

Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church

May 8th/May 9th 2021: 6th Sunday of Easter (English)

5th 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: 7:30 a.m. and 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: We have returned to an approximation of our normal weekend schedule with Mass inside the Church. We will have a 4:00 p.m. Saturday English Mass, a 9:00 a.m. Sunday English Mass, a 10:45 a.m. Sunday Latin Mass, and an additional Sunday Latin Mass at 7:30 a.m. The additional Latin Mass is intended to aid in the social distancing and will continue on a provisional basis.

COVID-19 RESPONSE, CONFESSIONS: For the time being, confessions will continue to be held behind the Church with Fr Booth in his car. Those wishing to confess can walk up individually maintaining a six-foot distance. Confessions will be offered at 3:30-3:55 p.m. on Saturday and on Sunday at 7:00-7:25 a.m., 8:30-8:55 a.m., and 10:15-10:40 a.m.

LIFTING THE DISPENSATION FOR SUNDAY MASS OBLIGATION: Per Bishop Raica, beginning on Monday, May 24th, which is the Memorial of Our Lady, Mother of the Church, all Roman Catholics residing or visiting and present in the Diocese of Birmingham shall again be subject to the precept physically attending Holy Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, notwithstanding the ordinary and serious reasons why one's obligation may be excused, including being at high risk, being advised by a doctor to avoid exposure to other people, or having an illness or Covid symptoms.

WELCOME to all of our visitors: We are glad you have attended Mass with us. If you wish to join Blessed Sacrament, please pick up a parish census form at the Religious Goods Counter located in the vestibule of the front entrance.

IN MEMORIAM: In memory of Glenn A. Varnell, the sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of his soul from May 9th to until May 15th. The sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of August & Josephine Nettleman from May 16th until May 22nd.

MASS OF THE ASCENSION: A High Latin Mass will be offered this Thursday, May 13th at 6:00 p.m. for the Feast of the Lord's Ascension. In our region of dioceses, the Feast of the Lord's Ascension is not a Holy Day of Obligation.

MORNING WITH MARY: All ladies are invited to a morning of devotion next Saturday, May 15th. Adoration will begin at 8:30 a.m., there will be confession during adoration, followed by benediction at about 9:10 a.m., and concluding with a Latin Mass beginning at about 9:15 a.m.

THIRD SUNDAY: Next Sunday is the Third Sunday of the month. We will have vocations prayers and a potluck lunch following the 10:45 a.m. Mass.

GAIL MCMAHON, our organist for 20 years, has retired due to health considerations. Get Well and Thank You cards can be sent c/o Ann Rodgers, 5031 Stratford Rd, B'ham 35242.

CONFIRMATION DATE: Confirmation currently scheduled for Thursday, June 3rd but might be moved to Sunday, June 6th pending Bishop Raica's approval. There will be three classes offered for the confirmandi scheduled for May 2nd, May 16th, and May 30th.

PARISH SUPPORT: The collection last weekend was \$10,369, \$50 was donated to the Preservation Fund, and an additional \$345 were given for the Catholic Home Missions. As always, many thanks for your generosity.

2021 HIGH MASS SCHEDULE: The High Mass schedule for the 10:45 a.m. Mass will be as follows: Every second, third, and fourth Sunday of the month excluding December 26th with the addition of Corpus Christi (June 3rd, Confirmation), All Saints (November 1st), All Souls (November 2nd), Immaculate Conception (December 8th), and Christmas (December 25th).

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

NOTE ON MASS INTENTIONS: There is about a five-month backlog on Mass Intentions. Thus, requested Mass dates cannot always be honored.

MASS SCHEDULE AND INTENTIONS: (*Masses in the Rectory Chapel)

Sat, May 8	4:00 p.m.	† Julia Bryant
Sun, May 9:	7:30 a.m.	Special Intention for Fr Booth (by Allen Bull)
	9:00 a.m.	Pro Populo
	10:45 a.m.	† Souls in Purgatory (by Allen Bull)
Mon, May 10:	*8:30 a.m.	Special Int. for Clancy Briggs (by Mallorie Duvall)
Tues, May 11:	*8:30 a.m.	† John Anderson (by Mallorie Duvall)
Wed, May 12:	*7:00 a.m.	Special Int. for the Lehman Family (by Mallorie Duvall)
	*8:30 a.m.	Special Int. for the Racca Family (by Mallorie Duvall)
Thur, May 13:	*8:30 a.m.	Special Int. for the Briggs Family (by Mallorie Duvall)
Fri, May 14:	*7:00 a.m.	Special Int. for Lori Hernandez (by Nicole Zaucha)
	*8:30 a.m.	Special Int. for Jeff Baumbach (by the Baumbach Family)
Sat, May 15	9:15 a.m.	Special Int. for Jeff Baumbach (by the Baumbach Family)
	4:00 p.m.	Special Int. for Jeff Baumbach (by the Baumbach Family)
Sun, May 16:	7:30 a.m.	Special Int. for Jeff Baumbach (by the Baumbach Family)
	9:00 a.m.	Pro Populo
	10:45 a.m.	Special Int. for Jeff Baumbach (by the Baumbach Family)

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND especially James Bonner, Matthew Clune Sr., Ronnie Buchanan, Barbara Williams, Gail McMahon, Gracimo Ribeiro Bento, Mary Cavanagh, Sr Miracles, Bob Wiseman, Jerry Bryant, Eve Moore, Nida Hammond, Aaron Minjares, Bill Dinan, Carol Brandley, Eddie Hunter, Lawrence Brandley, Don Williams, Roseanne Timpa, Pete Ransom, Jerry Joiner, Beryl Curtis, Nicole Copeland, Linda Cooper, Lee Dinan, Danny Rohling, Kay Dorion, Krissy Chism, William Scroggins, Lamar Smith, Paul Herrmann, Wayne Little, Maria Morin, Andrea Little, Joseph Edwards, George Dunham, Fran Costanza, Christine Cover, Thatcher Kerzie, Malcolm Perry, Koslyn Chism, Kathleen Strawmeyer, and Stephanie Perry.

NEXT WEEK'S MASS READINGS

4:00 p.m. Ascension	Acts 1:1-11, Eph 1:17-23, Mk 16:15-20
7:30 a.m. Sunday after the Ascension	1Pet 4:7-11, Jn 15:26-16:4
9:00 a.m. Ascension	Acts 1:1-11, Eph 1:17-23, Mk 16:15-20
10:45 a.m. Sunday after the Ascension	1Pet 4:7-11, Jn 15:26-16:4

Back to the Past

It is clear, or at least it should be, that Covid is winding down in this country and in Alabama. Despite the fear-mongers' best efforts to point out that the pandemic is alive and well, we should be able to recognize that the Covid threat is currently minimal. For example, we are currently averaging about 300 people hospitalized at any given time statewide, which is a far cry from the peak we experienced in January when we were averaging about 3,100 Alabamians in the hospital with Covid symptoms. To put that in perspective, we have not seen hospitalization rates this low since April of 2020, roughly a month into the outbreak here in Alabama. The statistics on Covid deaths are even more telling than the hospitalization rate. We have seen 10 or fewer daily deaths over the last month and over the last week there have only been between 1 and 3 Covid deaths per day statewide. This is tremendously lower than the 81 deaths per day seen at the pandemic's peak and even fewer deaths than were seen since late March of 2020, which was only 2-3 weeks into the outbreak in Alabama. Most importantly, the trend for Covid infections, hospitalizations, and fatalities continues to decline.

To put this in perspective, the likelihood of dying from Covid currently averages out to be about the same likelihood as dying in a car wreck. Most of us don't give a second thought when it comes to the risk of dying. Driving entails a risk level we have grown accustomed to and accept as being part of life. Indeed, anyone getting out on the road could be in a fatal accident. Barring stupid behavior, such as texting while driving or driving under the influence, we all face roughly the same odds of dying on the road despite our real or imagined driving expertise. This is so because a very skilled driver and a less skilled driver are as likely to be killed by a halfwit that is driving and texting or driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Stupidity is an equal opportunity killer. There is no way of predicting a car crash, unless we are the drunk driver or the fool who can't take their eyes off their cellphone or email accounts, so any trip that we take could be our last despite our best efforts.

But this shows exactly how risk of dying from Covid or driving, while currently being nearly equal on average, differ. Dying from an auto accident is a fairly random event that does not discriminate based on age, gender, race, or general health. Covid, as has been known from the beginning of the outbreak, does not randomly take the lives of those infected. No, we know exactly who is at greater risk. According to data from the University of Stockholm, the probability of surviving Covid for those who are reasonably healthy does not dip below 99% for both men and women under the age of 80. For those with compromised health, the probability of surviving from Covid does not drop below 99% for men and women under the age of 60. For those over the age of 80, however, the prospects are more bleak. For men 80 and over with compromised health, only 80% are likely to survive, and for women 80 and over with compromised health, only about 90% are likely to survive a Covid infection. Thus, Covid, unlike car crashes, is not an equal opportunity killer: it is a killer that certainly discriminates.

Armed with the knowledge of who is and who is not vulnerable along with the currently low infection rates should enable us to return to pre-Covid activities, especially Mass attendance. The Bishop has decreed that the dispensation from the Sunday Mass obligation will be lifted following the Feast of Pentecost, which is on May 23rd this year. Thus, everyone who already has been infected, who has been vaccinated, or is at low risk of dying from Covid must return to weekly Sunday Mass attendance on May 30th. From May 30th onwards, watching Mass on TV or over the internet does not satisfy the Sunday Mass obligation, which requires physical presence at the Mass, unless health, age, or other circumstances prevent attendance. Given the current state of the pandemic and what we know about Covid, it is certainly reasonable to return to our past activities without undue concern. Indeed, we must put aside our fear and return back to our normal way of life lest we let fear dictate how we live. If we see a resurgence of Covid or another pandemic is unleashed upon the world, we'll deal with that when it happens. In the mean time, we need to return to our past, normal lives.

- Fr Booth