

# Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church

April 4<sup>th</sup>/April 5<sup>th</sup> 2019: Palm Sunday



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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 30<sup>th</sup>. 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 Walter Roberts, the sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of his soul from April 5<sup>th</sup> to April 11<sup>th</sup>. The sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of Maxine Olson from April 12<sup>th</sup> until April 18<sup>th</sup>.

**PARISH SUPPORT:** The collection for last weekend was \$1923. Please feel free to mail your contributions in or save them up for when we return to having Mass.

**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 3<sup>rd</sup>. Given the state of things, it will probably be postponed.

**MASS SCHEDULE AND INTENTIONS:** (All Private)

Sat, Apr 4:	† Jennie Sciro (by the Rumore Family)
Sun, Apr 5:	Pro Populo
Mon, Apr 6:	† Celia Sampedro (by George & Madeline Sampedro)
Tues, Apr 7:	Special Intention for Katie Underwood (by Charlie Matthews)
Wed, Apr 8:	Special Intention for Rick Juneau (by Charlie Matthews)
Thur, Apr 9:	Special Intention for Jennifer & David Holden (by Joseph Matthews)
Fri, Apr 10:	No Mass, Good Friday
Sat, Apr 11:	Special Intention for Allison & Charlie Rumore (by Peter Matthews)
Sun, Apr 12:	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.

## *Perfect Contrition*

Much has been said of recent about making a perfect act of contrition. Why? Because it is quite possible that many people will face the danger of death without the benefit of the sacraments. Given the current circumstances, a hospital or nursing home could prevent a priest from hearing the confession of someone who is dying or prevent the administration of last rites. It is also possible that priests might not be available in large enough numbers to get to everyone who is in danger of death or actively dying. This is yet another consequence of the vocations crisis we have had for quite some time.

In any case, many Catholics have grown all too lax about remaining in a state of grace. To some degree this stems from bad preaching and teaching from the pulpit. But just because Father So-and-So says so does not make it true despite how much it might tickle our ears. To some degree many people have lost their moral compass, thinking that their sins are not so bad as to merit hell. ‘The affair I had twenty years ago was no big deal, especially since my wife never found out about it. Nobody got hurt, so it’s no big deal.’ Yes, he might have fooled his wife, but what are odds that he’ll fool God? Nobody got hurt? Impossible. Having killed his relationship with God could hardly be described as not being hurt nor could the sacrilegious Communion he received in a state of sin over those twenty years: he will have to answer for the Body and Blood of Christ (1Cor 11:27). ‘Contraception is no big deal: after all, everyone is doing it.’ Yes, she might have let the example of our fallen culture make a serious sin appear trivial or nonexistent, but that won’t fly with the Lord. St Augustine taught 1600 years ago that ‘Right is right even if no one is doing it; wrong is wrong even if everyone is doing it.’ Someone else might say ‘Yes, the Church says my lifestyle is sinful, but I am free to decide what is right for me.’ Not so much. Yes, we have free will, but that gift is given to us so that we might freely choose the good and reject what is evil. Besides, when did we come to the absurd conclusion that we know better than God? When did we conclude that God – our Creator – has no say in how we are to live or what is or is not sinful? “*You shall not do as we are doing here today, everyone doing what is right in their own sight*” (Deut 12:8) and “*All your ways may be straight in your own eyes, but it is the Lord who weighs hearts*” (Prov 21:2).

We must never forget what the Scriptures tell us about ourselves. For example, St Paul indicts all of mankind, Jew and gentile alike, because of our universal sinfulness: “*For there is no distinction; all have sinned and are deprived of the glory of God*” (Rom 3:22-23). Likewise, King David laments, “*God looks out from the heavens upon the children of Adam, to see if there is a discerning person who is seeking God. All have gone astray; each one is altogether perverse. There is not one who does what is good, not even one*” (Ps 53:3-4). Thus, Jesus died for everyone because everyone is a sinner in need of salvation. Besides the Blessed Virgin, no one is spared from the effects of sin. We are born into sin, better understood as being born alienated from God due to Adam’s sin, and we sin throughout our lives after having reached the age when we can discern right from wrong, the so-called age of reason. Baptism cures our having been born estranged from God because of original sin but it is the sacrament of confession where we seek and obtain His forgiveness for our own deliberate acts of evil. Indeed, baptism and confession are the two sacraments that are available for those who are in a state of mortal sin: baptism cannot be repeated, which means that confession is the normal means by which our mortal sins are forgiven. All of the other sacraments – Communion, confirmation, matrimony, holy orders, and anointing of the sick – presume and require that the recipient be in a state of grace. If they are not, the sacrament still happens but it will be received unfruitfully and sacrilegiously.

Yes, the anointing of the sick can absolve mortal sins, but its primary purpose and effect is to strengthen the soul to face serious maladies and even death itself. The forgiveness of sins possible in the anointing of the sick is conditional: the one who is anointed ought to go to confession prior to anointing, if they are able, and if not, they have to be truly sorry for their sins and have intended to confess them. Is the one who has not been to confession in ten years truly sorry for their sins and did they really intend on confessing them? Hard to say.

So why do people put off confessing their sins? In some cases, they love their sins too much to part with them. For example, the cohabitating couple, the couple that is living in sin, will often find it hard to confess what they are doing, to find remorse for their fornication, and to actually amend their ways. It really is not a matter of shame given that what they are doing is hardly a secret. In fact many will shamelessly flaunt their sin, sometimes even boldly. Even if they confess what they are doing, receiving absolution will require a purpose of amendment, the desire to end their sinful ways. Thus, some people choose not to confess their sins because they have no intention to change their ways, no desire to recognize what they are doing is sinful, or that they love their sin more than they love God.

Some people will avoid the confessional out of shame for their sins. They detest what they have done but they let fear keep them bound in a sinful state. Ultimately, it is human respect that keeps them from confessing. 'I could not possibly tell father what I have done.' Truth be told, I seriously doubt that any priest that has been ordained more than 6 months would be scandalized. By about six months into his priesthood, the priest will have pretty much heard it all. It has been a long, long time since I was shocked at a confessed sin, and even then the shock is very short lived. Indeed, when it comes to sin, there is nothing new under the sun. From the priestly perspective, the greater shock and the greater scandal comes not from what people confess but from the fact that people would rather remain estranged from God than to have their soul liberated from the contagion of sin.

Some people will skip the confessional out of presumption. They might presume that they can confess at any time in the future: I'll do it mañana, mañana. It seems that there will always be time to confess, that is, until there is no more time or opportunity. Others will presume on God's mercy, that He will certainly not send me to hell. Correct, God does not send us to hell, we do that ourselves when we sin grievously. Still others will see heaven as a right when it is an unmerited gift that can be spurned.

Another way of looking at it is to ask the question differently. Instead of asking why we don't go to confession, we could easily ask why we do go to confession. For many people, confessing their sins is a matter of fear of death, having to come before God to be judged, or the fear of hell. These are legitimate motivations for confessing and they represent sufficient remorse for receiving absolution from the priest. Others confess because they want to worthily receive the Lord in Communion. Again, this is a valid reason for seeking God's mercy in the confessional. Still others might go to confession out of routine, they might confess like clockwork. This also works regarding being absolved. However, all of these motivations, while valid, are to one degree or another defective. They are all lacking a key element that God wants so much. Love.

Indeed, to make a perfect act of contrition it must be motivated out of love for God. This is reflected in the traditional act of contrition itself: 'I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of heaven, and the pains of hell; but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, Who are all good and deserving of all my love.' It is implied in the modern form: 'I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things.'

So, if we are faced with the prospect of death without the availability or possibility of making a good sacramental confession, we would be well advised to do our best to make an act of contrition truly from the heart, desiring to be reconciled with God. In the absence of confession, but not a substitute for a good sacramental confession, we should do our best not to say the act of contrition mechanically or halfheartedly. We need to say it like we mean it and to say it with every fiber of our being out of a true love for the Lord.

If we are able indeed to make a perfect act of contrition, God may choose to forgive our sins. As was said above, this is no substitution for the sacrament of confession, a sneaky way to avoid going to confession. Confession, as a sacrament, always works as long as there is sorrow for sin, a complete confession is made, and absolution is granted. The perfect act of contrition does not carry the same level of certainty and should be seen as a means of last resort. Let us not resort to the means of last resort while there is still time and opportunity to avail ourselves of sacramental confession. - Fr Booth