Can you ever trust the instruction manual?

The parallels between building slightly unparallel walls and building real life

Pictured: Megan and her dad start assembling the gazebo structure that will help make our outdoor Masses more impermeable to rain, hail, and locusts.

I spent most of this past week outdoors (in the sun and, sometimes, smoke) improving our Parking Lot Mass setting with my dad and Father George. Here are a few life lessons that were reinforced by this project:

**Don't listen to anyone who tells you how long something "should" take.**
The instruction manual said installation should take approximately 3-4 hours. HA, HA, HA - it was more like 3-4 days! Don't let others tell you how long it "should" take you to learn something new, figure something out, or work through grief. Just keep taking it one hour at a time, inviting the Lord into each hour, and you'll get there.

**When you can get away without measuring, do it.**
The manual gave us footprint measurements incompatible with the Pythagorean theorem - i.e., impossible. So, instead of measuring where the bases should be anchored, we assembled a section, made sure the legs were plumb beneath it, and used that to mark the distance between the bases.
This rule also goes for knitting socks, cutting lumber, and cooking. (Didn't Grandma's vaguely unmeasured recipes always taste the best, after all?)

**Don't assume that everyone follows the rules you follow - no matter how obvious you think they are.**
I didn't realize I'd missed a throwaway line about installing part Z until we got to the end of the instruction manual and the Zs were still sitting in the box. Apparently in the gazebo manual world, the alphabet goes "h, i, z, j." It took a little ingenuity and a lot of Dremel work to fix that error. In real life, sometimes we cruise through things assuming that everyone

---

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
August 30, 2020
is on the same page - but that's often not the case. We use the same word to mean different things, interpret laws different ways, or take drastically different paths to address the same problems. Sometimes this is fine (like when you say "milk" and someone else says "melk") but sometimes this is not (like when you say life is sacred, and someone else doesn't think life includes unborn life, sick life, or poor life).

The invisible work is sometimes the most important. We took an entire day and a half to ensure that, when the wind blew or someone leaned on it, the gazebo wouldn't fall over or rip the plywood off the deck. It was work that wasn't visible or beautiful, but it needed to be done before anything else. Many times, the unglamorous and unrecognized work is the most important - staying up late with a sick child, preparing for a project someone else will get credit for, or helping a younger sibling with their homework. These are the behind-the-scenes actions that develop our character and give us opportunities to grow as loving people mirroring God.

In all honesty, this project was a lot of fun - mishaps included. I hope you enjoy it as much as we enjoyed building it!

Megan Arteaga
Youth Minister

Editor's Note: Thank you to those who responded about their own experience of our Masses after last week's article! It's great to hear your feedback and know we're in this together.

Weekend Worship Opportunities

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
August 30, 2020

8:30am | Mass in the Parking Lot; also Livestreamed (available all day)
10:30am | Mass in the Parking Lot
Download and print the Worship Aid here

Turn on your car's Accessory Mode and tune in at 87.9 KGOD!

Join us this Sunday in the Parking Lot at 8:30am or 10:30am for Mass! We are blessed to be able to celebrate Masses publicly with you again.

If you are unable to physically join us, we will continue to livestream the 8:30am Mass for you to participate from home.

We're getting creative for our fall programming!
Sister Mary Margaret and Megan have been working hard preparing "hybrid"
versions of their formation programs, which will include both in-person instruction (socially-distant on the property or via Zoom) and online content.

Much of our current K-5 curriculum is already available online from the publishers, so Sister will send information on how it will be utilized at home by families.

**MSYG** (6th-8th grade) will have "Bring-Back Haversacks" to pick up after an assigned Mass with materials for upcoming at-home meetings, which they'll "BRING BACK" to their once-monthly in-person meetings to be refilled for the next pickup.

**Confirmation** will also be a hybrid of once-monthly socially-distant or Zoom meetings focused on small group discussion, which will be augmented by online content on an **achievement-based online game platform** called Ascent, developed by Megan and her Youth Minister friend Jacob at St. Bonaventure (commercial coming next week!).

We're hoping registration opens soon - thanks for your patience and understanding as we navigate these new waters!

---

**We're finally celebrating First Eucharist!**

Santa Maria will celebrate First Eucharist Liturgies for the children in our Faith Formation program!

After months of waiting, our children will be spread out to receive their First Eucharist at the 8:30am Mass on September 20, 2020, and at both the 8:30am and 10:30am Masses on September 27, 2020.

Kindly keep them and their parents in your prayers!

**Confirmation Mass has been scheduled!**

We are so happy to announce that the Sacrament of Confirmation will be celebrated at the Church of Santa Maria for our teens the evening of Sunday, October 4!

The Confirmation Mass will be at either 5pm or 6pm, depending on the sunset. As we get closer to the date and see what the angle of the sun looks like, we'll be able to narrow down the time.

Keep our teens and their sponsors in your prayers!

**Santa Maria honored to host**
priestly ordinations
The priestly ordination of the Diocese of Oakland's 3 seminarians will take place on Saturday, September 5 on our church-level plaza.

Deacon Mac Lingo, Deacon Peter Lawongkerd, and Salesian Deacon Vien Nguyen will be ordained to the Priesthood by Bishop Barber, witnessed by a limited number of priest, friends, and family who will take their socially-distant seats spread throughout the church-level plaza and parking lot.

Please keep these men in your prayers as they continue in these last few weeks of preparation!

Tuesday Gardening
Join us each Tuesday, 8am to 11am at the Rectory level parking lot with your gloves and mask and we will give you a task.

To get involved, contact Janet Riley or Gail Gabriel.

How can I keep supporting Santa Maria?
Thank you so much for thinking about us and continuing to support our parish during these trying times! We are greatly appreciative of any help you can provide.

You may drop your collection in the offertory baskets at Parking Lot Masses, mail a check to the Parish Office (40 Santa Maria Way, Orinda CA 94563), or make a one-time donation using Faith Direct, our eGiving service, to make your offering.

If you would like, you can also sign up for recurring giving through Faith Direct to continue to give to the Sunday plate even though you can't come to the church to drop it in the basket as usual. Again, we thank you for your planning and your generosity!

Pastoral Team
Reverend George Mockel
Pastor
gmockel@smparish.org

Deacon Rey Encarnacion
dcn.rey@smparish.org x310

Prayer Intentions
For the Sick:
Liduvina Acosta, Sonny Acosta, Mary Beth Alban, Joan Artmann, Shoaib Aryan, Kristy Blackey-Taylor, Kathie Brady, Cara Bradbury, Miguel Briseno, Maria Carmen, Fred Chavarria, Jan Coe, Grace Parent DeBoot, Rich Delany, Mary

Deacon James Pearce
dcnpearce@smparish.org x301

Mirna Wong
Administrative Assistant and Bookkeeper
mirnawong@smparish.org x301

Tony Millette
Liturgy and Music
tmillette@smparish.org

Sister Mary Margaret Phan, LHC
Faith Formation (Grades K-5)
srmmphan@smparish.org x306

Megan Arteaga
Youth Ministry (Grades 6-12), Communications, and CYO
megan@smparish.org x308

Sister Mary Magdalene Nguyen, LHC
Pastoral Care of the Sick
sistermn@smparish.org x309

Dodge, Lorna Elliott, Anne Emery, Nora Enriquez, Emidio Fonseca, Liam Foley, Patricia Fox, Bridget Gallagher, Noreen Gillham, Jennifer Gray, Doris Hale, Florentino Ibabao, Brian Kelly, Mason Kelly, Aileen Kelly, Michael Kelly, Jim Kennedy, Jerry Kirk, Lawrence Knapp, Carol Koupus, Judy Lazarus, Herman Lee, Rose Mary McPhee, Robert Nick, Arsi Orihuella, Deacon Jim Pearce, Kathleen Pelz, Ann Powell, Mark Ricci, Ben Richey, Brian Riley, Patrick Sheehy, Jean Wells, Faye Young

Would you like to add yourself or someone else to the prayer list? Please ensure you have their permission, then contact Megan in the Parish Office at 925-254-2426 or at megan@smparish.org.

Mass Intentions
Most Mass Intentions during Shelter in Place orders are either postponed or celebrated privately. Mirna is contacting all those who requested the currently scheduled intentions.

To request a Mass Intention, please contact Mirna in the Parish Office.

Support Santa Maria
Like us on Facebook