When motivation fails

Cultivating discipline in faith and cardio

About a year ago, I started running.

You have to understand, I have hated running my whole life. (Bless me, Father—I hated it so much I used to fib about aching knees to get out of it.)

My original motivation came from my doctor, who said I needed to do more cardio, and after some analysis of my options, running seemed the best fit for me (read: it was absolutely free).

The problem, though, is when motivation runs out. The mental effort, shortness of breath, and physical exertion aren’t inspirational enough to counter the voice saying “you should really do this,” and those are the moments that offer the chance to cultivate “discipline.”

Last week, St. Paul wrote that while “discipline seems a cause not for joy but for pain” (hello, exercise!) “yet later it brings the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who are trained by it.” It’s a training process, not a punishment. Then, in the Gospel, Jesus says that many “will not be strong enough” to enter the narrow gate—they didn’t cultivate discipline.

When school and work bog us down, family schedules seem never-ending, and we’re feeling unmotivated to pray, go to Mass, or serve, remember—when you “strive to enter the narrow gate,” you’ll be grateful for this strength and training. No more “drooping hands and weak knees” for us—the Lord has given us these opportunities to cultivate discipline. Take them!
Important note from the Finance Council

Your Finance Committee continuously monitors the overall status of Santa Maria’s financial status, including weekly collections.

We have noticed a significant decline in these collections (both what is collected in the baskets as well as electronic payments via Faith Direct). Starting around mid-June, our weekly collections have declined by about 22%.

This does not seem to be a summer-related problem. As you can imagine, such a steep decline in our weekly collections will have a significant negative impact on our financials if it continues.

If you are using our Faith Direct automatic payment system we ask that you check your credit card or bank account to make sure that payments are still being made (note: if your credit card number has changed recently, please call Mirna Wong at the parish office to give her your new card number).

If you put checks or cash in the baskets at mass, we ask that you continue to give on a regular basis. Please consider automating these donations by using our Faith Direct system.

Good news, bad news, good news.

The good news is that we are back in the church now.

The bad news is that the wrong color carpet was ordered by the supplier!

The OTHER good news is that the supplier is installing a temporary carpet throughout the entire church at his expense until the new carpet can be manufactured and installed. So don’t be surprised, shocked, or disappointed when you see the carpet—IT IS TEMPORARY!

We should have known things were going too smoothly! We plan. God laughs!

Jesus is back!

Okay, he never left. But Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament (Adoration) followed by Benediction begins again in September! The Chapel will be open for Adoration from noon-3pm on Tuesdays starting on September 3 (the day after Labor Day).

Mark your calendars for Back to Church Sunday!

Join over 13,000 churches nationwide for National Back to Church Sunday, September 15. We’ll be blessing the Faith Formation and Youth Ministry parents and catechists, starting off our ministry year with the first Youth Mass at 5pm, and hosting a BBQ potluck after the 10:30am Mass!

Can you help us with the potluck? Sign up at tinyurl.com/BTCS-SM2019 to help!

We need young adults!

Have you recently been Confirmed, graduated from High School and are sticking
around, or just moved back to Orinda after college?

Tony and Megan would love to have you minister at the twice-monthly Youth Masses!

Contact tnillette@smparish.org if you’re interested!

**Classes are starting!**

K-5 Faith Formation begins Monday, September 9; Middle School Youth Group has its 8th annual Piñata KICK-Off Wednesday, September 11; and Confirmation hosts its first Youth Mass and Confirmation sessions Sunday, September 15!

**Faith Formation—not just for kids.**

Did you know we have adult Faith Sharing Groups that meet to learn and discuss the Sunday readings, current church events, the history of the Catholic Church, and more?

Email Tony at tnillette@smparish.org for more info!

**"Unplanned" movie showing at Santa Maria**

Join us 7pm, September 25 for a showing of the controversial, eye-opening, truth-telling movie Unplanned, by a woman who was once the abortion industry’s most passionate advocate.

“No matter which side of the fence you’re on, no one will leave this film unmoved by Abby’s journey,” their website claims.

Email Anne Fuller for details at annefuller@sbcglobal.net.

**Parishioners toured Malta Health Clinic, Pope Francis Legal Clinic**

Last month, parishioners from Social Justice and the Knights of Columbus visited the two clinics at the Oakland Chancery: the Malta Clinic providing health care services to uninsured and low-income patients, no matter their religious background or legal status, and the Pope Francis Legal Clinic which provides pro bono legal services to anyone.

More photos, details of their visit, and background on these two clinics can be found on the Social Justice page of our website.

**Golf for good.**

It’s time to have fun and help those less fortunate in our community! The Santa Maria Knights of Columbus are hosting their annual Charity Golf Tournament Monday, September 23 at the Moraga Country Club. The entry fee is $200, which includes 18 holes of golf, beverages, carts, and a delicious dinner after.

Contact Steve Berg at berg548@comcast.net for more information or to register!

**Weekly Food Collection**

1st/2nd Weekends: St. Cornelius School
3rd/4th Weekends: St. Peter
We encourage you to register in the parish so that you can receive regular communication via both email and regular mail. Registration information is essential for responding to request to be sponsors/godparents and other ministries.

Please register at www.santamariaorinda.com/registration
Middle School Youth Group’s

8TH ANNUAL piñata KICK-off

Register for MSYG at tinyurl.com/YMRocks19-20

SEPT 11
7:00pm
in the youth room