

# MASS OF THANKSGIVING

FATHER ALEX FRY

ST. JOHN NEPOMUCENE CATHOLIC CHURCH



SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION

SUNDAY, MAY 21, 2023



# MASS OF THANKSGIVING

<b>Celebrant</b>	Rev. Alex Fry
<b>Concelebrants</b>	Rev. John Dick Rev. Agustin Henderson Rev. Agustín Fuertes
<b>Deacon</b>	Deacon Donald Campbell
<b>Homilist</b>	Rev. Alex Fry
<b>Master of Ceremonies</b>	Hilario Martinez Bryce Baumann
<b>Musicians</b>	St. John Nepomucene Parish Choir James Montgomery, Organist Jonathan Malone, Vocal/Guitar Darwin Martin, Keyboard Elizabeth Clark, Vocal Brian Harmon, Drums Brian Muholland, Bass Justin Schenk, Guitar
<b>Choir Director</b>	James Montgomery
<b>Readers</b>	Joanna Gallegos Stephen Thompson

# THE CALL

**The journey to this day began 13 years ago, when I heard for the first time the words of Jesus, "Follow me."** Within the Church, I discovered a fountain of healing grace, a hidden treasure of truth and wisdom, and a sturdy refuge for the weak and brokenhearted. Most importantly, I found Jesus: friend, brother, savior. To be a priest seemed to be the natural response to this discovery. By the grace of God, I met Him when I was young, and He kept me close to Him in those early years, especially in serving at his altar. My faith was able to grow and thrive in the good soil of our little parish of St. John Nepomucene.

**In 2014, I graduated from Ennis High School, packed my bags, and moved to Holy Trinity Seminary in Irving, Texas.** My first four years of seminary mark one of the most intense periods of growth in my life. This first stage of seminary training focuses primarily on the human and spiritual development of the seminarian, helping him to grow in self-knowledge and the practice of virtue. The seminarian is taught how to pray, to listen closely to the words of Jesus, and to be a witness to His love in word and deed. In 2018, I graduated from HTS and the University of Dallas, and prepared for a new adventure.

**In the Summer of 2018, I arrived at my new home, the Pontifical North American College in Rome, Italy.** Known as the "NAC," the college was founded in 1859, and trains seminarians from all over the United States. The second stage of seminary training focuses on the priestly identity of the seminarian. In this stage, seminarians study theology in depth with courses covering a variety of subjects like the Sacred Scriptures, Church History, Morals, and Spirituality. Living in Europe for three years also provided me with the opportunity to travel to many different countries, including a one month teaching experience in Ukraine. One of the highlights of my time in Rome was meeting our Holy Father, Pope Francis in January 2020.

**In the Summer of 2021, I spent a year in Dallas for my pastoral year at St. Ann in Coppell, and on April 23, 2022, I was ordained a deacon at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church.**

**In the Fall of 2022, I flew back to Rome to begin a two-year cycle of graduate studies in Dogmatic Theology at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas.**

**On Saturday, May 20, 2023, I was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Dallas. God is good. Glory to Him forever.**

# WELCOME

Welcome to the House of Our Lord. Please remain mindful of this by turning off all cellphones and maintaining prayerful silence within the church. With your minds, hearts, and voices, join in this celebration by singing the hymns printed within this program, and by praying and responding wholeheartedly during the Mass.

## **Processional Hymn ..... Alleluia! Sing to Jesus!**

1) Alleluia! Sing to Jesus!  
His the scepter, his the throne;  
Alleluia! His the triumph,  
His the victory alone.  
Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion  
Thunder like a mighty flood.  
Jesus, out of every nation,  
Has redeemed us by his blood.

2) Alleluia! Not as orphans  
Are we left in sorrow now;  
Alleluia! He is near us;  
Faith believes nor questions how.  
Though the cloud from sight received him  
When the forty days were o'er,  
Shall our hearts forget his promise,  
"I am with you evermore"?

3) Alleluia! Heavenly High Priest,  
Here on earth our help, our stay;  
Alleluia! Hear the sinful  
Cry to you from day to day.  
Intercessor, friend of sinners,  
Earth's Redeemer, hear our plea,  
Where the songs of all the sinless  
Sweep across the crystal sea.

4) Alleluia! King eternal,  
You the Lord of lords we own:  
Alleluia! born of Mary,  
Earth your footstool, heaven your throne:  
You within the veil, have entered,  
Robed in flesh, our great High Priest:  
By your Spirit, left us heavenward,  
In the Eucharistic feast!

## **Gloria**

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; You are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

## **Offertory Song ..... Jesus, all for Jesus**

Jesus, all for Jesus	For it's only in your will that I am free
All I am and have and ever hope to be (x2)	For it's only in your will that I am free
All of my ambitions, hopes and plans	Jesus, all for Jesus
I surrender these into your hands (x2)	All I am and have and ever hope to be

## **Guidelines for the Reception of Holy Communion**

We welcome our fellow Christians to this celebration of the Eucharist as our brothers and sisters. We pray that our common baptism and the action of the Holy Spirit in this Eucharist will draw us closer to one another and begin to dispel the sad divisions which separate us. We pray that these will lessen and finally disappear, in keeping with Christ's prayer for us "that they may all be one" (Jn 17:21).

Because Catholics believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is a sign of the reality of the oneness of faith, life, and worship, members of those churches with whom we are not yet fully united are not admitted to Holy Communion. Non-Catholic Christians may come forward for a blessing or prayer. Please cross your arms over your chest to signify that you would like to receive a blessing.



**Communion Hymn ..... The Gift of Finest Wheat**

You satisfy the hungry heart  
With gift of finest wheat;  
Come give to us, O saving Lord,  
The bread of life to eat.

1) As when the shepherd calls his sheep,  
They know and heed his voice;  
So when you call your family Lord,  
We follow and rejoice.

2) With joyful lips we sing to you,  
Our praise and gratitude,  
That you should count us worthy, Lord,  
To share this heavenly food.

3) Is not the cup we bless and share  
The blood of Christ out-poured?  
Do not one cup, one loaf, declare  
Our oneness in the Lord?

4) The mystery of your presence, Lord,  
No mortal tongue can tell:  
Whom all the world cannot contain  
Comes in our hearts to dwell.

5) You give yourself to us, O Lord;  
Then selfless let us be,  
To serve each other in your name  
In truth and charity.

**Communion Hymn ..... Communion**

by Maverick City Music

We are returning  
To the place we've always belonged  
Right here with You  
Take me back to the garden  
Lead me be back to moment I heard Your voice  
Take me back to communion  
Lead me back to the moment I saw Your face  
And it was all so simple  
It was easy to love  
No space between us  
It was easy to trust  
'Cause You are closer, closer than my skin  
And You are in the air I'm breathing in  
(yes, You are)  
And here's where the dead things  
come back to living  
I feel my heart beating again  
It feels so good to know You are my friend  
And this is the garden  
Here in the place I find You close  
This is communion  
Here in the place I'm fully known

And it was all so simple  
You're so easy to love  
And no space between us  
You're so easy to trust  
'Cause You are closer, closer than my skin  
(yes, You are)  
And You are in the air I'm breathing in  
And Here's where the dead things  
come back to living  
I feel my heart beating again  
It feels so good to know You are my friend  
My friend, my friend, yeah (oh-oh)  
Mmh, it's where I'm meant to be  
Me In You, yeah, yeah  
This is where I'm meant to be  
Me in You, and You in me  
I don't have to prove a thing  
You've already approved of me (this is where)  
This is where I'm meant to be  
Me in You, and You in me  
And I don't have to prove a thing (I don't)  
You've already approved of me

This is where I'm meant to be  
Me in You, and You in me  
And I don't have to prove a thing  
You've already approved of me  
'Cause You are closer, closer than my skin  
You are in the air I'm breathing in  
Here's where the dead things  
come back to living  
I feel my heart beating again  
It feels so good to know You are my friend

There's nothing like Your friendship  
There's nothing like this friendship with You,  
with You, with You

We are returning  
We are returning  
To the desire of Your heart

We are returning  
We are returning  
We are returning  
To the desire of Your heart, yes we are

We are returning (woah)  
We are returning (we're coming back home)  
We are returning (woah)  
We are returning  
(oh, just sing it again) (woah)  
We are returning  
(oh, we're coming after You, oh)  
We are returning (here's my heart, God)

We are returning  
(oh, and we'll never look back)  
We are returning  
We are returning  
(we're coming back to You)  
We are returning (here's my heart, God)  
We are returning  
We are returning  
(here's where the dead things)

'Cause here's where the dead things  
come back to living  
I feel my heart beating again  
(here's where the dead things)  
Here's where the dead things come back to living  
I feel my heart beating again  
Here's where the dead things come back to living  
I feel my heart beating again  
It feels so good to know You are my friend

Cause this is where I'm meant to be  
Me in You, and You in me (and I don't have to)  
I don't have to prove a thing  
You've already approved of me (this is where)

Mm-mm  
Yeah, yeah, yeah  
Yes, I didn't know that I could have  
a friend like You  
I didn't know I could have a friend like You  
So good, You're so good  
I didn't know I could have a friend like You  
Closer than a brother, closer than a brother  
I didn't know I could have a friend like You  
I didn't think that I deserved it  
I didn't know I could have a friend like You  
You keep blowing me away  
I didn't know I could have a friend like You  
(just the voices, one more time)  
I didn't know I could have a friend like You

Cause You are closer, closer than my skin  
And You are in the air I'm breathing in  
And here's where the dead things  
come back to living  
I feel my heart beating again  
It feels so good to know You are my friend

What a friend we have in Jesus  
(Somebody better sing it out next time)  
(Ay, we're still rollin')



Sins and griefs to bear  
What a privilege to carry  
Everything to God in prayer

O what peace we often for it  
And O what needless pain we bear  
It's all because we do not carry  
Everything to God in prayer

I didn't know that I could have a friend like You  
I didn't know that I could have a friend like You  
(One who holds me close in shame, oh, I\_

I didn't know that I could have a friend like You  
(One who's a better friend than I could ever be,  
oh-oh)

I didn't know that I could have a friend like You  
(here's where)

And here's where the dead things come back to living  
I feel my heart beating again  
(it's coming alive now)

Here's where the dead things come back to living  
I feel my heart beating again  
(I'm not numb anymore)

Here's where the dead things come back to living  
I feel my heart beating again (here's where)  
Here's where the dead things come back to living  
I feel my heart beating again (it feels so good, sing)  
It feels so good to know You are my friend

## **Recessional Hymn ..... Crown Him with Many Crowns**

1) Crown him with many crowns,  
the Lamb upon his throne.  
Hark! how the heavenly anthem drowns  
all music but its own.  
Awake, my soul, and sing  
of him who died for thee,  
and hail him as thy matchless king  
through all eternity.

2) Crown him the Lord of life,  
who triumphed o'er the grave,  
and rose victorious in the strife  
for those he came to save;  
his glories now we sing  
who died and rose on high,  
who died eternal life to bring,  
and lives that death may die.

3) Crown him the Lord of love;  
behold his hands and side,  
rich wounds, yet visible above,  
in beauty glorified;  
no angels in the sky  
can fully bear that sight,  
but downward bends their burning eye  
at mysteries so bright.

4) Crown him the Lord of years,  
the potentate of time,  
creator of the rolling spheres,  
ineffably sublime.  
All hail, Redeemer, hail!  
for thou hast died for me;  
thy praise shall never, never fail  
throughout eternity.

## IN GRATITUDE

**To Almighty God**, whose love endures forever, for calling me to this vocation, for leading me along the way, and for always guiding and protecting me. Before you formed me in my mother's womb, you knew my name. By my baptism, you saved me. By confession, you heal me. By communion, you feed me with your own body and blood. By confirmation, you set upon me the seal of the Holy Spirit. And by ordination, you have called me to the service of your Church. *For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory for ever. Amen.*

**To my parents**, for your constant love and support. Thank you for baptizing me Catholic, for taking me to Church, and for sending me to the Pines Catholic Camp. Thank you for the innumerable sacrifices you made, for the hours spent at ball games and tennis matches, for every vacation and every camping trip, every bedtime story and every meal. And thank you for sticking with me on this wild journey of seminary. I could not have done it without you.

**To the priest mentors in my life**, pastors, seminary formators, rectors, spiritual directors, confessors, teachers, and friends. Thank you for your example of joyful service and generosity. Thank you for patiently listening to my doubts and worries, for sharing my joys and successes, and for affirming in me strengths which I could not see in myself.

**To my brother seminarians**, for your companionship along the difficult way of seminary. Thank you for the weekend trips, the late night study sessions, the spontaneous food runs, and all of the many adventures of the last eight years. It is the honor of my life to serve alongside you in the vineyard of the Lord.

**To my friends and benefactors**, for your kindness and support. Thank you for your examples of holiness and discipleship. In countless ways, you have taught me how to love and serve.

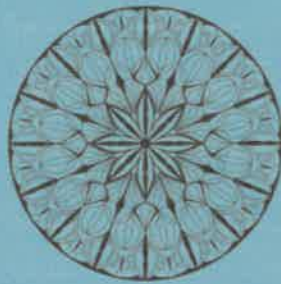
**To the musicians**, thank you for your service to God in this liturgy and for raising our thoughts and voices to Heaven.

**To the altar servers**, thank you for assisting at this Mass. Do not be afraid to give everything to Jesus!

**To the Altar Society, Catholic Daughters, Guadalupanas, KJZT, and Knights of Columbus**: thank you for your witness to Christian service and for your constant support of me during my seminary years.

**To all present here today**, thank you for joining in this celebration of the Lord's work in my life. I am humbled by your love and generosity. Please pray for me, that as a priest I may boldly preach the love of God in both word and deed.





Please join us after the Mass for a Luncheon Reception in the cafeteria, which has been graciously provided for by the St. John Nepomucene Parishioners and Ministries.

Fr. Alex will be available for First Blessings after the Luncheon Reception in the cafeteria.