Embracing Holy Week with the Church: but outside it?

Gathering for prayer and worship, remotely

There’s no mistaking this is going to be a strange Holy Week and Easter Sunday – many of you have said as much to our Pastoral Team as we work our way through calling all of our parishioners (hang tight if we haven’t reached you yet – we’ve got over 800 calls still to make!).

While it certainly is different participating in the Mass in front of your smart TV or your computer screen rather than taking your usual pew at Santa Maria, take a moment and think – are you really outside the Church? Sure, you may not be in the church building, but what did Jesus say about Church, with a capital C?

This is an opportunity to remind ourselves of one simple, beautiful truth: the Church isn’t Santa Maria. YOU are the Church. WE are the Church. Jesus said, “Where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them” (Mt 18:20). He didn’t say, “Where two or three gather in person,” or “Where two or three gather at the synagogue,” or add any other exclusionary phrase, he simply said “gather.”

This week and likely into the future, we may be gathering from different homes, different cities, and different devices, but we’re still gathering for prayer, together, centering ourselves around an encounter with the living Christ, whose resurrection is just around the corner.

Still feel outside the community? Give us a call – we’d love to connect!
**Holy Week Schedule**

Although we can’t gather in person as a community, we’re offering multiple opportunities to gather either virtually or otherwise for prayer:

**Holy Thursday**
Mass of the Lord’s Supper
7:30pm Livestreamed Mass

**Good Friday**
Liturgy of the Lord’s Passion
2:00pm Livestreamed Mass

**Easter Vigil**
8:00pm Livestreamed Mass

**Easter Sunday**
7:30am Livestreamed Mass
8:30am Parking Lot Benediction
10:30am Parking Lot Benediction

**How to attend Livestreamed Masses**
Open your internet and go to www.youtube.com. Type in “Megan Arteaga” in the search bar, and click on her picture. This will take you to the page with all available videos, including upcoming livestreams.

**Parking Lot Benediction**
On Easter Sunday, all are welcome to join us for a brief, social-distanced prayer service with the Blessed Sacrament. Park your cars in the lot above the church, facing the Mary statue, and remain in them as we pray and receive a blessing!

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**Communications**

**Are you in “Constant Contact” with us?**

Are you receiving our parish emails? At least once a week, usually more as we shelter in place, our Pastoral Team members send out email messages including information about upcoming Masses online, reflections from Father George, and other announcements.

If you’re not receiving these emails, please call or email Mirna in the Parish Office: 925-254-2426 or mirnawong@smparish.org. Thank you!

**How “in heaven’s name” can I watch Santa Maria’s Masses on my computer??**

Have you heard that we’ve been offering Masses online, but can’t figure out how to find them or get them to work?

Here are two options for you:

1. **Visit the Parish Website**
   Go to www.santamariaorinda.com, and on the homepage there will be a link to that week’s Mass. Click and watch away!

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**Parish Life**

**We’re open for prayer!**

Although we’re unable to celebrate public Masses or provide hospitality in person in the Parish Office, our church remains open 9am-5pm every day. Feel free to stop by for a few moments of private prayer and to sit with the Blessed Sacrament. All we ask is that you continue to maintain a generous social distance if someone else happens to be present when you are.

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**Do we need updating?**

Please take a look at the
Prayer Intentions list on page 3. Is there anyone missing you would like to add? Is there someone on there who has been healed or who has passed away? Help us keep this list updated for those who faithfully pray for our intentions each week!

We’re only a phone call away!

While our county is under the order to shelter in place, our Pastoral Team is still hard at work running our parish as best we can.

We’re still available by phone (925-254-2426) and email. Please let us know if you have any suggestions or recommendations for us as we journey through this time of sheltering in place together.

Reaching out to the sick and homebound

While we’re unable to visit the sick and homebound at this time, Sister Magdalene and our Pastoral Care Ministers will be reaching out by phone to those who regularly receive visits.

Treasure

March 2020

Faith Direct: $19,739.90
Weekly Plate: Unavailable at time of publishing
Second Collections:
Faith Formation: $200.00
Catholic Relief Services: $10,628.50

Would you like to add yourself or someone else to the prayer list? Please contact Mirna in the Parish Office at 925-254-2426 or at mirnawong@smparish.org.
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