

Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church

March 28th/March 29th 2019: Fifth Sunday of Lent



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Pastor

Rev. Jim W. Booth

SACRAMENTS and LITURGY

~~English Saturday Vigil Mass: 4:00 p.m.~~

~~English Sunday Mass: 9:00 a.m.~~

~~Traditional Latin Sunday Mass: 10:45 a.m.~~

~~English Weekday Masses: 8:30 a.m. Monday to Friday~~

~~Latin Weekday Masses: 7:00 a.m. Wednesday and Friday, 6:30 p.m. on First Friday~~

~~First Saturday Latin Mass: 8:30 a.m. with confessions beginning at 8:00 a.m.~~

Holy Day Mass: As Announced

Confessions: [See Below](#)

Baptisms: By Appointment

Marriage Arrangements must be made with the Pastor **at least 6** months before the date of the wedding. Talk to the Pastor before making any firm wedding plans. No destination weddings.

COVID-19 RESPONSE, MASS & DEVOTIONS: Per the order of the Bishop, there shall be no public Masses at least until or perhaps after April 18th, Divine Mercy Sunday. Since Sunday Masses are not being offered publicly, there is no Sunday Mass obligation. All, however, are required to keep the Sabbath holy especially through prayers and devotions. Likewise, Stations and other devotions and gatherings are also forbidden during this period.

COVID-19 RESPONSE, CONFESSIONS: Until further notice, confessions will be done in the Church parking lot with Fr Booth in his car. Those wishing to confess can walk up individually maintaining a six-foot distance. Hours for confession will be from 9:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

IN MEMORIAM: In memory of Eugene Mason, the sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of his soul from March 29th to April 4th. The sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of Walter Roberts from April 5th until April 11th.

PARISH SUPPORT: The collection for last weekend was \$1905.

PRAY FOR OUR SEMINARIANS: Please pray for our seminarians: Daniel Sessions, Charles Deering, Doug Hess, Matthew Gubenski, Patrick DePew, Max Gallegos, and John Gardiner. Please pray for more good men to answer God's call to the priesthood.

DATE FOR FIRST COMMUNION: First Communion is currently scheduled for Sunday, May 3rd. Opportunities for first confessions will be offered prior to First Communion.

MASS SCHEDULE AND INTENTIONS: (All Private)

Sat, Mar 28:	Special Intention for Max Cook (by Lena Donellan)
Sun, Mar 29:	Pro Populo
Mon, Mar 30:	Special Intention for Catherine Hahn (by Jacie Donellan)
Tues, Mar 31:	Special Intention for Joseph Donellen (by Scott Donellan)
Wed, Apr 1:	† Jennie Sciro (by the Bryant Family)
Thur, Apr 2:	† Jeremy Noblitt (by Susan Banks)
Fri, Apr 3:	Special Intention for Dan & Stephanie Burke (by the Meeker Family)
Sat, Apr 4:	† Jennie Sciro (by the Rumore Family)
Sun, Apr 5:	Pro Populo

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND especially Fr Raymond Dunmyer, Stephanie Burke, Daniel Burke, Lee Gaissert, Lawrence Brandley, Don Williams, Roseanne Timpa, Pete Ransom, Jerry Joiner, Natalie Karen Caraccilo, Beryl Curtis, Nicole Copeland, Laura Minjares, Linda Cooper, Lee Dinan, Mina Keasler, Isabella Auer, Levi Ray, John Minjares, Sr., Virginia Files, Danny Rohling, Kay Dorion, Krissy Chism, William Scroggins, Lamar Smith, Paul Herrmann, Debbie Zeller, Wayne Little, Maria Morin, Andrea Little, Joseph Edwards, George Dunham, Fran Costanza, Christine Cover, Thatcher Kerzie, Malcolm Perry, Koslyn Chism, Kathleen Strawmeyer, Cindy Little, Stan Trawick, David Henning, Loretta Mara, Lillie Rumore, and Stephanie Perry.

Christian Hope

Hope is a word that has come to mean several things. In the broadest sense of the word, hope means the expectation of something. Hope once meant the expectation of something positive or desirable but it has more and more come to carry a sense of the negative or doubtful. Last fall a college senior might have said with confidence ‘I intend to graduate this May,’ but given the current state of things he might say ‘I hope to graduate this May,’ meaning that the likelihood of his graduating is in doubt because COVID-19 has brought uncertainty into his expectations. Getting his diploma might happen on time, but it might be delayed, deferred, or never happen. His hope of graduating in light of the current epidemic implies, at least as the word is now commonly used, a degree of doubt that a diploma will soon be his. A mother might think ‘I am certain that my daughter will be safe’ if there is no reason to believe otherwise, while she might think ‘I hope my daughter will be safe’ if there is a degree of uncertainty surrounding the daughter’s wellbeing. The daughter might be married to a swine, drive an unreliable car, or work in a bad neighborhood, any of which would ignite motherly concern. Confidence erodes into hoping when the daughter’s circumstances become less reliably secure. In other words, we tend to hope against the bad or undesirable instead of positively hoping for the good.

Traditionally, hope suggested a positive expectation. More precisely, hope was once understood as a desire for something with the reasonable expectation of obtaining it. Properly formed desires are directed toward good things or at least things that are perceived as good. Likewise, the good thing that is hoped for, the good thing that is desired, must be reasonably attainable, perhaps even through considerable effort. A young lady desiring to marry a good, kind, loving man of faith has a well-placed hope and she will probably have to work to find such a man. If she desires to marry some movie star, one that all the young ladies swoon over, she is unlikely to have such a desire fulfilled despite her best efforts such that we would be better to say that she dreams of marrying such a man. If the young lady desires to marry a charming prince in the wedding of the century, live in a castle, and one day be a majestic and graceful queen, it would be more accurate to say that such a desire is not a proper hope, probably not a dream, but more along the lines of a fantasy or fairytale. However, in the modern sense of the word hope, to say that she is hoping to marry a good, kind, loving man of faith implies that she might settle for a man who is malicious, uncaring, despising, and/or unbelieving.

The above examples pertain to a natural sense of hope, which is to desire something that is good and can be reasonably obtained. The theological virtue of hope is similar to our ordinary hopes, but it is also different. The first difference is that Christian hope desires supernaturally good things while ordinary hope craves natural realities such as diplomas, good jobs, safe neighborhoods, general wellbeing, good spouses, and the like. Our natural hopes are worldly in nature but Christian hope has as its object and desire supernatural good, specifically the one true good that is God Himself.

Our natural hopes, likewise, might be mistaken because we perceive something to be good but our perceptions are misguided or mistaken. For example, a young man might hope one day to become a surgeon when in reality he might be quite ill suited for that profession. He might be drawn to the prestige that attaches to being a doctor and might desire the paycheck of a heart surgeon. Prestige and pay bring him to desire something that might be unobtainable for any number of reasons, and, if obtained, might make him quite miserable. Christian hope, however, is never going to dissatisfy if we obtain what we desire. Since God is the object of the Christian’s hope, there simply is no way that we could be disappointed in obtaining Him even in the midst of the worst afflictions: *“Not only that, but we even boast of our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, and endurance, proven character, and proven character, hope, and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us”* (Rom 5:3-5).

Yet another difference between natural and supernatural hope is the effort required to obtain that which is desired. The man aspiring to be a heart surgeon will have work and study hard to obtain the education and skills required. More than likely a degree in accounting or chemistry might be more

obtainable, but neither would be generally impossible and neither could be obtained without effort on his part. Obtaining the object of our supernatural desire, however, is impossible no matter how much effort we put forth. We are bound to the natural world and by ourselves we can only put forth a natural, limited degree of effort. God, however, is entirely supernatural and thus unattainable through natural means. Christian hope recognizes that God's help is required to obtain any supernatural good. That supernatural help – grace – comes from God and this is another reason why our Christian hope does not disappoint.

So, at this point it seems apropos to provide the Catechism definition of what we mean by hope: Paragraph 1817 states that 'Hope is the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit.'

This allows us to see Christian hope as trust in God, specifically trust in the promises that Jesus made to His disciples. Given what has been promised and Who has made those promises, our hope should not be timid or conditional or doubtful. To say that I hope to obtain heaven is a statement of great confidence and trust, confidence in Jesus Himself and trust that He will be faithful to His promises. In no way should we think that our hope for salvation carries any doubt as the common understanding of the word hope implies. No, placing our hopes in Jesus and His promises cannot and will not disappoint. The only way disappointment is a possibility lies in us not keeping our end of the bargain. Indeed, through Jesus we have access to all the graces we need for the otherwise unattainable desire for eternal life.

Thus, St Paul testifies to the certainty of hope, saying *"If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not also give us all things with him? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies; who is to condemn? Is it Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ... No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (Rom 8:31-39). In other words, nothing can separate us from the love of God except the one thing that is missing from St Paul's list of seemingly powerful but spiritually impotent forces: we ourselves. If there is any doubt in our hope, it lies with us, not with the goodness of our desire or the goodness of the One that makes our desire attainable.

Therefore, in these uncertain and harrowing times, we need to bolster our Christian hope. Is there anything more powerful than God? Are our sins more powerful than God? Are we beyond God's mercy? Does God take pleasure in the death of the wicked? Does God only want some to be saved? Did Jesus only die for a few? The answer to all of these questions is a resounding No. Therefore, we have no reason whatsoever to abandon our hope through despair.

However, we must not let our trust and confidence in God and His promises lead to negating our hope through presumption. While there is nothing more powerful than God, He respects our free will to reject Him, His mercy, and His salvation. While no sin is unforgivable in and of itself, the unrepented and unconfessed mortal sin, no matter how small it may seem to us, goes unforgiven through our own fault. While God's mercy, like His love, is utterly boundless, it is unobtainable to those who choose not to seek it. God created each one of us to share in his glory, but if we fall short of His glory we have no one to blame but ourselves. Jesus' death on the cross atoned for every sin that has been committed, is being committed, and will ever be committed until the end of time, but that atonement relies on our accepting the gift of salvation and living in His good graces. - Fr Booth

An Act of Hope

O Lord God, I hope by your grace for the pardon of all my sins and after life here to gain eternal happiness because you have promised it who are infinitely powerful, faithful, kind, and merciful. In this hope I intend to live and die. Amen.