

The Good News



St. Padre Pio Fraternity

gathers regularly on the first Saturday of the month at St.Helen Catholic Church in Georgetown, Texas. We begin with Morning Prayer at 8:30 AM followed by the Gathering at the St. Rita Center, Rm 223.

[Website: stpadrepioofs.com](http://stpadrepioofs.com)

Prayer Intentions:

- 1) For healing and recovery of Joe, Mary Jane Flynn's son, and Thankfulness for a successful surgery....*
- 2) For Lucille, Marv's mother; for Mark, Lynn's brother; for Marv and Lynn's friend, Janice, and for all other people that are alone during this time of isolation. May they have comfort and strength to make it through this lonely time.....*
- 3) For Adam and his parents, Joel and Kim, as Adam continues to battle brain cancer....*
- 4) For Mary Sealy, that she remain strong and healthy after having an episode of fever which is particularly distressing during this time....*
- 5) For Dale, who is recovering from pneumonia and the flu, and is high risk for Covid19...*
- 6) Please pray for fraternity members Cheryl, Sheila, Patricia, and Lucky, that they may have health and well-being....*

7) For all those who are in fear, are grieving, or ill from the virus, that they may keep their eyes on Christ, receive his graces, and know his peace.....

Oh, Lord, Hear our prayers.....

Brothers and Sisters,

April 22, 2020, **Earthday** will go digital. The website is www.earthday.org and promises to share all kinds of information! Look especially at “Campaigns” There will be a Justice Web Summit on Wed, April 22, 23, and 24th in which many people of Faith will come together (digitally). There will be a number of church services online to celebrate **Earthday**. **Please check out** this website for schedules!! See “The History of Earthday,” take the “Earthday Challenge,” and More!!!

Eleven Actions for the Planet during a Pandemic, (from the website under “News and Stories”)

Go plant-based and compost

When you’re stuck in your house, time is your friend. Now is the time to get creative and break those food ruts! Maybe you **made a resolution** to eat more plants this year, or maybe you just want to boost your immune system with an abundance of vitamin-rich fruits and vegetables. Either way, now is the time to get creative with your cooking. Try some new plant-based recipes — Nonperishable foods, like canned or dry beans and rice, are easy to prepare and nutritious. I always end up making too much and then have leftovers, which makes my next meal easy for me. It’s always important to save leftovers and reduce food

waste, and this is an especially good time to be making the most of what you have. If you have any produce that has gone bad and you can’t use, try composting. You can compost in a tupperware and store it in your freezer, under the sink, on a balcony, wherever!

— Sabrina Scull, Food and Environment Campaign Coordinator

Reading over streaming

Reading is good for the mind, the soul and it turns out, the planet: A pastime like reading easily replaces streaming, which is **notoriously carbon-intensive**. So, dust off that massive book you’ve been meaning to read, and get to work. Also, if you’re craving sports amid a

sportsless pandemic, why not crack open a biography about [your favorite athlete](#) or [sports moment](#)? Since libraries are closed, opt for an e-book through your library's digital platform. Our staff has [some recommendations](#) to get you started.

— Brandon Pytel, Communications Manager/Writer

There are 9 more creative ideas! Look at the website!! Brother Francis will be proud of you!!

Additional Earthday Links: ecokids.ca
www.loc.gov - (Library of Congress)
www.pollinator.org
usafacts.org
<https://ourneighborhoodearth.org>

An Easter without Eucharist cannot keep Christ from being among us

A Commentary by Xavier M. Montecel

.....St. Paul tell us, "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" ([Romans 8:38-39](#)). Our God is not the sort of God who abandons us to isolation, or who shrugs and gives up when circumstances throw up an obstacle to our usual means of grace. As a Catholic who draws my life and my faith from the sacraments, I have to believe there is grace here because, in the end, there is grace everywhere.

The Eucharist itself is not confined to the tabernacle or to the time we set aside for liturgy. How could it be? In the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, God is reaching out to all of us, to all of history, and bringing it to share in his life. At the altar of Communion, we give the whole world to God and receive it back as a new world: as the promise of eternal life.

The threat of disease may keep us from that altar and prevent us from embodying our side of this wonderful exchange in the usual liturgical way. But it can hardly keep God from bestowing his gifts on us. No obstacle can ever keep Christ from being present to us and among us. Indeed, so long as the memory of Jesus, who gave himself entirely to God and entirely to us, lives among us by the power of the Holy Spirit, so too does the grace of the Eucharist.

Naturally, there has been a lot of talk lately about the idea of "spiritual Communion," a term that normally refers to prayers and practices that provide a connection to the Eucharist for those who for certain reasons cannot receive the sacrament in person.

Spiritual Communion has now become the only option for most of us, and so we may be tempted to think of it as a sort of half-measure or consolation prize. As modern people, we

usually think of what is spiritual as less real than physical. If we cannot receive the Eucharist in a physical way, then we are forced by circumstances to accept a means of Communion that seems less real.

We watch Mass on television, we pray special prayers, and we try to live our faith through acts of mercy. These practices are meant, somehow, to "hold us over" until we can return to the feast of the Lord's table.

However, I believe this kind of attitude misses something essential. Spiritual Communion is not, in fact, some kind of lesser substitute for the real thing. To the contrary, the Catholic tradition teaches us that spiritual Communion is precisely the purpose of the Eucharist and its deepest reality.

In answer to certain controversies started in the 11th century, medieval theologians eventually articulated a Catholic theological view of the Eucharist in three dimensions. We can understand the Eucharist, they said, as consisting in what is only a sign (*sacramentum tantum*), what is both a sign and a reality signified (*sacramentum et res*), and what is only a reality signified (*res tantum*).

The *sacramentum tantum*, or the first level, consists in the matter and form of the sacrament, and every visible element that makes up our embodied experience of Communion. Bread and wine are taken, blessed, broken and given.

These things serve as signs of what is there invisibly, a deeper reality apprehended by the eyes of faith: the personal presence of Jesus Christ in his body, blood, soul and divinity. That is the second level, or the *sacramentum et res*, so called because it is a reality signified but also serves as a sign of something else, something even deeper.

That final reality, the *res tantum*, is the goal and purpose of the sacrament itself: the spiritual Communion of the faithful as one body in Christ, gathered by the Holy Spirit and sharing eschatologically in the heavenly banquet of God's life.

Spiritual Communion, therefore, is what the Eucharist is all about. And it is not taken away from us because we have been prevented this Easter from receiving the sacrament in person.

This does not mean, of course, that we have not lost something important. We have indeed lost our usual bodily encounter with the mystery of salvation, and we are right to be sad and right to be angry. Still, it may provide some consolation to remember that in the physical absence of the Eucharist, we are no less loved and saved by God as whole and embodied persons, united in communion with one another.

After all, what deeper encounter can we have with our bodiliness and the bodiliness of our salvation than to realize that our bodies are in each other's hands, that we are one flesh not abstractly but in a real, physical sense? We are woven together as embodied creatures: Our well-being rises and falls as one body. It is our greatest vulnerability and also our greatest gift.

Moreover, our physical separation from the Eucharist does not take away our ability to participate in the sacrifice of the Lord's Supper. What deeper sacrifice can we now make than to give up those forms of bodily intimacy that nourish us?

Perhaps in the days to come, when we are feeling keenly the pain of separation from the Eucharist and from one another, we can offer this pain as a sacrifice to God. Not because God demands it of us, but rather because we know that in God's hands, pain is transformed into life.

The Eucharist is the source of our life, and our difficult calling now is to let it go so that we might receive it in another way. "Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" ([Matthew 16:25](#)). We can only truly inherit the gifts of God by letting them go.

This is what Easter celebrates: that suffering and death, no matter how ubiquitous, will not have the last word. On Holy Saturday, we dwell in a time before that final victory. Pained by the absence of Christ, we know nonetheless that he is coming and that he brings with him the glory of God for us to share.

Even as we lament our distance from the Eucharist, may God give us the strength to be the body of Christ for one another as the current pandemic requires: to love our neighbors by staying away, to demand justice for the most vulnerable, to practice mercy through acts of care, to speak and share only the truth, to serve the common good even when it inconveniences us, and to be for one another sacraments of the kingdom of God.

Dear Sister's and Brothers,

Please read your emails about our next gathering, on May 2nd, carefully! It will be a lot of fun, and certainly different!! We'll have some good community time to talk (except it has to be one-at-a-time), and what a blessing to "see" each other again. See you at the dry run on April 30th.



Bible Trivia: Who said: “His blood comes over us and our children”?

Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel

Matthew 7, v21 “Not everyone who says to me ‘Lord, Lord’, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.”

Today is a good day to close the door to the outside and begin to look deeply within myself; for what I know and what I don't know, what I believe and don't believe, what I have faith in and what I don't. In John 9:41 Jesus says (paraphrasing) “if you are truly blind (ignorant) you would have no sin, but you say you see (are not ignorant) and so your sin remains.” Choosing ignorance, because it is the easy way out, will not get you to where you want to go. Do you really let the Lord know who you are?

Breath.....Listen 

<https://music.apple.com/us/album/spiegel-im-spiegel-for-violin-and-piano/694188558?i=694190492>

Happy Divine Mercy Sunday

Bob Pine, ofs, Minister

Gina Livesay, ofs, Vice-Minister

Peter Gruning, ofs, Formation Director

Mark Watson, ofs, Treasurer

Lynn Freeman, ofs, Secretary

Judy Puetz, ofs, Spiritual Assistant