
ST. ELIZABETH - ST. BRIGID PARISH

March 30, 2020 – April 5, 2020

5th Sunday of Lent

Dear friends in Christ,

We are all familiar with the words from Sacred Scripture: “This is the day the Lord has made, Let us be glad and rejoice in it” (Psalm 118:24). As we all know, there is never a reason for us as Catholics, as followers of Christ, to not be glad and rejoice! We always have more blessings than not, even in the midst of the current medical and financial crisis. Coronavirus must become our opportunity to show ourselves, God and others who we are and why we count our blessings.

From a spiritual point of view, we might say that the Coronavirus has become our Lent this year which may also be spoken of as our cross. The cross, of course, is meaningless without the resurrection. But we as Catholics, as followers of Christ, also believe in the resurrection. In fact, we not only believe but we look forward to celebrating the great mystery of Jesus Christ risen from the dead. As followers, what Christ does, we do ... where Christ goes, we go!

It is within this context that we must view and even live with the Coronavirus. We must rise to the occasion by being people of charity, thinking not only of ourselves and our households but being attentive to our friends and neighbors as well.

One of the matters that I want to bring to your attention is your parish stewardship. To say it another way, our parish collections are down significantly. Please take time to mail your donation to the parish when you find a moment and/or e-Giving. This is essential if we are going to keep two churches up and running once the Coronavirus is behind us. PLEASE don't forget

Secondly, and more importantly, the only way we are going to put this whole matter of the Coronavirus behind us is by maintaining a regular daily prayer life. We are really in a “wartime” mode. All public Sunday and weekday Masses for the faithful have been cancelled with the exception of funerals, weddings and small private baptisms (as long as they follow the “crowd size” guidelines mandated by civil authorities). This will be re-evaluated by Bishop Checchio before the weekend of Palm Sunday. All other parish events and gatherings are likewise cancelled including Stations of the Cross. As always, emergency Anointing of the Sick and Confessions can be arranged by calling the parish office. PLEASE NOTE: During these troubling times I am praying the Mass everyday on your behalf. For your part, I ask that you make a Spiritual Communion at home so as to “mystically” unite ourselves to one another and to the official prayer of the Church. As well, I recommend the “Coronavirus: Prayer for Courage” written by Father Hillier.

The Holy Rosary is also recommended for those who enjoy a Marian spirituality or the Divine Mercy Chaplet.

If circumstances warrant it, I will ask you to donate some of your extra items so they might be shared with those who have nothing. Such items may include: rubber gloves, disposable masks, disinfectant wipes and related items.

As we move along together in this national crisis, please remember the words printed on every currency: “In God We Trust”. We trust that Almighty God will lead us through this and comfort us along the way.

In Christ Jesus Our Lord,
Rev. Msgr. Edward C. Puleo, Pastor

FROM BISHOP CHECCHIO

TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF PUBLIC MASSES

All public Masses throughout the Diocese of Metuchen will be temporarily suspended and to resume no earlier than April 3, 2020, when the situation will be re-evaluated as circumstances unfold. Despite the suspension of public Masses, a private Mass will be celebrated daily at 7 AM in the Cathedral of Saint Francis of Assisi and can be viewed at that time on their website: www.stfranciscathedral.org. Televised or online celebrations of the Mass and other religious programming are available for use of the faithful on several television channels.

MASS INTENTIONS

(†) Deceased (L) Living

The following Mass Intentions to be said by Msgr. Puleo and Fr. Hillier

Monday, March 30 ~

Sean Dolan †

Tuesday, March 31 ~

Harold E. & Marie Jones †

Wednesday, April 1 ~

Antonina & Mario Sottile †

Thursday, April 2 ~ St. Francis of Paola

Special Intentions of Linda Marciano L

Friday, April 3 ~

Kathleen Murphy †

Saturday, April 4 ~ St. Isadore of Seville

Daniel Noll †

Rose & Bill Lynn †

Sunday, April 5 ~ Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

Patrick N. Mc Crory †

Robert Aromando, Jr. †

Dr. Angelo Bergamo †

For the Parishioners

For those names enrolled in the Mass Guild of St.

Elizabeth-St. Brigid

PRAYERS

An Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus,
I believe that You
are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.
I love You above all things,
and I desire to receive You into my soul.
Since I cannot at this moment
receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace You as if You were already there
and unite myself wholly to You.
Never permit me to be separated from You.
Amen.

Coronavirus - Prayer for Courage

God our Loving Father, comforter of the afflicted,
watch over us always, but most especially at this,
our time of urgent need.

With heavy hearts we cry out to you ...
We ask that you heal those among us
weighed down with the coronavirus.

Inspire with your holy wisdom —
our health professionals: scientists, doctors,
and all medical personnel.
Show special attention to our government officials:
nationally, internationally, and local.
Make them instruments of your love
as they seek to serve your people.

Lord and Giver of Life, trusting in your mercy,
we recall the prayer of your prophet Jeremiah:
*"heal me, O Lord and I shall be healed;
save me, and I shall be saved"* (17:14).

When fearful, grant us courage.
When uncertain, strengthen us.
In our sorrow, comfort us.

With hearts overflowing with love for you,
we surrender ourselves to your providential care,
and ask only that you consider our sincere request
to remain steadfast in your love — charitable to all
and faithful first and foremost in doing
your holy will.

Through Christ Our Lord, Amen

© Reverend John G. Hillier, March 10, 2020

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:

*Those who are ill in our parish: Ruth Stahl, Maria Nucci,
Mary Hanlon, Barbara Ryan, Carl Messina, Margharete
Saunders, Maureen McCrory, Jan Larusso and Annie Carver
and all those effected by Covid 19*

To add a name please call the Parish Office.

For the recently deceased:

PRAY FOR OUR MILITARY



Remember in your prayers the members of
our Armed Services, especially Matthew
Blejwas USMA West Point, grandson of
Walter and Kathryn Blejwas, John F. Stahl of
the US Army, son, Joseph Stahl of the Navy, grandson, and
Eric Hummel of the US Army nephew of Ruth Stahl; Jordan
Weaver of the Air Force, husband of Christy (LaPointe)
Weaver; John Walker and Nicholas Furtzaig of the Air
Force, grandsons of Bernard & Joan O'Reilly; Christopher
Jibilian, US Navy pilot and Matthew Jibilian US Navy Seal,
grand-nephews of Charlie & Pina Jibilian

LENTEN INSTRUCTIONS—2020

So that the Church of Metuchen may be spiritually one in a
common observance of Lent, the following days of fast and
abstinence are to be observed by all Catholics of the Diocese
who enjoy the blessings of good health:

~*The days of fast and abstinence are*

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

~*All other Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence.*

~ From the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy
Thursday until the celebration of the Easter Vigil on the
evening of Holy Saturday, the Easter fast should be observed
so that, with uplifted and welcoming hearts, we may be ready
to celebrate the joys of the Resurrection.

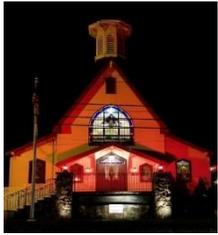
The obligation to fast applies only to Catholics between the
ages of 18 and 59. To fast in the Catholic tradition means to
limit oneself to one full meal during the day so as to experience
hunger. The obligation of abstinence affects all Catholics who
have reached the age of 14. Abstinence in the Catholic
tradition means to abstain from meat and all meat products.

The obligation of fast and abstinence, as a whole, is a
serious obligation. While failure to observe any penitential day
in itself may not be considered serious, the failure to observe
any penitential days at all, or a substantial number of them
without good cause, would be considered a grave
matter. Those unable to abstain for a valid reason on any
given Friday of Lent are asked to perform some other
penitential act, or to abstain on another day.

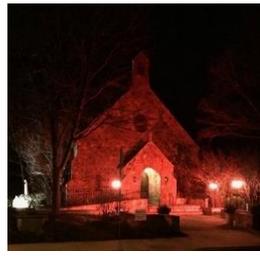
SUBSCRIBE TO MARRIAGE NEWS



Published on the internet by the Family Life
Office of the U.S. Bishops, it is free and you can
select the topics of most interest to you: dating,
engagement, marriage preparation, married Life,
family Life and parenting. <http://www.foryourmarriage.org>.



St. Elizabeth Church & St. Brigid Church are lit in red as a passionate plea to prayer for those



affected by Covid 19 and those who are working tirelessly to heal and protect the lives we all hold so precious.

Msgr. Puleo

“WALKING WITH MOMS IN NEED” INITIATIVE

New Jersey Safe Haven Law - Under the New Jersey Safe Haven Infant Protection Act a person may give up an unwanted infant anonymously. The purpose of Safe Haven is to protect unwanted babies from being hurt or killed from unsafe abandonment. A distressed parent who is unable to care for an infant can give up custody of a baby less than 30 days old safely, legally and anonymously. All that is required is that the baby be brought to any hospital emergency room, police station, fire station, ambulance, first aid, and rescue squads in New Jersey that are staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. As long as the child shows no signs of intentional abuse, no name or other information is required. The parent can call the Safe Haven Hotline - 1-877-839-2339 - and get the address and directions for any hospital emergency room, police station, fire station, ambulance, first aid, and rescue squad in the state.

24 HOUR PRAYER LINE

Our Diocesan Office for Persons with Disabilities has a 24-hour prayer line for those who desire prayer for special needs. If you, a family member or friend would like to be remembered in prayer for a temporary or permanent illness, please call us and leave a detailed message at (732) 765-6431 or send an email to our office: catholicswithdisabilities@gmail.com



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Vacation Bible School in partnership with Our Lady of Perpetual Help for children ages 4 through those entering sixth grade will be from July 13 – 17, 9 AM – 12:15 PM at the School of St. Elizabeth. The theme is about

Jesus's power pulls us through. We will explore our scripture and traditions, have fun in arts and science, play games, exercise and enjoy great snacks. Registration forms are on online as follows:

Campers (age 4 to entering grade 6) –

<https://membership.faithdirect.net/events/details/4107>

Junior Volunteer Registration (entering grades 7-12) –

<https://membership.faithdirect.net/events/details/4114>

For more information contact Sr. Monique at 908-234-1524.

2020 BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL STEPPING FORWARD IN FAITH: GRACE IN ACTION

Our goal is for every family to participate. Every gift, no matter the size, is important and greatly appreciated. Together we are working to become kindling that is set aflame by the Holy Spirit, allowing God's love and power to burn more brightly here in the Diocese of Metuchen. Thank you for actively participating in this mission by your financial support.

To date, the Development Office has received pledges totaling \$ 82,660 and payments totaling \$ 71,910 from 94 parishioners. This represents 35.9% of our \$ 230,000 goal.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES COUNSELING & WELLNESS

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Metuchen is offering Counseling and Wellness Services. If you or someone you know needs counseling or is impacted by addiction, we can help. Individual and family therapy for children and adults is available. For an appointment, call (800) 655-9491.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES DONATIONS

Please help support our local programs by donating Clothing, Shoes, and Household items in our donation bin located in the parking lot. Your continued generosity is appreciated. If you have any questions or have a larger pick up, please call the toll free number 1-877-343-3651.

OPEN YOUR HEART AND HOME TO A FOSTER CHILD

Catholic Charities, Diocese of Metuchen is seeking loving families to foster children of all ages, who have been abused, neglected or have had multiple out of home placements, through its Treatment Family Homes Program, contracted by New Jersey's Department of Children and Families.

The goal for the children in this program is to leave foster care and achieve permanency through reunification with their families, adoption, or independent living.

Catholic Charities provides these resilient children with individual and family therapy, assistance with educational and medical needs, and independent living skills to help them reach their full potential.

Applicants must have adequate space for a child and complete a home study which includes background checks, references, interviews, and a home inspection.

All Catholic Charities licensed families receive initial and ongoing specialized training, 24-hour emergency access to staff, respite services, monthly reimbursement for the child's expenses and support from experienced families. For more information about the program, please visit www.ccdom.org or contact Miguelina Nunez at 866-247-HOME (4663) or at mnunez@ccdom.org.



JOSEPH RATZINGER ON FASTING FROM
THE EUCHARIST

“A fasting of this kind—and of course it would have to be open to the Church’s guidance and not arbitrary—could lead to a deepening of personal relationship with the Lord in the sacrament,” Ratzinger wrote in ***Behold the Pierced One***. In ***Behold the Pierced One*** (pp.97-98), Joseph Ratzinger (Benedict XVI) wrote:

“When Augustine sensed his death approaching, he ‘excommunicated’ himself and undertook public penance. In his last days he manifested his solidarity with the public sinners who seek for pardon and grace through the renunciation of communion. He wanted to meet his Lord in the humility of those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for him who is the Righteous and Merciful One. Against the background of his sermons and writings, which are a magnificent portrayal of the mystery of the Church as communion with the Body of Christ, and as the Body of Christ itself, built up by the Eucharist, this is a profoundly arresting gesture. The more I think of it, the more it moves me to reflection. Do we not often take the reception of the Blessed Sacrament too lightly? Might not this kind of spiritual fasting be of service, or even necessary, to deepen and renew our relationship to the Body of Christ?”

“The ancient Church had a highly expressive practice of this kind. Since apostolic times, no doubt, the fast from the Eucharist on Good Friday was a part of the Church’s spirituality of communion. This renunciation of communion on one of the most sacred days of the Church’s year was a particularly profound way of sharing in the Lord’s Passion; it was the Bride’s mourning for the lost Bridegroom (cf. Mk 2:20). Today too, I think, fasting from the Eucharist, really taken seriously and entered into, could be most meaningful on carefully considered occasions, such as days of penance—and why not reintroduce the practice on Good Friday? It would be particularly appropriate at Masses where there is a vast congregation, making it impossible to provide for a dignified distribution of the sacrament; in such cases the renunciation of the sacrament could in fact express more reverence and love than a reception which does not do justice to the immense significance of what is taking place.

“A fasting of this kind—and of course it would have to be open to the Church’s guidance and not arbitrary—could lead to a deepening of personal relationship with the Lord in the sacrament. It could also be an act of solidarity with all those who yearn for the sacrament but cannot receive it. It seems to me that the problem of the divorced and remarried, as well as that of intercommunion (e.g., in

mixed marriages), would be far less acute against the background of voluntary spiritual fasting, which would visibly express the fact that we all need that ‘healing of love’ which the Lord performed in the ultimate loneliness of the Cross. Naturally, I am not suggesting a return to a kind of Jansenism: fasting presupposes normal eating, both in spiritual and biological life. But from time to time we do need a medicine to stop us from falling into mere routine which lacks all spiritual dimension. Sometimes we need hunger, physical and spiritual hunger, if we are to come fresh to the Lord’s gifts and understand the suffering of our hungering brothers. Both spiritual and physical hunger can be a vehicle of love.”

And, in his 2007 Post-Synodal Apostolic exhortation ***Sacramentum Caritatis***, Benedict XVI offered this beautiful reflection on the relationship between the Eucharist, suffering, and compassion:

“The bread I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world” (*Jn* 6:51). In these words the Lord reveals the true meaning of the gift of his life for all people. These words also reveal his deep compassion for every man and woman. The Gospels frequently speak of Jesus’ feelings towards others, especially the suffering and sinners (cf. *Mt* 20:34; *Mk* 6:34; *Lk* 19:41). Through a profoundly human sensibility he expresses God’s saving will for all people – that they may have true life. Each celebration of the Eucharist makes sacramentally present the gift that the crucified Lord made of his life, for us and for the whole world. In the Eucharist Jesus also makes us witnesses of God’s compassion towards all our brothers and sisters. The Eucharistic mystery thus gives rise to a service of charity towards neighbor, which “consists in the very fact that, in God and with God, I love even the person whom I do not like or even know. This can only take place on the basis of an intimate encounter with God, an encounter which has become a communion of will, affecting even my feelings. Then I learn to look on this other person not simply with my eyes and my feelings, but from the perspective of Jesus Christ.” (240) In all those I meet, I recognize brothers or sisters for whom the Lord gave his life, loving them “to the end” (*Jn* 13:1). Our communities, when they celebrate the Eucharist, must become ever more conscious that the sacrifice of Christ is for all, and that the Eucharist thus compels all who believe in him to become “bread that is broken” for others, and to work for the building of a more just and fraternal world. Keeping in mind the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, we need to realize that Christ continues today to exhort his disciples to become personally engaged: “You yourselves, give them something to eat” (*Mt* 14:16). Each of us is truly called, together with Jesus, to be bread broken for the life of the world. (par. 88)”
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