



# WEEKLY Diocesan Update



## Photo of the Week:

**Proclaiming Easter!** – Our churches may be closed but that doesn't stop many from proclaiming day and night that Christ is Risen! Fr. Bill Kraft (Holy Cross Parish in Linden) posted on Facebook: "Happy Easter. I'd like to see all the steps filled with flowers from your garden because as we know our Church, like the tomb, is empty. Our faith is alive, and we are called to share! Blessings". The word must have gotten around because flowers have been piling up all week!

## Office of the Bishop:

**Easter Message** – [Click here](#) to view Bishop Cotta's 2020 Easter Message.

**Bishop Cotta's Monthly Reflection** – Please [click here](#) to read Bishop Cotta's Monthly Reflection for the month of April.

**Catholic Rural Life** – The Catholic Rural blessing this month is the [Blessing of the Seeds and Rain](#). More about Catholic Rural Life can be found [here](#).

## Catholic Relief Services:

**CRS –Rice Bowl** – Our Catholic community in the United States does something amazing each Lent. We come together to practice prayer, fasting and almsgiving—and by doing so we help lift families and communities out of poverty. Families may turn in their Lenten gifts in the following ways:

- 1.) Send directly to your parish, or send directly to Catholic Relief Services online by using the CRS website in [English](#) or [Spanish](#).
- 2.) To give by phone: 1-877-435-7277. Be sure to tell the operator that the gift is for CRS Rice Bowl.
- 3.) To give by mail: Please write "CRS Rice Bowl" in the memo line of your check and mail it to Catholic Relief Services, CRS Rice Bowl, P.O. Box 17090, Baltimore, Maryland 21297-0303.

## Prayer & Reflection

### ***"Prayers of the People for Easter in a Pandemic"***

by: Deb Conrad  
April 12, 2020

In this season of resurrection, we offer our prayers for the world and for one another, saying:

*As Jesus is risen...LET US RISE ALSO.*

Our whole world is facing the specter of death in the form of a pandemic that threatens us all. In communities hardest hit, in poor nations who must compete with richer ones for the means of life, and in countries where pre-existing conditions have not disappeared: where war, terrorism and violence, economic and political upheaval were already part of daily life and have become overwhelming. As we consider what life may look like beyond the threat, we pray for wisdom and equity, for the willingness to rise to the moment.

*As Jesus is risen...LET US RISE ALSO.*

Reminded again of the vulnerabilities faced by people of color, by people incarcerated, by people without a nation in which to be at home, by people without family, by people of a certain age, and by those whose essential work puts them on the front lines, we pray for compassion and the willingness see all others as our neighbors.

*As Jesus is risen...LET US RISE ALSO.*

As our planet has begun to breathe and its heartbeat has become audible once again, we are reminded that we can live in new ways that also let the earth live. Keeping in mind *all* the inhabitants of the planet, we pray for humility and a willingness to share.

*As Jesus is risen...LET US RISE ALSO.*

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## Catholic Social Teaching:

**Census 2020** – April 1, 2020 was Census Day. It was not a deadline date. Everyone is encouraged to continue to register. Our diocese is one of the most diverse in the nation and also is home to a community of people who are traditionally among the hardest to count. Participating in the census is required by law and critical in determining our community funding, congressional representation, and more. [Find Census 2020 information here.](#)

**Advocacy** – With unemployment soaring, the COVID-19 outbreak is taking a staggering toll on workers. Food banks are ramping up services to meet the rising demand, even as donations, volunteers and supplies become more limited. Housing, prisoners' rights, immigration and detention, nursing facility policies are all in the headlines. In response, one way to ensure that our Catholic voices are heard is to join the Catholic Legislative Network and encourage our parishioners to do the same. More information on the Network, and how to join, can be found at <https://www.catholic.org/join-the-network> or by visiting the [Catholic Social Teaching](#) tab on the diocesan website.

## Development & Stewardship:

**Bishop's Ministry Appeal Update** – Thank You for your continued efforts on behalf of this year's Bishop's Ministry Appeal! We are working to deposit all gifts as quickly as possible and complete gift processing for each parish.

If the Development Office can be of any assistance to your parish, run gift reports, provide additional information, or assist with online giving setup, please contact us! We are working remotely, with limited staffing and in-office hours, and available by phone or email.

The next BMA Parish Progress Report will be sent the week of April 20.

If you have any questions or need any other information, please contact Stacy Erickson at [serickson@stocktondiocese.org](mailto:serickson@stocktondiocese.org) or (209) 546-7648 or Martha McCoy at [mmccoy@stocktondiocese.org](mailto:mmccoy@stocktondiocese.org) or (209) 546-7646

**Bishop's Awards Celebration: Letting Your Faith Shine Through** – Save the Date – Saturday, October 3, 2020 and check your email for event updates!

Nominations are now being accepted for those individuals and organizations who demonstrate commitment and support to our communities - perhaps someone who has let their "Faith Shine Through" during this unprecedented time, when faith is needed more than ever! Nominees may be individuals, married couples, or organizations. You may submit more than one nominee. To submit Honoree Nomination(s), please download and complete the [Nomination Form](#). Please return Nomination form(s) to Bishop's Awards Celebration - Office of Development & Stewardship by May 15, 2020. Please contact Stacy Erickson at [serickson@stocktondiocese.org](mailto:serickson@stocktondiocese.org) or (209) 546-7648 for additional information or if you have any questions – thank you!

**iGiveCatholic Update: GivingTuesdayNow and iGiveCatholicTogether**

On March 26, 2020, the [#iGiveCatholic](#) website was reactivated in support of the Church during this time of crisis. Now more than ever, giving back is critical for our parishes, which are missing weekly donations, do not have their own online giving set up, or need a second online giving option. It is also critical for our Catholic schools and non-profits, many of which have had

*(PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE  
FOR EASTER IN A PANDEMIC –  
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As Covid-19 continues to make its way through our communities, we pray for those afflicted, for those battling on multiple fronts, for those for whom life has always been a struggle to keep breathing, for family members who cannot extend the care they so desperately wish to share. We pray for willingness to hope, to believe in life.

*As Jesus is risen...LET US RISE ALSO.*

As we count ourselves among the sad and disillusioned, the bored and terrified, and those who feel that they have lost their way in a meaningless world, we pray for strength to get through these days.

*As Jesus is risen...LET US RISE ALSO.*

Stay with us, God. Wherever your word is spoken, wherever bread is broken, may your name be blessed, and may we find comfort and peace. AMEN.

***A Prayer for our Priests as they exercise their ministry during this time of COVID-19***

by: Archdiocese of Dublin  
Office of Evangelization  
and Ecumenism

Eternal God,  
Be with our priests this day as they seek to minister to your people. May you be a guiding and protective presence with them as they bring the consolation and hope of Your word and the grace and nourishment of Eucharist to those entrusted into their care.

Grant them the strength of mind and body, keep them safe to do your will, And give them the courage and peace to face each day with trust and confidence in You.

Into your hands O God, we commend them; fill them with your grace and healing. Amen.

to cancel their fundraising events or are responding to COVID-19 and need additional funding. This relief initiative for online giving, **#iGiveCatholic Together**, signifies our coming together as Catholics to provide urgently-needed resources to these life-giving ministries.

Our friends at #GivingTuesday are also responding to the unprecedented need caused by the Coronavirus. [#GivingTuesdayNow](#) is a global day of giving and unity that will take place on Tuesday, May 5, 2020. *This giving day will not replace this year's regularly scheduled #GivingTuesday on December 1.* However, it does offer an opportunity for people around the world to come together right now and use the power of generosity to connect with the nonprofits that impact their lives.

If you would like additional information or if you have any questions about iGiveCatholic Together or GivingTuesdayNow, please contact Stacy Erickson at [serickson@stocktondiocese.org](mailto:serickson@stocktondiocese.org) or (209) 546-7648 or Martha McCoy at [mmccoy@stocktondiocese.org](mailto:mmccoy@stocktondiocese.org) or (209) 546-7646.

## Life and Dignity Ministry

**Rachel's Vineyard Retreat.** – October 2-4, 2020 is the new date for the previously scheduled May retreat in Danville, CA. For retreat details call our direct number at 209-465-5433 or [see our website](#). Rachel's Vineyard is a safe place to renew, rebuild and redeem hearts broken by abortion. The weekend offers a supportive, and non-judgmental environment to transform the pain of the past into love and hope. You don't have to wait until the weekend to begin your healing journey. Reach out by email [kfuentes@stocktondiocese.org](mailto:kfuentes@stocktondiocese.org) or call 209-465-5433 for support and encouragement.

## Marriage and Family Life Ministry

**Caring for the Whole Person** – (formerly Whole Person Care) is an initiative of the California Bishops and Catholic healthcare systems that supports parishes, community services, and families in ministering to those who are seriously ill or at the end of life. The vision of *Caring for the Whole Person* (CWP) is a continuum of quality and comprehensive (physical, emotional, spiritual) care for all, enhanced through partnerships of health care professionals and institutions with community-based movements.

We are moving forward with this initiative in the Diocese of Stockton. Training for those who will train parish leaders is scheduled to begin in May. Click here for [more information](#).

## Safe Environment

In the month of May we look at how the Safe Environment Office is taking an active role in contributing to a safe environment for all. Please [click here](#) to see this month's edition.

## Vicar for Priests

**Annual Priests' Retreat** – Our annual retreat has been RESCHEDULED for September 21-25, 2020 at San Damiano Retreat Center in Danville with Fr. Chris Cartwright, S.J., as the retreat master. Priests are asked to hold that week open in their calendars. Additionally, the dates for the 2021 Priests' Retreat are confirmed for May 3-7, 2021. Please calendar this date.

## Prayer & Reflection continued

### ***"Covid-19: A Prayer of Solidarity"***

For all who have contracted coronavirus, we pray for care and healing.

For those who are particularly vulnerable, we pray for safety and protection.

For all who experience fear or anxiety, we pray for peace of mind and spirit.

For affected families who are facing difficult decisions between food on the table or public safety, we pray for policies that recognize their plight.

For those who do not have adequate health insurance, we pray that no family will face financial burdens alone.

For those who are afraid to access care due to immigration status, we pray for recognition of the God-given dignity of all.

For our brothers and sisters around the world, we pray for shared solidarity.

For public officials and decisionmakers, we pray for wisdom and guidance.

Father, during this time may your Church be a sign of hope, comfort and love to all.

Grant peace.  
Grant comfort.  
Grant healing.  
Be with us, Lord.

Amen.

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## Coronavirus

Find the latest information, diocesan directives and resources on our diocesan [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Prevention](#) webpage.