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St. Joseph Catholic Church
Located at 311 Oaks St., Marlin, Texas 76661
Sacred Heart Catholic Church
Located at 213 North 6th Street, Lott, Texas 76656
May 3, 2020 - Fourth Sunday of Easter





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Catholic Social Teaching Corner
May 2-3, Fourth Sunday of Easter

On this Sunday, our Risen Lord is recognized as the good shepherd who protects us and cares for us. Being the recipients of God's care, we need to realize that Peter's words to the people of Jerusalem are addressed to us as well – we too must reform and embrace a new way of living if we wish to be a part of Christ's fold. That new way of life is to bring God's care and mercy to the poor, the vulnerable, the forgotten and abandoned through our relationships with them.

Sunday May 3 2020
Acts 2:14, 36-41
Psalms 23:1-6
1 Peter 2:20-25
John 10:1-10

Monday May 4
Acts 11:1-18
Psalms 42:2-3; 43:3-4
John 10:11-18

Tuesday May 5
Acts 11:19-26
Psalms 87:1-7
John 10:22-30

Wednesday May 6
Acts 12:24-13:5
Psalms 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8
John 12:44-50

Thursday May 7
Acts 13:13-25
Psalms 89:2-3, 21-22, 25, 27
John 13:16-20

Friday May 8
Acts 13:26-33
Psalms 2:6-11
John 14:1-6

Saturday May 9
Acts 13:44-52
Psalms 98:1-4
John 14:7-14

Most Reverend Joe S. Vasquez, Bishop of Austin
Reverend Gregory A. McLaughlin, Pastor
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Christ
is
Risen!



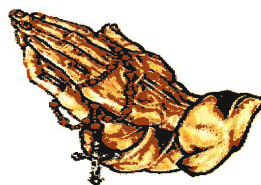
PLEASE BE SAFE, STAY HOME and PRAY!

Mass Intentions: Unless upon special request by the donor, all mass intentions have been deferred until masses can resume publicly in the Churches.

Fr. Gregory will continue to hear confessions at the rectory office at St. Joseph, Marlin from 5 – 7 PM on Mondays on the following dates: May 4, May 11 and May 25. [This will take us through the Easter Season]. Everyone should make confession at least once during the Lent / Easter Season. **Please call the office or rectory for an appointment in accordance with Bishop Joe Vasquez's letter dated April 3, 2020 .**

Let Us Pray for Our Sick and Homebound

Lupe Morales, Violet Piper, Joan Duhr, Indalecio Benitez, Rosemary Clark, Roslyn Schneider, Nancy Conners, Rosemary Clark, Alma Lena Roessler, Pete and Susanna Moya, Eva Ann Greger (infant), Gracie Jane Weibel (infant), John Delgado. Six month inclusion. Please call the Office at 803-8888 for inclusion or removal from list.



Happy Birthday! St. Joseph May Birthdays: Mariela Beceria, Felicitas Benitez, Giselle Cubilla, Sandra Cubilla, Annette Dingrando, David Espinoza, Justin Hay, Faustino Juarez, Lupe Morales, Mariah Salas, Jacob Tusa, Gene Wilkey, Ashley Yezak, Nellie Yezak. Call the office for inclusion.

Happy Birthday! Sacred Heart May Birthdays: Rosemary Clark, Scott Conners, Joyce Entrop. Call the office for inclusion.

Baptism Instructors: St. Joseph – Servando Gorostieta. Contact the office for preparation 3 months in advance. Pongase en contacto con la oficina para la preparacion de 3 meses de antelacion

Weddings - Register by calling the office at least 1 year prior to the planned date

Quinceanera Preparation – Call the office at least 1 year prior to the planned date

Music Directors: St. Joseph – Sue Yezak, Servando Gorostieta

Sacred Heart - Sue Yezak

Shut Ins: St. Joseph – Patricia Dingrando, Rosa Ramirez

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA): St. Joseph - Guillermo & Rose Ann Espinoza

Sacred Heart - Colleen Lawon

Religious Education (CCE) Directors : St. Joseph - Guillermo & Rose Ann Espinoza

Sacred Heart - Colleen Lawson

Marriage Recognition - 10 years and over (5 year increment) Contact the Office

Altar Server Instructors: St. Joseph - Rose Ann Espinoza

Sacred Heart - Colleen Lawson

Prison Ministry: Deacon Jack Murphy, St. Monica, Cameron. Contact the office to volunteer

Church/Housekeeping: St. Joseph - Rosa Ramirez. Contact the office to volunteer

Lector & Cup Minister Coordinators: St. Joseph - contact the office to volunteer

Sacred Heart - Joyce Timm

Usher & Collector Coordinators: St. Joseph - contact the office to volunteer

Sacred Heart - Edward Sliva

For Updates or Corrections, please contact the office at 254 803-8888

Bible Timeline Study will be held online beginning May 4

The Bible Timeline Study will begin online on May 4. Anyone interested in studying the Bible, understanding the story in the Bible, how to read it more meaningfully and connect more prayerfully to Our Lord through the Bible is invited to join the group. It will be six weeks long. There is a fee of \$50, which covers viewing the online videos and the cost of the workbook, the timeline chart and bookmark. (Scholarships are available.) Discussion groups will be online two times a week on Mondays and Thursdays at 7 p.m. or 2 p.m. For more information, email sandy@happenney.com or call (254) 722-4220.

CCCTX bulletin announcements May 2-3

Be sure to stay up to date with Catholic Charities of Central Texas on social media: Facebook – Catholic Charities of Central Texas (CCCTX); Instagram – @catholiccharitiesctx; and Twitter – @CCcentraltexas. You can also come join us in a kNOw Poverty Hour, an interactive opportunity to see our mission in action and learn how you can help to eliminate poverty in Central Texas. For upcoming dates and to register, visit www.ccctx.org/events.

During the shut-down due to the Corona Virus, I have had some time to meditate, reflect, remember, as well as write letters to parishioners, prepare sermons, create sacramental tests and overviews. One experience that I have had over and over again is with people who question the value of faith. Most of them had been raised in liberal schools and been involved in contemporary society which seems to be hedonistic or pursuing pleasure for its own sake and narcissistic or self-centered. Many of them can't stand boredom because, according to them, the world owes them a living, must entertain them to keep them interested, and similar notions. Many adults have never graduated from this immature way of looking at life. When the pandemic hit, "stay in place" orders came from government officials and non-essential businesses including restaurants, movie theatres, bars, and much of the entertainment industry were ordered closed. This caused a crisis for many of these people. They were forced to recognize that those venues that they considered "essential" for their well-being, their existence, their survival, were not considered essential by grownups. This probably caused a panic reaction and the longevity of the shutdown caused many people to have to rethink their values. Perhaps this pandemic was used by God to be an invitation to conversion. Real conversion doesn't occur without a sense that something is missing. Something isn't right with my life. The question is what did we do and what are we doing with the time we have been given to reflect on our lives? Our readings tell us how people responded in the post-resurrection time prior to the Ascension and gives us a clue to our response.

In our first reading from Acts of the Apostles, on the day of Pentecost, the birthday of the Church, Peter stuns the Israelites and the known world with a radical statement that is meant to stop them in their tracks. "Let the whole house of Israel know beyond any doubt that God has made both Lord and Messiah this Jesus *whom you crucified.*" Like the hedonists and narcissists of today, Peter forces them to take a look at their actions. They didn't like his message because it went counter their beliefs, their self-assured ideology. Instead of being open to listening to the prophets, re-examining the traditions of the faith in the way that Jesus invited them to see it, they went after him. They used the same tactics that many politicians use today. They took things he said out of context. They used a ruse to accuse Jesus within their own tradition but used the civil government to put him to death. Peter's message stunned them. They asked Peter, "What are we to do, brothers?" Peter's response, "You must *reform* your lives. and be baptized." Peter connects baptism with how we live our lives. This interim time after the resurrection and prior to the Ascension is what we are living in now. With the pandemic, we don't have our normal entertainment available. We don't have our normal freedoms. We don't even have our normal worship and sacraments. Perhaps it is time to ask ourselves, "What have I taken for granted? How many times have I used excuses not to pray, to go to Mass, to go to confession? How many times have I used my own entertainment as a way to escape God?" We are forced to re-examine our priorities, what we believe is necessary and perhaps even to recognize that we have been neglecting our souls.

In our second reading from the first letter of Peter, we are confronted with one of the differences between modern culture that many are so immersed in and the kingdom of God. Modern culture sees suffering as something to be avoided. We have a pill for everything. We have all sorts of diets and fads that help us slim down without the need to suffer through exercising. We have tools to attack those who give us any message that that we don't want to listen to. Look at college campuses that need "safe spaces" not to hear any message that doesn't agree with one's own philosophy. We even have the PC or Politically Correct Police to watch over any words which might cause an offense to someone else even if it is scientifically inaccurate such as the 27 genders. Against all this, Peter tells us, "If you put up with suffering for doing right, this is *acceptable in God's eyes*." He points out our example. Christ suffered even though, "He did not wrong; no deceit was found in his mouth. When he was insulted, he returned no insult. When he was made to suffer, he did not counter with threats." When I accept that suffering has value when it is connected with the kingdom, then I don't have to fear suffering. The ability to accept suffering based on a value which I must defend, empowers me. When I see how politicians are vicious toward one another, how Hollywood is trying to tell everyone else what they must believe to fit in, what college campuses are doing to our history and our ideas, then I believe we must say something without attacking. Jesus is our model. He didn't fight back with deceit or insults or attacks or threats. He fought back with his life, with his example, with his words of love and hope. Yet his witness will live on. During this time of shut down, it might be a good idea to take stock of what our actions say about our beliefs. Do we need our movies to

open before our churches? Which will we take advantage of first? Do we need our restaurants open before we need our ability to receive eucharist to come back? Do we need our counseling sessions to return before we need our sacrament of Penance to be available?

In our gospel from John, we hear about real leadership. And we are called to ask, "Who have we allowed to be our shepherd?" Jesus uses the image of the gate of a sheepfold. "The one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep...the sheep hears his voice as he calls his own by name and leads them out...the sheep follow him because they recognize his voice." The Shepherd is one who preaches a message that corresponds with reality, but not just an earthly reality, a reality that goes beyond this life. We are the sheep, but we have a decision to make. Who will we allow to be our shepherd? Whom do we believe speaks the truth? There are a lot of false shepherds. They tell you things that will make you feel good. They tell you things you want to hear. They tell you things that never challenge you to be the best person you can be. They will never speak of suffering, or the Cross, or living our lives in service. Notice the warning Jesus gives, "I am the sheepgate. All who came before me were thieves and marauders whom the sheep did not heed... Whoever enters through me will be safe." IF we choose a shepherd who will only make us feel good in this life, are we choosing the real shepherd? These are the people who will lead us into false security even among religious people. But they don't tell the truth with their lives. Who is our shepherd? I am...

Fraternally in Christ, *Fr. Gregory A. McLaughlin, Pastor*

Cuarto Domingo De Pascua

Durante el cierre debido al Coronavirus, he tenido tiempo para meditar, reflexionar, recordar y escribir cartas a los feligreses, preparar sermones, crear pruebas sacramentales y vistas generales. Una experiencia que he tenido una y otra vez es con personas que cuestionan el valor de la fe. La mayoría de ellos se habían criado en escuelas liberales y se habían involucrado en la sociedad contemporánea que parece ser hedonista o buscar placer por sí misma y narcisista o egocéntrica. Muchos de ellos no pueden soportar el aburrimiento porque, según ellos, el mundo les debe la vida, deben entretenerlos para mantenerlos interesados, y nociones similares. Muchos adultos nunca se han graduado de esta forma inmadura de ver la vida. Cuando se produjo la pandemia, las órdenes de "permanecer en casa" provinieron de funcionarios gubernamentales y negocios no esenciales, como restaurantes, cines, bares y gran parte de la industria del entretenimiento, fueron ordenados a cerrar. Esto generó una crisis para muchas de estas personas. Se vieron obligados a reconocer que aquellos lugares que consideraban "esenciales" para su bienestar, su existencia, su supervivencia, no eran considerados esenciales por los adultos. Esto probablemente causó una reacción de pánico y la longitud del cierre provocó que muchas personas tuvieran que repensar sus valores. Quizás esta pandemia fue utilizada por Dios para ser una invitación a la conversión. La conversión real no ocurre sin la sensación de que falta algo. Algo no está bien en mi vida. La pregunta es ¿qué hicimos y qué estamos haciendo con el tiempo que se nos ha dado para reflexionar sobre nuestras vidas?

Nuestras lecturas nos dicen cómo la gente respondió en el tiempo posterior a la resurrección antes de la Ascensión y nos da una pista de nuestra respuesta.

En nuestra primera lectura de Hechos de los Apóstoles, el día de Pentecostés, el cumpleaños de la Iglesia, Pedro aturde a los israelitas y al mundo conocido con una declaración radical que pretende detenerlos en seco. "Sepa todo Israel con absoluta certeza, que Dios ha constituido Señor y Mesías al mismo Jesús, a quien ustedes han crucificado". Al igual que los hedonistas y narcisistas de hoy, Pedro los obliga a echar un vistazo a sus acciones. No les gustó su mensaje porque iba en contra de sus creencias, su ideología segura de sí misma. En lugar de estar abiertos a escuchar a los profetas, reexaminar las tradiciones de la fe en la forma en que Jesús los invitó a verla, fueron tras él. Usaron las mismas tácticas que muchos políticos usan hoy. Tomaron las cosas que dijo fuera de contexto. Usaron una artimaña para acusar a Jesús dentro de su propia tradición, pero usaron el gobierno civil para matarlo. El mensaje de Pedro los sorprendió. Le preguntaron a Pedro: "¿Qué tenemos que hacer, hermanos?" La respuesta de Pedro: "Arrepiéntanse y bautícense". Pedro conecta el bautismo con cómo vivimos nuestras vidas. Este tiempo intermedio después de la resurrección y antes de la Ascensión es en lo que estamos viviendo ahora. Con la pandemia, no tenemos nuestro entretenimiento normal disponible. No tenemos nuestras libertades normales. Ni siquiera tenemos nuestra adoración y sacramentos normales. Quizás es hora de preguntarnos: "¿Qué he dado por sentado? ¿Cuántas veces he usado excusas para no rezar, ir a misa, confesarme? ¿Cuántas veces he usado mi propio entretenimiento como

una forma de escapar de Dios? Nos vemos obligados a reexaminar nuestras prioridades, lo que creemos que es necesario y tal vez incluso a reconocer que hemos estado descuidando nuestras almas.

En nuestra segunda lectura de la primera carta de Pedro, nos enfrentamos a una de las diferencias entre la cultura moderna en la que muchos están tan inmersos y en el reino de Dios. La cultura moderna ve el sufrimiento como algo que debe evitarse. Tenemos una pastilla para todo. Tenemos todo tipo de dietas y modas que nos ayudan a adelgazar sin la necesidad de sufrir durante el ejercicio. Tenemos herramientas para atacar a aquellos que nos dan algún mensaje que no queremos escuchar. Miren los campus universitarios que necesitan "espacios seguros" para no escuchar ningún mensaje que no esté de acuerdo con la filosofía propia. Incluso tenemos la PC o la Policía Políticamente Correcta para vigilar cualquier palabra que pueda ofender a otra persona, incluso si es científicamente inexacta, como los 27 géneros. Contra todo esto, Pedro nos dice: "Si soportas el sufrimiento por hacer lo correcto, esto es aceptable a los ojos de Dios". Él señala nuestro ejemplo. Cristo sufrió, aunque: "No se equivocó; no se encontró engaño en su boca. Cuando fue insultado, no devolvió ningún insulto. Cuando lo obligaron a sufrir, no respondió con amenazas". Cuando acepto que el sufrimiento tiene valor cuando está conectado con el reino, entonces no tengo que temer el sufrimiento. La capacidad de aceptar el sufrimiento basado en un valor que debo defender me da poder. Cuando veo cómo los políticos son viciosos el uno con el otro, cómo Hollywood está tratando de decirles a todos los demás lo que deben creer para encajar, lo que los campus universitarios están haciendo con nuestra historia y nuestras

ideas, entonces creo que debemos decir algo sin atacar. Jesús es nuestro modelo. No se defendió con engaños, insultos, ataques o amenazas. Luchó con su vida, con su ejemplo, con sus palabras de amor y esperanza. Sin embargo, su testigo vivirá. Durante este tiempo de cierre, podría ser una buena idea hacer un balance de lo que dicen nuestras acciones sobre nuestras creencias. ¿Necesitamos que nuestras películas se abran ante nuestras iglesias? ¿Cuál aprovecharemos primero? ¿Necesitamos que nuestros restaurantes estén abiertos antes de que podamos volver a recibir la eucaristía? ¿Necesitamos que nuestras sesiones de asesoramiento regresen antes de que nuestro sacramento de la Penitencia esté disponible?

En nuestro evangelio de Juan, escuchamos acerca del liderazgo real. Y estamos llamados a preguntar: "¿A quién hemos permitido que sea nuestro pastor?" Jesús usa la imagen de la puerta de un redil de ovejas. "El que entra por la puerta, ese es el pastor de las ovejas ... las ovejas reconocen su voz; él llama a cada una por su nombre y las conduce afuera ... las ovejas lo siguen porque reconocen su voz". El Pastor es aquel que predica un mensaje que corresponde con la realidad, pero no solo una realidad terrenal, una realidad que va más allá de esta vida. Somos las ovejas, pero tenemos que tomar una decisión. ¿A quién permitiremos que sea nuestro pastor? ¿A quién creemos que dice la verdad? Hay muchos pastores falsos. Te dicen cosas que te harán sentir bien. Te dicen cosas que quieres escuchar. Te dicen cosas que nunca te desafían a ser la mejor persona que puedes ser. Nunca hablarán de sufrimiento, ni de la Cruz, ni de vivir nuestras vidas en servicio. Note la advertencia que Jesús da, "Yo soy la puerta de las ovejas. Todos los que han venido antes que yo, son ladrones y bandidos;

pero mis ovejas no los han escuchado. Quien entre por mí se salvará". Si elegimos un pastor que solo nos hará sentir bien en esta vida, ¿estamos eligiendo al verdadero pastor? Estas son las personas que solamente nos llevarán a la falsa seguridad, incluso entre las personas religiosas. Pero no dicen la verdad con sus vidas. ¿Quién es nuestro pastor?

Fraternalmente en Cristo,

Fr. Gregory A. McLaughlin