May 1, 2020

Ignatian Spirituality: Gifts You Can Offer  https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/gifts-you-can-offer/

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PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

Loving and generous God, it is You who call us by name and ask us to follow You. Help us to grow in the love and service of our Church as we experience it today.

Give us the strength and courage of your Spirit to shape its future.

Grant us faith-filled leaders who will embrace Christ’s mission of love and justice.

Through the intercession of Saint Junipero Serra, bless the Church of Monterey by calling dedicated and generous leaders from our families and friends to serve your people as priests, deacons, sisters, brothers, and lay ministers.

Inspire us to know You profoundly, and open our hearts to hear your call.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord.  Amen.
April 29, 2020

Letter on the Month of May - Let us pray the rosary at home! Joining Pope Francis and the Church

Letter of His Holiness Pope Francis to the Faithful for the Month of May 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The month of May is approaching, a time when the People of God express with particular intensity their love and devotion for the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is traditional in this month to pray the Rosary at home within the family. The restrictions of the pandemic have made us come to appreciate all the more this “family” aspect, also from a spiritual point of view.

For this reason, I want to encourage everyone to rediscover the beauty of praying the Rosary at home in the month of May. This can be done either as a group or individually; you can decide according to your own situations, making the most of both opportunities. The key to doing this is always simplicity, and it is easy also on the internet to find good models of prayers to follow.

I am also providing two prayers to Our Lady that you can recite at the end of the Rosary, and that I myself will pray in the month of May, in spiritual union with all of you. I include them with this letter so that they are available to everyone.

Dear brothers and sisters, contemplating the face of Christ with the heart of Mary our Mother will make us even more united as a spiritual family and will help us overcome this time of trial. I keep all of you in my prayers, especially those suffering most greatly, and I ask you, please, to pray for me. I thank you, and with great affection I send you my blessing.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 25 April 2020

Feast of Saint Mark the Evangelist
FIRST PRAYER

O Mary,

You shine continuously on our journey
as a sign of salvation and hope.
We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick,
who, at the foot of the cross,
were united with Jesus’ suffering,
and persevered in your faith.

“Protectress of the Roman people”,
you know our needs,
and we know that you will provide,
so that, as at Cana in Galilee,
joy and celebration may return
after this time of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love,
to conform ourselves to the will of the Father
and to do what Jesus tells us.
For he took upon himself our suffering,
and burdened himself with our sorrows
to bring us, through the cross,
to the joy of the Resurrection.

Amen.

We fly to your protection,
O Holy Mother of God;
Do not despise our petitions
in our necessities,
but deliver us always
from every danger,
O Glorious and Blessed Virgin.

SECOND PRAYER

“We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God”.

In the present tragic situation, when the whole world is prey to suffering and anxiety, we fly to you, Mother of God and our Mother, and seek refuge under your protection.

Virgin Mary, turn your merciful eyes towards us amid this coronavirus pandemic. Comfort those who are distraught and mourn their loved ones who have died, and at times are buried in a way that grieves them deeply. Be close to those who are concerned for their loved ones who are sick and who, in order to prevent the spread of the disease, cannot be close to them. Fill with hope those who are troubled by the uncertainty of the future and the consequences for the economy and employment.
Mother of God and our Mother, pray for us to God, the Father of mercies, that this great suffering may end and that hope and peace may dawn anew. Plead with your divine Son, as you did at Cana, so that the families of the sick and the victims be comforted, and their hearts be opened to confidence and trust.

Protect those doctors, nurses, health workers and volunteers who are on the frontline of this emergency, and are risking their lives to save others. Support their heroic effort and grant them strength, generosity and continued health.

Be close to those who assist the sick night and day, and to priests who, in their pastoral concern and fidelity to the Gospel, are trying to help and support everyone.

Blessed Virgin, illumine the minds of men and women engaged in scientific research, that they may find effective solutions to overcome this virus.

Support national leaders, that with wisdom, solicitude and generosity they may come to the aid of those lacking the basic necessities of life and may devise social and economic solutions inspired by farsightedness and solidarity.

Mary Most Holy, stir our consciences, so that the enormous funds invested in developing and stockpiling arms will instead be spent on promoting effective research on how to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future.

Beloved Mother, help us realize that we are all members of one great family and to recognize the bond that unites us, so that, in a spirit of fraternity and solidarity, we can help to alleviate countless situations of poverty and need. Make us strong in faith, persevering in service, constant in prayer.

Mary, Consolation of the afflicted, embrace all your children in distress and pray that God will stretch out his all-powerful hand and free us from this terrible pandemic, so that life can serenely resume its normal course.

April 26, 2020

Dear St. Joseph parishioners,

We are all missing the way we, our faith community, engage with one another, particularly at weekly mass. To be living in this “COVID-19 limbo” is both unfamiliar and worrisome. The purpose of this letter is to offer some good news about the behind-the-scenes functioning of St. Joseph’s parish during these uncertain times.

For example, the 2020 Annual Ministry Appeal (AMA) has exceeded its goal by more than $4,300! All of that $4,300 will be coming back to the parish. This was accomplished by donations from 52 gracious parishioners. Last year we received back over $7,000 with 68 donors. It is the customary practice at St. Joseph’s to try and wrap up the AMA by the end of April or early May each year. However, due to our unusual circumstances in 2020, the AMA will continue on until donations cease to come in (we received two just this past week). We know there are more of you out there who have contributed in the past. Please keep our numbers (donors and monetary amounts) growing! And a most sincere thanks to all who already have fulfilled this annual obligation.

The Easter donations were awesome. St. Joseph’s parish is very blessed to have such giving parishioners, guests and friends, despite not being able to celebrate our most sacred holiday together.
On another financial note, your weekly contributions have been coming in with great regularity. This is very important to the well-being of St. Joseph’s because though our gatherings have been postponed for the time being, our monthly expenses continue on without skipping a beat. Thank you for understanding this and taking it upon yourselves to make the monthly contributions happen.

We hope that during this time apart, you have found more and different opportunities to celebrate God’s Word and to be grateful for the glorious surroundings He has provided for us on the Central Coast. The St. Joseph’s website is invaluable for keeping abreast of matters concerning the Diocese of Monterey, Fr. Charles’ frequent updates and “Word on Fire” masses. May we continue to ask for His grace and presence in our lives as we navigate this strange world together.

Many prayers and blessings to all of you,

Tom & Karen Hogan Fr. Charles

April 23, 2020

Praying in the Time of the Virus Crisis for calm and serenity. Andy Alexander, S.J.

The current spread of the novel Coronavirus is quite disturbing. There is a sense of the unknown. How bad will this get? Will it affect me? How will it further change our way of life? Just as we try to calm down and remind ourselves not to worry beyond the facts, the next day's news reveals something more shocking. Fear is a very unsettling emotion. It can paralyze us and take away our abilities to remain balanced and reasonable and to discern the right choices before us.

On one level it is critical that we follow good sound advice from the medical community and do what we can to prevent ourselves from getting the virus or from spreading it to others. But, on a far deeper level, we need to turn to prayer, to our relationship with God, to find comfort and peace that we need the most. This is a time to place ourselves in our Lord's hands and to ask for the grace to trust.

We certainly can pray that the epidemic will come to an end soon, and that people who contract the virus will receive the care they need. And, we can pray for those who are suffering, for the most vulnerable all over the world, and we can pray with those who are grieving the loss of loved ones.

Letting our Lord comfort us with a peace that nothing else in this world can give is to pray at another level. It begins with our reminding ourselves that we are loved by God. In the Christian tradition, we can remind ourselves of the Good News itself. We are saved from the power of sin and death through the death and resurrection of Jesus. Many other religious traditions offer us hope and consolation in God's love and presence with us.

How do we find that peace in the midst of so much anxiety and worry about the future? We can take precautions and be prudent, but we don't have to worry about what we can't control. We can trust that by turning to our God, we can rely on God's love and presence. We can take courage from a sense that we are not alone. And, we can let go of the anxieties and be brought deeper into that relationship which feels "at home" and reminds us of our truest self.

Most of all, faith and trust can help us replace our anxiety with our mission - the mission each of us has to love as we have been loved. When we ask for the help - in our relationship with our God - to grow in compassion and care for those around us, a new level of purpose is given to us. We can feel the grace of being sent -
missioned - to be for and with others in crisis. We can comfort others and help calm their fears. We can be a source of strength for others who are struggling. Our charity and the ways we reach out to others will transform our hearts. And, we can make a real difference. Perhaps someone I know, who is quarantined at home, needs a call every day, or perhaps a quick trip to the store for necessities. The possibilities will come to us as we let our hearts be calmed and be filled with compassion. Gratitude leads to generosity and courage lets our hearts move from being fearful to being bold.

Most loving God, Creator of us all, we turn to you to care for your people in need. We thank you for your presence among us and the peace you offer us. Send us your Spirit to fill us with courage and hope, so that we might be your instruments of love and assistance for others in need. Through this crisis, may we come together, as people of faith in a crisis so often do by your grace, and may we come out of it more united and more determined to care for those most in need. Thank you for your fidelity and the graces we need these days.

April 18, 2020

Dear Parish Family,

In these days of uncertainties, social distancing, and shelter in place, how is it going for you? Things can get rather discouraging but one thing I know: God is still with us. Of that we can be sure. Let us never forget that! Our churches may be closed to us but we can still hear and see Mass via the media of television, radio, or computers. Mass is available daily. EWTN is just one station that carries it.

Take courage and continue to live our faith daily. These are a variety ways to do that:
1. Read the daily readings, which give hope and can be found on the Laudate app for computers or other media.
2. Call your relatives, friends, and neighbors to see how they are and if they are in need of food or supplies that you might be able to get for them. Give them encouragement as doing this can give us some, too.
3. Check with older friends and neighbors asking if you can get them some needed food and/or supplies. Stay in touch.
4. Stay in prayer by evangelizing the Lord’s word to others.
5. Let people be themselves and accept them. Sometimes you may find some have become testy, despondent, or ungrateful. Always be encouraging and remind them that Jesus loves us.

You can probably come up with more ways to keep our faith.

Do you know that St. Joseph’s Church has a website? Check out the webpage http://www.stjosephcayucos.org/. You can read Fr. Charles’ messages daily along with other messages. You can contact Fr. if you have any questions regarding our religion or our parish.

So, as we wait for a return to normalcy, let us not become discouraged. We have to call on God with faith and sincerity. If we do our part, God will not abandon us!

God’s blessings to all. Jesus, I put my trust in you.

Anne Bennett
Liturgy Coordinator
April 17, 2020

Easter Reflection

Jesus gave us a meal in which our breaking of bread and sharing of wine with one another reflects his gift of Unconditional Love. We will honor his life among us, his persecution and death through this holy meal, the Eucharist, and our service to one another. Human nature wants to create elaborate rituals and fixed guidelines to define holiness, but Jesus left us a model of purest simplicity as the way to follow him.

Let us model our lives on the Eucharist: simple bread, unassuming, hidden... In this way, God’s Love shines completely through our lives.

May we have the grace to be God’s presence in the world, by our companionship, our sharing, our Unconditional Love, and gift of ourselves in service to others. By: Joyce Rupp

April 16, 2020

By Chris Sparks article as we approach Divine Mercy Sunday. An opportunity to reflect on our virtues:

Every day, it seems, we have more news of the spread of a strange-sounding disease. Every day, news of quarantines, of schools shut down, of increasingly larger disruptions in the ordinary workings of the world. It’s enough to alarm the most sedate soul — but we’re called to something different. As Catholic Christians, we are called to virtue. More specifically, we’re called to live the cardinal and theological virtues, both in good times and in bad. Those virtues are:

Prudence

Reason; don’t simply react. Take a measured look at the risks, at the news, and think through what you ought to do, given the duties of your state in life and the resources available to you.

Temperance

Don’t panic. That message comes again and again from government and medical experts. The best thing you can do is don’t panic. At the same time, apathy in the face of a real epidemic isn’t a good response either. Be prepared, but don’t go overboard.

Justice

What are your obligations? For whom are you responsible? How do you make sure you do justice to those responsibilities?
Fortitude

The virtue of strength involves the firm, steadfast refusal to give way in the face of a challenge. You need fortitude in order to face an ordeal and overcome it.

Faith

Our strength isn’t only natural; it’s also supernatural. We are Christians, after all, called to trust in Jesus through all things, good and bad. We must look at this whole situation in the light of faith, and allow that light to show us more than our unaided natural prudence will.

Hope

Because we have faith, we have a hope that many of our neighbors do not share. We know the ultimate outcome of human history: a great victory for love and goodness, leading into eternal beatitude. Because of that, all current crises and challenges can be seen in a different light. Evil may have its hour, but the Lord will have His day, and into eternity.

Charity/Love

Arising out of all the virtues, our response needs to be animated thoroughly by love: love for God and neighbor; love for the sick; love for our families and friends who are threatened by this virus or even enduring it already; love for those without the same faith and hope that we are blessed with; love for those falling under suspicion or prejudice because of this epidemic.

Our model for responding to this pandemic should be all those Christians before us who have faced such crises, and gave outstanding witness to Christian charity. From the time of Christians nursing plague victims in ancient Rome down to the present-day Christian hospitals and medical facilities around the world, Christians have been outstanding for going to places where the diseases have been most virulent in order to nurse the sick, bury the dead, and provide whatever aid possible.

Saint Faustina demonstrated this sort of courageous service to the poor and those in need. She also received it when she was suffering from the tuberculosis that ultimately took her life. In all things, she teaches us that we must pray, “Jesus, I trust in You.” We must refuse to give way to fear. We must abide in the virtues, repent when we fall, and turn again and again to our loving Lord as we transmit that love and mercy to those around us.

Jesus told St. Faustina (and, through her, tells us all):

I demand from you deeds of mercy, which are to arise out of love for Me. You are to show mercy to your neighbors always and everywhere. You must not shrink from this or try to excuse or absolve yourself from it (Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska, 742).

As the world faces this global epidemic, let us turn with trust to the Divine Mercy. Let us commit to prayer — especially the Chaplet before the Image of Divine Mercy — for all those afflicted with this disease, for all those providing care for them, and for everyone tasked with responding to this crisis. Let us be virtuous in our response to this outbreak, prudently discerning how best to fulfill the duties of our state in life with temperance, fortitude, and justice. Let us remember our faith, drawing on the hope it gives us, and thereby be free to truly love God and neighbor with Christian charity.

As St. John Paul II said, “Be not afraid.” Pray for me, that I may practice what I preach. I’ll pray for you.
Remember, Easter isn't just a single day of celebration—it's an entire season where we celebrate our new life in Christ. Just like Christmas, Easter is celebrated for an extended period of time—50 days to be exact!

The feast proper is celebrated for the full octave (Easter Sunday through Easter Saturday). Then we enter Eastertide, the longer Easter season which ends on Pentecost Sunday. During this fifty days of Easter we relive the amazing events of the Glorious Mysteries of the Holy Rosary—the Resurrection, Ascension, and the coming of the Holy Spirit on Mary and the Apostles at Pentecost.

Some thoughts to guide us daily during this Easter Season:
Now more than ever is the time for us, who follow Jesus, to recall that “love casts out fear.”
Now is the time to remember that we are called to love our neighbors as ourselves and to care for one another.
Now is the time to show the world the power of Christ’s love even when we are not able to worship together, or be together.
“The Church is not a building; the Church is the Body of Christ with all members linked to one another. The Church is ‘a people brought into unity from the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit’. We are the Church together!”

Let us be the Church in our communities, our homes.
Our communities, now more than ever, need the witness of the people of God.
There is work to be done. The work of sharing the hope of the Good News in the midst of anxiety, worry and fear is now.
Remember, a phone call, a note of encouragement, a zoom gathering for prayer, a quiet space for reflection, in many and countless ways we can share the Church.
Easter is here Alleluia…

1. SPREAD THE EASTER CHEER

Sustain the Easter mood for you and others too! Try sending out Easter greeting by mail or email throughout this Eastertide. This is an easy way to remind friends that Easter is an entire season, not just a single day! You can also spread the Easter cheer with phone calls and other positive email messages. Check to see how friends and neighbors are doing and let them know they are in your thoughts and prayers.

You can also bring back the traditional Catholic greeting at Easter: when you call or talk to family and friends, say, "He is Risen!" The reply greeting is, "He is risen, indeed!"

2. HAVE REMINDERS OF EASTER AT HOME

Spring and the Resurrection go together! If you can, bring in cut flowers, Move a crucifix or picture to remind you and family of the Resurrection of Jesus and a sign of hope in our own resurrection.

3. INCREASE YOUR DEVOTION

The fifty days between Easter Sunday and Pentecost Sunday is a great time to pray for the Holy Spirit to pour into your own life and those of family and friends, just as it did on Mary and the Apostles. The beautiful, simple prayers of the Novena to the Holy Spirit (http://www.scborromeo.org/prayers/novenahs.pdf) are a great way to foster a devotion specifically to the Holy Spirit this Easter season.

The second Sunday of Easter is Divine Mercy Sunday, therefore this devotion is tied in a special way to the Easter season. There are many ways to make the Devine Mercy devotion a part of your life. In addition to the
Divine Mercy feast day, there is also the Divine Mercy image that you can reflect on the Devine Mercy Chaplet (https://oll.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Divine-Mercy-Chaplet-Handout.pdf) which you can pray daily (it only takes 5 minutes!), and the Diary of Faustina Kowalski (https://www.divinemercy.org/elements-of-divinemercy/diary/86-diary-of-st-faustina.html) (the visionary who brought this great devotion to the world), which you can read during Eastertide.

Reflect on and share favorite quotes from Saints:

Padre Pio “Pray, hope, and don't worry. Worry is useless. God is merciful and will hear your prayer.”
St Teresa of Avila: “Let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you. All things pass away. God, never changes. Patience obtains all things. He who has God finds he lacks nothing: God alone suffices.

**Previous Messages**

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The Sea Shanty now offers free local delivery! Call us at (805) 995-3272

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**For Morro Bay Residents:**

Do you know a senior or other vulnerable neighbor who is sheltering in place who may need assistance? Please encourage them to sign up for the City's R.U.O.K. (Are you okay) program. This voluntary program will provide daily wellness checks to vulnerable folks sheltering in their homes and help connect those in need to food. For folks to sign up for this service they can visit https://forms.gle/LZUdPCpQVq6LtG8p9 or call the City of Morro Bay Fire Department at (805) 772-6242. Thank you.

Robert Fuller Davis

Morro Bay California

**BUSINESSES THAT MAY REMAIN OPEN**

- Agriculture, livestock supply
- Airlines
- Alarm and security companies
- Animal boarding, pet supply
- Auto repair and service
- Banks and other financial services
- Blood donation centers
- Businesses that supply essential businesses with necessary supplies or items required to work from home.
- Cemeteries, funeral parlor and internment services
- Childcare facilities (with limitations)
- Community gardens
Construction, architecture, engineering services (all active construction in progress and all work related to emergency housing, care facilities, and essential infrastructure may continue)

Convenience stores
Distribution and delivery of essential consumer or business goods
Domestic violence shelters
Drug stores
Dry cleaners and laundromats
Electricians
Essential government services
Exterminators
Farmer’s markets, produce stands
Farming (all agriculture) and related support industries
Food cultivation and related support services
Food and goods delivery services
Food banks and other organizations that provide assistance to the disadvantaged
Food preparation facilities
Gas stations
Grocery stores
Hardware stores
Home-based care
Home repair and maintenance (landscaping, pool service, repairs) Homeless service providers, shelters Hospitals, clinics, and medical offices Hotels and motels, bed and breakfasts, VRBO.
Mailing and shipping services Manufacturing of essential consumer and business goods
Media, internet technology support Online wholesale or retail sales Pharmacies
Plumbers, HVAC services Professional services (legal, insurance, title, accounting, mortgage brokers, payroll, and others as needed to assist with legally mandated or essential services)
Property management
Public transit, busses, rideshare, taxis,
Uber, Lyft
Railroads
Recyclers, including electronics recyclers
Re-entry or rehabilitation facilities
Residential facilities
Restaurants* (*See Limited Services List)
Schools - public and private (distance, learning, administration, and food only)
Solid waste haulers
Storage facilities
Trucking and moving services Utility providers - water, power, gas, cable, internet, cell service Veterinarians