



AS WE FOCUS ON THE HEAVENS, WE CHOOSE TO RISE

Ascension Sunday is our day to celebrate our God's infinite love and His reign over all creation as Christ ascended into heaven taking His seat at the right hand of the Father.

Christ appeared to his apostles, reassuring them that He will always be with us until the end of the world (Matthew 28:20).

Although in today's world we may find it hard to clearly see Jesus strengthening His will on earth as it is in heaven. That's when he wants to look in the mirror. God wants others to see and hear Christ in us.

On Sunday, we declare that commitment to share the good news in our words and actions as we jubilantly respond with Psalm 47, "God mounts His throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord!"

This week Pope Francis encouraged Christians to be compassionate witnesses of the Risen Christ, knowing that He remains with us. As Jesus directed the apostles, he wants all of us to "Go and teach all nations... teaching them to observe all that [He] commanded" (Matt 26: 19 - 20).

In his Catechesis on Prayer, Pope Francis said, "Men and women who pray know that hope is stronger than discouragement. They believe that love is more powerful than death, and that it will surely triumph one day, be it in times and ways we do not know.

"Men and women of prayer bear the reflection of light on their faces: because even on the darkest days the sun does not cease to illuminate them. Prayer illuminates you: it illuminates your soul, it illuminates your heart, and it illuminates your face. Even in the darkest times, even in the times of greatest pain.

"We are all bearers of joy. Have you thought of this? That you are a bearer of joy? Or do you prefer to bear bad news, things that bring sadness?"



"We are all capable of bearing joy. This life is the gift that God has given us: and it is too short to be consumed in sadness, in bitterness. Let us praise God, content simply to exist. Let us look at the universe, let us look at the beauty

and let us also look at our crosses and say: "But, you exist, you have made us this way, for you". It is necessary to feel that restlessness in the heart that leads us to thank and to praise God. We are the children of the great King, of the Creator, capable of reading His signature in all creation; that creation that today we do not protect, but in that creation, there is the signature of God who made it out of love. May the Lord make us understand this ever more deeply, and lead us to say, "thank you"; and that "thank you" is a beautiful prayer."

Let us look heavenward. Keep your eyes fixed on eternal life. Do not let negative thoughts, hateful words, or ugly bantering disturb your focus. Choose to find the good. Choose to remain in Christ. Choose to pray in all circumstances. Choose to rise.

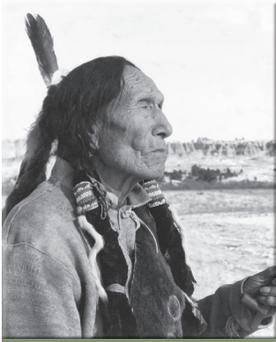


**West Virginia Council of Churches
with Bishop Mark Brennan**
will hold a virtual Interfaith Service of Prayer
regarding the coronavirus pandemic

MONDAY, MAY 25 • 12:00 NOON

Faith leaders representing a variety of congregations will lead all in prayers of hope and resolution. To participate in this virtual event you must register and [click here](#).

DOCUMENTARY RELEASED ON NATIVE AMERICAN'S JOURNEY TO SAINTHOOD



NICHOLAS BLACK ELK

He was a Native American, a medicine man, and a Catholic. Nicholas Black Elk, born in the 1800s into the Oglala Lakota people, of South Dakota, may be the first

Native American male to be declared saint. During his life he witnessed the most dramatic shifts in Native American history and experienced revelations that would keep him longing to become closer to Jesus on the “Good Red Road.”

A documentary on Black Elk’s cause for sainthood has been released and will be airing on ABC affiliates within the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston in the next several weeks.

“Walking the Red Road: Nicholas Black Elk’s Journey to Sainthood” was funded by the Catholic Communication Campaign of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and is a rare opportunity for Catholic programming in a mainstream media outlet. The documentary will be airing on WTRF-Wheeling on May 24th at 5 AM; WBOY-Clarksburg on May 24th at noon; and on WCHS-Charleston on June 28th at 12:30 PM.

The following was written as a profile of Black Elk by Dr. Damian Costello, author of Black Elk-Colonialism and Lakota Catholicism:

Servant of God Nicholas Black Elk is an example of discipleship for our times, though he lived the faith



Black Elk
YOUNG NICHOLAS BLACK ELK

in a completely different context.

Black Elk grew up hunting buffalo on the Northern Plains. He fought at the battles of Little Bighorn and Wounded Knee. As a young man, he was an important medicine man, using the power of song to heal the sick.

In 1904, Black Elk entered the Catholic Church and embraced a different way of healing. Utilizing his abilities to memorize Scripture and speak persuasively, he became a missionary

disciple. He served as a catechist, which in his community functioned much like a permanent deacon does today.

Black Elk went on missions to neighboring reservations and spoke to Catholic groups throughout the country, bringing more than 400 people into the church, including 113 that called him their godfather.

“THERE IS ONLY ONE
IMPORTANT LAW... TO LOVE
ONE ANOTHER AND BE
THANKFUL FOR EACH OTHER.”

~NICHOLAS BLACK ELK

Like many saintly people, Black Elk suffered greatly. He experienced the deaths of two wives and some of his children, endured debilitating illness, severe injury and partial blindness.

In times of tragedy, it can feel like one’s world is collapsing. Faith can dissipate, leaving emptiness in its wake. Yet Black Elk bore these trials with hope and persevered in his witness.

“Now my heart is getting sad — but my heart will never turn bad,” he wrote in a letter in 1948, two years before his death. “Ever since Wakan Tanka (the Lakota

name for God) gave light to my heart, it stands in light without end.”

Another layer of suffering that makes Black Elk’s discipleship and possible sainthood stand out: his world did collapse. The buffalo were killed. The

old way of life was destroyed. The Lakota people were imprisoned on reservations and forcibly reprogrammed.

Black Elk taught his people that Jesus was not just a good teacher, but the key teacher.



BLACK ELK CATECHIST WITH THREE CHILDREN

For Black Elk, Jesus and his new life were the answer to a collapsing world: Only he can fully heal the Earth, bring back the dead and explain how to make sense of the newcomers.

Black Elk explained this hope in a 1909 letter he wrote to the Lakota. He listed the tribes he visited and included the settlers among them. All — whether Lakota, allies or former enemies — are good people and he prayed for all. “We all suffer in this land,” Black Elk wrote. “But let me tell you, God has a special place for us when our time has come.”

Black Elk once healed the sick with sacred songs; with his baptism

he became a missionary disciple of life, radiating the healing love of Jesus into a broken world.



NICHOLAS BLACK ELK TEACHES
HIS DAUGHTER LUCY HOW TO
PRAY THE ROSARY

TOGETHER OR APART GOD IS WITH US

On Wednesday, the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston shared a video highlighting procedures to keep you safe while in our Churches. Bishop Mark has continued the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass until further notice. Sick persons and those more susceptible to infection – the elderly, those already in frail health – are urged to remain at home and participate in televised or online Masses. Anyone who fears being infected by attending Mass should stay home. We will continue to present our televised and live streamed Masses at the Cathedral of St. Joseph and many parishes around the state.

Together we need to honor the sacredness of each person, being mindful to protect our sisters and brothers in Christ. No matter if we are together in our church or if we must

remain apart, we are all united through the Trinity.

As we will hear in the Gospel reading on Sunday let us all remember the words of Jesus, “I am with you always until the end of the World: – Matthew 28:20. God knows our heart and our desires.

Having to make the decision to remain away from church, when we are longing to be there, is true fasting. Those who are unable to come to worship and experience the Sacrament can offer their experience as fasting bringing graces and a deeper connection to the Lord.

“Such fasting could help people toward a deepening of their personal relation to the Lord in the Sacrament; it could be an act of solidarity with all those who have a yearning for the Sacrament but cannot receive it...Spiritual hunger,

like bodily hunger can be a vehicle of love,” Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI wrote in his book Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith, when he was Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger.

For details about the directives in place for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston please go to [HTTPS://DWC.ORG/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2020/05/REOPENING-OF-PARISHES-FOR-PUBLIC-WORSHIP-DIOCESAN-DIRECTIVES.PDF](https://dwc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Reopening-of-Parishes-for-Public-Worship-Diocesan-Directives.pdf).

Moreover, the faithful must also check in with their parishes for more specific directives to their church. It is a good time to make sure your parish office has your most current telephone number, and both mailing and email addresses, so you are up to date with any and all announcements. Click or copy and paste this link to watch the procedural video: [HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/RXN 8sQo568](https://youtu.be/rxn8sQo568)

LET US GO
Rejoicing
TO THE
HOUSE OF THE LORD.
PSALM 122

Visit www.dwc.org to view the guidelines for returning to Mass.

Please contact your parish before attending for additional guidelines and special Mass times.



From the Desk of Superintendent Mary Ann Deschaine, Ed.S.

Department of Catholic Schools • www.WVCatholicSchools.org

WORD OF GRACE FOR WV CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Bragging rights! Our Catholic schools have earned them.

I smile as I sit here, writing this, and I have even caught myself shaking my head in amazement, as I think back on the first 72 hours of our stay at home mandates. Our principals and teachers were ready right out of the gate with a solid game plan for remote instruction and online learning. Sure, we had our rollercoaster of emotions and thoughts of what this all might look like, but that ride was short. These professionals quickly got on track and went above and beyond to make sure students would continue to be graded on assignments, tested in their disciplines, receive tutoring, and part take in special one on one or small group lessons, such as music, voice, etc.

While times have been uncertain our goals have remained very clear. With complete commitment to our mission as a Catholic school community we forged ahead confidently in our academic journey. Our principals and teachers did not settle for pass-fail curriculum across the board to lessen the load. They took their lesson plans as serious or if not, more so, than in a bricks and mortar classroom. They chose to push forward and not slack by keeping student grades where they were for the last grading period before the stay at home order. We as a Catholic school system continued to give our students responsibility, challenges, and accountability – expectations and character that make us stand out.

For all those efforts we have received praise not only from parents, grandparents, pastors, and alumni, but also families and education professionals from school communities outside our own.

Further, when other school systems were unable to administer their state or national assessments, our Catholic school students had already completed multiple assessments to define strengths, weaknesses, and any gaps. When we return to school in August our students will be assessed again. To measure their progress, as well as help develop a course of action for any necessary adjustments for the 2020-2021.

We have a proven track record that we can easily transition from a school building setting to a remote learning situation.

I applaud everyone involved in our Catholic schools for keeping us strong academically, socially, physically, and, most important, spiritually. Rest assured, when your child or grandchild is in a Catholic school they are loved and valued.

As we approach the celebration of the Ascension of our Lord, we prepare our hearts for devout thanksgiving of Jesus entering heaven to forever intercede for us at the right hand of the God the Father. Despite all that comes our way we if we remain faithful, focused, and prayerful, knowing that Christ will always be with us, nothing will be impossible.

Peace,



Mary Ann Deschaine, Ed.S.



Catholic
Communication
Campaign

CONNECT WITH CHRIST

The documentary of Nicholas Black Elk was made possible with the help of the Catholic Communication Campaign (CCC). It is through websites, social networks, television, radio, and print, that the CCC helps the Church spread the Gospel message through the media locally and nationally.

The CCC provides ongoing support for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' website (www.usccb.org), USCCB video productions including the reflections on the daily readings, and content development for many of the USCCB's media platforms.

Catholic Communication Campaign funds have also made possible media campaigns supporting marriage, family communications, service to others, and reconciliation, that reached millions on radio and television. Other projects have included the acclaimed public television documentaries *Picturing Mary* and *The Face: Jesus in Art*. . . .

CCC funds also support communications projects in developing areas of the world where the Church is growing but lacking in resources.

The Catholic Communication Campaign helps connect people at home and abroad with Christ. Please be generous when asked to give in your parish. The 2020 collection will take place in most parishes this weekend.

MASS READINGS FOR MAY 24, 2020
THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

First Reading: ACTS 1:1-11

In the first book, Theophilus, I dealt with all that Jesus did and taught until the day he was taken up, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. He presented himself alive to them by many proofs after he had suffered, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While meeting with them, he enjoined them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for “the promise of the Father about which you have heard me speak; for John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” When they had gathered together they asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” He answered them, “It is not for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has established by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” When he had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight. While they were looking intently at the sky as he was going, suddenly two men dressed in white garments stood beside them. They said, “Men of Galilee, why are you standing there looking at the sky? This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will return in the same way as you have seen him going into heaven.”

Responsorial PSALM 66:1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 16, 20

R. (6) God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord. or R. Alleluia.

All you peoples, clap your hands, shout to God with cries of gladness, For the LORD, the Most High, the awesome, is the great king over all the earth.

R. God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord. or R. Alleluia.

God mounts his throne amid shouts of joy; the LORD, amid trumpet blasts. Sing praise to God, sing praise; sing praise to our king, sing praise.

R. God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord. or R. Alleluia.

For king of all the earth is God; sing hymns of praise. God reigns over the nations, God sits upon his holy throne.

R. God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord. or R. Alleluia.

Second Reading EPH 1:17-23

Brothers and sisters:

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a Spirit of wisdom and revelation resulting in knowledge of him. May the eyes of your hearts be enlightened,

that you may know what is the hope that belongs to his call, what are the riches of glory in his inheritance among the holy ones, and what is the surpassing greatness of his power for us who believe, in accord with the exercise of his great might, which he worked in Christ, raising him from the dead and seating him at his right hand in the heavens, far above every principality, authority, power, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things beneath his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of the one who fills all things in every way.

Alleluia MT 28:19A, 20B

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Go and teach all nations, says the Lord; I am with you always, until the end of the world.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel MT 28:16-20

The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them. When they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted. Then Jesus approached and said to them, “All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

PRAYER INTENTIONS

That as parishes throughout the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston reopen to the public, Masses may be celebrated with respect and dignity while maintaining the safety and health of all, we pray . . .

That the elderly and infirmed may continue to know our compassion and love, especially during these times of isolation, we pray . . .

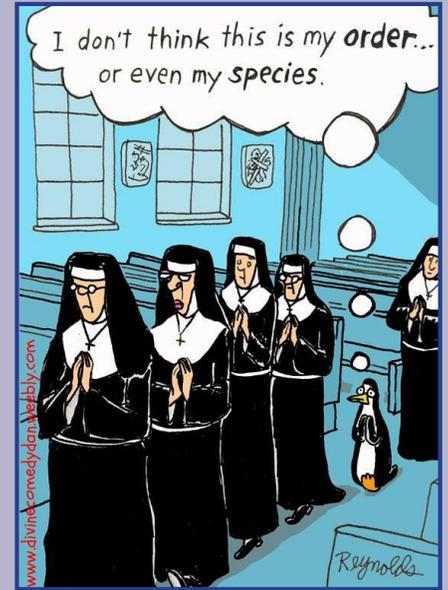
That all those graduating from Kindergarten to University, may celebrate their accomplishments and look forward to a future full of hope, we pray . . .

That all school personnel, especially teachers, may know of our appreciation for them and that they may not lose heart as education continues to take on different forms, we pray . . .

Lord hear our prayer



A LITTLE CATHOLIC HUMOR



Liturgy of the Hours LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Pray the prayer for this day, this hour!
Scan the QR code or visit the link below to view
a PDF version of the Liturgy of the Hours.

EBREVIARY.COM LITURGY OF THE HOURS



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Summersville	FM	91.3
Wheeling - Martins Ferry, OH	FM	90.7

You can find LoL Radio online at LoLRadio.org

YOUTH MINISTRY CONTINUES

YOUNG WV CATHOLICS invites teens to be part of

*project*YM
A WEEKLY LIVE YOUTH NIGHT
LIVE

Instead of feeling cooped up, encourage your teen to feel energized by participating in the PROJECT YM LIVE event and Young WV Catholics Zoom conversation. Office of Youth, Young Adult and Campus Ministry Interim Director, Shawn Madden, invites you to find out more and sign up at:

www.youngwvcatholics.com/ymlive.html

Project YM, a national youth ministry organization, streamed its first hour-long live youth night last week. It was attended online by more than 9,000 households! The event at projectym.com/live had games, prizes, a solid message, and engaging prayer. Help middle and high school students you know by sharing this opportunity.

ONLINE RESOURCES TO CHECK OUT THIS WEEK:

In addition to our diocesan website, DWC.ORG, check out:

- The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' website, for resources presented in text, audio, and video formats. Daily Readings written: USCCB.ORG/BIBLE/READINGS Daily Readings audio: USCCB.ORG/BIBLE/READINGS-AUDIO.CFM Video Reflection USCCB.ORG/BIBLE/REFLECTIONS/INDEX.CFM
The usccb.org site will also give you tutorials on how to pray the Rosary, the Divine Chaplet, and other prayers and devotions.
- National Catholic Register for Catholic news, stories, blogs, etc. at NCREGISTER.COM
- The Catholic News Service for the latest headlines for Catholics WWW.CATHOLICNEWS.COM
- My Daily Living with Fr. John Chapin Engler at MYDAILYLIVING.COM
- Fr. James DeViese - Altar-ed State: WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/C/FRDEVIESE
- Music ministries on Facebook: *My Heart is Ready*, WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/WWW.DAVIDHAAS.US and *John Angotti Music Mission*, WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/JOHNANGOTTIMUSICMISSION