

A publication of the Ellis County Ministerial Alliance March 2018

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# John 12:12-13: Triumphant entry

Welcome dear ONE readers to the Easter edition of the magazine! With Easter falling this year on April 1st, we wanted to give you this edition early so you would have it to meditate on and read as you prepare for Easter and the Easter Season.

Palm Sunday is the first day of Holy Week, the week immediately preceding Easter. This year Palm Sunday will be

March 25. In my congregation, we celebrate Palm/Passion Sunday. We begin with joyous shouts of Hosanna-Praise be to God, and end with Jesus on the cross.

For the Palm Sunday portion the service we gather in the basement and process upstairs to the Sanctuary, the main gathering space for worship. Then



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*The next day, the news that Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem swept through the city. A large crowd of Passover visitors took palm branches and went down the road to meet him. They shouted, "Praise God! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hail to the King of Israel!"*

people are invited to either keep their palm branch or to place on the cross that has been at the front of the Sanctu-

ary all Lent.

The palm branches portray the branches that were laid out on the ground before Jesus as he entered Jerusalem.

Lastly, as I mentioned earlier, Palm Sunday is the first day of Holy Week, which leads us to wait and see what comes next. Keep reading the other ar-



ticles to continue your journey through Holy Week to Easter. May you have a blessed Lent and Easter season.

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# John 19:1-3: Jesus flogged

From a human perspective, in the final days of Jesus' life he is not very attractive. He appears weak. He appears powerless. He appears insignificant almost trivial. Knowing his clear claim to be the Son of God, one is compelled to ask: Who has the authority in this scene. Who is really in charge here? As the religious "authorities" and the political authority vie for power, who ends up being the dominant figure?

In this passage he is "flogged" and he is mocked. Pilate's action, according to Luke (23:16), was another attempt at compromise. He hoped the crowd would be satisfied with a little blood. Roman flogging was done with a leather whip with bits of metal at the ends. Such flogging often killed a person. Pilate had neither sympathy nor pity for Jesus. He was wielding political power, thinking he could out-manuever his



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Jewish rivals to advance his political self-interest to keep a messy political situation under control.

The Roman soldiers viewed Jesus as a pretender to the throne of Israel and despised Him as a loser. The mocking crown of thorns and purple robe, the ridiculing in hailing Him King of the Jews, and the physical blows on His face—these were all part of Jesus' deep humiliation as He was identified with human sin as the Servant of the Lord.

The Jewish Sanhedrin members while happy to see Jesus ridiculed and beaten for what they considered to be His fraudulence wanted to see him executed. And they were used to getting what they wanted. So, they wielded their significant power to coerce Pilate into doing their will.

It turns out the ones who thought they were in charge ended up being under the complete sovereignty of Jesus. John ironically weaves numerous clues that Jesus is in

*Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. They came up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and struck him with their hands.*

complete control of the situation into the larger narrative of his final hours. Nothing that happens to him happens by accident or outside of his control and one gets the distinct impression he could put a stop to the process at any moment if he so chose. Jesus comes across not so much the willing victim as the Orchestrator of events.

History did not even record the soldiers' names. Pilate ends up being a small has-been governor whose "five minutes of fame" was quickly forgotten. Jesus, meanwhile, rises from the dead -- living proof that He was, as He had claimed, the Savior whom God had sent, the Incarnate Son of God.

Ken Blanchard, building on an essay by James Allen Francis, writes in *One Solitary Life*:

"Nineteen centuries have come and

gone and today the risen Lord Jesus Christ is the central figure of the human race. On our calendars His birth divides history into two eras. One day of every week is set aside in remembrance of Him. And our two most important holidays celebrate His birth and resurrection. On church steeples around the world, His cross has become the symbol of victory over sin and death.

This one Man's life has furnished the theme for more songs, books, poems, and paintings than any other person or event in history. Thousands of colleges, hospitals, orphanages, and other institutions have been founded in honor of this One who gave His life for us.

All the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the governments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned have not changed the course of history as much as this One Solitary Life."

John's account of Jesus' final hours helps us see the glory and power of Jesus as Savior. While earthly powers appeared to hold him under its power, Jesus was in his finest hour!



# John 19:28-30: Jesus dies

It is finished. Three words in English, but in the original Greek it was only one word. Jesus uttered a single word, tetelestai.

A. W. Pink, an early 20th century English Bible teacher said,

“It is finished’ is but one word in the original, yet in that word is wrapped up the gospel of God; all assurance, and the sum of all joy.”

The Rev. Charles Spurgeon a popular British preacher of the mid 1800’s in a sermon preached on December 1, 1861, in



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London said : “An ocean of meaning in a drop of language, a mere drop, for that is all that we can call one word! “tetelestai.” Yet it would need all the other words that ever were spoken, or ever can be spoken, to explain this one word. It is altogether

immeasurable! ... “Finished.” It was a Conqueror’s cry – it was uttered with a loud voice! There is nothing of anguish about it, there is no wailing in it. It is the cry of One who has completed

*After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, said, “I am thirsty.” A jar full of sour wine was standing there; so they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon a branch of hyssop and brought it up to His mouth. Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.*

a tremendous labor and is about to die – and before He utters His death-prayer, “Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit,” He shouts His life’s last hymn in that one word, “tetelestai!”

Tetelestai means finished, accomplished. It was a victorious word. When something bad happens to us, we often interpret it by thinking God might be

punishing us for some sin or evil is winning somehow. In light of tetelestai, that’s not true. Tetelestai is a cry of victory.

“It is finished” is not “I am done for” or “abandon all hope.” “It is finished” will not be the last words of Jesus. “It is finished” is a cry of victory.

“It is finished” is the triumphant cry that what Jesus came to do has been done. All is accomplished, completed, fulfilled.

The Gospel of John makes explicit what all the Gospels assume— the cross is not a symbol of death and defeat but the paradoxical victory of our God, who brings new life out of what appears to be utter ruin and even death.

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# John 20:1-2 : The body is gone!

Imagine that someone you love and admire has gone through a death such as Jesus has gone through. Imagine that he's been thrown basically into a cave and a *huge* and *heavy* stone has been put at the entrance to completely entomb Jesus. We are led to believe it has been done in haste and without much care for the deceased Jesus. Two of his friends come the next morning to care for the grave and they find the stone (it's massive, remember.....) is *moved*. Can you imagine the utter *shock* and *disbelief*? I would bet they felt scared, confused, and panicked. This was not the job of wild animals or a one-man show.

The second part of the passage leads us to see what her next action was. It says



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she RAN. I mean this is a pretty natural reaction, right? I would have been running so quickly I would have been clumsy! That's not the action I'm referring to, though. Before she runs away from this terrifying scene, she investigates

it. Say *what?* I definitely would have run away. I'm no Mary Magdalene. Run and ask questions later! She apparently goes inside the tomb and is able to

discern that Jesus has been removed and taken away. She does not find a gory scene indicating the work of enemies or even wild animals. She finds it absolutely empty and RUNS to tell someone. We know Mary Magdalene isn't alone because when she next speaks, she says "We". She runs and the first people we know she finds are Simon Peter and the other disciple. We

*Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him."*

have previously been led to believe that the disciples were long gone. This passage suggests that they had not gone as far as we thought.

Putting myself into Mary's shoes, I see her more and more as a heroic woman. She came to the tomb out of respect and to do right by Jesus, her friend. So many were happy to have him dead and gone and she was sad and paying respect. In what has been a horrible chain of events leading up to his death, she is maintaining composure and being strong. I get being strong, but her next steps certainly take strength to the next level. I've been strong, but I feel this would test even the strongest. I absolutely

can't imagine going to the tomb – THIS tomb of all tombs – and finding the MASSIVE "stone" just shoved aside.

I don't know about you, but when I hear the word "stone", I'm thinking rock rather than boulder. We've learned it was definitely a boulder since it was blocking the entirety of the tomb's entrance. It's been moved. Like, "What?". It would be at *that* moment I would either be passed out in shock and fear or running faster than anyone can imagine – and without grace! If I was conscious, I would be screaming. Mary did none of that. She went inside the tomb! She investigated and discovered that Jesus had been removed and taken to another place.

*Then* she runs and is able to express to the first people she finds (his disciples) what she's found. I would have been unable to make a sentence at that point, likely not even able to utter my own name. Her actions put her in hero category to me. This is the type of friend to have.

# John 20:11-18 : Appears to Mary

This passage can serve as a relevant analogy for the Lenten season.

It begins with sadness and ends in hope. We go into this solemn season knowing Christ's death is coming, and yet, we look forward to Easter. In the midst of our sorrows, we should cling to the hope of Christ's resurrection. We have been told of it, but often grief gets the best of us. How wrapped in grief must Mary be to not see Jesus, her teacher, standing there?

In this passage, it is hard for Mary to see Jesus. She sees a gardener, she sees angels, but to truly see that Jesus is there—and alive?! She goes to the tomb expecting to find her friend and teacher's



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body. Instead, she is the first to see that Jesus has indeed risen from the grave, and is speaking to her!

Sometimes, it is just as hard for us to see Jesus, especially in others. These days, everything seems to be telling us how different we are from one another—not just that we live as unique individuals, but in separate groups, where one group is better than the other. Divisive politics, a

constant barrage of microaggressions and hate speech on our social media, even in-fighting among Christians — all of these divisions partition us off, group us accordingly, and pit us against one another.

How can we come together during these times? It says in Genesis 5:1a,

*But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher).*

"When God created humankind, he made them in the likeness of God." What we all have in common is being made in God's image. This Lenten season, if we are looking for something to give up, maybe it should be our tendency to view the "other" as separate rather

than as a fellow child of God. It can be useful to remember Wendy Mass's words, "Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about."

What about those whose battles we know all too well? Sometimes, seeing Christ in others is easier than seeing Christ in ourselves. Lent is a time for introspection, and while we should be penitent, that does not mean we should be self-deprecating. As Pastor Marie Sager said on Sunday, "Sometimes we have an abundance of grace for everyone else, and do not give enough to ourselves."

My prayer for this Lenten season is that we all be a bit more like Mary. I pray that we eventually get out of our own heads enough to hear God's call to give and receive grace, and that we end in hope, embracing the Easter miracle.



# John 20:19-21: Jesus appears to disciples

What a crazy time it must have been. The One they had left everything to follow; the One who had taught with truth and authority; the One who had showed compassion, justice, and mercy to the least, the last and the lost; the One who had showed the way, the truth and the life to saints and sinners alike; the one who did everything from change water into wine to raise a man, four-days-dead, back to life; Yes, that One, the One who was mercilessly beaten, humiliated, spat upon, and unjustly killed on a cross, unwilling to take the sour wine on a stick that was offered and was himself now four-days-dead. Crazy!

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But crazier still, there were the women followers who went to the tomb the day before and claimed they saw a vision (some even said it was really him...) of the One who chose the nails, and then two of the men on their way to Emmaus declared a similar vision of the One before he broke bread and disappeared before their very eyes. And they didn't even recognize him when they were one the road and he was talking with them.

They only recognized him in the breaking of the bread...Crazy!

But now it was crazy-scary for those followers of the One. The religious authori-

ties that had put the One to death were now out looking for his followers with something similar in mind.

Then something really crazy happened:

*On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the disciples had gathered together and locked the doors of the place because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. So Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. Just as the Father has sent me, I also send you."*

And as crazy as that might sound, something insanely miraculous happened then. Where the followers harbored anx-

ety, suddenly joy filled their souls. And doubt became belief as the One they had followed in life and in death and now life eternal, showed them his hands...and his side... and fear gave way to faith. It was the One and he lives! Crazy!

But here's the craziest thing of all: The One whose followers were cowering in a locked room, became the most courageous men and women of that time, boldly sharing the peace, the joy, the love, the mercy, the kindness, and the goodness of the One who sent them so that everyone who believes might live in peace, joy, love, mercy, kindness, and goodness... and the One is still sending his followers out to the world in the same way. Even in the crazy world in which we live today. Crazy!

# John 20:24-29: Jesus appears to Thomas

How do you know when something is true? Do you base your decision on facts? Do you base your decision on your own experience? How about your feelings?

The fact is, most of us, though we say we base things on fact, lean more on our own experience and feelings than we'd like to admit.

In our passage, Thomas, faced with the facts – 10 other witnesses to Jesus' resurrection – didn't believe them. He based his decision on his own experience that people don't rise from the dead. The people he had seen who had died, had all stayed dead. Though he was facing the eye-witness testimony of his trusted friends and companions, he still doubted.

I think that most of us, if faced with the same situation, would have been with Thomas as opposed to the other disciples. I know we don't like to think that, but in reality, we would probably have doubted as well.

Even today we face a myriad of facts and theories and evidence that attempts to refute the claim that Jesus rose from the dead. Books have been written, speaking engagements have been booked, all claiming that Jesus' resurrection was a hoax or just a fable.

I'm not going to get into refuting some of those theories right now, but I would encourage you to check out any of "The Case for..." books by Lee Strobel.

He was an atheist who set out to disprove Christianity. Instead, he found that the evidence points to what the Bible teaches.

Thomas was a man who had lived with Jesus for three years, studying him, listening to him, loving him. Yet when it came time for him to believe what had happened he doubted. If you have doubts today about your faith or your future, Thomas would make a good companion for you. His example, and the way Jesus spoke with him, set the stage for how we should combat our

*But Thomas, sometimes called the Twin, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples told him, "We saw the Master."*

*But he said, "Unless I see the nail holes in his hands, put my finger in the nail holes, and stick my hand in his side, I won't believe it."*

*Eight days later, his disciples were again in the room. This time Thomas was with them. Jesus came through the locked doors, stood among them, and said, "Peace to you."*

*Then he focused his attention on Thomas. "Take your finger and examine my hands. Take your hand and stick it in my side. Don't be unbelieving. Believe."*

*Thomas said, "My Master! My God!"*

*Jesus said, "So, you believe because you've seen with your own eyes. Even better blessings are in store for those who believe without seeing."*

Second, Jesus never rebukes Thomas for doubting. Instead of yelling at him and telling him he should have believed, we see Jesus calmly and lovingly showing him the evidence he needs. God doesn't want you to hide your doubt, he wants you to express it so that he can help you overcome it.

When you have doubts about the faith, it is important to share those with a trusted Christian leader who can help you find the answers that you seek. Certainly there are always going to be questions we can't answer, but there are many answers found in Scripture that can help us through our periods of doubt.

When you face doubt, know that you are not alone. God will never leave you or turn his back on you because you have questions and doubt. In fact, some of the greatest understandings about God you have may come directly from the period of doubt you're currently in.

Don't be afraid of your doubt, but don't stop in that doubt. Work through it so that God can show you the wonderful truth of him and his word.

own fears and doubts.

First, Thomas was open and honest about his doubt. The first thing we must do if we are ever going to get the answers for the questions we seek is to be honest about having the questions in the first place. God can handle the questions that we have. In fact, he wants us to ask the questions and find the answer. And that leads us into the second thing to note.



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## News to know

### FHSU STUDENTS LAUNCH DRIVE TO HELP CHILDREN

Students in the Leadership Studies Department at Fort Hays State University are partnering with the Ellis County Ministerial Alliance to conduct a benefit drive March 4-19 for the Western Kansas Child Advocacy Center.

The center works with children ages 2 to 18 who have been removed from their homes by the courts.

Jon Folkerts, spokesman for the student group, said, "When a child is abused, it is most often by someone in the home. When children come to the center for help, they often times cannot return home, and this can mean that the child has nothing but the clothes on their back.

"Our group is working to help the WKCAC gather materials so that when a child with nothing comes in, they can give him or her a backpack with some of the basic necessities, a change of clothes, shampoo, a toothbrush, a teddy bear, and other such things."

Every child who is brought to the center receives a bag containing a blanket, a stuffed animal, personal hygiene items and educational/prevention information, depending on age. That bag goes with the child when he or she leaves.

According to an informational flyer, the center is especially in need of backpacks, small duffel bags and purses to hold each child's items. The center also has a difficult time obtaining items for teenagers, both male and female.

The full list of items on the center's wish list is available at <https://www.wkcac.com/our-wish-list>.

A number of area churches are setting up collection boxes for the drive. Donated items may also be dropped off at Trinity Lutheran Church, 2703 Fort, by Monday, March 19. Folkerts and other members of his group will be picking up the donations from the various churches that week.

In addition to the benefit drive, Freddy's Frozen Custard and Steamburgs, 3505 Vine, will be donating a percentage of its sales from 5 to 9 p.m. Monday, Feb. 26, to the center. "Be sure to tell the cashier you're part of this group," Folkerts said. The donation applies to both dine-in and drive-through sales, he added.

Folkerts and his fellow students picked the name "Backpack Advocates" for their group. Other students in the group are Cassidy Clark, Hannah Doll, Aubry Flory and J.J. Lewis.

Churches wanting collection boxes, or those wanting more information, may contact Folkerts at [folkertsjon@gmail.com](mailto:folkertsjon@gmail.com).

### CENTER FOR LIFE EXPERIENCES TO OFFER PROGRAMS

The Center for Life Experiences, 2900 Hall St., will be presenting the following programs in the next few weeks:

Psychologist Ken Windholz will discuss "Effects of Trauma and Neglect on the Developing Brain" at 6:45

p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 27, at the center. A complimentary meal for attendees will precede the program from 6 to 6:45 p.m.

Childcare is available, but an RSVP is required either to Carla Bixenman at (785) 623-2430 or to Ann Leiker at (785) 259-6859.

"Helping a Child Through Grief and Loss" will take place at 7 p.m. Thursday, March 8, at the center. Presenters will be Myrna Jordan, a social worker with Hospice, and Josh Tanguay, a therapist with Clinical Associates.

"Further Along the Bridge Back to Life" will begin at 7 p.m. Thursday, March 15, in the Fort Hays State University Black and Gold Room. The presenter will be Dave Schramm, former Hays resident and a faculty member at Stanford University. Schramm will be discussing his own suicide attempt and how he reached out for support.

Schramm's presentation is being co-sponsored by the following organizations: Healing After Loss of Suicide, the FHSU Psychology Department, the FHSU chapter of National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and the High Plains Mental Health Center.

All of the presentations are free and open to the public.

### KING FILM TO BE SHOWN AT FHSU FEB. 27

The film "Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: A Personal Portrait" will be shown from 7 to 9 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 27, in Beach-Schmidt Performing Arts Center at Fort Hays State University.

In December of 1965, King opened his home for the first and only time to a television interviewer, Arnold Michaelis, who spent four days recording King and his wife Coretta in a uniquely intimate setting.

This program has never been televised and remained unseen in the Michaelis Library of Living History, University of Georgia, for more than 40 years. George Silano, the director/cameraman and the only living member of the team, recently discovered the film.

Silano will participate in a Q&A session following the screening. The event is free and open to the public.

### 'AMAZING RACE' FUNDRAISER IS MARCH 3

"The Amazing Race: First Call Community Challenge" will take place from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, March 3.

The challenge will benefit First Call for Help of Ellis County. First Call provides a central access point for people to obtain information about resources and human services within and outside of Ellis County. In addition the organization provides financial assistance for basic needs such as housing.

According to its website, "Preventing homelessness and eviction is our top priority for Ellis County residents, but through donations and support from grants and individuals, we are often able to assist in other ways such as groceries, diapers, or hygiene items."

During the fundraiser, teams of four will solve clues,

walk, run and drive to local businesses to complete team challenges, said Linda Mills, executive director for First Call. "We would like to see churches challenging each other, law enforcement teams challenging each other, as well as other groups," she said.

Cost is \$75 per person on each team. Team members must be at least 12 years old. The team raising the most money will win the "Ultimate Fundraiser Award," plus receive a 3-minute head start in the race. All teams raising \$500 or more will also receive time deductions.

Other awards will include the quickest time and best costumes or uniforms. All contestants and volunteers will receive free T-shirts and snacks. In addition, all participants will be treated to a free lunch at the end of the competition.

Registration is available online at [firstcallelliscounty.com/AmazingRace](http://firstcallelliscounty.com/AmazingRace) or by calling (785) 623-2800. Registration deadline is Friday, Feb. 23.

### DANCERS TO PERFORM AT AFTER 5 DINNER

Students from Becky's School of Dance will be performing at the Hays After 5 Christian women's meeting on Monday, March 12. The event will take place from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the Rose Garden Banquet Hall, 2250 E. Eighth.

Also on the program will be inspirational speaker Nancy Holmgren of Salina. Holmgren has a dog grooming and boarding business that she has run for 25 years. In her talk, titled "The Mystery of a Napkin, a Parking Place and a Necklace," Holmgren will share how those three items had a great bearing on her life and the road she took.

The cost of the dinner program is \$12.50. Reservations are due by Thursday, March 8, to [daisymae0197@yahoo.com](mailto:daisymae0197@yahoo.com) or to (785) 202-1036. Hays After 5 is affiliated with Stonecroft Ministry of Overland Park.

### ECMA BOARD TO MEET MARCH 14

The Ellis County Ministerial Alliance Board will meet on Wednesday, March 14, at Cross Point Church, 1300 Harvest Road.

The editorial board for ONE Magazine will meet at 9 a.m. The full ECMA Board will meet at 10 a.m.

Anyone wishing to make a presentation to the board must schedule it in advance with the ECMA president at [president@ourecma.com](mailto:president@ourecma.com).

### LUTHERAN YOUTH SELLING BIEROCKS

The youth at ELCA Lutheran churches in Hays and Russell are making and selling bierocks to help fund their trip to the National Youth Gathering in Houston June 27-July 1. The conference occurs once every three years.

Bierocks are \$5 apiece, or six for \$25, or 12 for \$42. Orders may be placed by contacting Trinity Lutheran Church in Hays at [tlchays@eaglecom.net](mailto:tlchays@eaglecom.net) or at (785) 625-2044. Payment is due when orders are placed; the deadline is Wednesday, March 14.



## News to know



A group of children play an icebreaker game during the Healing Kids' Hearts Retreat last April at Sternberg Museum. (FILE PHOTO, HDN).

### RETREAT DESIGNED TO HELP GRIEVING CHILDREN

The Center for Life Experience will be holding its third annual "Healing Kids' Hearts Retreat" from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, April 14, at the Sternberg Museum of Natural History, 3000 Sternberg Drive.

The event is designed for children ages 7 through 12 in Northwest Kansas who are grieving the loss of a loved one. A trained adult buddy will guide each child through the day of activities. In the past those activities have included creating special keepsakes, music, drawing, writing, and a balloon launch.

According to a brochure about the event, "Children will learn that there is no one right way to grieve and heal from loss. They will learn positive ways to honor

the person who died and create lasting memories that can provide comfort."

Adults who are tending to the emotional, social and spiritual well being of children as they are healing from a loss are invited to a separate session during the morning. There they will be able to engage in interactive discussions with professionals and other attendees. Parents who have moved forward in their own healing also will share what has helped them and their children.

Registration is \$10 per child, which includes a T-shirt, tote, snacks and lunch. The cost for families with two or more children attending is \$5 per child. The retreat is limited to 20 children. Scholarships are available.

Registration forms may be picked up at the center's office inside the Presbyterian Church, 2900 Hall St., or by e-mailing [ccfpc@ruraltel.net](mailto:ccfpc@ruraltel.net). Registrations are due by Monday, March 12.

That is also the deadline for volunteers to sign up. Around 30 adult volunteers are needed to help with the event, said Ann Leiker, executive director of the center. All volunteers are subject to background checks.

A two-hour training session for the volunteers will be held at the center the evening of Friday, April 13. A light supper will be served. Continuing education credits are available to teachers who attend the training, Leiker said.

Volunteers may sign up by calling her at (785) 259-6859.



# What Easter means to me

*Editor's Note: This column first ran in The Hays Daily News March 12, 2008.*

Whenever I think of Easter, I think of a 10-year-old boy named Chris.

In the summer of 1982, I had just finished my first year of graduate school, and it looked like it might be my last. My husband Don, a school-teacher, had been without a job for several months. My part-time work brought in some money, but our financial situation was growing bleaker by the day.

Then Don was offered a job as the director of a summer school program for children with special needs. It was a definite answer to prayer.

There were about 10 students enrolled in the program. Even with the help of two aides, Don found the job

enormously challenging because most of the children had multiple special needs.

Seven-year-old Bradley was blind and autistic. He spoke in a sort of gibberish that no one could understand. Whenever he became frustrated or angry—which was quite often—Bradley bit whatever was near him. Sometimes it was a toy, sometimes it was a person, often it was himself. He wore special protective pads on his arms because they were so scarred with his own teeth marks.

Seventeen-year-old Alex was a quadriplegic and couldn't speak. His life was spent in a special wheelchair that reclined.

Chris had cerebral palsy and a heart condition. He used a regular wheelchair. He was a fragile looking little kid, small for his age, with blond hair, blue eyes, and a smile that

could light up a room and melt your heart.

At the beginning of the summer, Don asked each child's parents to list one goal that they would like for their child to work on that summer. He also asked the children—at least the ones who could communicate—what they would like to do that summer that they had never done before. Then Don set out to try and achieve both sets of wishes.

Bradley's mom wanted Bradley toilet trained. As she explained to Don, she was a single mom, and she just didn't have the right anatomical parts to teach Bradley how to urinate by himself. Male friends and family members had been unsuccessful also. Usually those unsuccessful attempts resulted in her having to clean the bathroom with bleach from ceiling to floor—literally.

Don took on this challenge. About a month later, Don arrived home one afternoon with his right hand bleeding profusely.

>>>>>>>>>>

**Linn Ann  
Huntington**

lhunting@fhsu.edu



## St. Nicholas of Myra Catholic Church

2901 E. 13th, Hays, Kansas, Parish Offices:

(785) 628-1446

Fax: (785) 623-4207, website: [www.heartlandparishes.org](http://www.heartlandparishes.org)

Fr. Jarett Konrade

### Mass Schedule:

Saturday at 5 PM

Sunday at 9:30 AM and 11:00 AM

Daily Mass - Wednesday, and Friday at 7:00 AM

Reconciliation: Saturday at 4:00 PM

## Immaculate Heart of Mary Church



1805 Vine Street - Hays, Kansas

Fr. Barry Brinkman, Pastor

Parish Office: 785-685-7339

Website: [www.ihm-church.com](http://www.ihm-church.com)

### Weekend Mass Schedule:

Saturday 5 PM - Sunday 8 AM - 10 AM - 6 PM

Sunday Spanish Mass - 12 PM

### Weekday Mass Schedule:

MWF 6:45 AM - TTh 8 AM Tuesday Spanish 6:30 PM

Reconciliation: Saturday 4 PM and Thursday 5 PM



As I drove him to the hospital, he was pale, but euphoric. He and Bradley had finally achieved success that day!

At the emergency room, doctors removed one of Bradley's teeth that had lodged in the bone of Don's hand and stitched up the bite. Then they gave Don a tetanus shot (at which point his euphoria diminished somewhat). But the next day, he and Bradley achieved success again, and, as Don told me later, Don learned to move his hands much more quickly.

Alex's parents wanted him to be able to communicate with his family. As it turns out, this was Alex's wish also.

Through testing, Don discovered Alex had an above-average IQ. Don taught Alex how to use a device between his teeth to tap out words on a computer. (This was the time when computers were first entering the workplace. Most schools still didn't have one. But Don got the funding to purchase one for Alex.)

Alex had always loved to read—as long as there was someone around to turn the pages of a book for him. Now, using his computer, Alex learned to write very quickly. After 17 years, this intelligent, funny, wise young man had a lot to say.

Alex's mother told Don that the first words her son typed as she and her husband looked on was, "I love you, Mom and Dad."

"That's when I burst into tears," she said. At the end of the summer, she reported to Don now that Alex had found a way to communicate with the world around him, he never wanted to "shut up." His tapping on the computer often continued far into the night.

I don't remember what goal Chris' parents set for him, but I do remember Chris' wish for that summer. He wanted to go swimming for the first time.

So Don organized a cookout and swimming party one evening at one of the family's home. He, the two aides, and the parents all went into the pool with the kids, so there was at least one adult with every child.

Don personally took Chris into the water. Don was a big man—6 foot, 4 inches tall, and at that time he weighed close to 300 pounds. As he gently held Chris afloat, Chris threw back his head and laughed with glee.

Why do I always think of Chris at Easter? My husband wrestled a lot that summer with why God put such wonderful minds and delightful spirits in such "crappy bodies" (to use Don's expression). As the years passed and my husband dealt with his own health issues that confined him to a wheelchair, I wrestled with that question many times myself.

Easter always reminds me that one day children such as Chris and Alex and Bradley will leave those handicapped bodies behind. The Bible teaches us that because Jesus lived and died and overcame death, those who believe in him will have an eternity free from pain, infirmities and tears.

When I think of Easter, I think of a blond, blue-eyed little boy walking hand-in-hand through heaven's meadows with a big 6-foot, 4-inch guy. And they're both laughing with glee.

That's what Easter means to me.

*Linn Ann Huntington is a long-time journalist who lives in Hays.*

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# How to be perfect in our love

Our English dictionary uses the word “complete” to explain what the word “perfect” means. When something is perfect, it is complete in the sense of absolutely nothing lacking in that which is described to be “perfect.”

So, Jesus, in chapter five of Matthew’s Gospel, having given the Beatitudes and an introduction to the Christian life, goes through six of the moral beliefs of the practicing Christian. The verse at the end of the chapter says in effect that another way of describing what must be done is to say, “Be perfect”:

Jesus said, “So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matthew 5:48)

Understood through the prism of our English definition, it means that if one is a complete human being, that person will follow all the laws of morality that Jesus has given to us.

The problem, of course, is that we are humans and in no way can we be “just as your heavenly Father” because we are not divine. So, in effect, the Lord is directing us to be as close as possible to becoming a complete human being who will not permit any fault in his/her person.

Such is the wish of every commitment song between people in true love. They want their love to be perfect, to be complete in whatever circumstance

Message at The Top

Fr. Mike Scully

michael.scully@capuchins.org



**THE GOSPELS IN FATHER MIKE'S TOP 5 as of Feb. 15**  
[see www.frmikescully.com]  
 1 - "Perfect" / Ed Sheeran Matthew 5:48  
 2 - "Thunder" / Imagine Dragons Luke 19:1-10  
 3 - "Havana" / Camila Cabello featuring Young Thug Matthew 1:18-20  
 4 - "Bad at Love" / Halsey John 15:11-14  
 5 - "How Long" / Charlie Puth Matthew 5:33-37

they find themselves. The love relationship described by Ed Sheeran in his song “Perfect” is exactly that way. The man in the relationship believes that his friend is complete in every way, and so he describes her as perfect:

“I found a love for me; just dive right in and follow my lead. I found a girl, beautiful and sweet. I never knew you were the someone waiting for me ‘cause we were just kids when we fell in love, not knowing what it was. I will

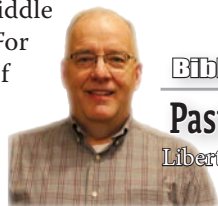
not give you up this time, your heart is all I own and in your eyes you’re holding mine. When you said you looked a mess, I whispered underneath my breath, but you heard it, you look perfect tonight.”

It is a lesson for every love relationship in our world, and an ideal that every relationship will try to approach. We are called to be “complete,” with nothing being held back, as we finally tell someone that we “truly love” him/her. That is the only way a human being can be perfect.

Good and gracious God, Your Son gave us the ideal of being perfect in the way we live our moral lives. We cannot be totally perfect because of our humanness, but we ask your grace that in commitment we may be as totally dedicated to the other as we can be. Be with us, we pray.

# The winds of change are upon us

Greetings Bible Reading Partner! It’s March, a time for the good old Kansas wind to wind up and usher in Spring. For some of our Christian brothers and sisters, we are in the middle of the Lenten season. For many, this is a season of reflection and self-discipline. Reading the Bible is always a great discipline. For those of you who are regular readers and want to add something to your Lenten exercise, add a chapter from the book of Proverbs this month. There are 31 days in March, and 31 chapters in Proverbs, so just check the calendar, and read the proverb for the day. There are



Bible Reading Plan

Pastor Steve Dinkel

Liberty Foursquare Church  
 lcfcsd@ruraltel.net

numerous principles for reflection in Proverbs. Or maybe using this reading plan will be your Lenten exercise. If that’s the case, welcome! We hope you continue for the rest of the year, God’s Word will enrich you in every season, and in every way!

For our Old Testament readings we will continue through the book of Psalms. We will finish Book 2 and almost complete Book 3 (73-89). The diversity of the Psalms (in my opinion) is much greater in Book 2 than in the previous Books. One of my favorites in this book is Psalm 86.

Our New Testament readings will

March	
1.....	□ Psm 64-65 ..... □ Acts 20
2.....	□ Psm 66 ..... □ Acts 21
3&4.....	Weekend Review
5.....	□ Psm. 67 ..... □ Acts 22
6.....	□ Psm. 68 ..... □ Acts 23
7.....	□ Psm. 69 ..... □ Acts 24
8.....	□ Psm. 70 ..... □ Acts 25
9.....	□ Psm. 71 ..... □ Acts 26
10&11.....	Weekend Review
12.....	□ Psm. 72 ..... □ Acts 27
13.....	□ Psm. 73 ..... □ Acts 28
14.....	□ Psm. 74 ..... □ 1 Thes. 1
15.....	□ Psm. 75-76 ..... □ 1 Thes. 2
16.....	□ Psm. 77 ..... □ 1 Thes. 3
17&18.....	Weekend Review
19.....	□ Psm. 78 ..... □ 1 Thes. 4
20.....	□ Psm. 79 ..... □ 1 Thes. 5
21.....	□ Psm. 80 ..... □ 2 Thes. 1
22.....	□ Psm. 81-82 ..... □ 2 Thes. 2
23.....	□ Psm. 83 ..... □ 2 Thes. 3
24&25.....	Weekend Review
26.....	□ Psm. 84 ..... □ 1 Cor. 1
27.....	□ Psm. 85 ..... □ 1 Cor. 2
28.....	□ Psm. 86 ..... □ 1 Cor. 3
29.....	□ Psm. 86 ..... □ 1 Cor. 4
30.....	□ Psm. 86 ..... □ 1 Cor. 5
31.....	Weekend Review

take us through the remaining chapters of the book of Acts; full of gripping narratives, and then start with the Apostle Paul’s letters. I enjoy this arrangement of Paul’s materials – you can see the growth of the Church in these letters. Even greater is the relevant council that the Holy Spirit inspired in these texts. You are in for some amazing reading this

month. My prayer is for all of us to have a great “season of preparation” for the celebration of Easter on Sunday April 1. May the wind of the Holy Spirit blow strong in us this season as we prepare to celebrate the new life Jesus bestows upon those who call upon Him. upon those who call upon Him.





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