

April 12, 2020

Easter Sunday



DIVINE MERCY

CATHOLIC PARISH

Loving Mercifully, Living Marian.

4337 Sal Lentini Parkway • Kenner, Louisiana 70065

Church Office: (504) 466-5016 • Church Email: office@divinemercyparish.org

www.divinemercyparish.org

Parish Staff

Pastor:

Rev. Robert T. Cooper

Parochial Vicar:

Rev. Paul Clark

Deacons:

Noel Martinsen, Drea Capaci,
Larry Oney, and David Caldero

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School

Joan Kathmann, Principal
(504) 468-3524

Director of Religious Ed.:

Jacques Delouche

Youth Minister:

Ryan Foulon

Director of Music:

Garrett Fried

Administrative Staff:

Sherryl Clements

Antoinette Silver

Mass Times

Saturday Vigil: 4:00 p.m. &

7:00 p.m. (Español)

Sunday: 8:30, 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.

Monday and Tuesday:

6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Thursday & Friday:

7:30 a.m.

Holy Days of Obligation

See Inside the Bulletin for Schedule

Confession Times

Saturday: 3:00—3:45 p.m.

Sábado: 6:15—6:45 p.m. (Español)

Sunday: 30 minutes before Mass

Tuesday: Prior to 6:30 p.m. Mass

And by Appointment

Devotions

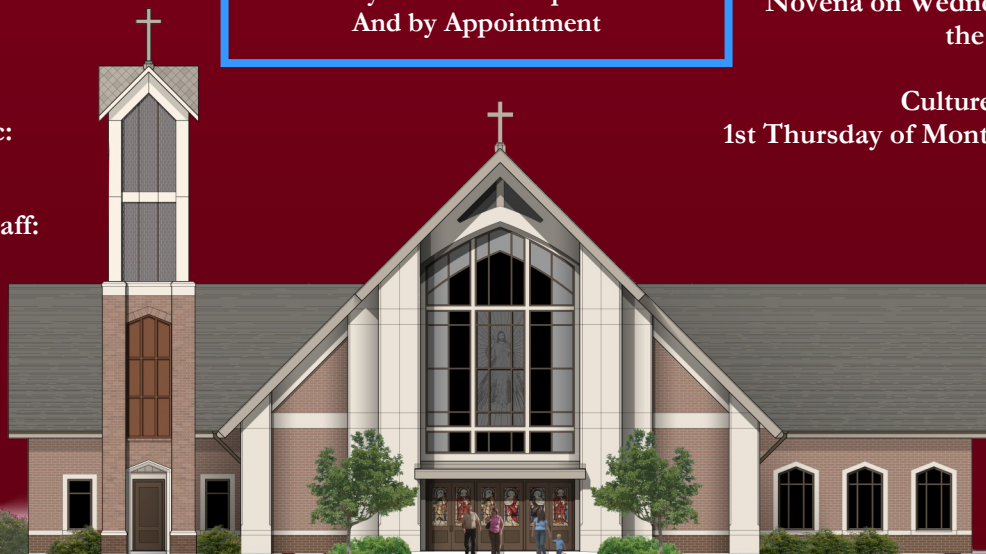
Eucharistic Adoration:
24/7 in the Adoration Chapel

Chaplet of Divine Mercy:
Thursday & Friday, 3 p.m. in
Adoration Chapel
and following
Weekday Morning Masses

Rosary:
Monday—Friday before Mass,
Sunday before 8:30 a.m. Mass, and
Sábados, 6:30 p.m. (Español)

Our Lady of Perpetual Help:
Novena on Wednesday following
the 7:30 a.m. Mass

Culture of Life Rosary
1st Thursday of Month following the
7:30 a.m. Mass





St. Joseph Sunday Missal

Today's Readings: p. 424

Next Sunday: p. 434

*To purchase a Sunday Missal for \$20,
please see an usher.*



The Sanctuary Candle
burns this week

In Memory of
Gary Waguespack

The Adoration Chapel
Candles burn this week

In Memory of
Kenneth Seals



Pray for the Repose of the
Souls of those who have died:

Maria Baranyai
Kylan Cyriaque



*May their souls and
the souls of all the
faithful departed,
through the mercy
of God, rest in
peace!*



Out of Reverence for the
Lord Jesus who so
generously shares with us
His Body and Blood in the
Eucharist,
worshippers are earnestly
invited to remain with the
congregation until Mass is
concluded.

MASS INTENTIONS

*To schedule Mass intentions, please visit website
www.divinemercyparish.org. The link for the
Mass intentions page is under "Pray," then
"Prayer & Liturgy," then "Mass Intentions", or
contact the Parish Office.*



April 11 - 17, 2020

Saturday 8:00 pm Easter Vigil Mass

All Affected by COVID-19, Bobby Jackson, Charles Kronlage,
Curtis Chatelain, Danny Picou, Gary Waguespack,
Joan Stoltz Preston, Mike Lemmon, Nelson Guarin Campof,
Prayer Blanket Recipients-Living & Deceased,
St. Jude (In Thanksgiving), Stanley J. Adamcewicz, Sr.

Easter Sunday 8:30 am Mass

Members of Crocker & Feliu Families

Easter Sunday 10:30 am Mass

Angelita Padilla, Beth & Kent Lomax (Living),
Blanche & Paul Poche, Doris Howcott, Florane & Miceli Families,
J.P. Clement, Jr., Jonathan Oney, Kevin M. Jeanes,
Mark Trimarco, Mirian Chacon, Norman Howcott,
Prayer Blanket Recipients-Living & Deceased, Ruth Alexander,
Samuel Sara, Sara & Watson Aicklen, Walter Petrucco

Weekday Masses

Monday 6:30 pm: Gary Waguespack

Tuesday 6:30 pm: Lester Mertz

Wednesday 7:30 am: Lois Smith

Thursday 7:30 am Mass: Jonathan Oney

Friday 7:30 am Mass: Tom Achor



The Paschal Candle was donated
in memory of

Alfonso Enrique Delgado Caldera



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday, April 12

- No Masses
- Church open 8 AM to 6 PM for personal prayer
- Second Collection– Priestly Formation/
Easter Charities

Monday, April 13

- Parish Office Holiday
- Church open 8 AM to 6 PM for personal prayer
- No 6:30 pm Mass

Tuesday, April 14

- Church open 8 AM to 6 PM for personal prayer
- No 6:30 pm Mass

Wednesday, April 15

- No 7:30 am Mass
- Church open 8 AM to 6 PM for personal prayer

Thursday, April 16

- No 7:30 am Mass
- Church open 8 AM to 6 PM for personal prayer

Friday, April 17

- No 7:30 am Mass
- Church open 8 AM to 6 PM for personal prayer

Saturday, April 18

- No Masses
- Church open 8 AM to 6 PM for personal prayer

Sunday, April 19

- No Masses
- Church open 8 AM to 6 PM for personal prayer



Golf Tournament

The Divine Mercy Men's Club
Annual Golf Tournament has
been postponed.

Stewardship of Treasure

Weekend of March 29, 2020

Envelopes	\$ 2,678.00
Loose	\$ 170.00
Online Giving	\$ 3,671.00
Capital Campaign	\$ 1,989.00
Other Income	\$ 904.00
Totaling	\$ 9,412.00

St. Anthony Ministry \$ 321.00

*"Let us focus on generosity, or
returning God's gifts with
increase, through the
generous sharing of our time,
talent and treasure."*

~ Fr. Cooper



GRATEFUL & GENEROUS

April 12, 2020 - Easter Sunday

*"Set your minds on things that are above, not on things
that are on earth." (Colossians 3:2)*

Do you put God first in all things?
Possessions, money, power, ego can easily be-
come gods to many of us. Do a quick check of
what is important to you. Is God at the very top
of the list? If not, your priorities need to be
re-adjusted. Don't let earthly things become a
god before God. This is
also the first
commandment – I am the
Lord your God, you shall
not have any strange gods
before me.





Online Giving Welcome to Online Giving

Divine Mercy Parish would like to thank our families who are currently giving electronically. You may not see these fellow parishioners place an envelope in the basket every week, but their consistent giving does not go unnoticed. Each month our parish receives a steady and predictable stream of income from



those donors who have made the commitment to give to God first by having a designated contribution automatically transferred to our parish through our Online Giving Program. If you would like to learn more about this easy, safe, and secure way of giving, please check out our website:

<https://giving.parishsoft.com/App/Giving/dmp>

Prayer Intentions

Francis Brunett, Rosemary Cotham, The Schmidt Family, Jackie Reynolds, David Hode, Laura Melancon, Elvira Savery, Robert Reinhardt, Robert Santopadre, Archbishop Gregory Aymond, Sybil Huesman, Mellina Zabala, Angel Roberto Caso, Evelyn Beler, Barbara Marroccoli, Tico Bevier, Andrew Thibodeaux, Margarita Silva, Maria Martinez, Bill Abadie, Katherine Seals, Karen Anderson, Deborah Simon, All Prayer Blanket Recipients, and All Prayer Intentions on the Divine Mercy website.



Names will remain on the list one month. Call 466-5016 to add a name.

Prayer Blanket Ministry



Relief to the suffering, peace to the fearful. May each Prayer Blanket Recipient know they are not alone. We are praying for their healing and comfort. This beautiful act of sacrifice

before the Lord transforms this blanket into a prayer blanket whose very threads become interwoven with pleas for healing on behalf of the recipient. To request a Prayer Blanket for someone who is ill or in need, contact Meryl Rooney at (504) 472-4383.

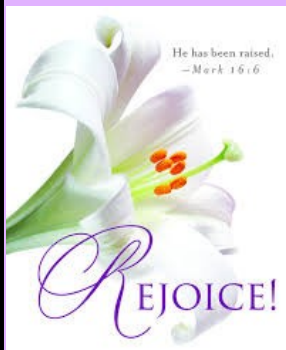
DIVINE MERCY YOUTH MINISTRY

Today, on Easter Sunday, we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. **Everyone involved with the Edge or LIFETEEN ministries wishes you and your family a Happy Easter! After we are presented with the Gospel (Jn 20:1-9), a LIFETEEN author reminds us that "the Resurrection of Jesus not only inspires us to hope but actualizes our hope."** During these trying times of the COVID-19 virus, the LIFETEEN author urges us to "start the day with hope; COVID will have a hard time stealing that from you." At LIFETEEN and Edge we agree with these words and invite you to start your day with the hope of the Catholic faith. As the LIFETEEN author says, "This is more than a vacation. This is a chance to be saints."

Confession

All Regular Scheduled Confession Times are Cancelled. To schedule an appointment for individual confession, please call the Parish Office at 504-466-5016, ext. 116.

Arrangements will be discussed between the priest and penitent.



Thank you to all who donated to the Easter Flower Fund and helped make the church beautiful for the Easter Season!



**WHEN YOU SEND FORTH YOUR
SPIRIT, THEY ARE CREATED;
AND YOU RENEW THE
FACE OF THE EARTH
(Psalm 104:30)**

When the great flood was over, Noah sent out a dove which brought back a sign that the earth was safe for all to leave the ark. Matthew, in his gospel relates that with the dawn on Easter morning, ***“there was a huge earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat upon it. His appearance was like lightening and his clothing white as snow.”*** (Matthew 28:1-3).

Heaven and earth participated in the resurrection of the Lord and those who had followed Jesus during his earthly life rejoiced because they had not believed in vain.

Through our faith we are assured that from the creation of the world until the end of time our God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit is present to us to guide and protect us during our earthly journey. Regardless of our present challenges, let us rejoice today,

“The Lord is Risen, Alleluia, Alleluia.”

Reflection by Anne-Marie Barrilleaux

**The Divine Mercy
Sunday Celebration
has been cancelled.**

**Please consult the website for
additional information.**

St. Anthony Ministry Food Pantry

The Food Pantry is in need of the following items:



Canned Items (sizes 14 - 16 oz.):
Carrots, Green Beans, Sweet Peas,
Tomato Sauce, Tuna (5 oz), Mixed Vegetables,
Soups, Beans, Peanut Butter (18 oz),
Jelly (16-20 oz plastic bottle),
Macaroni & Cheese (7.25 oz box), Pasta & Dry
Beans (1 lb), Canned Meats (Chicken, Chef
Boyardee, Spaghetti & Meatballs—14.5 oz),
Instant Potatoes (14 oz), Jiffy Corn Muffin Mix,
Dry Cereal, Grits, Juice (1/2 gal)

Please, No Glass, No Super-Sized or EXPIRED Items.

Thank You for your Support!

Special Second Collection



There will be a special Second Collection taken at all the Easter Masses to help support Priestly Formation at Notre Dame Seminary and to assist with the various Charitable Organizations of the Archdiocese of New Orleans. Thank you for your generosity as we help our young men studying for the priesthood.



You can help us during the COVID-19 pandemic.



During this challenging time, we depend on online donations to continue our ministry. Use eGiving from your computer, smartphone or tablet to set up a recurring donation or make a one-time gift. Plus, sign up is easy.

To sign up online, go to: <https://giving.parishsoft.com/App/Giving/dmp>

Or

From your smartphone, text “Give” to 504-500-4666.
You will receive a link to the Divine Mercy Online Giving website to complete a one-time registration.

Or

For an Online Giving Authorization Form, go to: <http://www.divinemercyparish.org/ways-to-give>. Complete the form, return to the Office and we will setup your Online Giving Account.

Due to the Corona Virus, All Dates and Times for Upcoming Events are subject to change or cancellation.

For Up to Date Information,
Please consult the Divine Mercy website
at: www.divinemercyparish.org
and
Archdiocese of New Orleans website at
<https://clarionherald.org/following-coronavirus>

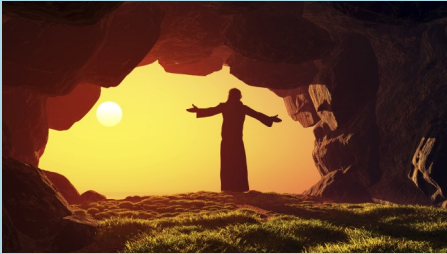
Debido al Corona Virus, todas las fechas y horas de los eventos programados, están sujetos a cambios o, a cancelación.

Para ver información actualizada, por favor, consulte el website de la Divina Misericordia en:
www.divinemercyparish.org
Y el website de la arquidiócesis de Nueva Orleáns, en: <https://clarionherald.org/following-coronavirus>



HISPANIC MINISTRY

**ENVÍAS TU ESPÍRITU, SON CREADOS;
Y RENUEVAS LA FAZ DE LA TIERRA**
(Salmo 104: 30)



Cuando terminó el gran diluvio, Noé envió una paloma que trajo una señal de que la tierra estaba a salvo para que todos salieran del arca. Mateo, en su evangelio relata que con el amanecer de la mañana de Pascua, *"hubo un gran terremoto; porque un ángel del Señor descendió del cielo y vino, echó hacia atrás la piedra y se sentó sobre ella. Su aspecto era como un rayo y su ropa blanca como la nieve.* (Mateo 28: 1-3).

El cielo y la tierra participaron en la resurrección del Señor y los que habían seguido a Jesús durante su vida terrenal se regocijaron porque no habían creído en vano.

A través de nuestra fe, estamos seguros de que desde la creación del mundo hasta el fin de los tiempos, nuestro Dios Padre, Hijo y Espíritu Santo está presente para guiarnos y protegernos durante nuestro viaje terrenal. Independientemente de nuestros desafíos actuales, regocijémonos hoy:

"El Señor ha resucitado, Aleluya, Aleluya".

Reflección de Anne-Marie Barrilleaux

EL Ministerio de San Antonio Despensa de Alimentos

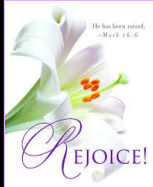
Artículos enlatados (tamaños 14-16 oz.): Verduras mixtas, Zanahorias, Tomate, Judías Verdes, Guisantes dulces, Maíz, Sopas, Frijoles, Leche Evaporada, Frutas, Carnes Enlatadas 14.5 oz (Pollo, Chef Boyardee, Espaguetis y Albóndigas), Atún (5 oz.)

Mantequilla de Maní (18 oz.), Mermelada - (botella de plástico 16 a 20 onzas), Macarrones con queso (caja de 7.25 oz.), Pasta (1 lb), Frijoles Secos (1 lb), Papas Instantáneas (14 oz), Cereal de desayuno, Mezcla para Muffins o para Panqueques (12 a 16 oz)

Avena o Sémola (1 a 2 libras o paquetes individuales), Jugo - (1/2 galón)



Por favor no vidrio o comida vencida y de tamaño regular. ¡Muchas Gracias!



Gracias a todos los que donaron al Fondo de Flores de Pascua y ayudaron para que la iglesia se vea hermosa para la temporada de Pascua!

La celebración del Domingo de la Divina Misericordia ha sido cancelada. Por favor, consulte el sitio web para obtener información adicional.



FR. COOPER'S CORNER

Being Risen with Christ!

Today we mark, with Christians throughout the world, the greatest day and the most important event in all of history. Today, the Son of God made man, who loved us enough to become one of us, and who loved us even more to give His life for us, rose from the dead, defeating death once and for all. Today, all Christians can jubilantly shout with St. Paul, "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" (1 Cor 15:55). Because of this day, evil does not have the last word. Because of this day, death is not a period, but a comma in a book without a final chapter. Because of this day, dying is just a change of address, in which those who are and live as God's children move to an eternal mansion full of love.

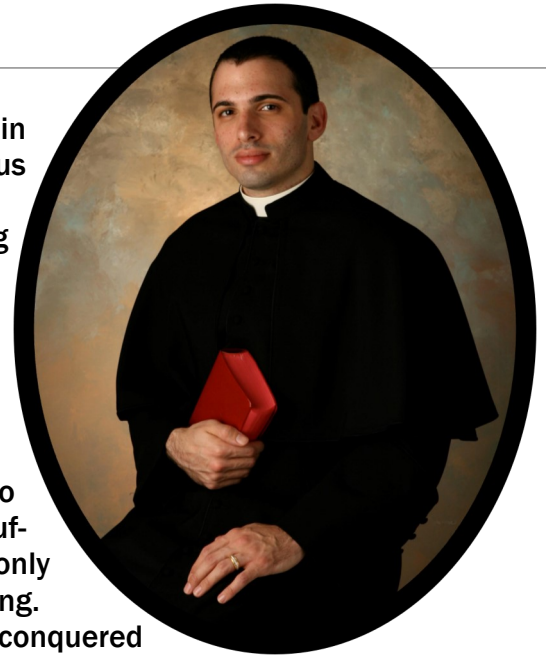
But the significance of this day of days is not merely supposed to be future, in terms of what it means for life after our death—as if we were just dealing with an eternal retirement plan. It is also not merely supposed to be the past, looking back to what happened to Christ nearly two thousand years ago. The most important thing for us is to consider what it means for our PRESENT, for you and me, today. The celebration of Easter today is supposed to have the same dramatic impact on us as it did on Jesus' first disciples because the Jesus who arose that day is still ALIVE and He wants to fill us with the same life-giving joy that He gave to His beloved disciples 20 centuries ago.

To capture the transformation the Risen Jesus wants to work in us, it would be good, briefly, to reflect on what it was like for Mary Magdalene, Peter, John, and the rest of His disciples on the day of the Resurrection. To call them dejected, lost, and profoundly saddened only begins to describe what they were going through. Their whole universe had been turned upside down. Not only had they witnessed Jesus, their friend, brutally tortured and massacred, nailed naked to a cross as a common criminal, but they also had believed deeply that He was the long-awaited Messiah, that He was God. Therefore, not only were they mourning the death of a loved one—which is already hard enough, as any of us who have lost a loved one recognize—but they were also trying to come to grips with whether God indeed had died or whether their friend, in whom they trusted, was, despite all His gifts, ultimately an imposter. Despite the fact that Jesus had told them on three occasions that He "must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again" (Mk 8:31; 9:31; 10:34), the words had not penetrated their hearts. When His critics had asked Him for a sign, He told them that "no sign would be given it except the sign of Jonah" (Mt 16:4), meaning that He would spend three days in the belly of the earth just as Jonah had spent three days in the belly of the whale. But that did not register. Even when Jesus identified Himself as the "Resurrection and the Life" (Jn 11:25), they did not capture what those words meant: in order for Him to be "resurrection personified," He needed to rise again, which means that He first needed to die.

When Mary Magdalene, Salome, and Mary, the mother of James, went to the tomb on Sunday morning, they were going reverently to anoint Jesus' corpse. Little did they realize what a great transformation had already occurred and what a great personal transformation awaited them. The stone had already been rolled away. The tomb was empty. A dazzling angel told them that Jesus had been raised. Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene in the Garden and filled her with exhilaration when He pronounced her name! He appeared to the ten in the Upper Room, filled them with His joy and peace, and gave them



His own mission—"Just as the Father sent me, so I send you," bestowing on them the Holy Spirit so that they could forgive sins in God's name. He appeared to the disciples on the Road to Emmaus and made their hearts burn as He described how the Son of Man had to suffer, and then revealed Himself to them in the "breaking of the bread." **THEIR WHOLE UNIVERSE**, which had been turned upside down two days before, was now turned **RIGHT-SIDE UP AGAIN**. And what incredible joy must have raced through all the cells of their body, the type of joy to which words cannot even do justice! Everything for them would have forever changed. The resurrection was the answer to all their questions, the resolution to all their doubts, the definitive peace to all their angst, the joy to all their sadness, God's ultimate response to the mystery of all suffering and death. Life in general—and their life in particular—not only was no longer a tragedy; their life now had immeasurable meaning. They were the disciples and intimate friends of the one who had conquered even sin and death—and they were now empowered and emboldened by Him to take that greatest news ever told to the ends of the earth. No amount of disdain, threats, persecutions, torture, or even death could dissuade them, because the resurrection taught them, unmistakably and unforgettably, that God is in charge and makes good on all His promises.



Jesus wants to bring about the same type of revolution in us today. He wants to give us the same joy He gave His first disciples because He loves us no less than He loved them. The only thing that will stop Him from doing so is if we do not let Him do what He wants to do. He who is the "Resurrection and the Life" wants us to experience in the present the full meaning of that resurrection and that life, but for that to happen, we have to recognize and structure our lives in correspondence to the fact that Jesus truly is **ALIVE**. Almost every Christian knows that Jesus is alive theoretically, but many Christians do not behave as if Jesus is alive practically. We can treat Jesus like a distant relative, someone whom we respect and care for, but whom for the most part in our day-to-day lives we ignore. Or we can treat Him like our best high school teacher, who has obviously had an impact in making us the people we are today, but who is no longer practically involved in continuing to guide our decision making. Or we can treat Jesus like a good doctor, to whom we go when we have problems, but, outside of those times, with whom we really have no relationship at all.

The point I am trying to make by analogy is this: Few Christians treat the Risen Jesus as if He is **DEAD**, but many Christians treat Jesus as if He is **BARELY ALIVE**. Today, on this Easter, Jesus wants to change that. He came, as He Himself said, "so that [we] might have life and have it to the full" (Jn 10:10), but for us to come fully alive, we need first to allow Jesus to become fully alive in us. We need to rise with Him and live a resurrected life with him! We need to stop treating Him as a concept, or as someone we turn to at our whim and convenience—or only at times of great inconvenience—but rather base our whole lives on Him. For the first disciples, the joy of that first Easter did not end the day after Easter, because they knew that Jesus, risen from the dead, would be with them "until the end of time" (Mt 28:20). They structured their whole lives on a deep personal relationship with the Risen Jesus, grounding all the aspects of their lives on the basis of this living communion of love. We are called to do the same! Christ has truly risen! And this changes everything! Alleluia!



DIVINE WORSHIP AND SACRED MUSIC

Palm Sunday

Memorare



REMEMBER, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly to thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother; to thee do I come; before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

Prayer to St. Michael

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.



Family Prayer



Loving and faithful God, through the years the people of our archdiocese have appreciated the prayers and love of Our Lady of Prompt Succor in times of war, disaster, epidemic and illness. We come to you, Father, with Mary our Mother, and ask you to help us in the battle of today against violence, murder and racism. We implore you to give us your wisdom that we may build a community founded on the values of Jesus, which gives respect to the life and dignity of all people. Bless parents that they may form their children in faith. Bless and protect our youth that they may be peacemakers of our time. Give consolation to those who have lost loved ones through violence. Hear our prayer and give us the perseverance to be a voice for life and human dignity in our community. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Our Lady of Prompt Succor, hasten to help us. Mother Henriette Delille, pray for us that we may be a holy family.

1

Make an act of faith

Come up with your own prayer or use a traditional one to express to the Lord our faith in his real presence in the Eucharist.



2

Make an act of love

Say a prayer that expresses your love and gratitude to the Lord. Thank Him for his infinite love as well.



4

steps for Spiritual Communion

 CatholicLink

3

Express your desire to receive him

As you are not able to physically receive the Lord, express your desire to receive Him in your heart.



4

Invite Jesus to come into your heart

With a humble and contrite heart we ask the Lord to come to us just as He would if we were able to receive the sacrament.



Let us pray,

Loving and faithful God, the coronavirus reminds us that we have no power and we are dependent on you.

We place ourselves in your loving hands.

Please give eternal rest to all who have died from the virus.

Please put your healing hand on those who are ill, and give your protection to us in this time of fear and uncertainty. Please, calm our fears and help us to trust you as our faithful God.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Our Lady of Prompt Succor, pray for us in this time of need

ARCHBISHOP GREGORY AYMOND

Jesus, I trust in You!



AT HOME WITH YOUR FAITH

Celebrate Sunday



- Set up a home altar or prayer space with a cross, icons or sacred art, and the Bible.
- Light a candle.
- Take a few quiet minutes before Mass starts. Gather your thoughts and prepare one intention to bring to the Lord.



- Find a Mass at www.archbalt.org/online-mass.
- Enjoy your coffee, breakfast, or brunch before or after Mass.
- Actively participate: sit, kneel, stand, and respond.
- Recite this prayer together as a family after 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 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.*



- What is one thing that struck you about the readings? The homily? Share it with your family. Ask your children what struck them.
- Host a virtual brunch with another family after Mass via Hangouts, Zoom, or GoToMeeting.



- Support your local parish by contributing online or dropping off a check sometime with week. Check your local parish's website for ways to contribute, but many can be found on www.faithdirect.net.

Find daily ideas on how to live your faith at home:
www.archbalt.org/at-home

Come experience the power of the Holy Spirit in the
HOLY LAND
- PILGRIMAGE TO PENTECOST -
Holy Spirit in the Holy Land

HECTOR MOLINA
DCN. LARRY ONEY
ANDI ONEY
FR. MARK CHERRY

11 DAYS MAY 25-JUNE 4 2020
FROM NEWARK OR TORONTO
For more details and to register,
contact Jane Allison
800.842.4842 jane@selectintl.com
selectinternationaltours.com

SPONSORED BY
Hope Purpose
HECTOR MOLINA



We Will Leave the Light On!

Divine Mercy Catholic Church
4337 Sal Lentini Parkway, Kenner

**Church will be open 7 days a week from
8AM - 6PM for personal prayer.**



Virtues Needed in a Time of Crisis

During the 1576 plague that menaced Milan and eventually took 25,000 lives, the civil government fled the city out of fear. The Archbishop of Milan, Saint Charles Borromeo, took over, assured the people he would not abandon them and, together with priests from the parishes and religious orders, began to care for their material and spiritual needs. He organized hospitals, cared for orphans, and brought the sacraments to those who were quarantined in their homes. He got priests to offer Masses in public squares and the middle of streets so that people could participate from their houses. He sold his personal goods and much of the diocesan treasury to feed the hungry and had the tapestries of his residence converted into blankets to warm the poor.

As a Good Shepherd, he was willing to risk his life to care for both the souls and the bodies of those entrusted to him and was able to persuade so many of his brother priests to join him. Recalling how Christ died for them first, he declared that Christ “does not even request this pathetic life of ours, but only that we put it at risk.” He challenged them to pay attention not only to what can kill the body, like the pestilence, but also to what can harm the soul, commenting, “the devout souls of our brethren languish with desire for divine things.” And providing them, he argued, is not a small matter.

“I will certainly say that the sick do not need our assistance in such a way that without it they would have no hope of salvation, but often our services are necessary. Besides, it is indisputably clear that we all understand how much [the sacraments] benefit not only the bad but also the good, and how much alleviation they usually bring to the sick body and above all to the soul solicitous for its salvation.”

The greatest illustration of that point was how he scaled a mountain of corpses to give absolution and viaticum to a man at the top of the heap who had been placed there prematurely. His example of courage tied to charity is a mirror for the Church and her leaders in every age, most especially at times of crisis. As all of us confront the coronavirus, we can profit from how St. Charles put the Catholic faith into action in the most demanding and dangerous circumstances. I would heartily recommend reading Msgr. John Cihak’s superb 2017 work *Charles Borromeo: Selected Orations, Homilies and Writings*.

To become courageous like he was, what virtues do we need?

The first is faith, to recognize that Christ, who promised to be with us always until the end of time (Mt 28:20), is good to His word. Faith likewise helps us trust in God’s providential care. There’s a temptation, in times of crisis, to try to take control even over things that human beings cannot control. This can come from a practical atheism, from living as if God does not exist or does not care. Faith inspires us to do all we can, but in tandem, rather than apart, from God, knowing that our life is in God’s hands.

The second is prudence, which helps us to discern the good in each circumstance among many competing goods—and to choose the right means to achieve it. It helps us set a proper rule or measure, something desperately needed in times of crisis when certain goods can be emphasized disproportionately and others can be forgotten. Aristotle, and St. Thomas Aquinas after him, taught that moral virtue is a middle point between two extremes, deficiency and excess. Compassion, for example, is the mean between apathy and sentimental indulgence. Courage is found between the extremes of cowardice and recklessness.

In this present circumstance, prudence can help us to see that an “overabundance of caution” is not a virtue but a vice. Prudence focuses on the right measure of caution, balancing, for example, the duty we need to protect those most vulnerable to infection by “flattening the curve” through social distancing,



hand-washing, and various other practices, with other needs, like providing for one's family, nourishing one's soul and others', providing goods and services, etc. Prudence assists courage in helping people know how to take the right risks.

The third virtue is charity, which helps us to sacrifice ourselves for the good of others. "No one has greater love," Jesus said during the Last Supper, "to lay down one's life for one's friends" (Jn 15:13), and charity motivates us to take risks, even dangerous ones, to protect and provide for those we love. Moms and Dads, even the most temperamentally timid and conflict adverse, instinctively protect their children in the face of gunmen, bombs, and tornados. The greater the love, the greater the audacity. Courage does not mean fearlessness, but doing what we ought despite our fear, and love gives us the strength to overcome fear and do what love demands.

The fourth is patience, which means principally not an ability to wait but a capacity to suffer. The word patience comes from the Latin *pator*, to "suffer," which is why we call the sick in hospitals "patients." Courage requires that we do not have an excessive fear of pain and of where our fear of pain ultimately derives, the fear of death.

In the present circumstance, many, including young people at very low risk of serious consequences from Covid-19, are terrified of contracting it, as if it were an automatic death sentence, even though, for 80 percent of those who get it, the symptoms are mild and pass like a cold or flu, and only those whose bodies are compromised by old age or other serious health conditions are in serious danger.

We should all be doing everything reasonable to prevent transmission out of concern for those who would be most vulnerable, conscious of the reality that our health care system is inadequate to handle more than 120,000 people in ICUs at the same time. We need to work together to ensure that no one dies when medical services, received promptly, could save their lives. At the same time, however, we should not be giving in to an epidemic of fear, as if catching Covid-19 were getting leprosy or stage-4 pancreatic cancer. Hysteria, based on fear of pain and death, does not help.

The *Imitation of Christ*, Thomas à Kempis' 15th-century spiritual classic, advised us that the easiest way to overcome the fear of death is to ponder it each day. "In every deed and every thought, act as though you were to die this very day." Once we begin doing that, we start taking every day more seriously: we do not procrastinate on telling family members and friends that we love them; we ask forgiveness from God and those we have wronged while we still have time; we let pass so many things that in the final analysis do not matter much; and we start to get our real priorities straight. When we pray each day Jesus' last words from the Cross, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit" (Lk 23:46), we become emboldened, like Jesus, not to have our life taken from us but rather freely to lay it down (Jn 10:18). When we are not afraid to die because we have rehearsed it daily in prayer, we will be ready to offer our life without fear should that prove necessary.

Crises, like the present situation of the coronavirus, are times for Catholics united with Christ truly to shine. As salt, light and leaven, Catholics are called to help everyone else to become courageous in the face of the threats, to be willing to act to help others and save their lives, and to show everyone how unite their situations to God. It is a time for Catholics to show that we truly believe Jesus' words, "Take courage. It is I. Do not be afraid!" (Mk 6:50), and, like waves of apostles and martyrs throughout the centuries, and saints like Charles Borromeo, boldly lead society not only in response to people's material needs, but in care for their even more important spiritual needs.



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The Missionaries of St. Therese at Divine Mercy Parish are seeking additional members and are asking you to consider joining this parish ministry. Through prayers, contributions and donations, we are able to continue the missionary work of the church, assist clergy and religious in developing countries, as well as donations to Notre Dame Seminary and St. Joseph Abbey in St. Benedict. We also aid needy parishes in the New Orleans area develop more adequate catechetical programs and obtain religious education materials. The Missionaries of St. Therese meet on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Community Center. Our meetings consist of prayer and sharing. Everyone is welcomed to find out more about our ministry. Please consider joining us. If you have any questions or are interested in joining, please contact Sherryl Clements at 466-5016.