

**The Power of Humble Prayer**

The First Reading, like the Gospel, is on the power of prayer, *humble* prayer. The backdrop of this reading is the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Both towns displayed a gross lack of hospitality to God and his two angels in last week's reading. Abraham is visited by God in this story, and they go for a walk together. While doing so, Abraham tries to convince God not to destroy the city. Abraham, always respectful, gets God to agree that if He can find even 10 righteous people, He will spare the city. (Ten is the number needed to form a prayer assembly.) Unfortunately, not even 10 were found; however, God saved Lot and his family by having them flee the doomed city, thus He showed His love and mercy. • The Responsorial is about God's faithful response to our prayer and need. The world often discounts the poor and the lowly because they are powerless, but God does not look at us with human eyes; He reaches out to those most in need of Him and fills them with His blessings and answers even the prayers of the poor. • The Second Reading is filled with symbolism: 1) *baptismal*: using Baptism to describe the process of dying to our old way of life, giving up a life of sin and self-indulgence, to live a new life with true meaning because it is filled with true love, Christ's love. 2) *being bound and set free*: Sin has been bound (*nailed to the cross*) that we might be free, i.e. have the freedom to choose love and life. • In the Gospel we find the disciples asking Jesus to teach them how to pray as soon as He finishes praying. Jesus prayed constantly to discern the Father's will and for the courage to fulfill it. Besides giving them the *Our Father* prayer, Jesus gives further examples of prayer, implying a relationship with God who, *better than a loving earthly father*, knows how to give good gifts (*especially spiritual, i.e., the Holy Spirit*) to all who ask. So, when we need something, we should not be afraid to humbly ask, and our truly loving Father will respond to our needs.

**Prayer of the Week**

God our Father, open our eyes to see your hand at work in the splendor of creation, in the beauty of human life. Touched by your hand our world is holy. Help us to cherish the gifts that surround us, to share your blessings with our brothers and sisters,

**Faith First**

and to experience the joy of life in your presence. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

*Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. Everyone who ask receives; everyone who searches finds; everyone who knocks will have the door opened.*  
--- Matthew 7:7-8

**What is Prayer?**

Prayer begins in humility, a gift from God that involves a divine dimension as well as human action. God seeks us first in prayer. The Holy Spirit moves us to respond in faith to the Father's calling. Prayer is our response to God's abiding, faithful love. • But what *is* prayer? There are many good definitions of prayer, for example, "the lifting of one's mind and heart to God." Prayer is also asking God for good things. Or prayer is our conscious turning to God, directing our thoughts and love to him. We can also define prayer as "the heart's response to our search for God." • In prayer, we enter into a dialogue with the Lord. We both *listen* to the Spirit and *speak* our own heartfelt prayers of adoration, contrition, thanksgiving, and supplication. (Note the acronym ACTS that spells out the various kinds of prayer conversations.) Conversational prayer involves an *active* dimension of taking our concerns, worries, petitions, and the like to God. It also involves a *passive* dimension where we pause and allow God to speak to us. • Thomas Merton defined prayer as "the consciousness of one's union with God, an awareness of one's inner self." This definition makes sense when we consider Jesus' revelation that we are his brothers and sisters, children of a loving Abba. When we pray, we become aware of ourselves as children of a most gracious God who loves us beyond compare. In Christian prayer we enter into communion with the loving Triune God. • Prayer awakens us to God's marvelous activity in our lives. St. Teresa of Avila imaged prayer as a conscious turning to the invisible friend who walks with us always. Prayer indeed deepens our friendship with the Lord and strengthens us for our journey to God. As food is to the body, prayer is to the spirit of Jesus' friends.

**In Our Prayers**

**Daily Mass Intentions  
July 28 - August 4**

|            |         |                              |
|------------|---------|------------------------------|
| <b>Sun</b> | 8:00am  | Alfons Valadez (+)           |
|            | 9:30am  | For the People of the Parish |
|            | 11:00am | Dick Cutting (+)             |
| <b>Mon</b> | 8:00am  | Carol Piercy (+)             |
| <b>Tue</b> | 8:00am  | Joan T, Koster (+)           |
| <b>Wed</b> | 8:00am  | Souls in Purgatory (+)       |
| <b>Thu</b> | 8:00am  | Loretta Mette (+)            |
| <b>Fri</b> | 8:00am  | Int...Christy Mayer          |
|            | 12:00pm | Gene Vittori (+)             |
| <b>Sat</b> | 9:00am  | Dorothy Picanco (+)          |
|            | 5:30pm  | SH Sch Fnd Mem & Rem         |
| <b>Sun</b> | 8:00am  | Dick Cutting (+)             |
|            | 9:30am  | Mary Ester Sousa (+)         |
|            | 11:00am | For the People of the Parish |

**In Memoriam**

**Rouzbeh Daylami, M.D. • July 17, 2019**  
**Msgr. T. Brendan O'Sullivan • July 17, 2019**

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord.

**Please Pray for the Sick**

Thomas Wolfanger, Robin Aurelius, Diana Zuniga, Suzy Riehl, Isabel Harper, Howard Huston, Mark Zane, Richard Honey, Dale Wooldridge, Donald Anderson, Nancy McGarry, Rita Doherty, Patrick Valenzuela, Cheryl Halm Lincoln, Michael Fletcher, Grayson Kemp, Gary Pepe, William Daniel Reed, Stephanie Merenda, Victoria Generoso, Jim Collins, Robert Arkebauer, Libby Basurto, Dena Foster-Cook, Marie Schumacher, Ralph Goodall, Josephine Haddock, G.R. Gurley, Darren Stewart, Marge Mugartegui, Angel Curiel, Phillip Worth, Sonia Damiano, Barbara Cramer, Ava Grace Arnold, Karen Amnon, Mary Terese Henricksen, Pamela Saenz, Stan Boyd, David Hunn, Addison Parker, Brett Stover, Norma Clark, Robert Clark, Jr.

**2019-2020 CFF Registration**

Children attending a non-Catholic school in grades Kindergarten through 8th grades can register for the Parish's Faith Formation Program on the weekends of August 17-18 and 24-25. Registration forms and other program information are available in the church vestibule. • Starting Tuesday, September 3, classes will be held from 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm every Tuesday at Sacred Heart Parish School • The fees for classes are: \$75 for one child and \$100 for two or more children, with additional per child fees for First Holy Communion and Confirmation. • For additional information contact Tila Madrigal at tilamadrigal@gmail.com or 916-947-2683.

**Altar Society News**

Do you have a hidden talent? Have friends told you your crafts are good enough to sell? At the Altar Society Bake and Craft Sale at the Fall Festival, you can share your creativity with hundred and earn some money! Get your inventory ready and contact Tila Madrigal at 916-947-2683 or tilamadrigal@gmail.com for more information.

**Food Donation Collection: Today!**

At all Masses this weekend, parishioners are invited to bring non-perishable unexpired food donations. This month, the pantry needs: cereal, small boxes of crackers, peanut butter and jelly, canned fruit, marinara sauce, and granola/nutrition bars. • Please check expiration dates on all items; we are not able to dispense out-of-date food. A bag filled with non-perishable food may be left inside the altar rail. • Many local families and students at Sacramento State rely on assistance from our St. Vincent de Paul food pantry to make it through the month. Thank you for your generosity!

**Interested in Becoming a Catholic?**

Easter 2020 will be on April 12! Will you be ready? Are you, or someone you know, interested in becoming a Catholic? Call RCIA director Rita Spillane at 916-452-4830 to explore the possibility of becoming a Catholic or renewing the practice of your Catholic faith.

**Parish School Summer Hours**

During the summer months the Sacred Heart Parish School office has the following schedule: Monday to Friday 9:00 am to 2:00 pm.

**Email and Texting Scam on the Rise**

The Diocese has received multiple reports from parishioners of several parishes about receiving scam emails from an imposter who creates an email address using the pastor's name and then sends a phony email asking for money in the form of gift cards. The scam has recently evolved and parishioners are now also receiving text messages from the imposter/scammer using the pastor's name and a local telephone number. A pastor or clergy member will never ask for gift cards electronically via email or text message. • *Please Note: Several Sacred Heart parishioners have received bogus requests allegedly from Father Walton asking for gift cards.* • If you would like more information on how to protect yourself on the internet, go to the SANS website and subscribe to the OUCH! Monthly Newsletters. • If you believe you are a victim of an internet crime (no matter what the dollar value), file a report with the FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center by going to the following website <https://www.ic3.gov/default.aspx>. For more information, go to their website.

**Meetings & Events**

**Back to School**

Sacred Heart Parish School will begin the 2019-2020 school year with an Open House and supply drop off day on August 14<sup>th</sup>, from 7:45 am-10:00 am. The first official day of school is a minimum day on August 15. We will be back to a regular schedule on August 16. Enjoy these last few weeks of summer fun!

**Please Remember**

Since we do not have security around the church, please, for your child protection and safety, always accompany him/her to the restrooms located in the church vestibule. We are located on a busy corner with increasing foot traffic.

**First Friday Adoration: Fri., August 1**

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament follows the 8:00 am. Mass and concludes with Benediction at 12(noon). Mass is celebrated immediately after Benediction. • Join us and spend some time in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. On First Fridays, parishioners are encouraged to include in their prayers, a prayer for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life. A special prayer for vocations is available in the church vestibule. (First Friday devotions were encouraged by St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, whose portrait is hanging in an alcove on the west wall of the church nave.)

*Lord, on the day I called for help, you answered me.*  
-- Psalm 138

**Baptism Class for Parents and Godparents**

A baptism preparation class is offered the second Monday of every month at 6:30 pm in the Parish Hall. To attend you must sign up by calling the Parish Office at 452-4136 ext. 2. At the class, the necessity and importance of baptism are explained as are the obligations and duties of parents and godparents. Baptisms take place on the first and third Sundays of the month after the 11:00 am Mass (around 12:15 pm). Parents and godparents must attend a preparation class. For more details, please call the Parish Office.

**Farmers Market at Mercy General Hospital**

There is a new Farmers Market in the neighborhood. Every Friday, from 9:30 am to 2:00 pm, Mercy General Hospital sponsors a farmers market in the parking lot in front of the J Street entrance. Shoppers can purchase organic fruits and veggies, fresh baked bread, organic cheese, homemade salsa, tamales and more. This is an initiative of Mercy Hospital as a community service to support healthy food production and the farmers who grow it. Support your local farmers and enjoy organic, fresh produce!

**Parking Issue**

A new restaurant has opened across J Street from the church. This restaurant specializes in breakfast and lunch, but unfortunately it has no parking lot. Sacred Heart will need to restrict its parking lot for parishioners only. We will have appropriate signage as well. Although parking in the medical lot next to Sacred Heart is available to us, we cannot restrict that space as we can our lot. We are asking that parishioners help out by moving their cars from our lot after they have attended Mass in order to free up spaces for the next Mass. If you decide to patronize the restaurant after Mass, please do not leave your car in the church lot, but find alternate parking. Thank you for your cooperation.