

Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church

May 9th/May 10th 2019: Fifth Sunday of Easter (English)
Fourth 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. (Outdoors in the Field)

Traditional Latin Sunday Mass: 10:45 a.m. (Outdoors in the Field)

~~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: Beginning this Sunday, May 10th, we will begin to have outdoor Masses in the field north of the Church. We will maintain our Sunday schedule with an English Mass at 9:00 a.m. and a Latin Mass at 10:45 a.m. Those attending will be responsible for maintaining proper social distancing from people who are not members of their own household. Everyone attending will also be responsible for bringing their own seating, blankets, etc. It must be remembered that there is still no Sunday obligation for anyone within the Diocese of Birmingham and that those who are vulnerable to the coronavirus should absent themselves from attending Mass. If this situation persists into the following week, we will also have the English vigil Mass beginning on Saturday, May 16th at 4:00 p.m. as well as the Masses on Sunday.

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.

IN MEMORIAM: In memory of Glenn A. Varnell, the sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of his soul from May 10th to May 16th. The sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of Josephine S. Nettleman from May 17th until May 23rd.

PARISH SUPPORT: The collection for last weekend was \$3238 and \$625 was offered for the Preservation Fund. Please feel free to mail your contributions in or save them up for when we return to having public 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: (Public Masses in the Field)

Sat, May 9:	Private	Special Intention for Richard Bull (by Allen Bull)
Sun, May 10:	9:00 a.m.	Pro Populo
	10:45 a.m.	Special Intention for Daryl Burnley (by Allen Bull)
Mon, May 11:	Private	Special Intention for Sharon Gagnon (by Allen Bull)
Tues, May 12:	Private †	Msgr Anthony LaFemina (by the Clemens Family)
Wed, May 13:	Private	Special Intention for Danielle Rose Hesley (by the Clemens Family)
Thur, May 14:	Private †	Diego Cardente (by the Clemens Family)
Fri, May 15:	Private	Special Intention for Anna Pohorelshy (by the Clemens Family)
Sat, May 16:	4:00 p.m. †	Jeffrey Holloway (by James & Nida Hammond)
Sun, May 17:	9:00 a.m.	Pro Populo
	10:45 a.m.	Special Intention for John & Julia Estes (by George & Madeline Sampedro)

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND especially Fr Vincent Bresowar, 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, 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.

Routines

It has been since March 15th when we last met for public Mass. Eight weeks. In many respects it seems much, much longer than that. The stay-at-home order, the closing of many businesses, children now having to be home schooled, and the need for social distancing have truly disrupted our various routines. Many people say that life needs to be spontaneous, that we need to live in the moment. Maybe, but not entirely so. One thing this whole episode ought to have taught us, to one degree or another, is our true need for routine. The destruction of the structure of the work week, school week, and the weekend has caused many people to become disoriented to the point that they readily lose track of the day of the week. I heard someone quip that she had day-of-the-week underwear when she was little, and because of all of the sudden changes in life brought about by our response to the pandemic she has become so discombobulated that she wished she still had a set. Probably not the most practical means for reckoning the day of the week, nevertheless, some people might need something along these lines in order to keep things regulated and in focus. For example, in junior high school I had a social studies teacher, Mrs. Bertoli, who wore the same outfit every Monday, a different outfit every Tuesday, and so on. She never deviated from that fashion routine no matter the weather or the season, even down to scarves, jewelry, and shoes associated with each day-of-the-week outfit. In college I had a math professor, whose name utterly escapes me, that wore a bright red shirt with Kelly green pants one day, then the next day he wore a Kelly green shirt with bright red pants. It was never red and red or green and green, nor did he wear same color shirt two days in a row. We all assumed that he was color blind and it made sense that he was more than likely a bachelor. In any case, that math professor and Mrs. Bertoli had routines that served them: they had a firm handle on the problem of what to wear.

But what if the drycleaner managed to destroy Mrs. Bertoli's Wednesday outfit? What if there was a bleach accident involving all of the math professor's green shirts? Did either have a plan for such a fashion emergency? I would not be surprised if Mrs. Bertoli had duplicate outfits, finding something she liked and buying several of them to be used on a particular day of the week, and it is possible that the professor had orange shirts and pants stowed away for emergencies. Maybe, but probably not. What is probable is that such disasters would have greatly challenged both of them. The disruption of their fashion routine might have been a minor irritation, or it could have sent one or both of them over the edge. They probably assured themselves that they could handle such a situation, that the destruction of 'Wednesday' or 'the greens' would be but a minor annoyance. Such things are easy to say, it is easy to assume that we will be ready and respond appropriately, until the disaster actually happens. It is only then that we know how we will handle such an adversity or whether we are truly prepared.

Indeed, over a shorter period amount of time than we have been away from public Mass, the Germans were able to invade France and defeat the Allied armies during May of 1940. Eighty years ago the French were confident, actually convinced, that they could prevail against a German invasion. After

all, they had been on the winning side just twenty or so years before during World War I. After all, they had the Maginot Line, almost 300 miles of state-of-the-art fortifications, which they were certain would be utterly impregnable. After all, they had the Ardenne Forest to the north of the Maginot Line, a forest they regarded as essentially impenetrable. After all, they had the British, Dutch, and Belgian armies on their side such that they slightly outnumbered the German army arrayed against them. After all, they fielded 65% more tanks and almost twice as many artillery pieces than the Germans. However, after all of that, their confidence proved to be utterly unfounded and truly misplaced. In the course of six weeks, the Germans inflicted two and a quarter million allied casualties (killed, wounded, or captured) at a loss of only about one hundred fifty thousand German soldiers, a casualty ratio of about fifteen to one. The French were not merely defeated, they were utterly crushed. It was not as if they were caught flat-footed and unaware of the threat posed by the Germans. They had recognized and planned for the probability of another war with Germany since the early 1920s and the French had been re-arming in earnest since 1935. In other words, the Fall of France in 1940 was hardly like our own Pearl Harbor or 9/11 where we were entirely unprepared and caught by surprise.

So, has this pandemic caught us unprepared and by total surprise? Just as armies plan to fight the next war the same way they fought the last, will we be prepared for the next crisis by having gallons of hand sanitizer and hundreds of rolls of toilet paper squirreled away? It never occurred to the average citizen that they needed to have any N95 masks, but will we all have a stockpile of them for the next pandemic? And if we amass a bunch of supplies, will we fall into complacency leading to being caught unprepared and totally surprised? Case in point, responding to the SARS (2003) epidemic, President Bush called for national preparedness against a respiratory pandemic such that ventilators, N95 masks, and other protective equipment were stockpiled only to be sold off, thrown away, and squandered a decade later. Indeed, even after the Swine Flu (2009) and the MERS (2012) epidemics, New York City chose to auction off their spare ventilators in 2015. Even if we prepare and remain vigilant for another pandemic, what if we find that the next crisis is the loss of the electrical grid or some other disaster?

More importantly, has this pandemic caught us by surprise spiritually? Certainly our spiritual routines have been disrupted with the curtailment of public Mass back in March. But did this make private prayer and devotion more central or less central in our daily stay-at-home lives? From my own experience, beginning in seminary, when the daily and weekly routine changes, it becomes more difficult to sustain the same prayer life. The structure of seminary or parish life being taken away, perhaps because of vacation or some other break from routine, resulted in haphazard prayer and devotion. Even though there might be much more time available to pray, the lack of structure and routine can make it difficult to focus on prayer. When we have more time at our disposal we tend to dispose of it more recklessly. Instead of praying more it is more likely that we will struggle to pray as much or even to pray at all when our routines are disrupted or abolished. This can persist until a new routine establishes itself.

Hopefully after eight weeks we have established new routines. But have these new routines recognized and prioritized our spiritual needs? If we have more time on our hands, do we spend more of it on our knees or more of it staring into the screen of a phone, tablet, or computer? If we find ourselves having less time, do we cherish and protect our prayer regimen or is our time communicating with God one of the first things we put aside for other pursuits?

A reprehensible politician has been known to say 'Never let a crisis go to waste,' meaning that a crisis ought to be exploited – shamefully – for political purposes. We might well ask ourselves if the current crisis has been an occasion that we have exploited – laudably – for spiritual purposes or if it has been a squandered spiritual opportunity. As life begins to return to normal, or to more normal, or to a new normal, we need to keep our spiritual routines in mind and adapt them accordingly. If we keep God rightfully in the center of our routines, no crisis will be a true crisis. The true crisis, basically the only crisis, is for God to be left out of our lives and our routines, and this applies equally to difficult times and when life is going quite smoothly.

- Fr Booth