

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

I regret that we are unable to gather as a parish family to celebrate the Eucharist. However, I want you to know that I am celebrating a private Mass throughout this time and including the Mass intentions listed in the parish bulletin at these Masses. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have sent your weekly offering to us during this period in which public Masses have been suspended. Your support helps us to continue to advance the mission of St. Joan of Arc Parish. May the Lord reward your generosity and kindness. Although the church remains closed at this time, you can participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and view other very good quality spiritual programming on Catholic TV, found on your local cable Channel 268, or on EWTN, Channel 56. You can also view daily Mass on-line at: <http://www.catholictv.org/masses/catholictv-mass>

Recently, it was decided by the Bishops of our region that out of a concern for the health of our community, no public Masses or Liturgies will be celebrated this Holy Week and Easter Sunday. **However, on Palm Sunday weekend, blessed palms will be made available at the main entrance of our church during the regularly scheduled Mass times: Saturday, April 4 from 5pm to 6pm and Sunday, April 5 from 8am to 11am.** It is important to not use this as an opportunity to socialize with friends we may see during those hours. Please maintain the social distancing prescribed by the Commonwealth and safely return to the sanctuary of your homes.

This will be a very different experience of Holy Week for us. I do encourage you to take advantage of the television and internet opportunities to participate in the religious services led by the Holy Father in Rome. Let us remember this year that in this time of worldwide pandemic, we are members of a worldwide Church shepherded by the Bishop of Rome, the successor of St. Peter, Pope Francis. May this be a source of spiritual strength, consolation and hope.

A number of people have spoken with me recently about how they truly miss receiving Holy Communion. For many of us it has always been a part of the rhythm of our lives which we may easily have taken for granted would always be available to us. These conversations have reminded me of what the Church has referred to over the centuries as an Act of Spiritual Communion. I would like to say a few words about this here.

No matter what our day is like, Jesus can help make it better, or at least more bearable, if we ask Him for His help and guidance in prayers such as this one, composed by St. Alphonsus Liguori in the 18th century:

*My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.*

The best way to receive Christ in Holy Communion is at Mass. Yet for those times when we can't make Mass, we can still reach out to Him by making a Spiritual Communion in prayer. St. Thomas Aquinas once defined a Spiritual Communion as, "an ardent desire to receive Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament and in lovingly embracing Him as if we had actually received Him." We can make a Spiritual Communion whenever and wherever we'd like, using this prayer or our own heartfelt thoughts. Christ might not answer us quite so instantaneously, but we can rest assured, He can and will respond to anyone who comes to Him in love and humility for His Divine assistance. After all, didn't He say in the Sermon on the Mount, concerning the power of prayer, "Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and you shall find" (Matt 7:7)? We just need to approach Him with sincerity, humility and a desire to follow in His footsteps in acts of faith and charity. And He's delighted when we do so!

St. Jean-Marie Vianney, a French clergyman and Patron Saint of Parish Priests, who as an instrument of God's grace, converted countless souls to Christ in his parish at Ars in the 19th century, once said, "when we feel the love of God growing cold, let us instantly make a Spiritual Communion. When we cannot go to the church, let us turn our thoughts towards the tabernacle; no wall can shut us out from the good God." We can all indeed be grateful for that!

Although we are disappointed that we are not able to participate in the community and parish events that we had looked forward to, our journey to and through Holy Week continues. Perhaps it has become more of a monastic Lent in the isolation of self-quarantine. However, when we look to the lives of the saints, we often see that at the times when they were "stopped in their tracks" and redirected away from their regular routine, it was then that they heard the voice of God in their hearts in a new and fresh way. We think of St. Ignatius of Loyola who while convalescing from a battle wound, felt the presence of God for the first time and it changed the course of the rest of his life. From there he went on to found the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits, who proclaimed the Gospel of Jesus Christ and taught the Catholic Faith throughout the world.

Let us remember one another in prayer, especially those most in need of our prayers during these extraordinary days. May we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus who is with us in all seasons and circumstances of our lives. St. Joan of Arc, pray for us. Our Lady of Fall River, pray for us.

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
Fr. Bill Rodrigues

*Please keep these deceased loved ones in your prayers.*

**THIS WEEK**

Saturday	5:00	Philip F. Bradley, Jr.
Sunday	8:00	Elaine Goslee, Fr. Bob Kemmery, Parish Family
	10:00	Lew Carrington
Monday	8:00	Rudolf & Eleanor Culik
Tuesday	8:00	Meredith Trapp
Wed	8:00	Eileen Keough
<b>NEXT WEEKEND</b>		
Sunday	8:00	The Wendelken Family, Elizabeth Dunn Fr. Bob Kemmery, Parish Family
	9:30	Charlie Wolff
	10:00	Ross Aronica

**Coronavirus Prayer**

*Jesus Christ,  
you traveled through towns and villages curing every  
disease and illness.  
At your command, the sick were made well.  
Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of  
the coronavirus,  
that we may experience your healing love.  
Heal those who are sick with the virus.  
May they regain their strength and health through quality  
medical care.  
Heal us from our fear,  
which prevents nations from working together and  
neighbors from helping one another.  
Heal us from our pride,  
which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that  
knows no borders.  
Jesus Christ, healer of all,  
stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow.  
Be with those who have died from the virus.  
May they be at rest with you in your eternal peace.  
Be with the families of those who are sick or have died.  
As they worry and grieve, defend them from illness and  
despair.  
May they know your peace.  
Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers and all medical  
professionals who seek to heal and help those affected  
and who put themselves at risk in the process.  
May they know your protection and peace.  
Be with the leaders of all nations.  
Give them the foresight to act with charity and true  
concern for the well-being of the people they are meant to  
serve.*

*Give them the wisdom to invest in long-term solutions that  
will help prepare for or prevent future outbreaks.*

*May they know your peace, as they work together to  
achieve it on earth.*

*Whether we are home or abroad,  
surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or  
only a few, Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and  
mourn, persist and prepare. In place of our anxiety, give  
us your peace.*

*Jesus Christ, heal us.*

Kerry Weber is an Executive Editor of America Magazine, taken from  
www.americamagazine.com

## WHEN DOES HOPE DIE?

Palm Sunday begins the week we call *Holy Week*. The palms – gathered from the “kingly” palm trees surrounding Jerusalem – symbolize royal status. They are joyfully waved and spread before the donkey that carries Jesus into Jerusalem. But the crowd is fickle and easily swayed. By Friday they are jeering and shouting for his death. How quickly we move through the scenes of the week: the intimacy of the *foot washing*; the *gift of bread* – blest; broken; shared at that Last Supper; the *agonizing hours* in the Garden; the brutal night of interrogation; the *torturous journey* to the destination of death. How is one to cope with it all? Who wouldn’t run away or deny any knowledge of this man, Jesus? *Who wouldn’t lose hope?*

The question doesn’t stop at Calvary. It echoes in our world today. We welcome the hope Jesus brings when we experience healing; forgiveness; love. So when is it that we drop our palm branches and walk away? When does our hope die?

Is it when Jesus asks us to partner with him in sharing the pain of the cross? When he insists that we detach from possessions, and give more generously? When we are shown the way of non-violence; non-judgment; and non-prejudice? Is it when Jesus urges us out of our “tombs” of self-righteousness to see that even our enemies are held within his field of grace – that no one is excluded?

Do we walk away when the going gets tough, or distance ourselves when Jesus doesn’t seem to be “coming through” for us. Perhaps, Jesus is someone we can admire from a distance, but to get really close to him might prove too costly.

It is precisely here in the darkness of our fears – in our blindness and ignorance –that Jesus illumines our path. He walks with us in the midst of the very doubts and struggles that cause us to give up hope. He transforms our hearts and re-ignites our spirits in his all-embracing love. This is the God who yearns for all creation to “*come alive*” – to be co-creators of a new world – his kingdom of justice and peace.

As we welcome the *Christ of Victory* with palm branches, may we also welcome the *Christ of Calvary* – *The Suffering Servant*, who humbly embraces our humanity and walks with us in our own pain. It is here that we find the hope that refuses to die, and the courage to ‘*suffer with*’ one another in life-giving ways. May this Holy Week be one of healing and hope for each of us and for our suffering world.

## PLEASE HELP US KEEP THESE LISTS UP TO DATE

### PRAY FOR THE ILL OF THE PARISH

Martin Coughlin, Loretta Stephens, Harry Marcoux, John Keane, Tris Windle, David Cousins, Lynne Scalia, Alex Podeszwa, Thomas Stone, Nick Bartick, Pam Hedlund, Len Hedlund, Greg Morongell, Nora Gould, Edan Pearl, Anne Caruso, John M. Pollard, Peter Cruickshank, Bill Hannon, Ivy Davis, Maddy Hayes, Clare Stevenson, Joseph Nosari, Vincent Lencvewski, Jeffrey Wolfgang, Joan Ouellette, Bev Sarazin, Tyler Benscoter, Agnes Wolfgang, Fr. Paul Smith, Marilyn Drewes, Ray Castriotta, Julianne Sullivan, Robert Grudzina, Marge LaGrassa, Jim Lewis, Joyce Loechner, Frank Salomone, Pauline Laberge, Chad Larivee, Dick Wentworth, Nuvia Downs, Karen Mary McNulty, Olivia Hart, Alex Haas, Patrick Devine, Gerry Csaposs, Peggy Carson, Addie Priess, Frank McCarthy, Andree Yager, Loretta Reiter, Paul Kascsak, Patty Camarra, James Manley, Betty Babcock, Thomas Murphy, Chris Frazier, Melissa K., Baby Lillian Thoman, Jessica O., Fran McDonagh, Donna Hibbert, Margaret Royce, Beth Nixon, Anne O’Brien, Ben McMahon, Gerry Moynihan, Martha Moynihan, Richard Paskiewicz, Mary Rodrigues, Emily Sparks, Stephen Moreau, Paula Madeiro, Paul Brandon, Rita Folger, Gerri DiCristina, Kathleen Kilmer, Marguerite Forren, Mary Pickard, Deepthi Moola, Steve Novick, Ernie T., Eleanor Symecko, Susanne Albert, Joseph Wignot, Hector Pelletier, Bob Cunnane

### PRAY FOR OUR ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN

Brandy Nelson, Timothy Horigan, Scott Doucette, Michael Wilson, David Lucas, Sean Lucas, Peter Civita Shayne, Peter Cabral, Gregory DeLuca, Joshua Schmitt, Joseph Long, Brad Howard, Thomas Scudder, Jeffrey Stebbins, Phillip McDonough, David Wilcox, John Amick, David McDonald, Lt. Edward J. Maloney, Andrew Kelley, William James Miller, David Orloski, Stephen Tammaro, Michael L. Hamilton, Thomas Crawford, Aaron Charette, Nicholas McGahey, Edward Prufer, Brandon Stubbs, Christian P. Goodman, Trevor Lafontaine, Connor Lafontaine, Colin Bracken, Michael Bracken

