

Dear People of Divine Savior and our Cherished Visitors:

For the second of three Sundays we have a lengthy Gospel reading from the Gospel of John. As was the case with last week's Gospel, the one for this weekend presents a couple of themes. Upon reflection on them, we can come to know Jesus more intimately and follow Him more faithfully. The passage begins with three words beginning with the letter "s": saw, spat, smeared. The first can be considered the most important, especially with what is going on in our world. Jesus saw. He did not look the other way, cross the street away from the man blind from birth, or go past him with His head bent down to avoid eye contact.

We pray during this Lenten Season to develop the habit of making eye contact with one another. A smile, a nod or a wave that can do so much to help us connect with each other while still keeping appropriate distance because of the virus. We pray that, like Jesus, we can engage in these actions with the clearest possible awareness of how we are children of light so that we can dispel the darkness of separation and loneliness. As our second reading states, we allow the light to help us do our best in making known the goodness and kindness of our Divine Savior present within us.

The next "s" word is spat. While many would consider this a vulgar and disgusting gesture, Jesus' action display how He wants to connect with the man born blind in a very personal way. We see that Jesus uses His saliva to make clay dressing. We are reminded of how in the second chapter of Genesis, God our Creator formed the first human being using the dirt of the earth. Jesus is truly recreating this individual to be free of what impedes him so that He can live the type of life God intends for all of us. We pray that our interactions with each other will more and more be marked by our sharing something precious of ourselves, especially a sense of who we are in the eyes of God.

Next, Jesus smears this clay on the man's eyes. As we read in this Gospel, the Pharisees considered this man to be born in sin. According to the rule of the culture, one made oneself unclean by touching anyone with an ailment such as blindness. We see how Jesus has no hesitation in touching this man. Jesus focused on the person's identity as one of God's beloved people, not on anything else, certainly not giving any consideration to sin. Pope Francis continues to encourage all of us to avoid judging one another but to realize that we are all people of God's family, ones whom we welcome warmly and do our best to make feel at home. The person we welcome may have issues or even be quite the one to violate the principal commandments of God, but that is not our concern. Our interest is to provide a caring environment so that, if there is sin, a person will have a caring environment in which to accept and resolve any issue.

Through it all, the man born blind comes to know Jesus through a gradual process. We realize that we have much to learn about Jesus. Let us spend extra time during this Lenten season, allowing ourselves, like the blind did, to be touched by the healing presence of our Divine Savior.

~Fr. Roman

Parish Announcements

**The week of
March 16th—March 22nd**

All Parish activities have been cancelled until further notice. Updates will be posted on the parish website. If you need assistance with anything (like shopping), please call the parish office (916) 989-7400.

PARISH RESPONSE TO CORONAVIRUS

Holy Mass

At the direction of Bishop Soto, the public celebration of Mass has been suspended until further notice. However, Divine Savior will offer an opportunity for you to view Mass on our Parish website and Parish Facebook.

Sunday Mass - The fourth Sunday of Lent, March 22nd Mass will be livestreamed on Facebook at 9:00am . A pre-recording of Sunday Mass will be available for viewing beginning at 4:00pm Saturday, March 21st on our parish Facebook, website, and YouTube (Divine Savior Orangevale).

Daily Mass will be livestreamed on Facebook at 9:00am. A recording of the Mass will be available for viewing at 10:00am on our Parish Website, our Parish Facebook page and our YouTube Channel (Divine Savior Orangevale)

We are blessed to have the ability to virtually attend Mass, but also an opportunity to reach out to friends or neighbors through Facebook as we are viewing. Email elaine@divinesavior.com if you would like any help accessing this information.

Our Church and Parish Office will be closed until further notice, however staff will answer the phone Monday through Friday from 8:00am until 4:00pm.

For **funerals, confession, or anointing of the sick**, please call the parish office.

CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

This Sunday we have a special collection for Catholic Relief Services. Please visit the parish website and go to **GIVING** to make an online contribution, choose Catholic Relief Services and put in the amount you want to contribute. Catholic Relief services is often the first on scene to help when tragedies occur. For more information go to www.usccb.org/crscollection.



Crab Feed News

How sad we all are that we were not able to participate in this exciting and nurturing community event! Many, many thanks to all who bought tickets for this fundraiser. Given that the duration of the coronavirus is quite uncertain, we will keep you informed as we find out more information. Hoping that a Crab Feed in the next month or so is still possible, we ask that everyone hold onto your tickets. For those who want to be refunded for your tickets, we will need to figure out a way by which this can take place, given that the parish office needs to be closed according to Bishop Soto and the health officials.

Many thanks as well to the many wonderful people who donated items for the Silent Auction and Raffle as well as any and every donation that was extended. We will keep all of these items safe and hope that soon we can use them for either a crab feed or some other major social event.

Many thanks as well for the wonderful parishioners who spent much time preparing for the Crab Feed. From preparing items for the raffle and silent auction to the setting of tables with all the various bowls, plates and plastic ware, the gym looked quite fashionable. We are truly blessed with many parishioners who continue to offer time, talent and treasure so that our parish community can thrive and that we can come together to enjoy each other's company.

~Fr. Roman Mueller, S.D.S.

Coronavirus Prayer By Kerry Weber

Jesus Christ, you traveled through towns and villages "curing every disease and illness." At your command, the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love. Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care. Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbors from helping one another. Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders. Jesus Christ, healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow. Be with those who have died from the virus. May they be at rest with you in your eternal peace. Be with the families of those who are sick or have died. As they worry and grieve, defend them from illness and despair. May they know your peace. Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process. May they know your protection and peace. Be with the leaders of all nations. Give them the foresight to act with charity and true concern for the well-being of the people they are meant to serve. Give them the wisdom to invest in long-term solutions that will help prepare for or prevent future outbreaks. May they know your peace, as they work together to achieve it on earth. Whether we are home or abroad, surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or only a few, Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare. In place of our anxiety, give us your peace. Jesus Christ, heal us.



I want to acknowledge that a parish family donated \$5,000 to the parish this past week realizing that our parish will likely see a

downturn in contributions as the coronavirus continues to cause havoc with our regular routines. This family recognizes that, like all households, the parish continues to have bills to pay.

While writing this, another family from the parish mailed in their weekly contribution saying that "even though we received dispensation of the obligation to attend Sunday Mass, we know that the parish still has light bills and heat bills to pay."

While that is an important concern for sure, we all want to keep in mind that regardless of the effects of the coronavirus, we continue to give thanks to God for all the blessings we enjoy. We pray that we can manage those blessings to make it through this current crisis, however long it takes.

How to Continue Giving

For those who wish to continue making contributions to the parish but would prefer to avoid writing a check and spending money on postage, please go to our parish website <http://divinesavior.com>. Scroll down to the section titled "Important Information" and in the right hand column scroll to, "**Online Giving**" and select an option. Please notice that we have added a new option, "**text giving**".

This is a unique time when we are asked to keep a certain physical distance from one another. But in the Spirit of our Divine Savior let us do our best to remain connected in the various ways available to us. Many thanks for all the ways we are supporting one another. May God bless us abundantly as we continue to do our best given the unique reality we face.