



# Church of Santa Maria

*4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent  
March 22, 2020*



## Trusting the One who is always present with us

### *From Father George to the parish during COVID-19*

We are in the midst of a very unsettling time. As I said in my homily this past Sunday, while it is essentially a health crisis, its tentacles and impact reach out and affect every aspect of our lives to include our faith lives.

The authors of the Scriptures must have observed the power that fear has over people because variations of “do not be afraid” and “fear not” appear throughout the Scriptures. To Abraham and Moses: “Do not fear.” To Mary at the Annunciation: “Fear not, Mary.” The angel declared it to the shepherds at the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. Jesus said it to Mary Magdalene near the empty tomb on Easter morning.

While medicine and technology can offer us “temporary fixes,” the only real “fix” is trust. Jesus tells us that “fear is useless.” He tells his disciples not to fear persecution or threat - not because these things will not happen, but because, in spite of them, “I am with you always.” Saint Paul tells us: “He who made the promise is worthy of the trust.”

We here at Santa Maria are “with you” as well. I hope you will “trust” us to continue to provide the ministry of Christ and his Church as much and as well as we can. While much of what we usually do is not possible, there are still important things we can do, and are doing.

First I want you to know that the most important is still happening. While public Masses are not possible, I join the Sisters in offering

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### **Parish Office Hours**

Monday-Friday 9am-5pm

### **Mass and Liturgy Schedule**

Daily Mass

8:00am (Chapel)

Eucharistic Adoration

Noon-3:00pm Tues Sept-  
May (Chapel)

Reconciliation

4:00pm Sat (Church)

Sunday Masses

5:00pm Sat Vigil  
(Church)

8:30am; 10:30am; 5:00pm  
Sun (Church)

Holy Days

8:00am and 7:30pm  
(Church)

Baptisms: Call the Parish  
Office

Marriage: Call the Parish  
Office

private Mass "Pro Popolo (for the people)," which is my most important obligation and privilege. Prayer is the most powerful thing we could ever do. The staff and I are also working on additional ministries and services going forward. For example, Sunday worship resources will be shared with you, Confirmation classes are being hosted online, Pastoral Care Ministry is being continued by Sister Magdalene via telephone, and I am still responding to emergency sick calls. I encourage you to check our webpage frequently to stay connected and updated.

## PARISH LIFE

### Parish life while sheltering in place

While our county is under the order to shelter in place, our Pastoral Team is still hard at work running our parish as best we can while working remotely.

To that end, we will be available by phone (925-254-2426) and email during normal working hours; continue publishing the weekly bulletin online for you; run Faith Formation, MSYG, and Confirmation in creative ways; provide resources for your Sunday worship at home (see pages 4-5); and more. Please let us know if you have any suggestions or recommendations for us as we journey through this time of sheltering in place together.

### Collection reporting updates

We are changing the frequency and manner of reporting our Sunday collection income, because the weekly income reports are no longer giving a meaningful picture.

This is due to several factors: more people are using Faith Direct and making their contributions on a monthly basis, and others contribute bi-monthly, bi-annually, or even annually to the Sunday plate. Our weekly reports are showing extreme swings in income because of these factors, such that they no longer give a useful picture of the state of the plate.

Going forward, we will try a monthly report that will hopefully help smooth out some of those swings to give everyone a more useful picture of our income.

## FAITH FORMATION



### Confirmation is switching to online sessions

It's a huge blessing that many of our Confirmation class resources are already online –

## Lenten Regulations

Lent is a time of prayer and penance. Our Church has a few ways of practicing these things during Lent:

### *Fasting*

Catholics aged 18-59 are bound to fast on both Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. This means consuming at most one full meal that day, while taking other smaller quantities of food at the other customary mealtimes is permitted. Food and drink between meals (excepting water) is not permitted on fast days.

### *Abstinence from Meat*

Catholics aged 14 and up are to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, all Fridays of Lent, and Good Friday. This means refraining from eating meat products, although eggs, milk, and fish and shellfish are permitted.

### *Lenten Practices*

All the faithful are encouraged to receive Holy Communion, participate in penance services, take part in public and private exercises of piety, give generously to works of religion and charity, perform acts of kindness toward the sick, aged, and poor, and to pray more fervently. All of these practices will help you have a more fruitful and holy Lent!

## PASTORAL TEAM

**Reverend George Mockel**  
Pastor  
[gmockel@smparish.org](mailto:gmockel@smparish.org)

**Reverend Jude Poopana**  
Priest in Residence

**Reverend Christopher Fadok, OP**  
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both Decision Point (the Matthew Kelly program) and Alpha have their videos available for you to watch for free, and it's easy to share Scripture passages and discussion questions as well. We've set up an online classroom with EasyClass for our teens to log in; details have been emailed to participants.

## MSYG Resources

Hey, Middle Schoolers – do you miss playing Krampus and leading prayer together?

I'll be doing my best to keep us connected and engaged in our faith and prayer lives while we're at home. Keep an eye out on Instagram (@smyouthmin) and on your/your parents' email for activities, Bible Studies, videos, and more you can share with your family.

## PASTORAL CARE

### Reaching out to the sick and homebound

While we're unable to visit the sick and homebound at this time, Sister Magdalene and our Pastoral Care Ministers will be reaching out by phone to those who regularly receive visits.

## TREASURE

**Please see the note on page 2 regarding collection-reporting updates.**

## MASS INTENTIONS

**All Mass Intentions scheduled for the week of March 16-22 will be rescheduled as soon as the order to shelter in place has been lifted.**

*To request a Mass Intention, please contact Mirna in the Parish Office.*

## PRAYER INTENTIONS

*For the Sick:* Liduvina Acosta, Sonny Acosta, Mary Beth Alban, Joan Artmann, Shoaib Aryan, Kristy Blackey-Taylor, Kathie Brady, Cara Bradbury, Maria Carmen, Rosemary Catton, Fred Chavaria, Delores Codde, Grace Parent DeBoot, Rich Delany, Lorna Elliott, Anne emery, Nora Enriquez, Emidio Fonseca, Liam Foley, Patricia Fox, Bridget Gallagher, Noreen Gillham, Doris Hale, Florentino Ibabao, Brian Kelly, Mason Kelly, Aileen Kelly, Michael Kelly, Jim Kennedy, Jerry Kirk, Lawrence Knapp, Carol Koupus, Judy Lazarus, Jim Marchetti, Rose Mary McPhee, Robert Nick, Arsi Orihuella, Deacon Jim Pearce, Kathleen Pelz, Ann Powell, Mark Ricci, Ben Richey, Patrick Sheehy, Jean Wells, Faye Young

*Would you like to add yourself or someone else to the prayer list? Please contact Mirna in the Parish Office at 925-254-2426 or at [mirnawong@smparish.org](mailto:mirnawong@smparish.org).*

**SUNDAY WORSHIP: FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT**  
**MARCH 22, 2020**



**Sign of the Cross**

**Opening Prayer**

O God, who through your Word reconcile the human race to yourself in a wonderful way, grant, we pray, that, with prompt devotion and eager faith, the Christian people may hasten toward the solemn celebrations to come. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

**Gospel**

*Jn 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

As Jesus passed by he saw a man blind from birth. He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva, and smeared the clay on his eyes, and said to him, "Go wash in the Pool of Siloam" – which means Sent. So he went and washed, and came back able to see.

His neighbors and those who had seen him earlier as a beggar said, "Isn't this the one who used to sit and beg?" Some said, "It is," but others said, "No, he just looks like him." He said, "I am."

They brought the one who was once blind to the Pharisees. Now Jesus had made clay and opened his eyes on a Sabbath. So then the Pharisees also asked him how he was able to see. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and now I can see." So some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, because he does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a sinful man do such signs?" And there was division among them. So they said to the blind man again, "What do you have to say about him, since he opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet." They answered and said to him, "You were born totally in sin, and are you trying to teach us?" Then they threw him out.

When Jesus heard that they had thrown him out,

## SUNDAY WORSHIP: FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT (CONT'D)

he found him and said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered and said, "Who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?" Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, the one speaking with you is he." He said, "I do believe, Lord," and he worshipped him.

### Gospel Reflection

Today's Gospel reading is the second in a series of three quite lengthy readings from the Gospel of John that are a feature of the Lenten season in Year A of the liturgical cycle. The three readings address three significant themes and images: water, light, and new life. Although today's passage is about the healing of a blind man, the event takes place as part of a longer section of the Gospel dealing with the image of light and specifically the image of Jesus as the Light of the World.

Although the man's physical sight is restored by Jesus simply enough, his journey from darkness into light is a more complicated affair. He faces disbelief, ridicule, and even abuse from the Jewish authorities as they try to discredit Jesus and diminish the impact of the miracle. In fact, their treatment of the man is what drives him along the road from recipient of an act of mercy to a confirmed believer. Furthermore, the Jewish authorities, despite their physical capacity for sight, are shown to be the ones who are truly blind and trapped in darkness because they deny the light that is before their very eyes.

### Faith Sharing Questions

In what ways can you be the Light of Christ for others?

Where have you seen the Light of Christ the past week?

What blindness needs healing in your own life?

### Intercessions

That we may share the light of the Gospel with all who are struggling to recognize good from evil, truth from lies, and selfless love from self-

serving activity, we pray to the Lord.

That our government leaders will promote the well-being of all whom they serve, particularly the vulnerable and powerless during this time of sheltering in place, we pray to the Lord.

That God will free all who are bound by blindness and prejudice and open their eyes to the value and dignity of each human person, we pray to the Lord.

That God will heal those from the Coronavirus and restore them to their families and communities, we pray to the Lord.

That God will give wisdom to the healthcare providers trying to contain the virus, and insight to those searching for treatments or a cure, we pray to the Lord.

### The Lord's Prayer



### Spiritual Communion

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 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.

### Silent Prayer

### Sign of the Cross