



Church of Santa Maria

40 Santa Maria Way | Orinda CA 94563 | 925-254-2426 | www.SantaMariaOrinda.com

On muddied waters

What happens after the rain - in the watershed and in our lives

Pictured: A trail saturated with water gets trenched and widened by unsuspecting trailgoers



2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
January 17, 2021

Last Sunday after Mass, I decided to go for a trail run at Briones. After the rain, I wanted to see if any of my favorite ferns were popping up again. I didn't think about what that life-giving rain would do to my usual trails, though.

I was enjoying it all until I got to a muddy hill. I thought, "if I keep my center of gravity low and balance through the skidding, I could probably get down." "But what will you do when you need to get back up?" my reasonable half asked. The reasonable half won, and I rather dejectedly returned to the paved trail for the rest of my run - ferns unseen.

Turns out I made the best decision not just for myself, but also for the trail itself, and the whole watershed. I later read that one of the most damaging times for trails is when they're saturated with water. People hike down the middle and carve out a trench, which the next hikers eschew for the sides of the trail, which further widens it. That widening leads to significant soil erosion, washed off the side of the hills and into local streams, which changes the sediment content of the streams, which in turn affects the habitat of riparian life, which supports the entire ecosystem you enjoy while out on the trail. Not to mention that once a trail is trenched and widened like this, it costs thousands (sometimes hundreds of thousands) of dollars to fix over many years - assuming it even can be fixed (source: [an actual professional trail engineer](#)).

Let's transition here to "real life." We usually like to think of ourselves as living in an isolated bubble (especially during a pandemic!), where our actions affect our lives and nobody else's. For the trail, that means

avoiding muddy feet with no consequences elsewhere. In reality, that's not the case at all. Nothing is isolated, and everything has effects. Choosing veggies over a steak means thousands of gallons of water saved in raising that beef. Wearing your mask correctly (yes, even if you've been vaccinated) gives peace of mind and a feeling of solidarity with all those around you. Attending Mass supports the rest of the attending community and bolsters everyone's sense of identity and belonging. Choosing kindness in commenting on social media makes every future reader's day better.

The truth is we don't see all the effects of our actions, and we probably don't want to - but the Lord does. Some believe there will be a day when He reveals all the consequences of choices we've made or not made, and then fully understand the value of His mercy and forgiveness. In the meantime, we can all pray for the grace to do what we can, choose as best we will, and avoid making muddy trails worse - metaphorically or not.

Megan Arteaga
Youth Ministry Coordinator

Weekend Worship Opportunities

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday, January 10, 2021

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 with you.

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

Drive-Thru Food Drive PLUS Warm Clothing Collection: Jan 24

Social Justice invites you to kick off 2021 with our monthly food drive! The **food collection** this month will go to [Oakland Catholic Worker](#). (You may also donate checks made payable to "Oakland Catholic Worker" or food gift cards.)



The **warm clothing** (i.e., new/gently-used, clean coats, jackets, sweaters, hats, gloves, and socks) is for the [Dorothy Day House](#) in Berkeley. Blankets are also appreciated!

Can you volunteer to help staff the collections in the Park and Ride Lot?

We need people from 8-8:30, 8:30-9:30, 10:30-11:30, and 11:30-noon.

For more details, visit the [Social Justice Announcements webpage!](#)

If you can help out or if you have more questions, contact [Janet Riley](#) or [Gail Gabriel!](#)

Two more nights of the Virtual Novena to the Santo Niño!

Our Fil-Am community is once again bringing us a beautiful opportunity for devotion to the Santo Niño, or Child Jesus, with 9 days of prayer - they're hosting a Virtual Novena!

Every day between January 8 and January 16, there will be a chance to gather on Zoom to pray the Novena. Come to one or come to all!

January 15: 7:30pm

January 16: 5:00pm

[Click here to join the Zoom Meeting at the above times and dates!](#)



December Collection Report

Our Finance Council has determined our monthly goal for the Sunday Plate. Here is our total for the month of December:

Goal: \$42,000.00

Total: \$54,598.90

Surplus for December: \$12,598.90

Christmas: \$60,478.00



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!

Mass Intentions

Sunday, Jan 17

8:30am: Francis J. Marshall (D)

10:30am: Parishioners of Santa Maria, Living and Deceased

Mass Intentions are a beautiful way of praying for your intentions or for the souls of our deceased loved ones. To request a Mass Intention, please contact Mirna in the Parish Office.

Pastoral Team

Reverend George Mockel

Pastor

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Deacon Rey Encarnacion

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Deacon Louie Hotop, SJ

x301

Deacon James Pearce

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Administrative Assistant and Bookkeeper

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Tony Millette

Liturgy and Music

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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

Prayer Intentions

For the Sick:

Sonny Acosta, Mary Beth Alban, Joan Artmann, Shoaib Aryan, Kristy Blackey-Taylor, Kathie Brady, Miguel Briseno, Maria Carmen, Fred Chavaria, Grace Parent DeBoot, Rich Delany, Lorna Elliott, Anne Emery, Nora Enriquez, Al Ferreira, Emidio Fonseca, Liam Foley, Patricia Fox, Bridget Gallagher, Noreen Gillham, Jennifer Gray, Florentino Ibabao, Brian Kelly, Mason Kelly, Aileen Kelly, Michael Kelly, Jim Kennedy, Jerry Kirk, Lawrence Knapp, Carol Koupus, Judy Lazarus, Patricia McGuire, Rose Mary McPhee, Robert Nick, Arsi Orihuella, Deacon Jim Pearce, Kathleen Pelz, Ann Powell, Mark Ricci, Ben Richey, Brian Riley, Patrick Sheehy, Scott Treter, 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.

Sister Mary Magdalene Nguyen, LHC

Pastoral Care of the Sick

sisternm@smparish.org x309

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