

SAINT MARY of the Assumption



Roman Catholic Church
Manchester, Michigan



REVEREND FR. BOSCO PADAMATTUMMAL
Administrator

DEACON DENNIS WALTERS

210 West Main Street • PO Box 249

Manchester, Michigan

Phone: (734) 428-8811

stmarymanchester@gmail.com

www.stmarymanchester.org

WEEKEND MASSES:

Sunday 8:30 am and 10:30 am

Vigil Mass Saturday at 5:00 pm



March 17, 2020
Feast of St Patrick

"...all public Masses, events, and gatherings will be cancelled throughout the Diocese of Lansing beginning tomorrow morning (March 18, 2020) lasting, for now, through Wednesday of Holy Week (April 8, 2020)"

"...all Catholics in the diocese are dispensed from the obligation of Sunday Mass participation through Easter Sunday"

"...all our priests will continue to offer daily private Masses... Many of these daily Masses have intentions applied to them and those will be honored"

"...pray that Jesus will enter your hearts in an act of Spiritual Communion"

"Please, let these coming Sundays be times of family prayer"

"...Churches open for private prayer"

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

After consultation with the priests of the diocese, who were of mixed minds on this matter, and out of deep concern for the health of all our folks especially our elders, and with due deference to medical and government authorities, it has been decided that all public Masses, events, and gatherings will be cancelled throughout the Diocese of Lansing beginning tomorrow morning (March 18, 2020) lasting, for now, through Wednesday of Holy Week (April 8, 2020). We will see at that time whether these plans will have to change.

Private Baptisms, Marriages, and Funerals may continue but only with immediate family present. As a reminder, all Catholics in the diocese are dispensed from the obligation of Sunday Mass participation through Easter Sunday. I ask our pastors to keep Churches open for private prayer.

The Holy Mass is our way to render back to God our worship and thanks for his many blessings to and for us, his beloved sons and daughters. We are blessed that all our priests will continue to offer daily private Masses in order to fulfill our blessed duty to God and to lift up our needs in prayerful petition to our Heavenly Father. Many of these daily Masses have intentions applied to them and those will be honored; in addition, feel free to submit other needs to your pastors to include at the altar.

The loss of the regular reception of Holy Communion is a great cross for many; during this fast from receiving our Lord in the Eucharist please pray that Jesus will enter your hearts in an act of Spiritual Communion. As for Sunday, they have always been a day of worship for us. Please, let these coming Sundays be times of family prayer.

St. Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church, Pray for Us.

Our Lady, Health of the Sick, Pray for Us.

Our Lady, Comforter of the Afflicted, Pray for Us.

Assuring of my prayers, I am sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Earl Boyea

Bishop of Lansing

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.

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,
health of the sick and cause
of our joy.

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.

—Archbishop Jose H. Gomez,
president of the U.S. Conference
of Catholic Bishops

P A R I S H N E W S

Questions about COVID-19?

Dr Virginia Johnson has generously offered to answer any questions you might have about the Coronavirus. Her email address is: vj370589@comcast.net

Reminders...

PER BISHOP BOYEA: All public Masses as well parish events and gatherings – here at St. Mary's and throughout the Diocese – have been cancelled, now through Wednesday of Holy Week (April 8, 2020). However, the church will be open daily for private prayer. Also during this time, you can pick up a bulletin from the vestibule.

**The following parish news items are ALL
TENTATIVE until Bishop Boyea announces the
resumption of parish Masses and activities...**

EASTER LILIES: There are forms in the vestibule to order Lilies to decorate the altar on Easter Sunday (and then take home for your Easter table). More info and prices are on the form. Orders needed by **Mon., April 6**.

DECORATING FOR EASTER: If you would like to help on **Sat., April 11** with decorating the church for Easter, please see the sign-up sheets in the vestibule for times and to sign up.

CHRISM MASS: Although now tentative as a public Mass, if you have an interest in attending this special Mass on Holy Thursday morning, **April 9**, contact Connie Schaffer (who is coordinating it for our parish): 734-428-7271 or 734-216-3510.

WASHING OF THE FEET and CANDLE-BEARING RITUALS: Pray we will have a public Mass on Holy Thursday **April 9**. And with that hope, consider that we will need 12 men to volunteer to be part of the ceremonial washing of the feet ritual. We also will need 14 women to serve as candle-bearers in the procession to the Altar of Repose. To volunteer, contact Marja Warner as soon as possible: 734-428-9506.

Change in Bible Study

Given the measures we are asked to take to protect one another from the coronavirus outbreak, the two remaining sessions of our "Genesis to Jesus" Bible Study will be postponed to a later date. —Dcn. Dennis

Our Parish DSA Goal

Thank you to all who have made pledges to the Diocesan Services Appeal this year. If you have not yet made yours, please consider doing so today. Envelopes are available in the vestibule and can be mailed or dropped off at the parish office. Those wishing to make their commitment online may do so at www.dioceseoflansing.org. Remember, 50% of all contributions, in excess of our parish goal, will come back to our parish for local use. ■

ST. MARY'S SUPPORT OF THE 2020 DSA:

Our parish goal is: \$27,306⁰⁰. As of March 15,

20 PARISH FAMILIES have supported DSA with \$5,585⁰⁰

We are at 20% of our parish goal! Won't you do your share?

*Happy the one who
trusts in the Lord!*

Proverbs 16:20



NEED HELP?
ALTERNATIVES TO ABORTION:
Call (734) 994-8863 or the 24-hour
Hotline 800-712-HELP
Or visit arborwoman.com/abortion/

Need Help? PROJECT RACHEL
(post-abortion reconciliation
and healing) Call the confidential
phone line: 517-993-0291, or email
nlc@resurrectionlansing.org

NEED HELP? "COURAGE" is a Catholic
(endorsed by Diocese) spiritual support group
for those struggling with same sex attraction.
"ENCOURAGE" is a separate support group
for families & friends. Call 810-231-9199 ext.
202 or email frjohnroscus@holyspiritcs.org

Please Pray for...

- Megan (niece of Lynn Waldecker)
- Anna Muldoon (mother of Tina Doyle)
- Eddie Walz
- Leon Ball
- Tom Burch
- Mary Ruth Neely
- Inge's family & friends:
 - Anna
 - Robin and her sons
 - Gerlinde
- Tim Runion
- Brian Ball
- and for all suffering from the effects of the coronavirus — in physical health, in mourning, financially, in anxiety and worry.
- Tom Kladzyk
- Aimee Simpson
- Mary Frances Cox
- Lynn Miller (sister of Mary Ann Fielder)
- Ray Seghers
- Virginia Strong
- Connie and Frank Stancato
- Paula Saft
- Wilma Lentz
- Bruce Sommers
- Duane Beuerle

(Need Prayer? Contact the
St. Mary Prayer Tree by calling
the Parish Office at 428-8811.)

**Please note: The doors of our
parish church will be open
daily from 7am to 6pm.**

BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS

Mar 22... Mary Ann Fielder
... Sharon Kleinschmidt
Mar 25... James Miller
Mar 26... Cecelia Kueffner
Mar 27... Lisa Chisnell
Mar 28... Garrett Sanders



**St. Mary Roman
Catholic Church
Stewardship**

WEEKLY COLLECTION:
Sunday, March 8, 2020

Sunday Env (82)\$ 4,865.00
Welcome&Loose.....\$ 220.00
Easter decorations\$ 60.00
E-Giving General\$ 145.64

Combined toward budget: \$ 5,290.64
Budget goal:\$5,300.00
Amt BELOW goal: - \$ 9.36

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS:

Buildings & Maintenance\$ 210.00
Blk & Indian Missions\$ 60.00
Poor Box\$ 181.26
Votive Candles\$ 32.00

**NEED HELP? "AA" group
meets Tuesdays at 7:00pm at
Manchester United Methodist
Church, 501 Ann Arbor St.**



FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT ♦ MARCH 22, 2020

The Prophet

— by Fr. Bosco Padamattummal —



In today's reading from the ninth chapter of the Gospel of John, the entire chapter – from beginning to end – is basically built around one miraculous healing. The whole chapter! Much of it is given to the discussion of the miracle itself as the “unbelief investigates a miracle.”

At the request of the Lord, the blind man went and washed in the pool of Siloam and then came back seeing. Therefore, the neighbors and those who previously saw him as a beggar were saying, “Is not this the man who used to sit and beg?” Some said, “It is he”; others said, “No, but he is like him.” He said, “I am the man.” So they were saying to him, “How then were your eyes opened?” He answered, “The man who is called Jesus healed me.”

At the interrogation by the Pharisees, the blind man states that Jesus is a prophet. They said to him, “Where is He?” He said, “I do not know.” These spiritually blind people are asking direction from a formerly blind man to go and look for Jesus. How can he help? He had never seen any place or people before this miracle happened.

The prophet Isaiah in chapter 42 verse 7 said the Messiah would come and heal; He would give sight to the blind. Throughout the Old Testament we don't see any miracles of giving sight to the blind, but in the New Testament there are five different miracles of giving sight to the blind. And this is the fulfillment of the Messianic prophecy in the *Servant Song* of Isaiah, chapter 42.

This miracle alone should have substantially changed the Jewish leaders' view of Jesus. If they hadn't already understood that He was divine, this should have been enough to affirm His claim to divinity. But instead of coming to faith, instead of acknowledging that there was no human explanation for what they had seen and experienced, all it does is elevate their animosity. It elevates their anger. The more evidence that Jesus gives, the angrier they become. Their hatred escalates.

Today's reading from John chapter 9 follows John 8:58 where, after a heated discussion between the Jewish leadership and Jesus in the temple area, Jesus declared that He is the **IAM**, that is He is God Himself. They were so infuriated at what they saw as blasphemy that they picked up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself from them and went out of the temple.

As he went out of the temple, Jesus saw this man, blind from birth, who was sitting at one of the temple gates, begging. I just need to make the note that Jesus is never too concerned with His own life. He stopped, even though He was at high-risk and in danger, escaping from being stoned. But He stopped to demonstrate grace, and power, and mercy, and compassion, and judgment, and even salvation on a blind beggar. This is very much like Jesus at the very time of His death, collecting a thief on the way to His own death and resurrection.

Today I would like to focus on one word the blind man

said about Jesus – that He is a prophet who comes for judgment – and what that might mean for us. What does a prophetic Jesus have to say about you and me? Prophets and judgment tend to make us a bit uncomfortable. Prophets speak words we often do not want to hear. They show us truths we often do not want to see. They ask us to change. And judgment often leaves us thinking about wrongdoing and punishment. Prophets generally do not work within the system, but often stand outside the system. Prophets speak against that which diminishes human dignity. They speak a difficult truth to us, calling us to change; or they offer words of consolation and hope and open our eyes to a new life, a new seeing, a new understanding, a new faith. We don't often think or speak of Jesus as a prophet, and yet that is exactly how the man who has been given new sight sees Jesus. “He is a prophet,” he tells the Pharisees.

The judgment for which Jesus comes into this world is not so much a judgment about good or bad, right or wrong, in or out, saved or damned. It is a judgment about our seeing. This is about spiritual seeing. Do we see with eyes opened or do we see with eyes closed?

When we live and see with our eyes closed, we withhold mercy, live in fear, let anger control our lives. When we are unforgiving of ourselves or another, we are seeing with eyes closed. Sometimes we either refuse or are unable to see the pain or needs of another. When we love ourselves more than our neighbor, we are seeing with eyes closed, blind to the value of the other's life. When violence becomes our default response, we are seeing with closed eyes. In all those and a thousand other ways we see with our eyes closed.

Jesus did not say that He came into this world to make judgments but “for judgment.” His judgment is not a series of individual decisions. Rather, his very life and presence are the judgment. His compassion is a judgment on our indifference and apathy. His justice is a judgment on injustice. His nonviolence is a judgment on our violence. His mercy is a judgment on condemnation. His forgiveness is a judgment on guilt. His welcome is a judgment on exclusion. His life of prayer is a judgment on our attempts at living self-sufficiently. His simplicity is a judgment on our overly busy and cluttered lives. His truth is a judgment on lies, falsehoods, and alternative facts. His wholeheartedness is a judgment on our fragmented and divided world. His resurrection is a judgment on death.

Everything about Jesus, His life, His words, His actions, are a judgment on our lives and world. That judgment offers us the chance to see as He sees, to live as He lives, and to be as He is. +