

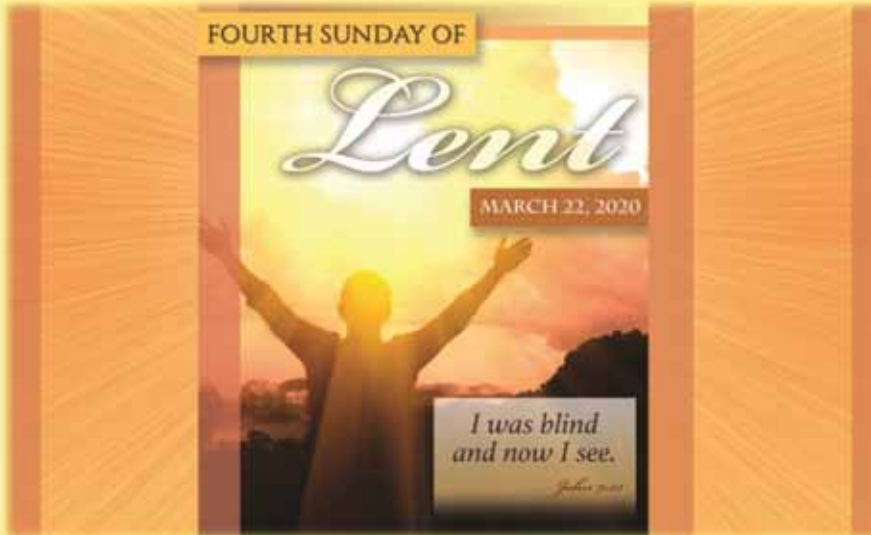
St. Mary, Mother of God Church



Roman Catholic Church
608 High Street ~ Freeport, PA 16229
A Parish of the Diocese of Greensburg
A Pennsylvania Charitable Trust



Established 1826



Father Ronald Maquiñana—Pastor
rmaquinana@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Parish Information

Saturday (Vigil): Suspended until further notice

Sunday: Suspended until further notice

Weekday Masses: Suspended until further notice

Holy Day of Obligation: Suspended until further notice

Reconciliation: By appointment only—call the Administrative Office at 724-295-2281

Baptism: Sundays (by appointment)

Marriage: Contact the Administrative Office nine months in advance

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults: RCIA helps you to learn more about the Catholic faith. Pre-registration is required. Contact Fr. Ron or William Girardi at 724-295-2281.

Hospital or Home Visit: If you would like to receive Holy Communion or if you know someone who would like to have the priest visit, please call Fr. Ron at 724-295-2281.

Anointing of the Sick: Contact Fr. Ron at 724-295-2281

Holy Communion: Suspended until further notice—please call the Administrative Office at 724-295-2281.

Baptism: To understand the importance of the Sacrament of Baptism and your obligation as parents, you are required to attend one baptismal class. To register for one of these classes, please call the Administrative Office at 724-295-2281.

Parish Staff

William Girardi,

Pastoral Associate—412-719-7085

Claudia Vertosick

Business Manager/Parish Secretary

Helen James, Religious Education Director

Thomas Koharchik, Choir Director

Cindi Harbison

Social Hall Coordinator—724-272-7744

Jennifer Liti/David Valencic

Parish Custodians

Richard Bertino, Cemetery Caretaker

724-295-3632 (home); 724-602-5986 (cell)

Ministries

Kristen Marhefka/Julie Polana Gardone

Teen Ministry

Melissa Kristine/Beth Macurdy

Evangelization

John Nemcek—Homebound Ministry

Gina Jones—Helping Hands

724-448-9251; ginaj1904@gmail.com

Organizations

Diane Grant—Christian Mothers

Ray Smetana/Mary Ellen Gray

St. Vincent de Paul Society

Tim Fogarty—Men's Group

Office Information

Administrative Center Numbers & Hours :

724-295-2281 (Office) 724-295-3090 (Fax)

Monday through Thursday - 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.

Friday - 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.

Parish Website: www.stmaryfreeport.com

Parish Email Address:

thechurch@stmaryfreeport.com

Facebook: Saint Mary, Mother of God - Freeport

Send Information to share:

stmarysocialmedia@yahoo.com

MISSION STATEMENT—St. Mary's is a caring and welcoming family committed to building and strengthening a community of God, reaching out as disciples of Jesus Christ to Freeport and beyond.

Please Note

During this time when all weekday and weekend public masses have been suspended until further notice, please know that Fr. Ron will privately celebrate mass and will fulfill all of your requested intentions.

Mass Intentions FOR THE WEEK

†=(in memory of) ♥=(IHO/special intention/parishioners)

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE 4TH SUNDAY OF LENT

- SATURDAY:** March 21st
†John McDermott (Vicky, Barb & Ralph)
- SUNDAY:** March 22nd
†Marjorie Kohlmyer (Deborah Sullivan)
♥St. Mary Parishioners
- MONDAY:** March 23rd
†William Davis (Doug & Grace Seitam)
- TUESDAY:** March 24th
†Ellen Huth (Wyant Family)
- WEDNESDAY:** March 25th
†Linda Antonucci
(Betty Mason & Beth Wonders)
- THURSDAY:** March 26th
†Edna Barr (Anne Gentile)
- FRIDAY:** March 27th
†Patti DeCroo (Ed Friel)

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE 5TH SUNDAY OF LENT

- SATURDAY:** March 28th
†Gene & Donna Nagy
(Jeannie & John Manocchi)
- SUNDAY:** March 29th
†Barbara Sliviak (Robert & Diane Grant)
♥St. Mary Parishioners

SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

- Sunday:** Fourth Sunday of Lent
- Monday:** St. Turibius of Mogrovejo
- Tuesday:** World Day for Truth Concerning Human Rights Violations
- Wednesday:** The Annunciation of the Lord
- Friday:** Abstinence

Fourth Sunday of LENT

Our Lenten journey continues this Sunday as we hear of Jesus healing a blind man in the Gospel of John. Jesus proclaims himself the light of the world, a light that overcomes darkness and enables a new capacity to see. The man, blind from birth, was able to begin his path to sight by first acknowledging his blindness. We are reminded of God's ongoing invitation to us to journey from blindness to sight. We begin by acknowledging our own capacity for "blind spots," and so open ourselves to uncomfortable truths and to God's healing. We are invited to see beyond appearances, as the reading from Samuel indicates, and to look into the heart of things. We are invited to "live as children of light" as the letter to the Ephesians teaches. Like the man healed from blindness, we may gradually learn to see fully and to follow Jesus.

Sunday's Readings



First Reading — *As the prophet Samuel anointed David with oil, the spirit of the LORD rushed upon David (1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a).*

Psalm — *The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want (Psalm 23).*

Second Reading — *You who were once darkness are now light in the Lord (Ephesians 5:8-14).*

Gospel — *The man who had been blind from birth proclaimed: The one called Jesus made clay with his saliva, anointed my eyes with it, and told me to wash (John 9:1-41 [1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38]).*



Readings for the Week

Monday: *Is 65:17-21; Ps 30:2, 4-6, 11-13b; Jn 4:43-54*

Tuesday: *Ez 47:1-9, 12; Ps 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9; Jn 5:1-16*

Wednesday: *Is 7:10-14, 8:10; Ps 40:7-11; Heb 10:4-10; Lk 1:26-38*

Thursday: *Ex 32:7-14; Ps 106:19-23; Jn 5:31-47*

Friday: *Wis 2:1a, 12-22; Ps 34:17-21, 23; Jn 7:1-2, 10, 25-30*

Saturday: *Jer 11:18-20; Ps 7:2-3, 9bc-12; Jn 7:40-53*

Sunday: *Ez 37:12-14; Ps 130:1-8; Rom 8:8-11; Jn 11:1-45 [3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45]*



From the Pastor's Desk

Since last week, we felt the impact of the corona virus not only in our workplace and in business establishments, but also in our parish community because it continues to spread and grow. It saddened me to see that we had less attendance than usual for our two masses last Sunday, but I understand what made people decide not to go to mass—the public advisory both from the government and the church. We were asked to protect ourselves and avoid large gatherings since there is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The virus is thought to be spreading mainly from person-to-person between people who are in close contact with one another (within about six feet) and through

respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

The [National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases \(NCIRD\)](#), [Division of Viral Diseases](#) provided some basic steps to protect ourselves and others against the virus and I would like to share them.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least twenty seconds, especially after you have been in a public place or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, **use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol**. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth** with unwashed hands.



Avoid close contact. **Avoid close contact with people who are sick. Put distance between yourself and other people** if COVID-19 is spreading in your community. This is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.



Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care. Learn what to do if you are sick.



Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow. **Throw used tissues in the trash. Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least twenty seconds.** If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



Wear a facemask if you are sick. You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then you should do your best to cover your coughs and sneezes, and people who are caring for you should wear a facemask if they enter your room. If you are NOT sick: **You do not need to wear a facemask unless you are caring for someone who is sick** (and they are not able to wear a facemask).



Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks. **If surfaces are dirty, clean them:** Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfecting.



Above all, let us pray not only for our protection but also for others, especially those who were affected and infected, for healing and recovery. May God be merciful upon us!

PRAY FOR OUR WORLD

TV and Online Mass Options:
<https://www.heartofthenation.org/where-to-watch>
<https://mass-online.org/daily-holy-mass-live-online/>; <http://www.catholicv.org/masses/catholicv-mass>
EWTN

Parish Information/Events

Suspensions/Cancellations Until Further Notice

Weekday and Weekend Masses—Suspended
Religious Education Classes—Suspended
Choir Practice—Suspended
RCIA Meetings—Suspended
Teen Ministry Meetings—Suspended
The Bible Timeline—Cancelled and will be postponed to a later date
Stations of the Cross—Suspended
Regional Penance Services—Cancelled
First Friday Adoration—Suspended
Tenebrae Practice—Cancelled
Resurrection Choir Practice—Suspended
Christian Mother's Meeting—Suspended



In your charity, please remember the souls of those who passed away, especially **John C. Holetich** and **Robert Floyd Montgomery, Sr.** We ask God to welcome **John and Robert** and all who have gone before us into the joy of everlasting life and bring comfort and peace to their families. †

Due to the corona virus (COVID-19), there are no updates for the Diocesan Lenten Appeal (DLA)



Diocesan Target - \$37,826.00; Parish Target - \$55,000.00
Pledges to Date - \$61,630.00; Paid to Date - \$36,480.00
Number of Donors - 106 Diocesan Target has been Achieved!!!
ALL future gifts and/or pledges will now stay directly here at St. Mary's in order that we may complete this year's major projects!

Important News from Our Diocese

In this difficult time as concerns surrounding the spread of the corona virus continue to grow, the following advisory is important both from the civil leaders and the church leaders. I would like to share with you the email I received from the Diocese of Greensburg and give you the highlights of it:

Effective Wednesday, March 18th, all weekday and weekend public masses in the Diocese of Greensburg have been temporarily suspended. That being said, we will not have our daily mass in our parish until further notice. **St. Mary Church, however, will remain open for private prayer a few hours each day from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.** For all previously published parish Mass intentions, I will continue to offer Mass daily in private as well as offering additional prayers at these Masses for the protection of our parish community during this time of crisis. I will continue to respond to all pastoral emergencies and provide Anointing of the Sick and Viaticum for the critically ill and dying.

OTHER IMPORTANT DECISIONS

For baptisms, funerals and weddings, it is preferred to scale back attendance to immediate family. We will follow all mandated regulations regarding the size of gatherings.

All other gatherings, including faith formation (e.g. RCIA) are now suspended, but we will try to continue, if possible, electronically.

The public celebration of Stations of the Cross, Chaplet of Divine Mercy, Morning/Evening Prayer and Rosary are all suspended.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

- All public Penance services are suspended.
- Those who require the sacrament of reconciliation should contact our parish for an appointment.

Our Homebound Members that are praying for our Confirmation Candidates



Candidate: Emma Dunn
Homebound: Michele Michelini



Candidate: Brian Kijowski
Homebound: Pauline Sliviak



Candidate: Luke Boylan
Homebound: Ron & Darlene O'Brokta



Candidate: Grace Beach
Homebound: Betty Canterna



Candidate: Michael Speer
Homebound: Kathryn Barch



Candidate: Bella Delia
Homebound: Helen Furman



Candidate: Jacob Craven
Homebound: Helen Goodman



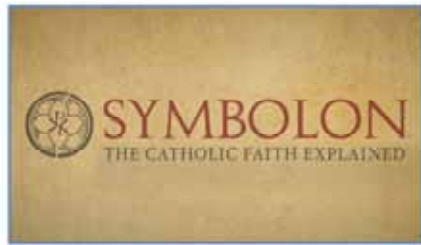
Candidate: Hannah Sheppard
Homebound: Dorothy Wyant



Candidate: Saige Smith
Homebound: Lola Bono

Evangelization

FORMED PICK OF THE WEEK



Symbolon The Story of Salvation

The story of salvation began with Creation itself—and a decision that affects all of us to this present day. How did the events of an ancient past set into motion God's rescue operation to save us from eternal death?

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I Must Confess... "He came to call sinners" is a phrase that we hear every time we attend the Most Holy Mass. This is a truth that we need to hear and respond to. St. Paul agrees in 1Timothy 1:15 that "Jesus came into the world to save sinners. And I am the foremost of sinners." The entire ministry of Christ was to show the Mercy of God: He forgives sins and gives to us a new life full of grace. But what about the sacrament of Confession. Do I really have to go to a priest? Can't I just go to God the Father in prayer and ask for forgiveness and skip that uncomfortable step in the middle? Let's look at five reasons why sacramental confession is necessary and vital to our spiritual health. *First*, we see in John 20:23 on the evening of His resurrection that Jesus breathes upon disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit, allowing them to hear confessions of the sinners. Therefore, He wants us to go to the successors of the disciples (our bishops and priests). *Second*, by going thru the conduit of the priest, we learn a lesson in humility. It is a human tendency to desire the escape of a humbling experience. It is good to remember that "the humble will be exalted". *Thirdly*, we are "assured" that our sins are forgiven, because we hear it from the lips of the priest during the prayer of absolution. We, therefore, don't have to rely on just a subjective feeling of forgiveness. The Lord knows that when we can touch, see, taste, smell or hear our experiences, they become more real and personal. *Fourth*, we will receive sound advice from the priest on a tendency of sinful patterns in our lives. He will also give us instructions on how to avoid and fight this battle in order to be victorious in the future. *Fifth, and most importantly*, we receive sacramental graces. Through this outward sign given to us by Jesus Christ, we become reconciled with God and the church. Peace, spiritual consolation, and strength for further battles is showered upon us through the words and actions of Christ's representative, the priest. When we enter the confessional, we are patients infected with the most serious virus of all, our sinful tendencies and actions. But when we depart, we are cleansed and declared clean and heaven rejoices over "the one sinner who repents!" (Luke 15:7) †

SAINT TURIBIUS OF MOGROVEJO (1538-1606) - March 23



In times of crisis, God always surprises the Church with unlikely saints, through whom Christ's light radiates beyond their local communities to illumine the universal Church. Charles Borromeo was such a saint: appointed Archbishop of Milan at twenty-one by his papal uncle, epitomizing the corruption that the reformers condemned, Charles instead inspired a revival that reinvigorated a Church devastated by the Reformation. His less well-known contemporary, Turibius of Mongrovejo, was God's "saintly surprise" in the New World. Spanish-born lawyer, professor, head of the feared Inquisition, Turibius was still a layman when a grateful king appointed him Archbishop of far-off Lima. Once in Peru, however, Turibius was appalled at the abuse of indigenous peoples by the occupying *conquistadores*—his fellow countrymen—and by the complicity of the clergy. He became the natives' devoted advocate, building churches, schools, hospitals, and the first seminary in the Americas, publishing catechisms and prayer books in the native languages he painstakingly mastered. Four hundred years later, whenever Pope Benedict welcomed Latin American bishops to Rome, he always invoked "the shining example of San Toribio." †

Community Information/Activities

CANCELLED The Lenten Reflection scheduled for Sunday, March 29th at 6:30 P.M. at the United Presbyterian Church Sanctuary is cancelled.

Altar Bread and Wine

The Altar Bread and Wine were donated for this week in loving memory of



Sister Mary Steven Calvin

By

*Ed & Jeannie Lepkowski
Children & Grandchildren*

Sanctuary Lamp

In acknowledging the Real Presence of Christ, The Sanctuary Lamp (Candle) will burn this week



in loving memory of

Eleanor Balest

By

Diane Grant

Collections

Offertory Collection for March 15th, 2020

No. of Envelopes Mailed Out: 600

No. of Envelopes Received: 111

Collection: Offertory - \$2,672.00

Electronic Payments (9) - \$1,690.00

Loose - \$144.00; Children (2) - \$11.00

Candles - \$216.00

Total Collection - \$4,733.00

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**NO
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THIS WEEK**

Please call the Administrative Office if you would like to volunteer to be one of the cleaning volunteers—724-295-2281.

St. Mary, Mother of God Membership Request/Change

Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Number: _____

____ Address/Phone Change

____ Please remove me from your census

Please drop this form in the collection basket

****New Membership Registration Forms are located at all of the church entrances****

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