

Dear Parishioners,

As we continue our celebration of Easter and Christ risen from the dead, it is with sadness that I write to inform you that our Holy Father Pope Francis passed away today. We give thanks to God for the blessings he brought to the Church these last twelve years leading the Church. He was always impelling us towards a greater closeness – with one another, with those on the margins and peripheries, with Creation, and of course, with the Lord.

Yesterday he gave his final message to the world. As he continued to recover from a lengthy illness, he wasn't able to read his Easter [Urbi et Orbi](#) – the annual blessing to the city and the world, but was able to say a few words at the beginning and to give the blessing at the end. He reminded us, “we were not made for death, but for life.” May the Lord grant him eternal rest. May he rise with Christ to new life.

The traditional practice of offering Masses for the Dead for the pope aren't allowed this week because it is the Easter Octave, but we will be remembering him in prayer each day at Mass, and will be able to do so at the beginning of next week as a part of the nine days of prayer for him.

As the whole Church unites in a unique way during these days of loss and mourning, we also pray for the cardinals who will soon elect a new pope, that they listen to the promptings of the Spirit for the Church. On Wednesday, April 23 at 7PM I will be giving a presentation at Mary, Queen of Peace in the Marian Social Hall on the rituals of these days, and the papal election process.

May we always be united together in Christ, our High Priest.

In Christ,  
Fr. Matthew Oakland