

Religious Education

Give your child the gift of faith!



CCD Family Newsletter

June 25 - July 9, 2025



We are His Witnesses - Pastoral Initiative

[We Are His Witnesses](#) is a pastoral initiative launched by Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., Archbishop of Newark, on Pentecost in June 2025. It invites all of us to walk together on a journey called *We Are His Witnesses*—a path of pastoral conversion inspired by the Word of God, rooted in Pope Francis's *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel). This initiative invites the entire Church to reimagine parish life, mission, and ministry in response to a changing world.

Together, we will reflect on three essential questions:

1. Where are we now?
2. Where is God calling us?
3. How will we get there together?

To read Cardinal Tobin's letter to the faithful, click [HERE](#).

To view the 5-minute explanation video by Cardinal Tobin, click [HERE](#).

Early Bird CCD Registration Ends July 15th

Be sure to register soon for CCD in order to take advantage of the "early bird" pricing discount. Your early registration helps us ensure that we have enough volunteer catechists and that we order enough books for the coming year. Thanks!

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CCD REGISTRATION

2025 - 2026

Allow our catechists the privilege of helping your child develop a lasting relationship with Jesus Christ through the OLS CCD program.



Calendar

25 Total Classes

Classes Begin

Last week in September

Classes End

First week in May

Homeschooling option available



Timing

Monday Classes

Grades K-6 & 8
3:55 - 5:15 pm

Tuesday Classes

Grades 1-8
3:55 - 5:15 pm



Cost

Register By July 15th

1 Child - \$150
2 Children - \$240
3 Children - \$325

Register After July 15th

1 Child - \$180
2 Children - \$270
3 Children - \$355

Register on the OLS website



olschurch.com



Jen Noll
973-763-5454
jennollols@gmail.com

[2025-2026 OLS CCD Registration Form](#)

Summertime Service

People often ask me about ways in which they can get their kids involved in community service - especially during these long, hot summer months during which kids have a little more downtime. The truth is, because they are minors, finding safe and meaningful community service options for kids can often be difficult. Thankfully though, there is a new OLS ministry which seeks to match the needs of the members of our OLS community with individuals who can offer their help.

Your child might not be able to drive, but do they have a gift for baking or cooking? If so, consider signing yourself up to be a member of the OLS Cares Team and then work with your child to make a meal or a dish for a family or individual in need. It's a great way to help your child improve upon his or her gifts while also meeting someone else's very real need.

And speaking of need, please don't be shy about letting the OLS Cares team know if *your* family might need a little extra love during a difficult time. By letting the parish know that you need some help, you are actually providing others with the opportunity to show their love and gratitude. See the flyer below for details on how to request help or to join the team of support or learn more about it. Thanks!

A new ministry
of service!



OLS Cares

A new ministry dedicated to
meeting the emergency and particular needs
of our fellow parishioners

Do you need help with...?

- Support during hospitalizations
- Rides to Church for the elderly
- Outreach to the homebound
- Help during family crises, etc.

Please reach out via the email below or contact Mary Beth
in the Parish Office to inform us of your/another's needs.
We may be able to help!

Email: cares@olschurch.com

Phone: 973-763-5454 ext. 209 (Mary Beth)

Do YOU want to help others in the OLS community
in times of need?

With your time, your cooking, your treasure, give a ride, etc.?

Join Us!

Contact our team at cares@olschurch.com to join our email list
and receive OLS CARES updates with opportunities to help.



Homeschooling Year End Discussions

If you were not able to sign up for one of the homeschooling year-end discussion slots available on SignUpGenius, no worries. Please reach out to Jen Noll and set up a convenient time to meet either in person or via Zoom.



Summer Prayer Placemat

Before heading out to enjoy fun activities in nature this summer, pause to thank God for the gifts of the season. This summer prayer placemat invites children to compose a prayer of thanks in a fun fill-in style. Pull out the big box of crayons, because even adults will want to spend time coloring the cute images and completing the activities on the sheet. (And then be sure to pray the prayer together before enjoying breakfast, lunch, dinner, or even a tasty ice-cream treat.)

Click [HERE](#) to download and print the placemat



OLS Parish Office Summer Hours

The parish **offices are closed on Fridays from now until August 29th**. Daily Masses (7:00 am and 12:00 pm as well as Adoration (beginning after noontime Mass on Mondays and Fridays and ending with Benediction at 3:00) will still take place in the church.

Mrs. McDonald will be out of the office until June 30th recovering from shoulder surgery. If you need assistance during her absence, please reach out to Mrs. Noll. And don't forget to keep Mrs. McDonald in your prayers.



Is Your Child Being Called to Serve?

The primary role of the altar server is to assist the priest during the celebration of the Mass. As altar servers, children are able to participate in the Liturgy of the Eucharist in a very special way. They also learn the order of the Mass, the aspects of the sanctuary, and the various altar vessels used in the Mass. Altar service also provides students with an increased familiarity with the priestly vocation. Altar servers are needed at every weekend Mass of the year, some Holy Days and for other special liturgies such as weddings and funerals. In general, altar servers are scheduled for one or two Masses each month based upon their Mass day and time preference.

Fr. Andrew will be reaching out via email to all of the families of students who have recently celebrated First Eucharist to see if they are interested in being added to our server list. **If your child has already received the Sacrament of the Eucharist and he or she is interested in becoming an altar server, please reach out to Fr. Andrew at frlee527@gmail.com.**



Saint / Feast For Week 1

Sts. Peter and Paul, apostles

Feast Day: June 29th

On June 29th, the Church celebrates the feast day of Sts. Peter & Paul. As early as the year 258, there is evidence of an already lengthy tradition of celebrating the solemnities of both Saint Peter and Saint Paul on the same day. Together, the two saints are the founders of the See of Rome, through their preaching, ministry and martyrdom there.

Peter, who was named Simon, was a fisherman of Galilee and was introduced to the Lord Jesus by his brother Andrew, also a fisherman. Jesus gave him the name Cephas (Petrus in Latin), which means 'Rock,' because he was to become the rock upon which Christ would build His Church.

Peter was a bold follower of the Lord. He was the first to recognize that Jesus was "the Messiah, the Son of the living God," and eagerly pledged his fidelity until death. In his

boldness, he also made many mistakes, however, such as losing faith when walking on water with Christ and betraying the Lord on the night of His passion.

Yet despite his human weaknesses, Peter was chosen to shepherd God's flock. The Acts of the Apostles illustrates his role as head of the Church after the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ. Peter led the Apostles as the first Pope and ensured that the disciples kept the true faith.

St. Peter spent his last years in Rome, leading the Church through persecution and eventually being martyred in the year 64. He was crucified upside-down at his own request, because he claimed he was not worthy to die as his Lord. He was buried on Vatican hill, and St. Peter's Basilica is built over his tomb.

St. Paul was the Apostle of the Gentiles. His letters are included in the writings of the New Testament, and through them we learn much about his life and the faith of the early Church.

Before receiving the name Paul, he was Saul, a Jewish pharisee who zealously persecuted Christians in Jerusalem. Scripture records that Saul was present at the martyrdom of St. Stephen. Saul's conversion took place as he was on his way to Damascus to persecute the Christian community there. As he was traveling along the road, he was suddenly surrounded by a great light from heaven. He was blinded and fell off his horse. He then heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" He answered: "Who are you, Lord?" Christ said: "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting."

Saul continued to Damascus, where he was baptized and his sight was restored. He took the name Paul and spent the remainder of his life preaching the Gospel tirelessly to the Gentiles of the Mediterranean world. Paul was imprisoned and taken to Rome, where he was beheaded in the year 67. He is buried in Rome in the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls.

In a sermon in the year 395, St. Augustine of Hippo said of Sts. Peter and Paul: "Both apostles share the same feast day, for these two were one; and even though they suffered on different days, they were as one. Peter went first, and Paul followed. And so we celebrate this day made holy for us by the apostles' blood. Let us embrace what they believed, their life, their labors, their sufferings, their preaching, and their confession of faith."



Church "I Spy" on the Solemnity of Sts. Peter and Paul

At Mass this Sunday, you can help your children learn more about the lives of Sts. Peter and Paul by playing a game of OLS "I Spy." Both St. Peter and St. Paul have their own stained-glass windows in our beautiful church. See if your children know the stories depicted on the glass. See if they can they guess why St. Paul has a book (*he wrote the most books in the Bible*) and a long sword (*he was beheaded*) or why St. Peter is holding a fancy set of keys (*he was given the keys to the kingdom by Christ*). After Mass, take them up close to the sanctuary and point out St. Peter on the top left of the baldacchino and St. Paul up on the right. Ask your children why they think these two saints have their own special solemnity and why their statues have such an important location in our church.

SAINT PETER

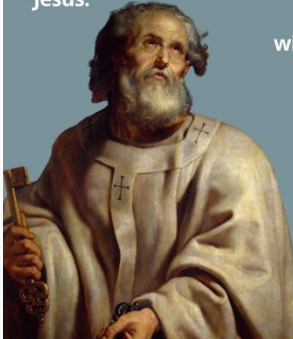
1. St. Peter's name was originally Simon and he was a fisherman of Galilee.

2. He was one of the 12 apostles. His brother, Andrew, introduced him to Jesus.



3. St. Peter struggled with doubt and human weakness, yet Jesus still chose him!

4. St. Peter was the first Pope. The Catholic Church can trace the succession of every pope back to St. Peter!



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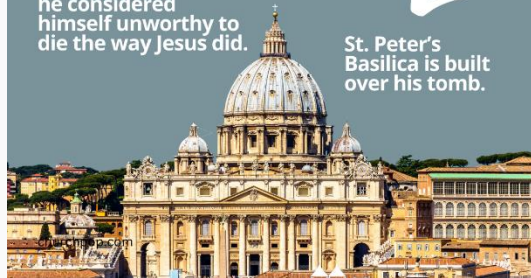
SAINT PETER

5. The Acts of the Apostles illustrate his role as Church's head—the rock upon which Christ would build His Church.

6. He died by crucifixion. Tradition says he requested an upside-down crucifixion because he considered himself unworthy to die the way Jesus did.



St. Peter's Basilica is built over his tomb.



SAINT PAUL

1. Before receiving the name Paul, he was Saul, a Jewish pharisee who zealously persecuted Christians in Jerusalem.



2. He underwent a huge conversion on his way to persecute Christians in Damascus. He instead went on to be baptized there and dedicated his life to spreading the Gospel.

3. St. Paul was imprisoned and beheaded under Emperor Nero.



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SAINT PAUL

4. His letters are in the New Testament. These writings shed light on the faith of the early Church.

5. He is buried in Rome in the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls.

6. St. Paul is the patron saint of missionaries and evangelists!





Mark Ten Mission Videos

Saints Peter and Paul both showed their love for Jesus no matter the cost. As the Church celebrates these two great saints this Sunday, click on the links below to listen to the Gospel passage where Jesus chooses Saint Peter to lead his Church and hear about how children can show their love for Jesus and not to worry about what others may think.

[Sts. Peter and Paul Little Liturgy \(ages 4-8\)](#)

[Sts. Peter and Paul Little Liturgy \(ages 8-12\)](#)



SAINT / FEAST FOR WEEK 2

St. Thomas, apostle

Feast Day: July 3rd

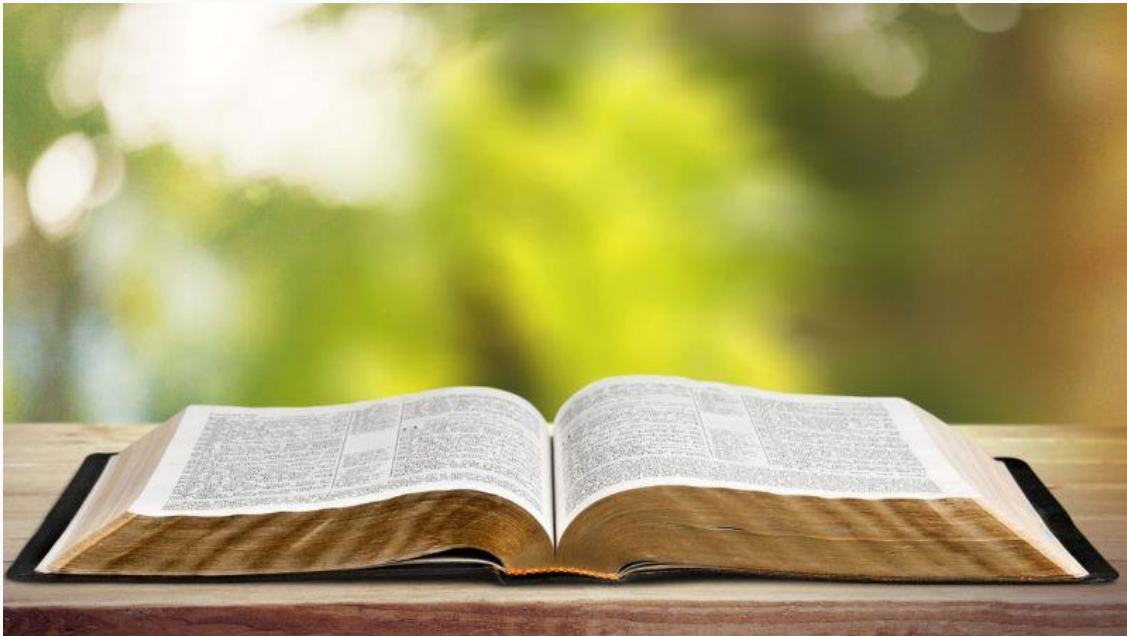
Patron Saint of: Architects, Christians of India

On July 3, we celebrate the Feast of Saint Thomas the Apostle. Though he has been nicknamed “Doubting Thomas,” the moniker obscures his unwavering devotion to Christ.

In the Gospel of John, Saint Thomas is referred to as *Didymus* or “the Twin.” It is unclear why exactly. On one occasion, Mary and Martha sent word to Jesus and requested he come to Bethany to heal their sick brother, Lazarus. Jesus made plans to go, although people in the region had already attempted to stone him on his last visit. The disciples brought this up, saying “You want to go back there?” Thomas, however, insisted they accompany the Lord despite whatever hostility they might face, saying “Let us go, that we may die with him.” Thomas acknowledged the grim realities of their situation while still faithfully and bravely moving forward. Although Lazarus died before they arrived in Bethany, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

Another instance where Saint Thomas is specifically mentioned in the Bible is at the Last Supper. Jesus turned to his disciples, saying “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be. Where [I] am going you know the way.” Thomas wondered how exactly this was going to work, asking Jesus, “Master, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?” (John 14:5). But Jesus wasn’t speaking of a physical way; he responded, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6).

The last gospel narrative where Saint Thomas is featured is perhaps the most well-known. When Jesus rose from the dead, he appeared to all the disciples except Thomas. Why Thomas was not among them remains unclear, but they shared with Thomas what they had seen. Without physical evidence, however, Thomas refused to believe that Jesus had come back: he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nailmarks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.” Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, “Peace be with you.” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe.” Thomas answered and said to him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed.” – John 20:24-29



In the Liturgy of the Word, the Church feeds the people of God from the table of his Word. Previewing the readings before Mass then is a bit like looking over the menu before you get to a restaurant: you have a better idea of what you can expect so that you can enter into the experience more fully prepared. And like a good discussion during a meal, discussing the readings and how they can be applied to your family's daily life helps your family to truly go out and proclaim the gospel after leaving the church.

Here are a few resources to help your family delve deeper into the Liturgy of the Word:

[Solemnity of Sts. Peter and Paul - June 29th](#)

[The 14th Sunday of Ordinary Time - July 6th](#)

[Loyola Press: Sunday Connection](#)

[Sadlier: This Week's Liturgy](#)

Living Faith Kids Pause + Pray + Play with Scripture Every Day

KIDSCALENDAR

JUNE 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER Q Who is Jesus praying to? <small>(SEE JUNE 7)</small> John 17:20-26 1	SAINTE MARCELLINUS AND PETER, MARTYRS 2	SAINTE CHARLES LWANGA AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS 3	4	SAINTE BONIFACE, BISHOP AND MARTYR 5	SAINTE NORBERT, BISHOP 6	A His Father 7
PENTECOST SUNDAY Q What name did Jesus use for the Holy Spirit? <small>(SEE JUNE 12)</small> John 14:15-16, 23b-26 8	THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, MOTHER OF THE CHURCH 9	10	SAINTE BARNABAS, APOSTLE 11	A The Advocate 12	SAINTE ANTHONY OF PADUA, PRIEST AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH 13	14
THE MOST HOLY TRINITY Q What will the Spirit of truth do for the disciples? <small>(SEE JUNE 17)</small> John 16:12-15 15	16	A Guide them to all truth. 17	18	SAINTE ROMUALD, ABBOT 19	20	SAINTE ALOYSIUS GONZAGA, RELIGIOUS 21
THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST (CORPUS CHRISTI) Q What did Jesus bless and use to feed the crowd? <small>(SEE JUNE 26)</small> Luke 9:11b-17 22	23	THE NATIVITY OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST 24	25	A Five loaves and two fish 26	THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS 27	THE IMMACULATE HEART OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY SAINTE IRENAEUS, BISHOP, MARTYR, AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH, BVM 28
SAINTE PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES Q Who did Peter say Jesus was? <small>(SEE JUNE 30)</small> Matthew 16:13-19 29	THE FIRST MARTYRS OF THE HOLY ROMAN CHURCH A The Christ 30	Word of the month: CREATION All that God has made—heaven, earth, the universe and us!				

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[Click Here to Download the June Calendar from Catechist Magazine](#)

Catholic Trivia

Question: What is the Scavi in Rome?

- a) A disease of the ancient world characterized by sores on the tongue and throat
- b) The ancient burial ground located underneath St. Peter's Basilica



- c) The family name for the twins tasked with burying St. Peter whose descendants still act as undertakers in the area near St. Peter's Basilica
- d) A curse sometimes directed at tourists

Answer: b

"Scavi" is an Italian word meaning "excavations". In Rome, it most famously refers to the [Vatican Necropolis](#), the ancient burial ground unearthed beneath St. Peter's Basilica during excavations in the 1940s. The most significant discovery was finding what is believed to be the tomb of St. Peter, situated directly beneath the main papal altar of St. Peter's Basilica.

The building of the original church had been ordered by none other than emperor Constantine, who had also decided to flatten the hill that used to be where St. Peter's Basilica is now located. That hill, while not one of the original seven hills of Rome, is as important because emperor Nero used it as a location to martyr some of the first Christians – among them, St. Peter.

Those killed there, along with other Romans who were not Christian, were all buried in a necropolis which ended up underground when Constantine ordered, indeed, to build St. Peter's in its stead. The "Scavi" are the part of that same necropolis, which includes St. Peter's tomb, that have been excavated since around 1939.

Joke of the Week

Q: *Which tree can fit in your hand?*

A: A palm tree.

Jen Noll

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[Our Lady of Sorrows Website](#)