

Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church

April 25th/April 26th 2019: Third Sunday of Easter (English)
Second Sunday After Easter (Latin)



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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 30th. 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.

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 Alexander Salillas, the sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of his soul from April 26th to May 2nd. The sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of Tevin Williams from May 3rd until May 9th.

PARISH SUPPORT: The collection for last weekend was \$3553 and \$180 were given for the Preservation Fund. 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 tentatively rescheduled for Thursday, June 11th (Corpus Christi).

MASS SCHEDULE AND INTENTIONS: (All Private)

- Sat, Apr 25: † Eugene Mason (by Mary & Betty Mason)
- Sun, Apr 26: Pro Populo
- Mon, Apr 27: † Antonella Trinci (by the Botta Family)
- Tues, Apr 28: † Leonard Smyly (by James & Nida Hammond)
- Wed, Apr 29: † Tranquilla Malone (by James & Nida Hammond)
- Thur, Apr 30: † Ryan Frazier (by the Rumore Family)
- Fri, May 1: † David Bull (by Allen Bull)
- Sat, May 2: † Wayne Bullock (by Allen Bull)
- Sun, May 3: Pro Populo

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND especially Fr Raymond Dunmyer, 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.

Peace be with You

What does Jesus say when He first appears to the assembled Apostles on Easter morning? Jesus said a number of things. For instance, He gave them the Holy Spirit, saying “*As the Father has sent me, so I send you.*” And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “*Receive the Holy Spirit*” (Jn 20:21-22). Why did He give them the Holy Spirit? Jesus makes that clear with the very next thing He says: “*Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained*” (Jn 20:22). Jesus delegates His own divine power to mere men, the power to forgive the transgressions of others. He sends them, empowers them, and gives them the authority to forgive sins in His name through the Holy Spirit. This is a critical thing to understand, that Jesus has delegated divine power and authority to the Apostles and no doubt to their successors. We see this also, this enduring delegation of power and authority, in the Great Commission, Jesus’ last words to His Apostles before He ascends into heaven: “*Then Jesus approached and said to them, ‘All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age’*” (Mt 28:18-20). This commission is until the end of the age, the end of time, which clearly implies that this divine delegation was not for the Apostles alone but endures in the Church itself. Indeed, Jesus could hardly expect a mere handful of men to teach, baptize, and make disciples of all nations, even though these few men were wildly effective in fulfilling the Great Commission.

In any case, what did Jesus say on Easter morning before He sent the Apostles as He Himself was sent by the Father? Jesus says something of equal importance as delegating His power and authority to forgive sins. He says “*Peace be with you*” (Jn 20:19, 20:21, and 20:26). He says this to distraught men. He said this to men who expected to be arrested, locked up, and killed for having been followers of Jesus. He said this to men who had locked themselves inside out of fear of what might happen next. He proclaims His invitation to peace thrice, twice on Easter Sunday and once again on the following Sunday. Clearly the Apostles needed to hear what Jesus said, otherwise He would not have repeated Himself. Clearly they were not a peace with themselves – after all, they had all betrayed Him and their own oaths to remain with Jesus even if it might mean death – and they betrayed Jesus in a multitude of ways besides not having remained by His side after His arrest. They must have dreaded having to be held accountable to Jesus for having failed Him in such a spectacularly cowardly manner. The Apostles deserved a harsh reprimand as a minimum from their Lord, but He chooses not to fulfill their fears. No, He says “*Peace be with you.*” Jesus allays their fear of being reprimanded or even being disowned. What a relief this must have been for the Apostles.

Even though they are comforted by the fact that Jesus has no appetite to chastise them, they remain in fear. A week later, they are still cowering behind locked doors. Having nothing to fear from Jesus has not brought them to the point of having nothing to fear from the scribes, Pharisees, the chief priests, and the Romans as well. In a certain way, the Apostles are in a similar situation as we find ourselves of recent. They are social distancing, keeping away from anyone who might report them to the authorities. They are essentially in quarantine, they are placing themselves under a stay-at-home lockdown. Did they have enough food and water? Did they have enough of what passed for toilet paper two thousand years ago? They might have had a primitive form of soap made from olive oil, but hand sanitizer was many centuries into the future. Chances are, however, they had little of the essentials and certainly could not depend on Amazon, Shipt, Grubhub, or DoorDash. Maybe some of the women catered to them, but it is just as likely the Apostles asked them to keep away for their safety and that of the Apostles. There was no equivalent of Netflix, cable, satellite TV, Hulu, or iTunes to keep them occupied. They were alone with their own thoughts and fears. No doubt they probably needed to get away from one another.

The total peace that they craved but did not enjoy, even though Jesus had given them His peace, did not become active in their lives until Pentecost. Yes, they received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, but they already had Him from Easter morning when Jesus empowered and authorized the Apostles to forgive the sins of others. In saying “*Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained*” to the Apostles He is not only delegating His divine power and authority, Jesus is also telling them that they have a future, one not measured in hours or days, but in years and decades. Why else would He give them the ability to forgive sins in His name unless Jesus actually expected the Apostles to be His instruments of divine mercy? What need would they have had to absolve sins if the Romans were about to kick down the door and arrest the Apostles at any minute? If the Romans didn’t care to come after them, the Apostles knew that the Jewish authorities would not hesitate to persecute them, and they too could have easily kicked their door down. Indeed, Jesus’ invitation to be at peace and delegation of power ought to have brought peace to the Apostles, but it did not.

The reason they had no peace was because the Apostles let their fear overcome their faith and their hope. Jesus conquered death by His resurrection, but they still fear their own deaths. Jesus sent them as He was sent, initially to forgive sins but eventually to make disciples, teach, and baptize all nations, but the hope (trust) in what Jesus was calling them to do, a calling that would take more than a lifetime to achieve and could only be done with divine assistance, was lacking because of their fear of immediate arrest, torture, and death.

We can also let fear get the better of us. We have received the gift of the Holy Spirit first in our baptism, second in the anointing of confirmation, and we re-receive Him, He reenters our soul, every time we make a good, complete, and humble confession of our sins. If I have said it once I have said it a thousand times, that if we have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, if we are in God’s good graces, then we have absolutely nothing to fear. So, what do we have to fear from this coronavirus? Death? Jesus has conquered that for us in His death and resurrection. Suffering? In his passion Jesus has given human suffering meaning and power, meaning in that we know that God Himself has suffered on the cross, and power because we can join our suffering with His. Uncertainty? Yes, the future looks quite uncertain and there are many things that could happen that we cannot foresee, control, or perhaps defend ourselves against. Strictly speaking, however, there are ultimately only two futures that lie in store for each and every one of us. This sounds outrageously simplistic, but in all truth there are but only two possible futures: either heaven or hell.

Yes, there is great uncertainty regarding what might happen in this world, and this is and always has been the case. With or without a pandemic, no one knows with any degree of certainty what the future might bring. Experts claim to know, supposed seers and mystics claim to prophesy, computer models try to project, politicians promise certain outcomes if they are elected, Madison Avenue markets us with all sorts of enticements of what might be, but they all simply have no clue, so much so that God must laugh at us for putting any faith in those who propose to know what lies beyond tomorrow. After all, such seers, prophets, and experts told us that the world would end in the year 1988, 1989, 2000, and 2012. So-called futurists assured us that we would have flying cars, that disease would be a thing of the past, that we would have limitless energy, that we would have colonized Mars and the moon, and that the polar icecaps would have melted by now. None of these things have happened and it is unlikely that they will.

Jesus says “*Peace be with you*” to the Apostles and He says it to us as well. He is the only certainty in this life, He is the only person or thing we can count on regarding what lies ahead in the future. As St Paul says, “*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teaching*” (Heb 13:8-9). Indeed, Jesus holds the key to the future, the only future that truly matters. Nothing past, present, or future has power to negate Jesus’ promises, and therefore His promise of peace, even in the midst of a pandemic or any other circumstance that clouds our future, applies now as much as ever.

- Fr Booth