,19-21ab; Jn:21:15-19

May 23 Sat: Easter Weekday

Acts:28:16-20, 30-31; Ps:11: 4, 5, & 7; Jn:21:20-25

The Ascension: Jesus Ascends to Heaven !

Etymologically, the term Ascension comes from the Latin ascendere, which means to ascend or rise. Therefore, the feast of the Lord’s Ascension celebrates Christ’s ascent into the glory of Heaven and marks the end of his visible presence on Earth shortly after his death and resurrection.

The apostles, witnesses of this last encounter with Jesus, are however not “Left alone”: Christ’s departure marks a new mode of presence, not visible but universal and timeless. Jesus indeed declares to them: “Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew:28:20), signifying his presence in the sacraments, particularly in the Eucharist.

The feast of the Ascension is also for Christians and announcement of the coming of the Holy Spirit ten days later at Pentecost. Indeed, Jesus announces twice to his disciples the coming of the advocate, the Spirit of truth, as he sends them on a mission: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts: 1:8)

A STEWARDSHIP MOMENT:

In today’s Gospel Jesus charges his followers to “Make disciples of all nations.’ What exactly is going on here” What is this Great Commission anyway ? Good stewards know they are directed to share what they exercise stewardship over: their life of faith in Christ Jesus. They know Jesus didn’t direct them to go to church and to keep quiet about it; or to out into the neighborhood workplace or marketplace and just be nice. Christ’s Good News is meant to be shared. Many people in our communities don’t know about Jesus Christ. Do we realize we are supposed to do something?

International Catholic Stewardship Council

STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE

Sunday Collection :	\$3,022.00
Mass Intentions :	\$40.00
Candles :	\$10.00
Total :	\$3,072.00

Restricted Collection:

Building Fund :	\$805.00
Repairs / Maintenance :	\$50.00
Outreach :	\$2,625.00
Religious Retirement :	\$245.00
Air Conditioning :	\$6,163.00

Total : **\$12,960.00**

MAHALO FOR YOU YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF ST. RITA!

St. Rita of Cascia Feast Day May 22,2026



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The Ascension of the Lord A May 17, 2026

O Ke Kahuhipa – Aloha ‘Ohana Aloha Nui’ia

Scripture Reflections

Introduction: As we celebrate the **Ascension of the Lord**, when our Risen Lord ascended into the heaven and took His seat at the right hand of the Father, we are reminded that Jesus did not leave us behind as orphans but sends us out with a mission and a promise, **“I am with you always unto the end of the age” Matthew 28:20.**

Today’s readings invite us to move from believing in Jesus Christ to actively witnessing to Him in our daily lives strengthen by His presence.

First Reading: Acts of the Apostles 1: 1-11 Background Context: The 1st reading taken from the **Acts of the Apostles** is the opening **written by Luke** as a continuation of his Gospel. It is set after the Resurrection of Jesus, during the forty days when Risen Jesus appeared to His disciples teaching them and preparing them for their mission. **(Luke began his letter, addressed to Theophilus, Luke 1: 1, whose name in Greek means “friend of God, “Theos – God” & “philos- friend”. Theophilus was a gentile government official. At this time Paul was in Rome and Luke also).**

Application to Life: This passage described the **Ascension** as **Jesus who returned to the Father** marking a turning point from Jesus’ earthly mission **to mission of the Church, that is our mission as His disciples.** Before ascending Jesus gave an important instruction; **the disciples must wait in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit.**

We find the disciples who are eager and desiring to know if this was the time when God would restore Israel – end times, but Jesus shifted their focus. Instead of worrying about **“the time and seasons – end times”** and when this may take place. Jesus instructed them rather **to the important task that they are called to a mission.** Christian life – our discipleship is not about guessing about the future events, rather it is about witnessing as a disciple in our daily life. **Ascension** itself is not about Jesus leaving but a new way of being present in the disciples’ lives – in our lives!

This passage teaches us that waiting is part of God’s plan. The disciples wanted quick answers about times and dates, but Jesus gave them promise instead, that the Holy Spirit would come, and they would receive the strength for their mission ahead. How we are very much like the disciples who want quick answers and resolutions to life’s challenges. But Jesus called them and all of us to deeper trust and to receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit so that we can courageously bear witness to Jesus Christ.

Like the disciples we often wait for “**the perfect clarity**” or “**the right time**” before acting. We may focus too much on questions we cannot answer. Jesus calls us to trust and be witnesses in our daily lives, **at home, at work, and in society**. The promise of the **Holy Spirit** assures us that we are not alone. We are given strength, courage and guidance for our mission. Am I just looking up waiting and hesitating or am I actively living as a witness to Jesus Christ? My cousin famously had an answer to all his procrastinations, “**tomorrow, tomorrow I’ll get to it.**” I wonder if he was able to do anything?

The **Feast Ascension** reminds us that our Faith must move from words to action, trusting that God is always with us. Do not procrastinate in spiritual life, we may never catch up to it...the regret of so many Christians at the door of their death, are the regret of not practicing their faith in action when they could have!

Second Reading: Ephesus 1: 17-23 Background Context: The 2nd reading taken from the Letter of Paul to the Ephesians, is a prayer where Paul asks God to bless believers with wisdom and deeper understanding. He does not pray for success or comfort but that they may truly know God. This reminds us that Faith is not just about information, but about a living relationship with God.

Application to Life: Paul used the beautiful phrase, “**may the eyes of your hearts be enlightened**” **Ephesians 1:18**. He is stating that we need more than physical sight, we need spiritual vision. Many times, we see only problems, fears, or limitations. But with faith we begin to see hope, the purpose and the meaning as we see God’s presence in our lives.

Here we see that Paul highlights **3 important things**; the **hope** that God has given us, the **richness** of being God’s people and the **greatness** of God’s power. This power is the same power that raised Jesus from the dead, and conquered sin and death.

What Paul is stating is that God is not distant nor helpless in the affairs of human life, that God is active and powerful in our lives, even when we do not feel it or it seems contrary. Paul reminds us that Jesus Christ is above all power and He is the head of the Church, which is His body. This means we are connected to Jesus Christ and to one another through our baptism, “**the body of Christ the church**”. We do not walk alone; we belong to a body, the Church, the community of believers guided by Jesus Christ and His power.

This passage reminds and challenges us to take time to grow in relationship with God. Do we try to see life with faith and not just with our human limitations and fall into fear? Do we trust that God is working within our lives daily and that God can transform our weakness

into strength? If we desire to see God's hand at work, we must see it through our daily prayer, for even in difficult moments we will recognize the good hand of God!

We are invited to open our hearts to God, so that we may live with hope, grow in deeper trust and awareness of God's presence.

Gospel: Matthew 28: 16-20 Background Context: I remember one of our professors during our formation in the seminary stating, **“What you learn here is not just for your exams but for life.”** The real test is not just the exam that we have to appear before and pass but how we live out what we studied and learned.

In similar way in **today's Gospel taken from Matthew**, Jesus gave His disciples a mission, not just to remember His words – teachings but to live them and share them. Then the disciples went ahead and met **the Risen Jesus** on a mountain in Galilee. We are told that some worshipped Him, but the Gospel also honestly tells us that some still doubted.

Application to Life: In a way it is comforting, that **Faith and doubt** did exist together in some of the hearts of the disciples, yet Jesus did not reject them. We who are baptized and have received the Sacraments, especially Confirmation and Holy Communion, should be strong in faith and should not harbor doubts. But the truth is that we often do, we do doubt and even struggle with our faith in the truth taught by Jesus Christ.

What a comfort indeed that Jesus would not simply reject us for our weakness of faith but like the apostles still encourages us to grow in faith and to entrusts us as He did with them with a great mission – to live out our Faith. God does not wait for perfect people; God works through ordinary people like us.

Jesus began by saying **“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me”** **Matthew 28:18**. This reminds us that mission – proclaim the Good News, the Gospel is rooted in God's power not ours. Then followed the command, **“Go and make disciples of all the nations”** **Matthew 28: 19**. Jesus did not ask them to simply to preach or teach but to form disciples. We too are called to form disciples, first ourselves by living out daily our discipleship and then to encourage and lead people know Jesus, follow Jesus and live Jesus' teachings. Jesus told them **to baptize in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit**, demonstrating that **Faith is a relationship with the living God**. Moreover, finally Jesus gave a promise full of hope, **“I am with you always to the end of the age”** **Matthew 28: 20**. Though the Risen Jesus ascends into heaven His presence remains, by the power of the Holy Spirit. This Gospel invites us to reflect how do I live out this mission-discipleship in our daily lives? At times we are called to witness and very often **“our**

preaching” happens not so much to what we state; but through our actions, attitudes and choices we make and other see and recognize who we are.

As **St. Francis of Assisi** is often quoted saying, **“Preach the Gospel at all times, use words if necessary.”** This means that we kindness, forgiveness, honesty and love can speak more powerfully than words.

So that question is not just whether **“we preach”** but **“how we preach”**, in our homes, in our workplaces and to our neighbors. **People may not always listen to what we have to say but they will always notice how we live.** The great commission by Jesus is not only for priests or missionaries, it’s for all who are baptized and are disciples of our Lord.

Jesus called each one of us, Jesus calls ordinary people to an extraordinary **mission - to witness with our words when needed and always through our actions – our lives, trusting that God is with us every step of the way, let us do our part!** Today don’t simply just look up to heaven, go out and be Jesus’ living witnesses, let your spouse notice, your children see, may your neighbors know you are a living Christian whose Lord is none other than Jesus Christ.

COMING DIOCESAN CLERGY RETREAT: Pastors of the Diocese of Honolulu will be on a week of Clergy Retreat from **Monday, 18th – Friday, 22nd**. I will be in the retreat with my brother priests. Please keep in your prayers all the pastors who will be on retreat.

Ho’omaika’i to All our Parish Graduates of 2026: Do call the church office at **808 668 - 7833** and leave your name & school graduating from: elementary, junior, high school or college **by May 31st**. We want to honor all our graduates at the Masses on the **weekend of June 13th and 14th**. Let us give thanks to God for all your accomplishments!

OUR PARISH PATRON FEAST of ST. RITA of CASCIA (1371 – 1447)

Brief Biography of St. Rita of Cascia (1371 – 1447), also known as **“the Saint of the Impossible,”** has been for centuries one of the most popular and venerated saints. **Rita**, whose birth name was **Margherita** was born in Roccaporena, a few miles outside Cascia (Perugia). She was the **only daughter of Antonio Lotti and Amata Ferri**. Her parents were called **“Christ’s peace makers”** – wise people, who often contributed to settling the quarrels between the Guelphs and Ghibellines clans.

Margherita, was still a young girl when she made up her mind to consecrate her life to God. Her parents, who were already well on in their years, insisted, however, that their only daughter should marry.

Margherita (Rita) not wishing to cause her parents sorrow married therefore Paolo Mancini, when she was just 16. The from the early years their marriage were very difficult, because of her husband’s character and behavior. These difficulties, however, did not deter Rita from assisting him with tender care

and conjugal love. Their marriage was soon blessed with **birth of twin brothers Giangiacomo and Paolo Maria**.

Rita with her simple manners, her virtues and devotion, and her love for the family helped her **husband Paolo** to slowly change his conduct and live an honest and hardworking life. **Two tragedies interrupted Rita's newly recovered peace**; the murder of her husband in 1413 and the death of her twin sons soon after. Truly a tragedy that weighed heavily upon her heart! God placed a heavy cross on her shoulders to bear, yet ever growing closer to Jesus crucified, she calmly placed all her trust in God.

Now that she was alone losing all her **"earthly connections"**, **Rita** dedicated herself to many acts of mercy and in particular to the reconciliation of her relatives with her husband's murders.

Meanwhile the original desire to consecrate herself and enter the Augustinian Convent started to grow again in her. Three times she applied, and each time denied but she persevered, and she was finally accepted in 1417. (**St. Rita of Cascia was canonized a saint by Pope Leo XIII on May 24, 1900**).

There Rita lived 30 years of generous offering of her life to God and to people. On Good Friday Rita received on her forehead the stigmata of Jesus' crown of thorns. She accepted agony with joy and heroic strength, completing the sufferings of Our Lord in her own body. **Rita died on Saturday, 22nd of May 1447**.

Novena Prayers to Our Parish Patron, St. Rita of Cascia may be prayed at home with your family until the actual feast day on **Friday, May 22nd**. On the feast day, **6:00pm the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, during which Novena prayers and Anointing of the Sick will take place. 7:00pm the feast day mass. Do join us and also pray at home the Daily Novena Prayer.**

St. Rita is the Patron Saint of Impossible cases. We have many situations in our life that seem impossible to overcome; perhaps in **faith crisis** where we ourselves or our loved ones have drifted away from the precious faith, **relationships** that are immoral and leads to dead end – spiritual death, **addictions, and inclinations** to grave sins such as pride, envy, gluttony, lust, greed, anger and sloth The **often lingering feeling of despair and guilt** of the past and **many others** that seem to be attached to us.

We implore St. Rita's intercession to assist us in our weaknesses and to overcome what seem impossible so that we may grow in the life of Christian virtues: patience, kindness, forgiveness, compassion, generosity, purity, a courageous Christian of today!

Daily Prayer to St. Rita of Cascia (1381- 1457) Patron of the Impossible Cases

Dear St. Rita, during your entire life on earth you found your happiness by following the will of our heavenly Father. Help me to be as trusting of God in all His plans for me. Help me this day to give myself to Him as you did, without limits, without fear, without counting the cost. Here, mention your request: _____.

Help me to be generous in serving the needs of others, patient in all difficulties, forgiving toward all who injure me. Help me to learn more deeply the great mystery of the of the Cross of Jesus, so that by embracing it as you did, I may come to experience its power to heal and to save. Amen.

Have a Blessed week in the Lord! A prailo of ncp