

OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL
SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL
WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER
Fourth Sunday of Easter - Mother's Day
May 11, 2025



The Good Shepherd is risen.
He who laid down His life for the sheep, who died for His flock.
He is risen. Alleluia!

CHAPEL SCHEDULE

Weekday Mass: (Monday-Friday at 12 noon)
Weekend Masses: Saturday: 4:00pm - Sunday: 7:30am & 4:00pm
Holyday Mass Schedule: afternoon prior at 4:00pm
Holy day proper at 12 noon and 4:00pm
Confessions: First Saturday of every month at 3:30pm
Department Telephone: 508.363.6246
Chapel Website: www.ourladyofprovidence.net

MASS INTENTIONS — LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Saturday, May 10 *Vigil of the 4th Sunday of Easter*

4:00pm +Jane Kempfski by alumnae of former SVHSN

Sunday, May 11 *Fourth Sunday of Easter—Mother’s Day - Day of Prayer for Vocations*

7:30am For mothers who have lost a child

4:00pm +Lois Sheeran, Marion White, & Evelyn Foley by their families

Monday, May 12 *Ss. Nereus & Achilleus and Pancras, martyrs* ²

12:00nn For the intentions of Fred Bergeson

Tuesday, May 13 *Our Lady of Fatima*

12:00nn +John & Mary Murray by their family

Wednesday, May 14 *Feast of Saint Mathias, apostle*

12:00nn +Kathleen Zawalich

Thursday, May 15 *Saint Isidore the farmer* ²

12:00nn In gratitude to God for the ordination anniversary of Fr. Derek Borek

Friday, May 16

12:00nn +Patricia Molinari by alumnae of former SVHSN

Saturday, May 17 *Vigil of the 5th Sunday of Easter*

4:00pm For the intentions of Timothy P. Horgan

Sunday, May 18 *Fifth Sunday of Easter*

7:30am +Sophie Groccia — 24th anniversary

4:00pm For the intentions of John Walsh

The Key to Understanding the Day’s Liturgical Significance: **Sunday** is the day that the Church celebrates the Paschal mystery—the Lord’s Day—which, according to apostolic tradition, is the day of Christ’s Resurrection. The Sundays of Advent, Lent, and during the Easter Season take precedence over other celebrations. **Solemnities** honor significant religious events, beliefs or saints of the greatest importance and universal in their observance that begin at Vespers (or Evening Prayer) the day before. **Feasts** must be observed, though, less important than solemnities, hence, feasts are only observed on the natural day. **Memorials** are of two types: Either the observance is an **obligatory memorial** ¹ or an **optional memorial** ².

Toward a Better Understanding of the Lord’s Post-Resurrection Appearances

The tenth chapter of Saint John’s Gospel is partly an extended discourse on the Good Shepherd. Throughout that chapter, Jesus reveals what His mission is in the world, given to Him by God the Father: His mission was to lay down His life for the sheep and, then, to take up His life again. After rising from the dead, He was to universally call all men and women to become His sheep and to call them by name, all over the world, through the voice of His disciples. Then, Jesus adds that His sheep will know His voice when He calls them and follow behind Him. Ultimately, in the end, there will be one flock from all the peoples of the world, enjoying eternal life together (Jn 10: 28). In that unknown future, there will be one shepherd who will provide complete safety for the sheep. This week’s Gospel is the finale of chapter ten and returns to the bond uniting the sheep and their intimate union with the guiding Shepherd. While John the Evangelist often circles back to what he had already said, it is not mere repetition of what was said because it builds upon it. In the final verse of the passage, this declaration that “the Father and I are one” constitutes a high point in the Lord’s self-revelation and His relationship with God the Father. The varied relationship between the Shepherd and sheep is described by four verbs in verses 27-28a: (1) the sheep hear (Gk. ἀκούω) the shepherd’s voice and (2) because the shepherd knows (Gk. γινώσκω) them (3), then, they follow (Gk. ἀκολουθέω) and because they do so (4) He gives them eternal life, so that the sheep who believe in Him “shall never perish.” To hear or listen entails that the listener recognizes the authority and the crucial nature of the particular speaker’s words. In doing so, anyone and everyone who acknowledges the Shepherd’s authority enters into communion with Christ the true Shepherd. Then, for those who willingly put themselves under the Lord’s guidance that act of obedience implies following Him or attaching yourself to Jesus. By doing so, it means becoming one of His disciples. Only the Risen Christ can say that He knows His sheep (or disciples) and gives them the singular kind of life that is His to give – eternal life (Gk. ζωὴν αἰώνιον). After outlining the fact that every disciple who attaches themselves to Him, in the four-fold way that Jesus had sketched out, the Lord offers them this solemn assurance, “they shall never perish.” Safely enshrined in the palm of the Lord’s hand, “no one can take them out of [His] hand.” Earlier in this chapter, Jesus stated that He was no hired hand, but was the Son and, as the Father’s Son, Jesus received His mission from God. Thus, no one who has listened to Christ’s voice will ever be lost because they have been entrusted into the Shepherd’s care. When the Father gives His sheep into the omnipotent hand of the Son, they still remain in the Father’s hand. Even during the dreadful days of the Lord’s arrest, suffering, and crucifixion, Jesus safeguarded the Apostles even then. When the authorities crossed “the Kidron valley

May the God of peace...who "chose David, his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds" (Ps 78:70), the smallest and youngest of Jesse's sons (1 Sam 17:14)...shepherd of shepherd and guide of guides...be presented a splendid flock, without defect, worthy of the heavenly sheepfold, the dwelling-place of the blessed, in the splendor of the saints, so that we may all together, sheep and shepherd, sing his glory in his temple, in Christ Jesus, our Lord, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

to where there was a garden," as they prepared to arrest Jesus, He said to them, "...if you are looking for me, let these men go" (Jn 18:8). Such unheard of security not only came from the Shepherd, but was also assured due to Christ being one with the Father. Jesus can assure the disciples unequivocal protection because He has the same power and authority as God. There is also a hint of tentativeness in the formula by which Jesus declared Himself to be one with the Father. The hesitancy reveals a deeper mystery and unity than earthly protection—in the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel, the evangelist declared that "the Word was with God, and the Word was God...and the Word became flesh..." (Jn 1:1,14). Elsewhere, in this tenth chapter, Jesus said, "...the Father is in me and I am in the Father" (Jn 10:38). The mystery of the Trinity can only be vaguely understood by faith in the Lord Jesus and through the oneness of the Father and Son, along with the Spirit descending from on high.

Paschal Mystery

About 56 AD, during Passover, Saint Paul wrote this to the Corinthians, "Christ, our Passover has been sacrificed" (1 Cor 5,7). He sought to interpret Christ's death on the Cross by means of the Passover metaphor. In subsequent centuries, the term paschal mystery (Lat. *mysterium paschale*) grew in importance and became the preferred way of speaking about what God had done in Christ. The traditional Jewish Passover and its unfolding lasted for fifty days or a week of weeks (7x7=1), culminating in Pentekoste (Gk. πεντηκοστή) or the fiftieth day. To this present day, this annual memorial celebrates Israel's going forth (or exodus) from the land of Egypt and Yahweh's conferring of the covenant at Mount Sinai. The two English words *paschal* and *mystery* are derived from biblical Greek, the original language of the New Testament. The adjective paschal (Gk. πάσχα) is derived from the Hebrew word for Passover or pesach. Even the word pascha (or Easter) had to be newly-coined by the Greek translators of the Septuagint (or LXX) that was a third-century BC translation of the Bible from Hebrew into Koine Greek. This was done to make the Hebrew accessible to Greek-speaking Jews in Alexandria. Neither classical nor conversational Greek of that period had any word to identify the foundational religious event of the Hebrew Scriptures. Pesach incorporates a journey from bondage in Egypt to eventual freedom in the land of Canaan that began when the angel of death passed over the houses of the Israelites, marked with the blood of those lambs that had been sacrificed for the first Passover. Such blood effectively saved God's people from the certain death of their first-born (Ex 12:21-36). Later on, Christians came to see the Blood of Christ, shed on the Cross, as similarly salvific. The noun mystery (Gk. μυστήριον) was generally associated with the worldview of Platonism, long before the NT writers used that word to describe what God was doing in Christ. For Platonic philosophers, sensible realities were understood as participating in and pointing toward invisible or heavenly realities. So, the created order, perceptible to the senses, requires *contemplatio* in order for the physical world to be understood intellectually. As Platonism further developed, this symbolic understanding was extended to incorporate the spiritual interpretation of historical events. Thus, events that were chronologically prior came to be perceived either as a preparation for or as a foreshadowing of future events—promise awaiting fulfillment. In the second century of the Christian era, Saint Melito of Sardis preached an Easter homily entitled Περὶ Πάσχα or *On the Pascha*, that was only translated in the middle of the 20th century. While Melito, as Bishop of Sardis, does not use the term paschal mystery, he rejoices that Christ is the fulfillment of the earlier redemptive acts of God. His chief concern was interpreting a passage selected from the Book of Exodus, "how the lamb was sacrificed, how the people were saved." Melito begins with this declaration, "The sacrifice of the Lamb, and the celebration of the Pasch, and the letter of the Law, have been fulfilled in Christ." This use of the imagery of the Passover yielded a paschal understanding of the events surrounding Christ's death. Initiating new members into Christ through Baptism and the signing of their foreheads with the Cross came to be understood as analogous to the Blood of the Paschal Lamb that marked the doors and lintels of the Israelites. As that sign had saved the Chosen People from imminent death, the water and the Cross marked out those destined to be saved by Christ from the threat of unending death. The eating of the Passover lamb also foreshadowed the messianic banquet to which all the baptized are invited and the Eucharist is seen as that banquet's anticipation and foretaste of the paschal feast of heaven. The understanding of the Eucharist as a sacrifice drew upon the identification made between Christ and the Passover (or paschal) lamb. Two images are at the heart of the Book of Exodus: In chapter twelve where the image is that of the lamb slaughtered and its blood becoming the source of salvation or the second image in chapter fourteen that is focused upon the Israelites passing safely through the waters of the Red Sea. Standing amid waters, seemingly threatening their very survival, instead the wall to their right and to their left became the miraculous path of their salvation through the sea and foretold eventual death for the Egyptians. These two typologies or the process of uncovering religious meaning by sustained ecclesial exploration of type (the Passover event) and antitype (the Jesus event) evoked what came to be known as *mystagogical catecheses* or the reflective teaching offered to those who had been newly-initiated into the mysteries of faith in the weeks following Easter and their baptism. The most well-known examples of this type of catechesis are from the second-half of the fourth century attributed to Saint Cyril of Jerusalem (viz. five mystagogical catecheses) and Saint Ambrose of Milan—*De mysteriis* and *De sacramentis*. Mystagogy: "From the visible to the invisible, from the sign to the thing signified, from sacraments to mysteries" (CCC, n. 1075).

Understanding the Mass—Both Memorial & Sacrifice

There was a time when the two words homily and sermon meant essentially the same thing. Today, they differ enormously. The etymology of the word homily, comes directly from the Greek word *homilia* (Gk. ὁμιλία). The Latin and Greek words mean the same thing: conversation or interaction with other people. Homily, however, has a second root — *homilein* (Gk. ὁμιλεῖν), which means “to be in company or associate with a crowd.” Thus, homily designates a conversation

among people who walk together. Being derived from homilos, it means to be in company with and, by implication, to converse, commune, or talk (see Lk 24:14). The practice of preaching has its origins in the Jewish synagogue service where, after the readings from the Law and the Prophets, an explanation of their meaning was given by one of those present. *Sacrosanctum Concilium* says this, “By means of the homily the mysteries of the faith and the guiding principles of the Christian life are expounded from the sacred text during the course of the liturgical year; the homily, therefore, is to be highly esteemed as part of the liturgy itself” (SC, n.52). Here is Justin Martyr’s account of the celebration of the eucharist ca.155 AD: “When the reader has finished, the president in a discourse urges and invites us to the imitation of these noble things” (*First Apologia*, 67). Clearly the episkopos (Gk. ἐπίσκοπος) is applying the reading that has

been proclaimed to the lives of the worshippers. Then, in the recent edition of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, in regard to the individual parts of the Mass, you read this, “...in the readings, as explained by the Homily, God speaks to his people, opening up to them the mystery of redemption and salvation, and offering spiritual nourishment; and Christ himself is present through his word in the midst of the faithful” (*GIRM*, n. 55). The citation serves as a reminder that God truly dwells within sacred Scripture, the homily’s focal point. So, the homily is a true and essential liturgical act. It must be

“purified” of personal opinions, comedy, scolding, sports talk, trendy slang, and so on. The true homily has a strong connection with the biblical readings assigned for a given day. This prevents the homilist from picking and choosing his own favorites, thereby depriving people of the fullness of the Word. Because sacred Scripture has puzzling and obscure passages, the homily serves as a “bridge” or a conversation between the word of God and the hearts of people who hear it. This conversation, sparked and supported by the homily, should become a continuous spiritual experience, as well as an intellectual one. Because every homily, especially within Mass, is a sacred and grace-filled mystery, the Lord can cause it to bear abundant fruit. Here are two characteristics from the homiletic tradition: the theme is selected from the day’s readings or another part of the celebration and the type of speech is somewhat informal, lacking rhetorical style and designed to elicit a response from the people. Since “The reading of the Gospel constitutes the high point (Lat. *culmen constituit*) of the Liturgy of the Word” (*GIRM*, n.60), the homily is a continuation of the Scripture’s saving message that is meant to elicit faith and conversion. The homily is neither exegesis nor moral exhortation (Gk. *παραινέσις*). Instead, it is intended to be the joyful proclamation of God’s saving deeds in Christ that actualizes it by showing how God continues to do so in the world today.

Sermon

The word sermon is derived from the Latin word *sermo*. In the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, the preeminent governing document of the sacred liturgy, the word homily is used 16 times and those sacred instructions never use the word sermon. Why? Because sermon usually means a speech about a religious topic delivered apart from the sacred liturgy. This separation of preaching from the Mass began in the Middle Ages. During that time the sermon developed into an independent activity which appeared to have no connection to worship. The content changed from a proclamation of the word of God to an instruction on Catholic doctrine or morals. It became almost an interruption to the Mass, especially since the celebrant removed his chasuble and moved to the pulpit in the nave to preach. In some ancient Roman churches, you can still see large, elevated pulpits situated far away from the sanctuary, even in the church’s center. This arrangement points to the liturgical independence of the sermon.

www.catholicn.org. Fr. Michael Kerper. “what’s the difference between a homily and a sermon?”

THE MASS

- I. Introductory Rites
 - Entrance
 - Veneration of the Altar
 - Greeting
 - Penitential Rite
 - Kyrie Eleison
 - Gloria in excelsis Deo
 - Collect
- II. Liturgy of the Word
 - Scripture Readings
 - Homily
 - Nicene/Apostles Creed
 - Prayers of the Faithful
- III. Liturgy of the Eucharist
 - Preparation of the Gifts
 - Eucharistic Prayer
 1. Preface
 2. Sanctus
 3. Epiclesis
 4. Consecration
 5. Mysterium fidei
 6. Anamnesis
 7. Offering
 8. Intercessions
 9. Doxology and Amen
 - Communion Rite
 - Lord’s Prayer
 - Rite of Peace
 - Breaking of the Bread
 - Communion
 - Prayer after Communion
- IV. Concluding Rites
 - Blessing
 - Dismissal
 - Veneration of the Altar
 - Personal Thanksgiving