



CHRIST OF THE SPARROWS

In the Bible, sparrows are mentioned several times. They often symbolize a variety of things, including God's care and provision for his creation, the importance of humility, and the idea that even seemingly insignificant creatures are known and loved by God. Sparrows have many symbolic meanings across cultures and religions including hope, love, and resilience.

It is believed in Greek mythology that sparrows are associated with Aphrodite, the Goddess of Love. The Gospels use sparrows to illustrate God's love and spiritual connection.

There is a symbolism to sparrows that suggests hope and resilience. They can remind us to embrace change, find joy in simplicity, and hold onto hope & trust God's care during challenging times.

In an excerpt from the artist:

"Christ of the Sparrows" is the name I gave to this painting. Our Lord subsequently referred to this image as "The suffering face of My Son" in an inspired writing given to my wife.

It is a part of my daily prayer to thank our Heavenly Father for giving me the privilege of painting this image. Along with acknowledging this tremendous gift, which I was completely unworthy to receive, I ask for Grace to propagate this image in accordance with what is pleasing to Him. I am aware that with this gift there is also a responsibility that can be overlooked because of my fallen nature. After I had received this image and finished the painting, the Lord revealed to me that He wanted copies made and that they be made available to as many people as possible because, "Through this image I will lead many souls back to My Son." I know that as long as I live, I will never be finished disseminating

this image of Christ. This, also, is a great joy and privilege. It happened this way: It began with what I call the "Great Commission" which took place in Trinity Episcopal Church on Ridge Road in Greece, NY. A clear interior voice said, "I am commissioning you to paint 200 pictures of My Son." I said, "Yes." The first two paintings were my efforts to comply with our Heavenly Father's request. The first painting was "Desire of all nations". The second painting was "Christ Shoulders Our Cross".

Sometime later I was once again sitting in Trinity Episcopal Church after receiving Eucharist with my eyes closed. I saw sparrows clearly in my mind. They were in flight. They converged and landed on tree limbs and on the snow covered ground. As they converged, the brown sparrows against the white background of snow, formed an image of the face of Christ. The tree limbs formed the crown of thorns. It was breathtaking. I murmured, "That is beautiful!" I was aware of an interior voice saying to me, "Go home and paint it." After church I excitedly went home and prepared a large canvas, got out my paints and brushes and started. I began with the eyes of Christ. His eyes were formed by sparrows in the trees and sparrows in flight. I don't know how I painted so quickly, but in what seemed like a few short minutes, Jesus was looking at me. His eyes were sad, but so beautiful. His eyes drew me into His presence; I was overwhelmed with a feeling of unworthiness. I stopped; afraid. I thought, "This is God and I am Paul." I felt too unworthy to continue. I put the brush down. Looking back, I think I have an idea of how St. Peter felt when he said, "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man." I would visit the painting often, but I could not bring myself to touch it. It was too holy and I was acutely aware of my shortcomings.

Somehow as time went on, God coaxed me into picking up my paint brush. I busied myself

painting His "hair" with birds along the edges. I felt "at home" painting the tree branches that formed His crown of thorns. Yes, I was responsible for that crown. It was fitting that I should paint that. What should only have taken a week or two took an entire year. I actually had to make a vow to the Lord that I would finish it by Holy Week of the coming year in order to force myself to paint on it. In retrospect, painting this image of Christ became a spiritual pilgrimage for me and a true milestone in my development as a follower of Christ.

This account is true and factual to the best of my ability to understand what has taken place."



This image was shown to a local artist, who wishes to remain anonymous, from Rochester, NY in a vision and the artist was told by an interior voice to paint it, with the promise that by this image God the Father would lead many people back to His Son.

Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them shall fall to the ground without your Father. Even all the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. Matthew 10:29-31



FAITH BASED ACTIVITIES FOR FAMILIES

As families seek to grow closer to God and each other, integrating faith into daily life can be both fun and important. Faith-based activities are an imperative part of worshipping for families, as they can help families support and reinforce their faith, bond with each other, and serve others. Participating in faith-based family activities not only supports spiritual basics but also creates lasting memories. A few interactive ways to integrate faith into your family's routine would be to take a walk in nature, pray together, serve others by volunteering, play faith-based board games, and get creative with faith-based activities.

Families can take a walk in nature -showing how He created it, that His footprint is on it and the influence He has on it. Spending time out in nature gives us the opportunity to slow down and enjoy the surrounding beauty and peacefulness around us. It allows us to reflect better on our spiritual health by improving our focus, increasing our sense of creativity, and allowing us a higher level of self-esteem.

Praying together as a family can help with allowing a stronger sense of cohesion and connection within the family unit. It allows members to openly express their love, fear, needs, and appreciation toward one another all while allowing a deeper connection to their faith. Parents can establish the significance of prayer and faith to their children by actively contributing and participating in family prayer. Think about praying over a meal, for a safe trip when traveling, pray for health, safety, and success for the day, and making bedtime prayers a ritual.

Live out your faith by serving others. Make care packages for the less fortunate, send cards to elderly members of your parish and community or those serving overseas. Volunteering one's own time shows faith in action. Your own engagement in volunteering shows your confidence in caring for others. Family volunteering offers a pedestal for individuals to contribute meaningfully and promotes a sense of triumph and success. Working together in benevolent activities often reinforces one's confidence by highlighting the positive impact they can make within their community. Teaching children to serve others encourages the importance of service, compassion and empathy and reinforces biblical values.

Engage in regular family faith-based board games. Allow a friendly contest of Bible trivia. This activity provides a fun way to learn about their religious beliefs together; it nurtures open communication around faith, while encouraging open communication that deepens spiritual understanding. It allows for a fun learning experience and encourages discussion about

biblical teachings in the comfort of your own home. This fosters and creates experiences that reinforce their value as a family unit.

Faith-based crafts and activities help introduce a sense of accomplishment and pride in children. They are an artistic way to teach biblical lessons. Try making prayer jars include your favorite biblical verses or something that is important to you in prayer. Make cross-shaped bookmarks out of colorful paper or papier-mâché them, create a Jesus-is-My-King Crown or a Bible verse collage.



Children can also create puppets to reenact Bible stories such as Noah's Ark or design a "Fruit of the Spirit" tree with qualities like love, joy, compassion, dependability, peace, patience, faithfulness, and kindness.

By including these faith-based family activities, parents can foster a love for God in their children while solidifying family bonds. With appealing faith-centered play, learning can become an electrifying part of everyday life.



Cemetery Tours

By: Michelle LiButti
Family Services & Community Outreach Counselor

I started my job at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery as a Family Service Counselor. As time unfolded, I also gained interest in community involvement and was asked to be a Community Outreach Counselor. I was excited to develop some new and exciting things for the cemetery and our community. One of these initiatives is the current tours that we offer. When I first started working here, I heard about tours that used to be held and led by a cemetery representative. I wanted to bring that piece back for the community as a whole, but I also had a desire to try to get the youth community more involved.

When I was both in high school and college, I took a couple of classes centered around death and dying. This gave me the idea of contacting local high schools and colleges to see how we could collaborate to enhance the learning experience for the students. Nazareth and St. John Fisher responded. I met with professors from each location and put together an educational tour for the students. We have collaborated for a couple of years now, and I have also visited the classroom at St. John Fisher, giving a presentation that supplements the tour. I have also provided a tour for home-schooled children ages 5-18. One mom reached out to me and together we were able to tailor an informational session for the students, a few stops at certain sites, and finish with a Mass in the historical All Soul's Chapel. At times, I have also been asked by customers who call or come in if the cemetery offers tours for anyone who is interested and the answer is YES!

A tour is usually about an hour long and we visit several different sites that make Holy Sepulchre unique. Some people also call seeking assistance with genealogy questions, and that is always interesting to me as well. These tours are something that I enjoy doing and I am excited when someone calls and schedules one. I am proud of Holy Sepulchre Cemetery and the work that goes into maintaining the integrity of our sacred space. I am grateful to have the opportunity to work with such a variety of different groups and people. I love telling the history of the cemetery, seeing people's excitement and curiosity and also answering any questions they may have. We have also provided

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STAFF HIGHLIGHT: CATHY VAIL

This year, we celebrate executive director, Cathy Vail's 10 year milestone. Cathy was hired as CFO on February 23, 2015 and named Director in 2021.

How did you get involved with the cemetery? I had already been working in nonprofit for years and was working for another Diocesan company in the affordable Housing Industry when I heard of the opportunity in Rochester.

Who most inspires you? The staff. Every day I witness coworkers supporting families on their worst day. They do this with compassion, empathy and patience. They are now the keepers of their stories; they carry it with them, and it does not break them, but makes them stronger and more empathetic and compassionate for the next family that walks through the door.

What are you most thankful for? Other than my Family and friends- I am extremely thankful to those I have met within this industry, who live this ministry in their daily lives-they started as my mentors and are now considered friends.

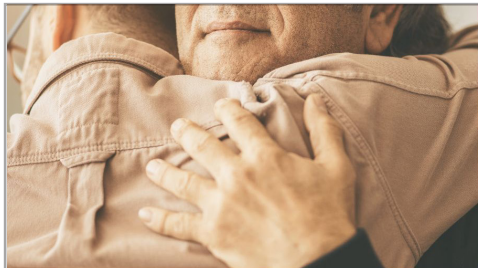
Tell us a little about your family: I have been married to John for 16 years and I am the proud mother of Jessica who is 15 yrs old and a freshman in high school. We also welcomed Josie into our family last year and she is 14 years old and is also a freshman in high school. As if two teenage girls we not enough to fill the house, we have Waffles a 4-year-old St. Bernard.



Some fun facts and favorites of Cathy's: I enjoy all types of music but when "Come on Eileen" comes on it makes me happy and want to jump around. I love Mexican and Chinese food. I am at my happiest place when I am poolside with Jessica and her friends and entertaining family and friends.

"I would like to be remembered for my integrity, being approachable and having the ability to defuse tense situations with humor."





Take the first step toward healing and find support during this challenging time. For more information on this free group, please Call Our Mother of Sorrows at (585) 663-5432 or Holy Cross at (585) 663-2244.

SPECIAL DATES

SUNDAY, APRIL 13: Palm Sunday

FRIDAY, APRIL 18: Offices closed for Good Friday. Our offices will reopen on Saturday, April 19th at 9:00 am.

SATURDAY, APRIL 26: April Mass (8:30 am)

SUNDAY, MAY 11: Mother's Day

SATURDAY, MAY 17: May Mass (8:30 am)

MONDAY, MAY 26: Offices closed for Memorial Day. Our offices will reopen on Tuesday, May 27th at 9:00 am.

SUNDAY, JUNE 8: Pentecost

SATURDAY, JUNE 14: Flag Day

SUNDAY, JUNE 16: Father's Day

THURSDAY, JUNE 19: Offices closed for Juneteenth. Our offices will reopened on Friday, June 20th at 9:00 am.

SATURDAY, JUNE 21: June Mass (8:30 am)

For the most up-to-date information, please visit our calendar of events on our website, or follow us on Facebook, Twitter & Instagram.

GRIEVING WITH GREAT HOPE

Have you recently lost a loved one? Our free Bereavement Support Group offers comfort, connection, and a place to share your journey.



Cemetery Tours continued

tours at our newer cemetery in Henrietta, Ascension Garden. Many people are unaware that this cemetery even exists, but once you see it, you won't be able to forget it.

The grounds are beautiful and peaceful. The cemetery itself is much smaller than Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, but that does not mean it lacks in beauty. The mausoleum is a quiet place to visit. Each hallway is adorned with bronze saints where you can pray and and reflect. Outdoors, you will find St. Francis green burial. It is naturally stunning and reminds us that peace surrounds us. If you would like to book a tour of Holy Sepulchre and/or Ascension Garden Cemetery, please feel free to call our office at (585) 458-4110.

The Jubilee Prayer

*Father in heaven,
may the faith you have given us
in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,
and the flame of charity enkindled
in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,
reawaken in us the blessed hope
for the coming of your Kingdom.*

*May your grace transform us
into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.
May those seeds transform from within both
humanity and the whole cosmos
in the sure expectation
of a new heaven and a new earth,
when, with the powers of Evil vanquished,
your glory will shine eternally.*

*May the grace of the Jubilee
reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope,
a yearning for the treasures of heaven.
May that same grace spread
the joy and peace of our Redeemer
throughout the earth.
To you our God, eternally blessed,
be glory and praise for ever.*

Amen

FEAST DAYS

SUNDAY, APRIL 16: St. Bernadette, patron saint of bodily illness, Lourdes, against poverty.

SUNDAY, APRIL 23: St. George, patron of England and protector of husbands, soldiers, Boy Scouts.

TUESDAY, APRIL 25: St. Mark, patron saint of Venice and protector of pharmacists.

SATURDAY, APRIL 29: St. Catherine of Siena, patron saint of Italy and protector of nurses.

TUESDAY, JUNE 13: St. Anthony of Padua, protector of orphans and sick children.

SATURDAY, JUNE 24: St. John the Baptist

THURSDAY, JUNE 29: St. Peter the Apostle, protector of fishermen, and St. Paul the Apostle, protector of theologians and the Catholic press.

We offer locations dedicated to the Saints at both our locations. For more information, please email events@holysepulchre.org. We would be happy to help you locate a specific area dedicated to a Saint.

Jubilee 2025

PILGRIMS OF HOPE

HOLY SEPULCHRE CEMETERY

2461 Lake Avenue, Rochester NY 14612

P 585-458-4110 F 585-458-3059

HOLY
SEPULCHRE
CEMETERY

ASCENSION
GARDEN

ASCENSION GARDEN

1900 Pinnacle Road, Henrietta NY 14467

P 585-697-1122 F 585-444-5841

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