

So often we hear people or even ourselves excuse an action by saying "I was only following orders." But for **Nereus and Achilleus** this excuse could not stand in the face of the cross.

Everything we know from authority about the two first-century martyrs comes from a testimony written by Pope St. Damasus in the fourth century and inscribed on a memorial tablet that commemorates their lives. But even this commentary comes 300 years after they died.

Damasus tells us that Nereus and Achilleus were soldiers in the Roman army where they helped carry out the persecution of Christians. They probably had nothing against Christians and didn't carry for the bloody slaughter they were commanded to perform, but they obeyed these cruel orders out of fear of dying themselves. After all, that was what soldiers have always been expected to do.

We are not told how they were converted, only that it was a "miracle of faith." After this miracle, they threw down their weapons and escaped from their camp, discarding armor and arms as they went toward their new life in Christ. As participants in the persecution they knew perhaps better than any other Christian what pain awaited them. Faith, however, had triumphed over fear of death and the victory of faith was the sweetest they had known.

We are told they were martyred but Damasus doesn't mention how.

Later legend had it that they served Flavia Domitilla, the great-niece of Emperor Domitian, and were exiled and executed with her when she converted. This legend probably originated in the fact that the martyrs were buried in what was later known as the cemetery of Domitilla.

Prayer:

Saints Achilleus and Nereus, pray for those in the military and armed forces throughout the world that they may always see God as their authority and obey God's orders first. Amen



This Week

- † Saturday, May 9: Confession 4:30PM to 5:15PM, Mass 5:30PM; Int. For all our Parishioners.
- † Sunday, May 10: Sixth Sunday of Easter & Mother's Day; Mass 9:00AM; Int. For all the mothers of the St. Matthew Parish/Sacred Heart Mission.
- † Tuesday, May 12; Mass 9:00AM; St. Nereus & Achilleus; St. Pancras; Int. For all the new Catholics.
- † Wednesday, May 13: Mass 9:00AM; Our Lady of Fatima; Int. For increased devotion to the Rosary.
- † Thursday, May 14: Mass 9:00AM; St. Matthias, Apostle; Int. For all Bishops, Priests and Deacons.
- † Friday, May 15: Eucharistic Adoration 8:30AM, Mass 9:00AM; St. Isidore; Int. For continued growth in the Church.
- † Saturday, May 16: Confession 4:30PM to 5:15PM, Mass 5:30PM; Int. For all our parishioners
- † Sunday, May 17: The Ascension of the Lord; Mass 9:00AM; Int. +Branden Barnes, Req. by Jenny & John Butler.

Saturday May 16, 2026

Reader: Paul Bourque

Eucharistic Ministers: Terry Parsons & Jenny Butler

Sunday May 17, 2026

Readers: Beth Baldwin & Allen White

Eucharistic Ministers: Sally Hildebrand & Angela Maurer

Hospitality: Julie Parks

Grass Cutters

May 14– Mark Kidder, Cameran Marcum

Offertory/Attendance

May 3: \$3357 Attendance 110

Prayer List : Collette Howard, Jim Hildebrand, Mary Beth Hixon, Maddie Hixon, Sheila Giovinazzo, Gabe Maurer, Father Pen's brother, Riley Knotts, David Shockey, Bobby Lucas, Peyton Kegley, Ina Morrell, Richard & Kate Douglas, Sharyn Sims, Emily, Jim Hormsdorpher, Keaton Patterson, Norma Maurer, Gordon Maurer, Tanya Ball, Malori Bailes, Katie Romeo, Josie Morris, Shirley Livingston, Debbie Gump, Gale Tribbett, Barb White, Brittany Cottrell, Debbie Mullins, Beverlee Wilson, Billy Cox, Brian Cox, Melissa Holsinger, Allie Romeo, Ruth Sergeant, Debbie Romeo, Millie Jaggard, Jim Jaggard, Roberta Striga, Carol Woody, Ralph Parsons, Terry Parsons, Toni Burks, Lois Shreve, Holly McCoy, Benny Hunt, Vanessa Sawyer, Breanna Sawyer, Kevin Donahue, Robert Patterson, Dr. Alberto A. Fernandez, David Harris, Vincent Vespucci, Jason Price, Rick Petry, Baylen Evans, Malinda McNabb, Larry Vansickle, Richard Buckley, Allie Kramer, Vince Jiovannazzo, Gina Daviau, Michael Hughes, Devin Colahan, Bryan Thompson, Jeananne Tribbet, Luke Liggett, Betty Collins, Stephanie Milikaia, George Malone, Steve Sommerville, Axel, Devin Colahan, Lois Rafferty, Jacob Morton, TC Johnson, Dax Austin, Gary Gwisdalla, Inkey Arose, George Puskas, Jackson Parker, Amanda Taylor, Sierra Butler, Susan Johnson, Angela Kelly, Steve Hunt, Mika Martin, Martha Moran, Charles and Gail Parks, Melanie Johnson, Marife Daily, Kitty Deschappelles, Fanie Vannest, Steve & Vida Perrine, Julian Perrine, Cindy Crocket, Barbara Rutan, and all the sick of our parish, and all the Poor Souls in Purgatory.

May Birthdays: Lexi Corcovilos 5/1, Aaron Bridges 5/4, Diane Johnson 5/5, Graceland Tignor 5/5, Beth Baldwin 5/7, Rey Tignor 5/8, Drew Hunt 5/11, Michael Sayre 5/12, Leslie Pauley 5/14, Ronnie Maurer 5/15, Paul Kobe 5/17, Joann Gorman 5/22;

May Anniversaries: Danny & Jane Mitchel 5/2, Rick & Elaine Corcovilos 5/10, Allen & Barb White 5/17, Scott & Beth Baldwin 5/22, Frank & Ann Nester 5/23,

Intention for the Month of May: That everyone might have food. Let us pray that everyone, from large producers to small consumers, be committed to avoid wasting food and to ensure that everyone have access to quality food.

Pope Leo XIV@Pontifax: The Church interprets history through the lens of the Gospel and speaks decisively against all evil, as the pilgrim People of God. At the same time, she acknowledges the need for continual conversion so she may properly fulfill her mission. As members of the same Body, we are called to renewal.

Announcements

- St. Matthew welcomes any visitors here today who may be traveling through or in town to visit friends or family. Know that our prayers are with you as you pass through.
- If you want to receive Holy Communion kneeling down, please sit in the front pew.
- If you or anyone you know is interested in learning more about the Catholic faith please call the office and leave a message or call Father Roy or Deacon John. Their numbers are in the bulletin. We would be very happy to hear from you and help you begin your journey.
- Online orders for the Pampered Chef party held Saturday at Sacred Heart can be placed until May 16 at this site <https://www.pamperedchef.com/party/helpstockthekitchen>
- Please check your email for a message from VIRTUS Online. Every 3 years we have to renew our background check. For many of us that time is now. Please do the background check as soon as possible because I have an audit report due at the end of May.

- The Bishops of the United States voted to consecrate the United States to the Sacred Heart of Jesus to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the United States with the hope that our people “recognize the kingship of Christ, perfecting the temporal order with the spirit of the Gospel” . The consecration will take place on June 11 during the spring meeting of the Bishops. Bishop Brennan is asking that all parishes in our diocese celebrate a Mass the next day on June 12, the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. We will have a Mass and adoration at 9:00AM on Friday, June 12 and Mass and Adoration at 6:00PM at Sacred Heart. Special readings and prayers will be said at these masses.
- David McGraw the son of Diana McGraw and a parishioner is currently a Sophomore pre-med student majoring in biology at Marshall University will be doing a mission trip to Central Asia this summer (May 17-June 28) where he and a group of fellow students will be sharing the gospel and love of Jesus Christ. His goal is to raise \$1650. If you would like to donate you may do so on his giving page at give.cru.org/1344470 . Prayers for safety and success are appreciated.
- If you would like to be a candidate for training to be a Tribunal Advocate to help with the ministry of the Marriage Tribunal please let Father know. It is an 8 week commitment and the training is done via Zoom.
- The Finance Council meets this Tuesday, May 12 at 6:30PM.
- If you love the Hallow App you will be interested in the Hallow Summit 2026 to be held at the Franciscan University in Stubenville, OH October 8-11. Don't procrastinate. Tickets will sell fast. We will be having two spaghetti dinners as fundraisers to help with the costs of attending this event. For more info go to the website Hallow Summit 2026.
- Look around and notice the beautiful religious art that has been added to the church and parish hall. If you would like to contribute to this ongoing project make your donation with ART in the check memo or envelope and we will happily credit your contribution and continue to add to our collection.
- Michael Sayre is planning to attend the 2026 Boy Scout National Jamboree in July. The two week camping experience is attended by Scouts from all over the country. The cost is \$1950. Michael wants to raise part of the money himself to pay for his trip. He will do odd jobs around the county. Call him at 304-440-0100 or Catherine Sayre at 304-512-9151.
- Have you experienced the loss of a loved one? Please join Father Roy and Deacon John for a five week bereavement experience called “Grieving with Great Hope”. Join with others who have suffered loss as we learn together in the love of Christ how to grieve with great hope. Sign up sheet and more information in the vestibule.
- The Knights and Ladies Guild will pray the Rosary every Wednesday at 6:00PM. All are welcome to come and join in prayer.
- If you are interested in The Prayer Chain Prison Ministry to pray for inmates wanting prayer, contact Sr. Delores Keyser at dkeyser@dw.org or call 304-233-0880 ext. 16
- If you want to receive Holy Communion kneeling down please sit in the front pew.

To report an incidence of suspected child sexual abuse, please contact your local law enforcement agency, or you may confidentially contact WV Child Protective Services at 800.352.6513. To report suspected cases of sexual abuse by personnel of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to the Diocese, please contact one of the bishop's designees at 888.434.6237 or 304.233.0880: Sister Ellen Dunn, ext. 264; Mr. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Mr. Tim Bishop, ext. 353; Fr. Dennis Schuelkens, ext. 270 or call the Office of Safe Environment at 304.230.1504