# St. Mary, Mother of God Church



### Roman Catholic Church 608 High Street ~ Freeport, PA 16229

A Parish of the Diocese of Greensburg A Pennsylvania Charitable Trust



Established 1826



Father Ronald Maquiñana—Pastor rmaquinana@dioceseofgreensburg.org

#### Parish Information

Saturday (Vigil): Suspended until further notice Sunday: Suspended until further notice Weekday Masses: Suspended until further notice

Holy Day of Obligation: Suspended until further notice

Reconciliation: By appointment only—please call the Administrative Office at

724-295-2281

Baptism: Sundays (by appointment)

Marriage: Contact the Administrative Office nine months in advance

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults: RCIA helps you to learn more about the Catholic faith. Pre-registration is required. Contact Fr. Ron or William Girardi at 724-295-2281.

**Hospital or Home Visit**: If you would like to receive Holy Communion or if you know someone who would like to have the priest visit, please call Fr. Ron at 724-295-2281.

Anointing of the Sick: Contact Fr. Ron at 724-295-2281

**Holy Communion:** Suspended until further notice—please call the Administrative Office at 724-295-2281.

**Baptism**: To understand the importance of the Sacrament of Baptism and your obligation as parents, you are required to attend one baptismal class. To register for one of these classes, please call the Administrative Office at 724-295-2281.

#### Parish Staff

William Girardi,

Pastoral Associate—412-719-7085

Claudia Vertosick

Business Manager/Parish Secretary

Helen James, Religious Education Director

Thomas Koharchik, Choir Director

Cindi Harbison

Social Hall Coordinator—724-272-7744

Jennifer Liti/David Valencic

Parish Custodians

Richard Bertino, Cemetery Caretaker 724-295-3632 (home); 724-602-5986 (cell)

#### **Ministries**

Kristen Marhefka/Julie Polana Gardone Teen Ministry

Melissa Kristine/Beth Macurdy Evangelization

John Nemcek—Homebound Ministry

Gina Jones—Helping Hands

724-448-9251; ginaj1904@gmail.com

#### **Organizations**

Diane Grant—Christian Mothers
Ray Smetana/Mary Ellen Gray
St. Vincent de Paul Society
Tim Fogarty—Men's Group

#### Office Information

Administrative Center Numbers & Hours: 724-295-2281 (Office) 724-295-3090 (Fax) Monday through Thursday - 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. Friday - 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.

Parish Website: www.stmaryfreeport.com

Parish Email Address:

thechurch@stmaryfreeport.com

Facebook: Saint Mary, Mother of God - Freeport

Send Information to share: stmarysocialmedia@yahoo.com

During this time when all 🧶 weekday and weekend public masses have been suspended. until further notice, please

know that Fr. Ron will privately celebrate mass I and will fulfill all of your requested intentions.

**†**=(in memory of) **▼**=(IHO/special intention/parishioners)

#### MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE 5TH SUNDAY OF LENT

SATURDAY: March 28th

> †Gene & Donna Nagy (Jeannie & John Manocchi)

SUNDAY: March 29th

†Barbara Sliviak (Robert & Diane Grant)

♥St. Mary Parishioners

MONDAY: March 30th

†Son—Richard & Mary Brestensky

(Mom & Dad)

TUESDAY: March 31st

†Kerry Liti (The Posney Family)

WEDNESDAY: April 1st

†John McDermott (Siblings)

THURSDAY: April 2nd

†Raymond Ravotti

(Alfred & Marlene Brown)

FRIDAY: April 3rd

†William Bale (Patty Hughes)

#### MASS INTENTIONS FOR PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

SATURDAY: April 4th

†Victor Zadnik (Wife—Dianne)

SUNDAY: April 5th

♥St. Mary Parishioners

†Dolores Watt (Lillian Pernazza Family)

#### SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

Sunday: Fifth Sunday of Lent Wednesday: April Fool's Day Thursday: St. Francis of Paola Friday: First Friday; Abstinence Saturday: St. Isidore: First Saturday

# Fifth Sunday of

As we approach Holy Week, our readings speak of a God who, in the midst of death, brings new life to the people. In Ezekiel, we hear that God will open the graves of the people of Israel who faced near extinction. In the Gospel of John, Jesus gives new life to Lazarus in a manner that prefigures the resurrection of Jesus. Paul tells the Romans that in Christ, God will not only give life to our bodies after death, but God offers us abundant life here and now. We observe that the external conditions for the people described in these readings did not radically change. Israel was still in exile. Lazarus would eventually face death again. But now God's presence and power are revealed. Even when our situation in life is difficult and perhaps not likely to change soon, we remember that the Spirit dwells within us.

## Sunday's Readings



First Reading — Thus says the Lord God: I will open your graves, have you rise from

them, and settle you on your land. Then you shall know I am the Lord, O my people! (Ezekiel 37:12-14).

**Psalm** — With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of

redemption (Psalm 130).

**Second Reading** — If Christ is in you, the spirit is alive even if the body is dead be

cause of sin (Romans 8:8-11).

Gospel — Lazarus, dead for four days, came out of his tomb when Jesus called his name (John 11:1-45 [3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45]).

## Readings for the Week

**Monday:** Dn 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62 [41c-

62]; Ps 23:1-6; Jn 8:1-11

Nm 21:4-9; Ps 102:2-3, 16-21; Jn 8:21-Tuesday:

*Wednesday:* Dn 3:14-20, 91-92, 95; Dn 3:52-56;

Jn 8:31-42

*Thursday:* Gn 17:3-9; Ps 105:4-9: Jn 8:51-59 Friday: Jer 20:10-13; Ps 18:2-7; Jn 10:31-42 Saturday: Ez 37:21-28; Jer 31:10, 11-13; Jn 11:45

-56

Sunday: Mt 21:1-11 (procession);

> Is 50:4-7; Ps 22:8-9, 17-20, 23-24; Phil 2:6-11; Mt 26:14 — 27:66 [27:11-



## From the Pastor's Desk

#### Dear St. Mary's Parishioners,

Greetings of peace and blessings to you! I hope all of you are staying safe and healthy.

It has been more than a week now since the Diocese of Greensburg temporarily suspended the public mass. I am now celebrating mass in private because of the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak. I must tell you that it was a hard decision and it affects me, especially when I celebrate the mass just by myself. Never

did I expect that I would be doing this in my priestly ministry. Since I was ordained, I have become accustom to celebrating mass with people. But now, because of this COVID-19, I need to abide with the strict guidelines. It is very emotional, especially this past weekend, when you are used to seeing the children getting excited to come in front of the altar for the children's liturgy at 8:30 A.M. on Sunday; when you are used to seeing the smiles on the faces of those coming to mass; when they shake your hand after mass and chat with you a little bit. I miss all of these. I miss celebrating the Eucharist with you.

Another concern I have is that, because we do not have public mass on weekends, our Sunday offertory is also affected. As you can imagine, our parish will continue to face regularly occurring expenses including utilities and salaries of our parish staff.

Please continue to support our parish and those who are in need. As Mother Angelica, the foundress of EWTN once said, "Please put us between your gas and electric bill". Be assured of my continued prayers for you and your loved ones, especially at this difficult time. Let me know if I can also be of help to you. I can be reached through the office number at 724-295-2281 or you can email me at: rmaquinana@dioceseofgreensburg.org.

I still believe that God is with us. He will restore us, just as He restored the people of Israel in the first reading (Ezekiel 37:12-14) and gave hope to Martha and Mary in the gospel when their brother, Lazarus, died. (Fifth Sunday of Lent)

Jesus said to Martha, "Your brother will rise." Martha said to him, "I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day." Then Jesus said these words, "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die." And then he says to her, "Do you believe this?" And she says, "Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world." (John 11:1-45)

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

John 11:25-26

Our Sunday bulletin is an important way for us to communicate with you. Producing it every week could be very costly, but through our arrangement with the J. S. Paluch Company, the parish does not pay for the printing, saving thousands of dollars each year. The Paluch Company arranges for the bulletin to be supported through the generosity of the businesses that you see advertised on the back cover. Most of these advertisers are members of our local community, and some belong to our parish. During these difficult economic times, you are urged to support these advertisers with your patronage. Tell the business owners that you appreciate their support of our parish through their advertisements in the bulletin. This is one small way that we can work within our own community to weather the challenges that we are facing. A strong and vibrant parish is good for our community and a thriving business community is good for our parish.

#### TV and Online Mass Options:

https://www.heartofthenation.org/where-to-watch https://mass-online.org/daily-holy-mass-live-online/; http://www.catholictv.org/masses/catholictv-mass EWTN

## Parish Information

## Suspensions/Cancellations Until Further Notice

Weekday and Weekend Masses—Suspended

Religious Education—Suspended

Choir Practice—Suspended

RCIA Meetings—Suspended

Teen Ministry Meetings—Suspended

The Bible Timeline—Cancelled and will be postponed to a later date

Stations of the Cross—Suspended

Regional Penance Services—Cancelled

First Friday Adoration—Suspended

Tenebrae Practice—Cancelled

Resurrection Choir Practice—Suspended

Christian Mother's Meeting—Suspended

Cancelled. Suspended. Postponed.



Diocesan Target - \$37,826.00; Parish Target - \$55,000.00 Pledges to Date - \$77,230.00; Paid to Date - \$51,414.00 Number of Donors - 187 — Diocesan Target has been Achieved!!! Thank you! ALL future gifts and/or pledges will now stay directly here at St. Mary's in order that we may complete this year's DLA major projects!

#### Holy Virgin of Guadalupe,

Queen of the Angels and Mother of the Americas.

We fly to you today as your beloved children. We ask you to intercede for us with your Son, as you did at the wedding in Cana.

Pray for us, loving Mother, and gain for our nation and world, and for all our families and loved ones, the protection of your holy angels, that we may be spared the worst of this illness.

For those already afflicted, we ask you to obtain the grace of healing and deliverance.

health of the sick and cause of our joy.

Hear the cries of those who are vulnerable and fearful, wipe away their tears and help them to trust.

In this time of trial and testing, teach all of us in the Church to love one another and to be patient and kind.

Help us to bring the peace of Jesus to our land and to our hearts.

We come to you with confidence, knowing that you truly are our compassionate mother,

Shelter us under the mantle of your protection, keep us in the embrace of your arms, help us always to know the love of your Son, Jesus. Amen.

From Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles,
 President of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops



Getty Images



#### What is a Spiritual Communion?

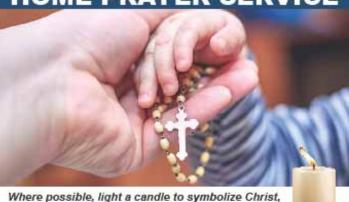
This is a long-standing practice of our Catholic faith.

St. Teresa of Jesus wrote: "When you do not receive Communion and you do not attend Mass, you can make a spiritual communion, which is a most beneficial practice; by it the love of God will be greatly impressed on you."

[The Way of Perfection, Ch. 35.]

A spiritual communion can be offered by anyone who desires a deeper union with Christ and is unable to attend Mass and receive the Eucharist. There are many reasons why one may not be able to receive holy Communion. It may be due to the fact that one is not Catholic; those who have been away from the Church for a long time and have not yet made a good confession; those who are living in a state of serious sin; and also for those who are sick or homebound. This form of prayer is most appropriate in the current situation when members of the faithful are unable to attend Mass.

#### HOME PRAYER SERVICE



#### Introductory Rite

Leader: The Lord is always attentive to the needs of His people and makes all things new through the glory of the resurrection. Let us praise him! Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.

All: Amen.

#### **Opening Prayer**

Leader: Let us pray.

God of light, by whose Spirit all things are made new, we praise you for the gift of life, for the blessing of a new day, for your mercy that makes each day a fresh start and offers hope in time of darkness.

All: Grant us the strength to walk in your light,
the grace to experience your presence with us,
and the hope that comes from being made new in Christ.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Also consider.

the light that has conquered the darkness.

#### Scripture: Revelation 21:3-5, 6b-7

Reader: I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them as their God.

He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, for the old order has passed away."

The one who sat on the throne said,
"Behold, I make all things new."
I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.
To the thirsty I will give a gift from the spring of life-giving water.

The victor will inherit these gifts, and I shall be his God, and he will be my son.

#### What must I do to make a Spiritual Communion?

The key in making a spiritual communion is to express to the Lord our faith in His merciful love and his real presence in the Eucharist. Remember, you are making a spiritual communion because you are unable to receive the Eucharist at Mass. The following prayer service can be used to make a spiritual communion. Here are four easy steps to guide you:

- Make an act of faith Express to Jesus your faith in His real presence in the Eucharist.
- 2. Make an act of love Offer a prayer of love and gratitude to the Lord.
- Express your desire to receive Him Because you are not able to physically receive Jesus, express to Him your desire to receive Him in your heart.
- Invite Jesus to come into your heart Ask Jesus to come to you as He would if we were able to receive the sacrament of holy Communion.

The following prayer service can be used to make a spiritual communion.

#### Reflection

Reader: God promised to make all things new again. It's a constant promise made by God, from the lips of Isaiah to the triumphant cry of Christ risen from the dead: "Behold, I make all things new." The ability to make things new again, even better than the original creation, is a prerogative of God. God Himself is ever new — He never ages for He is eternal. Moreover, because He is infinite, we will never cease seeing new insights of his beauty and magnificence; for all eternity we will never be bored.

When we say that God is immutable, unchanging, this is not to say that He lacks life, but rather, that He is so alive that He does not lose any of his perfection, but is always new. So too with the Church, and with each one of us, her members...We have God's divine life within us. We walk in newness of life...destined to sing a new song of praise to God forevermore.

Fr. McLean Cummings

(www.preciouslifemissions.org/FrCummings/Homilies)

#### Prayer to the Most Holy Redeemer (Anima Christi)

Soul of Christ, sanctify me. Body of Christ, save me. Blood of Christ, embolden me. Water from the side of Christ, wash me. Passion of Christ, strengthen me. O good Jesus, hear me. Within thy wounds hide me. Never permit me to be parted from you. From the evil Enemy defend me. In the hour of my death call me. And bid me come to thee, that with your saints I may praise thee for age upon age. Amen.

#### Intercessions

Leader: We trust in God, who makes all things new.

Let us lift up to him our prayers, saying:

All: Lord, you make all things new.

Leader: For those who feel they are out of second chances,

fill them with hope in you.

All: Lord, you make all things new.

Leader: For those who are broken and seeking the truth,

guide them to the fullness of faith in you.

All: Lord, you make all things new.

Leader: For children, parents, and teachers,

keep them always in the care of your redeeming love.

All: Lord, you make all things new.

Leader: Our Father...

#### Conclusion

readings from

Sunday Mass.

You can find the

readings at

usecb.org

Leader: 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, Salvation of Your People, 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 we who are in trial, but deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin. Amen.

All: Amen.



# News from Our Ministries/Organizations Evangelization



## **TV Listing for Sunday Mass**

## Pittsburgh

Provider/Network	Station/Channel	Day/Time
WPGH	Fox Ch. 53.1	Sunday 7:00 AM
Cable TV		

Provider/Network	Station/Channel	Day/Time
Armstrong Cable	Fox Ch. 9	Sunday 7:00 AM
Xfinity (Comcast)	Fox Ch. 7	Sunday 7:00 AM
Xfinity (Comcast) Bethel Park	Fox Ch. 8	Sunday 7:00 AM
Xfinity (Comcast) New Middleton/East Palestine	Fox Ch. 12	Sunday 7:00 AM
Verizon FiOS	Fox Ch. 7	Sunday 7:00 AM
Xfinity (Comcast) Bethel Park	WGN America Ch. 11, 180, 1420	Sunday 8:00 AM
Xfinity (Comcast) Blairsville	WGN America Ch. 12, 180, 1420	Sunday 8:00 AM
Xfinity (Comcast) Hampton	WGN America Ch. 19, 178	Sunday 8:00 AM
Xfinity (Comcast) Pittsburgh City	WGN America Ch. 19, 178	Sunday 8:00 AM
Xfinity (Comcast) Suburbs	WGN America Ch. 19, 178, 1420	Sunday 8:00 AM

Annity (Comcast) Suburbs	WGN America Ch. 19, 178, 1420	Sunday 8:00 AIVI
Satellite TV		
Provider/Network	Station/Channel	Day/Time
DirecTV	Fox Ch. 53	Sunday 7:00 AM
Dish Network	Fox Ch. 53	Sunday 7:00 AM
DirecTV	WGN America Ch. 307	Sunday 8:00 AM
Dish Network	WGN America Ch. 239	Sunday 8:00 AM

## FORMED' PICK OF THE WEEK



Lectio: Salvation with Dr. Michael Barber

At every Sunday Mass, Catholics confess that Jesus came down from heaven "for us men and for our salvation." But what does "salvation" mean?

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Learn and enjoy your faith at home and on the go, from any device. Sign-up for free at: formed.org/signup. When the "Create a New Account" page comes up, enter the parish zip code (16229) in the "Find your Parish or Organization" box. Select our parish and click the next button. Any issues, please contact Beth Macurdy at: bmacurdy@zoominternet.net. †

Lenten Tombs—On this 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent, we hear the wonderful story of Lazarus and his rising from the dead to life again. Just as Lazarus was buried in his earthly tomb for a time, we also become entombed into our own sinful tendencies from which Christ so wants to free us. Our Lord wants to impart upon us three very important lessons through this miracle. First, we become aware of the depth of Christ's love for the sinner dead to sin. Just as He wept at the tomb of Lazarus, He weeps for us when we sin and choose not to repent and seek His merciful love and forgiveness. Jesus was willing to go back to an area filled with his adversaries plotting to kill him in order to personally free Lazarus. He is willing to die for us as He did for His friend. "Greater love has no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13 Second, we see the ultimate power over death that Christ holds. But we need to focus more on the death of the soul rather than the body. Lazarus is raised from the dead to only die physically again someday. In the first reading from Ezekiel, we hear that God wants to "open our graves" so that our bones, dry from sin, will rise again and be filled with His spirit "so that you may live". Ezekiel 37:12-14 Third, we are shown that the resurrection of Lazarus is more than just His body alive again. When we allow the Lord to free us from our sins, especially thru the sacrament of Confession, we become once again "alive in Christ Jesus" as St. Paul reminds us. When we accept the freedom from the entombment of sin, then we will truly live because we are once again close to Jesus as He so wants us to be. "I am the resurrection and the Life" He tells us because we don't need to physically die to enjoy the rewards of His rising and ours. This Lenten season of 2020 is one that we will never forget for so many reasons. But these weeks of entombment in our homes should not look upon as wasted. These moments are for us to reflect upon because it is an act of self-sacrifice to distance ourselves from others. I am loving my neighbor, those most vulnerable to sickness, by controlling my desire to be out and about. It is no longer about my wants and needs, but of another. Each time we cleanse our hands, we can lift up our soul in prayer for ourselves and each other, so that when we emerge from our caves in a few weeks, we will look upon those faces whom I laid down my life for. †

## Altar Bread and Wine

The Altar Bread and Wine were donated



for this week in loving memory of Raymond Ravotti By Family

## ollections

Offertory Collection for March 22nd, 2020

No. of Envelopes Mailed Out: 600 No. of Envelopes Received: 11 Collection: Offertory - \$370.00 Electronic Payments (11) - \$705.00 Loose - \$-0-; Children (-) - \$-0-

Total Collection - \$1,075.00 THANK YOU!



Saturday April 4th, 2020 NO **CLEANING ASSIGNMENTS** THIS WEEK

lease call the Administrative Office if you would like to volunteer to be one of the cleaning volunteers-724-295-2281.

## Sanctuary Lamp

In acknowledging the Real Presence of Christ, The Sanctuary Lamp (Candle) will burn



this week in loving memory of Richard Brestensky, Jr. Ву Dad and Mom

Although we are unable to attend Mass at this time, we urge you to please mail your weekly/monthly contribution or drop it off at the Administrative office or the mail box outside the office doors.

Something to think about—If you normally give in the offertory basket, now might be the time to think about electronic giving.



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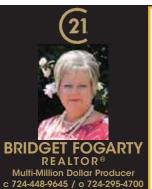
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