

Saint Thomas More Catholic Church

4 Convent Road, Morristown, New Jersey 07960

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www.stmnj.org

info@stmnj.org

We exist for one reason: to come to know and be formed by the Word of God and the Message of Jesus. When we gather in prayer and worship, in service and community, we assemble as disciples and friends with the Lord in our midst. Rooted in our Roman Catholic tradition, we are proud of our parish heritage and hopeful for our future.

Fourth Sunday of Easter – Good Shepherd Sunday – May 3, 2020

Parish Staff

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Frank Miles
Trustee

Mary Murphy
Trustee

Due to CDC guidelines and in an abundance of caution in light of continuing COVID-19 concerns, Bishop Serratelli has mandated the following:

Parish Facility Closures:

The church, the parish office and all parish grounds will remain closed until further notice. We look forward to updating you when we can resume with scheduled ministries and events.

Celebration of the Eucharist

All public Masses are suspended until further notice.

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance)

All parish activities and events, including Penance Services and scheduled Confessions, are suspended until further notice.

Additional Sacraments and Celebrations

Baptism: *Until further notice, all Baptisms are deferred except in case of urgent necessity.*

Funeral Rites: *All Funeral Masses are discontinued until further notice. The Rite of Committal as established in the *Order of Christian Funerals* may be used for a graveside service with no more than 8 members of the immediate family present. All are to keep the recommended social distance. The priest will offer a private Mass for the repose of the soul of the departed. A public memorial Mass can be arranged for a later date when restrictions on the gathering of large crowds have been lifted.*

Marriage: *Until further notice, all weddings are deferred.*



Blast from the Past(or)
Fourth Sunday of Easter,
Good Shepherd Sunday
May 3, 2020

I am the Good Shepherd.....

Such is one of the most far-reaching, familiar and endearing of Christ's I AM statements. In these uncharted and unsettled times, Christ our Shepherd 'walks ahead' of us. Our front-line health care professionals: nurses, doctors and first responders, give their lives to help us, and the Good Shepherd goes before them, taking all uncertainty upon Himself and nailing it to the Cross. This Shepherd is Leadership Incarnate and the human condition pines for His direction. In these unusual days of ours, many are clamoring for direction and guidance. I recently attempted to take the lead in providing some direction here at the rectory. In doing so, I thought of the most constructive way to spend time in quarantine. Yup, you know where I am going with this. That's right-- Rectory Conga Line, the time-tested favorite for those who shelter-in-place. Netflix? Ha. It's all about the Conga. I had Harry Belafonte's *Jump the Line* all queued up. But then Fr. Daniel refused to participate. This was particularly painful since I had already shelled out money for Rosetta Stone to learn Canadian. In short, my hope was dashed because it lacked leadership. It had no one to follow (incredible analogy, I know. You can thank me later.). Anywho, back to the Good Shepherd. Our Hope is a Person Who never separates Himself from us, nor leads from behind. Rather, Christ the Shepherd puts Himself in the way of all that would harm His flock. He leads as Shepherd because he *protects and heals* all in His care. Finally, His leadership is never separated from His authority. *'Truly, this Man is the Son of God,'* somebody once said. As we take comfort and solace in the Shepherd's protection, we rightly honor those essential servant-leaders on the front line of this pandemic. They don't lead from behind, either, thanks be to God. While the herd may be separated for now, fear not, little flock. God bless you!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Parish Donations

A heartfelt "thank you" goes out to all who have continued to make donations to our parish during this difficult time. You can contribute to our weekly collection, monthly second collection or make a one-time donation online at: <https://stthommore.weshareonline.org/> or by clicking on the "Online Donations" link on the St. Thomas More home page. Please email Sue Marshall at smarshall@stmnj.org with any questions. You can also make contributions by mail at 4 Convent Road, Morristown, NJ 07960. Any small way you can contribute is very much appreciated.



Monday, May 4: Blessed Michael Giedroyc
 Zeke DiVincenzo
Tuesday, May 5: Saint Hilary Of Arles
 Joseph Ryan
Wednesday, May 6: Saints Marian And James
 Police Officers Lost in the Line of Duty
Thursday, May 7: Saint Rose Venerini
 Monsignor Patrick Brown
Friday, May 8: Saint Peter Of Tarentaise
 Father Tom Rainforth
Saturday, May 9: Saint John Of Avila
 Monsignor James H. Murray
Sunday, May 10: Fifth Sunday of Easter
 Katherine Soule
 John Lukin
 All Mothers Who Have Passed



Mass Intentions

Although public Masses are currently suspended, please know that Father Tom or Father Daniel will continue to say Mass on their own for all Mass intentions. If you would like to request that a Mass be said for a loved one or another intention, please email Sue Marshall at smarshall@stmnj.org.



Prayers for the Sick

Please join us in praying for all who are ill in our community, and in a particular way for Chris Auger, Phil Barrett, Bob Bass, Fred Donikowski, Jim Johnson, Florence Kearney, Barbara Kline, Anne Morrison, Bobby Polidore, Christopher Popp, Edmond Sherry, James Stewart and Flynn Sullivan. May God bring them and their families His healing, comfort and peace. If you would like to have your name or that of a loved one included in (or removed from) the request for healing prayers in our weekly bulletin, please send an email to Sue Marshall at smarshall@stmnj.org.



For the Most Up-To-Date STM Information...

Any schedule changes or other STM news will be communicated via Flocknote (by text and email) and also posted to our parish website. If you haven't already signed up for Flocknote, please take a moment to do so by texting 'STMNJ' to 84576 or visiting flocknote.com/STMNJ.



Call to Ministry
Helping Those in Need During These Challenging Times

In this time of self-isolation and social distancing, some people have kindly expressed an interest in helping the elderly or anyone else needing assistance to get something from the store or pharmacy, needing a meal, or simply wanting someone to talk to during these sometimes trying days. If you would like to participate in this ministry, please contact Sue Marshall at smarshall@stmnj.org and provide her with your contact information and how you might be willing to assist. If we receive enough participants, we will then invite parishioners to submit requests so we can match them with a volunteer. Thank you for your prayerful consideration. May God continue to bless you and your families and keep you safe and healthy!

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you...
Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.
- John 14:27

GET TO KNOW OUR NEW BISHOP-ELECT KEVIN J. SWEENEY

*Below is his Easter message to his parish, St. Michael's Church in Brooklyn,
that appeared in their Sunday bulletin...*

Easter Sunday

April 12, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

“Brothers and sisters: Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life.” (Romans 6:3-4)

Jesus is Risen, Alleluia!!! Yes, we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus in this Easter Sunday, even as we experience an Easter Sunday that is different from any other Easter Sunday of our lives. Something struck me as I read and prayed with today's Gospel - it took time to realize and understand that Jesus had risen from the dead. The Gospel that we read on this Easter Sunday...tells us that Mary Magdalen, Peter and John all saw that the tomb was open and empty, but they did not appreciate or understand what it meant. The last line of the passage tells us, “For they did not yet understand that Scripture that he had to rise from the dead”. Today, as we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus, we can say that we not only believe that Jesus rose from the dead, but that we understand what it means for us, as St. Paul writes to the Romans, “... we who were baptized ... into his death so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life.”

Yet, when we experience what we are currently going through in the midst of this “pandemic” and see and hear about so many who are sick and so many who have died, we can wonder, “where is our Risen Lord?” and it can be very difficult to “feel” the “Joy of Easter”. Sometimes, we need more time. We believe Jesus is truly Risen. He has conquered sin and death. He suffered, died and Rose for each and every one of us and for each and every victim of this terrible “Coronavirus”. So, what do we do on an Easter Sunday when we can't go to Church to be at Mass and receive Holy Communion? So many of us will not be able to get together with our families as we usually do on Easter Sunday and we know there are families who, instead of feeling the “Joy of Easter”, are feeling the terrible sadness of the death of a loved one or are worried for a loved one who is sick or in the Hospital.

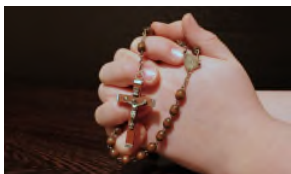
What do we do?

1. We **PRAY** and we ask our Risen Lord Jesus us to give us Peace, the Peace that only He can give. We ask Him to heal the sick and Bless and protect those who care for them. We ask Him to give the fullness of Eternal Life (the true meaning of His Resurrection) to those who have died.
2. We **LIVE** our Faith - we do the best we can to help and support each other, especially at home with our families. We stay at home, if we can, until this crisis has passed. We look for ways that we can help those (neighbors and others) who are in need.
3. We **Remember** that every day is a **GIFT** and we try to make the most we can of every day, trying to recognize and “see” the presence of our Risen Lord Jesus, even on the most difficult days.
4. We look forward in **HOPE** - we are learning in a new way, that none of us knows what “tomorrow will bring”, but we know that death and darkness and sin will not have the last word - that is the “Lesson” of Easter. Jesus is **RISEN**, there will be better days ahead, the Risen Lord will give us healing and Peace - we just may need some time to appreciate and realize it.

Happy Easter!!!

Sincerely,

Fr. Kevin (now our Bishop-Elect)



Ways to Stay Spiritually Connected While Public Masses are Suspended and Churches are Closed

1. **View Mass Online or on Television:** Check out our parish website to view Mass each day celebrated by Bishop Robert Barron. You can also view Mass at www.catholic.tv or on television on EWTN. We will try to post a recording of the Sunday Mass Father Tom will be saying on his own as well, to the extent possible.

2. **Make an Act of Spiritual Communion:** This beautiful practice has been part of the lives of countless saints who found it drew them closer to God on a daily basis. Below is a traditional prayer of spiritual communion which can be prayed while watching Mass online or on television, in the midst of your daily work, or at any time during the day, lifting up your thoughts to God.

My Jesus,

*I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.
I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.*

*Since I cannot at this moment 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.

3. **Pray the Rosary:** Appealing to our beloved, Blessed Mother and uniting with other Catholics throughout the world by praying the Rosary is a profound way to find peace and strength during these difficult times. A number of resources are available to assist in praying the Rosary at home, in the car, or wherever your social distancing might take you.

Apps: (Free, available in the Apple and Google Play stores)

Laudate App- Combines a large number of Catholic resources such as Daily Mass, prayers (including the Rosary), the Bible, Stations of the Cross, the Catechism and much more.

Mary App- Created by the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception, this app is a helpful resource on our Blessed Mother and includes, among many other things, an interactive Rosary with an audio option.

Family Rosary's Mobile Rosary- Offers the traditional Rosary with the text of each prayer. You can pray in silence or with the companion voice of Venerable Patrick Peyton.

iRosary- Displays a fully-animated set of Rosary beads which displays each prayer as you move each bead with your finger, like a standard Rosary.

YouTube: There are many videos of people praying the Rosary that you can join. One popular example is that of the Dominican Sisters of Mary Mother of the Eucharist, which can be found through a YouTube search or at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCijy_J5ozpFLoxo4vZARRYA.

Online: The Rosary Center & Confraternity website offers a number of resources and options for praying the Rosary, including, "Praying the Rosary Without Distractions," "Scripturally Based Rosary," and "In Stained Glass." You can find a description of the Rosary and prayer links here: <https://www.Rosarycenter.org/homepage-2/Rosary/how-to-pray-the-Rosary/>

4. **Participate in Virtual Stations of the Cross:** Various examples can be found online, but here is one: <https://bustedhalo.com/video/virtual-stations-of-the-cross>.

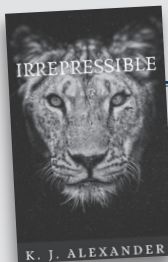
5. **Even Washing your Hands Can Lead to Prayer:** Instead of singing *Happy Birthday*, try reciting the *Hail Mary* two times as you scrub. It's a great way to keep us centered while we're keeping safe.



Prayer of Pope Francis for Protection and Help

O Mary,
you always shine on our path
as a sign of salvation and of hope.
We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick, who at the cross
took part in Jesus' pain, keeping your faith firm.
You...know what we need,
and we are sure you will provide
so that, as in Cana of Galilee,
we may return to joy and to feasting
after this time of trial.
Help us, Mother of Divine Love,
to conform to the will of the Father
and to do as we are told by Jesus,
Who has taken upon Himself our sufferings and carried our
sorrows to lead us, through the cross, to the joy of the
resurrection. Amen.

Under your protection, we seek refuge, Holy Mother of God. Do
not disdain the entreaties of those of us who are in trial, but deliver
us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin.



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K.J. Alexander

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To them, she's the queen
who will save them all.

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