

Dear Padre,

I've offered many Masses for wife and family, thinking if perhaps they are in Purgatory, it would help shorten their time. How can we tell if our prayers and Masses are beneficial? How do we know?

It has been a long- and well-established expression of Catholic faith and practice to pray for the departed. Our prayers help us as we grieve and mourn the passing of the people we love. Our prayers help us keep their passing in perspective—not as the end of something, but rather as the beginning of new life in Christ. This is beneficial and needs no further evidence to illustrate the value of the practice.

Your question, on the other hand, goes beyond what the tradition emphasizes. It seems like you are seeking some sort of guarantee or warranty, which you assume will be reassuring. Unfortunately, there is no guarantee or warranty either promised or implied in this spiritual practice. In death, indeed in the whole of Christian life, we bump up against mystery, not certitude. We are invited to enter into the mystery. To grow in the mystery. To be graced by the mystery. Nothing more is possible. We hope because we believe. We believe because we practice what we hope for. ●



RENATA SEDMAKOVA / SHUTTERSTOCK

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSsR / DearPadre.org

Monday MARCH 23 <i>Lenten Weekday</i> Dn 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62 or 13:41c-62 Jn 8:1-11	Thursday MARCH 26 <i>Lenten Weekday</i> Gn 17:3-9 Jn 8:51-59	Saturday MARCH 28 <i>Lenten Weekday</i> Ez 37:21-28 Jn 11:45-56
Tuesday MARCH 24 <i>Lenten Weekday</i> Nm 21:4-9 Jn 8:21-30	Friday MARCH 27 <i>Lenten Weekday</i> Jer 20:10-13 Jn 10:31-42	Sunday MARCH 29 <i>Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord</i> Mt 21:1-11 Is 50:4-7 Phil 2:6-11 Mt 26:14-27:66 or 27:11-54
Wednesday MARCH 25 <i>The Annunciation of the Lord</i> Is 7:10-14; 8:10 Heb 10:4-10 Lk 1:26-38		

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.



FAUSTO RENDA / SHUTTERSTOCK

A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

A very widespread ailment of our time is the fatigue of living: reality seems to us to be too complex, burdensome, difficult to face. And so, we switch off, we fall asleep.... But reality has to be faced.... Let us go to Jesus: he can heal us; he can revive us. Jesus is our hope!

GENERAL AUDIENCE, ROME, JUNE 25, 2025

Our Parish COMMUNITY

March 22, 2026

Fifth Sunday of Lent (A)

Ezekiel 37:12-14 / Romans 8:8-11 / John 11:1-45 or 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45



I Am the Resurrection

ANN M. GARRIDO

The prophets before Jesus had long spoken of God's dreams for our world. In seasons of darkness and despair, they would offer snapshots of hope for what it would be like in the "kingdom of God." Those who were blind would see. Those unable to walk would dance. Those imprisoned would be free. And those who had died would be raised to life again.

In today's gospel, we hear that Martha shared in the prophets' hope. When Jesus tells her that her brother Lazarus will rise, she replies, "I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day." In other words, Martha believes in the coming "kingdom of God." But then, Jesus stuns her with his response: "I am the resurrection and the life." That is, "I am the kingdom of God."

Origen of Alexandria—a third-century theologian—spoke of Jesus as the *autobasileia*. The term comes from two Greek words: *auto*, meaning "self," and *basileia*, meaning "kingdom." It was his way of expressing that Jesus was the fulfillment of all that the prophets had preached. He was all of God's dreams for us manifest, not as had been anticipated in a future time, but in a living person.

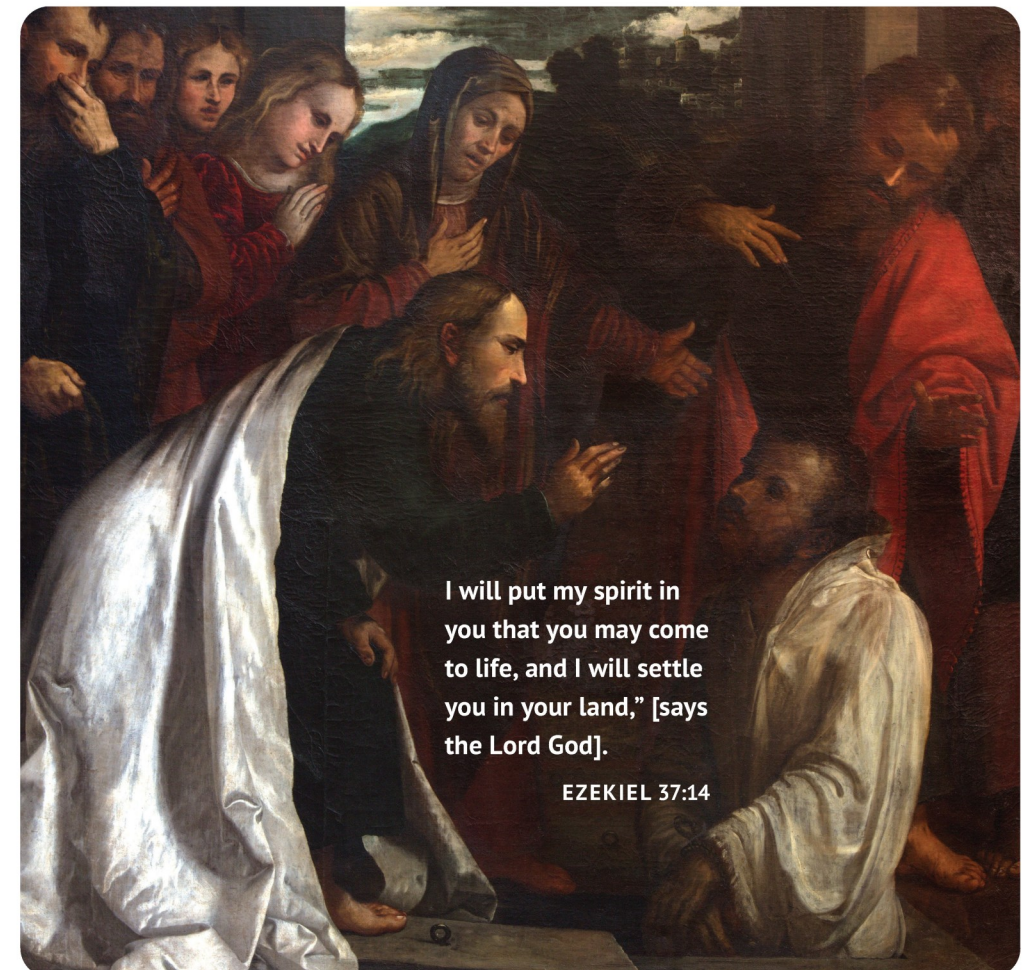
We still wait for God's dreams to be realized on a global scale, but, like Martha, we have seen what that realization will look like already in our experience of Jesus. With Martha, we can confess that he is "the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world." ●

Reflect

Where do I see signs or snapshots of the kingdom of God?



LEARN ABOUT THE AUTHORS OF OUR PARISH COMMUNITY



I will put my spirit in you that you may come to life, and I will settle you in your land," [says the Lord God].

EZEKIEL 37:14



St. Paul Catholic Church

713 CRAWFORD STREET
VICKSBURG, MS 39180

Fifth Sunday of Lent
March 21 & 22, 2026



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Parish Announcements

Thank You

A heartfelt thank you to Paul and Linda Banchetti for their generous gift of providing lighting behind the crucifix. Their thoughtfulness has beautifully enhanced our worship space.

Baskets for Believers

Be sure to return the filled basket to Vicksburg Family Development, located at 1205 Monroe St. (Mon-Fri, 8 AM—5 PM) or to St. Paul Parish office by Monday, March 30, by 12 PM. Please be sure to attach the egg to the basket.

Daily Mass

There will be no daily Mass on Thursday, March 26, due to Father Rusty being out of town for the senior retreat.

Catholic Moms Group

The Vicksburg Catholic Moms Group is continuing the study on Marian virtues this Sunday, March 22, at 3 PM in the St. Michael's Education Building. Now is a great time to join the study. Please join us!

Easter Flowers

Donations for Easter flowers are used to pay for the lilies and palms that will decorate the church during the Easter season. Envelopes can be placed in the basket with your weekly offering or brought to the office during office hours.

Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday, March 29
Mass: 10:30 AM. Mass will begin in the Farrell Hall parking lot.

Holy Thursday, April 2
No 12:00 PM Daily Mass
Mass: 5:30 PM
Adoration following Mass until 8 PM

Good Friday, April 3

No 7:00 AM Daily Mass
Office closed for Good Friday
Stations: 12:00 PM
Service: 3:00 PM

Easter Vigil, April 4

No 4:00 PM Mass
Easter Vigil Mass: 8:00 PM

Easter Sunday, April 5

Morning Mass: 10:30 AM

Easter Mon & Tue., April 6 & 7

Office closed for Easter
No Daily Mass

Offertory Summary

Weekly Budget.....\$7,700

Online Giving

Mar 9 - Mar 15.....\$1,510

Weekend Offertory

Feb 28 & Mar 1.....\$4,835

Mar 7 & 8\$9,020

Mar 14 & 15\$5,433

Mar 21 & 22.....\$, ____

Mar 28 & 29.....\$, ____

Special Collections

March 15: Catholic Relief
Services.....\$250



Sign up for automatic online giving at www.osvhub.com/st-paulscatholic-church

Weekend Mass Schedule†

Saturday

#Confession 3:15-3:45 PM

Mass 4:00 PM

Sunday

#Confession 9:45-10:15 AM

Mass 10:30 AM

Daily Mass Schedule†

Monday 7:00 AM

Tuesday 12:00 PM

Wednesday 7:00 AM

Thursday 12:00 PM

Friday 7:00 AM

† All schedule updates can be found in the Parish Calendar section of the bulletin.

‡ For Confessions during the week, please call the Parish Office.



I am the resurrection and the life: whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and every who lives and believes in me will never die.

Today's Readings

Visit bible.usccb.org or scan this QR code to find the readings



Check out our Social Media!



St. Paul
Catholic Church

Sanctuary Flowers

In observance of the Lenten season, no flowers are placed at the Ambo

Pastoral Care

If you or a loved one is hospitalized or in urgent need of anointing, please call the church office Emergency Ext 106

Parish Calendar

MAR 22, SUN	Children's Church led by: Amy Winschel
MAR 23, MON	Offertory Counters: Jan Jackson & Paul Banchetti
MAR 25, WED	RCIA will meet at 6 PM in Glynn Hall
MAR 26, THUR	No Daily Mass
MAR 27, FRI	Stations of the Cross 5:30 PM.

Knights of Columbus

<https://facebook.com/kc898>

www.ms-kofc.com/898

Become a KNIGHT.
Scan this QR code to join the Knights today!



MAR 24 Rosary 6:30PM followed by Recruitment & Retention social.

MAR 27 K of C Fish Fry @ 5:30 PM

MAR 31 Rosary @ 6:30 PM followed by 5th Tuesday Social.

Mass Intentions

MAR 23, MON Doris Davidson, Deceased

MAR 24, TUES Special Intentions

MAR 25, WED Mike Hill, Deceased

MAR 26, THUR No Daily Mass

MAR 27, FRI Laura Ables, Healing

MAR 28, SAT Bob Coleman, Deceased

To request a Mass Intention for a Daily Mass or the Saturday Vigil Mass, please call, email, or visit the parish office. Each Mass with no intention is offered for all St. Paul's parishioners.

St. Paul Parish Staff

Pastor Fr. Rusty Vincent	Office Manager Ashley Roesch	Office Assistant Janis Koestler
Bookkeeper Beverly Connelly	Maintenance Charles Hahn	Organist Karen Harrison

Leadership & Ministries

Parish Council President Travis Thornell	Finance Council Chair Bill Fulcher	
Bereavement Story Ebersole	RCIA Connie and David Hosemann, and Bruce Ebersole	Meals On Wheels Jan Jackson, Christy Guizerix, and Rae Perry
Altar Flowers Cynthia Montalbano	Homebound Janis Koestler	Children's Church Ashley Lawrence
Baptism Prep Barbara Hill	Confirmation Jordan Amborn	