

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH

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FIFTH SUNDAY OF *Easter*

MAY 10, 2020

A SPIRITUAL LIFE IN A CONCRETE WORLD

Today's readings describe the complexities of trying to live a spiritual life while still living in a world that demands concrete action. Acts tell us about disagreements beginning to emerge in the early Christian communities over divisions of labor. Some people are praying and preaching while others are feeding the hungry. In First Peter we are reminded that Jesus is the cornerstone. Jesus was rejected yet is the very foundation for building the community, and yet he is also a stumbling block for those who do not follow the path laid out by his life and works. In John we hear again the contrast of the spiritual and the concrete, of houses with many rooms, of truth and life. Is it surprising that the apostles and we are sometimes confused about how to live the life Jesus intended for us?

FINDING REALITY IN FAITH

The readings today describe a faith community struggling with the realities of preaching, teaching, praying, and spreading the word of God while others are concerned about putting food on the table and a roof over their heads. In Acts decisions are made about a division of labor. Some will preach and others will ensure that the community is fed. In First Peter there is talk of spiritual houses, builders, and cornerstones, of faith and stumbling blocks. In John, Jesus begins to prepare the apostles for his departure. Jesus talks about his Father's house but the apostles want concrete answers to their questions. They want to see the Father. They don't know the way. Jesus' response is both spiritual and concrete. His answer is both faith and works.

FINDING FAITH IN THE REAL WORLD

The tensions within the readings are tensions we feel every day between our faith and the world in which we live. We stumble over stones that litter the way, over lies that hide the truth, even over the reality of death. We want our faith to be solid, so we can test its permanence and reality. But faith is not concrete. Faith is a living thing, a leap into the unknown. Works are concrete. The works of the apostles are what sustained them even as they struggled with their own faith. We must feed the hungry and shelter the homeless even as we speak to ourselves and others of faith beyond brick and mortar. While we live in a world of harsh realities, we must remember there are realities beyond those we see but not beyond our belief. We know that the faith born of love for others and lived out in caring for the sick and sorrowful, the hungry and homeless, the poor and imprisoned is real.

TODAY'S READINGS

Acts 6:1-7
Psalm 33:1-2, 4-5, 18-19
1 Peter 2:4-9
John 14:1-12

Jesus said,
"I am the way and the truth and the life.
No one comes to the Father except through me."

John 14:6

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Mission Statement

Called to be disciples of Jesus Christ, we strive to live His Gospel by answering daily, "Yes, here I am Lord". Strengthened by the sacraments and trusting in God's saving grace, we joyfully commit ourselves to sharing our gifts for the continual renewal of our parish and the Maplewood community.

From Deacon John:

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY:

We only have one. And YOU are special. No one else in the whole world gave us a special place near your heart, an unlimited supply of nourishment, and a perfect place of comfort (not too hot, not too cold) for the first 9 months of our life. You shared your own life as we were conceived, developed and were born. You shared with us your joys and sorrows, your hopes and dreams, your love and faith with us as we (and you) grew. For many of us you taught us how to live, and some even taught us how to die. You are special. We only have one.

Mothers, we hope today—wherever you are—is a happy and blessed one.

COVID-19 UPDATE:

We lost our first priest to COVID-19, Father Bob Menner, age 77, died April 24th. A priest for almost 50 years, he served in Bolivia and Chile for 30 years. Msgr Blood, former director of the Mission Office, called him “an outstanding missionary, very faith-filled with a heart as big as the world.” He was a jokester, and known for drawing pictures of Mickey Mouse on windows with the phrase “*paz, amor y alegria*” (peace, love and joy) signed Padre Roberto. He was a wonderful priest.

Fr. Menner lived at Regina Cleri, a retirement home for 28 priests in Shrewsbury. COVID-19 spreads so easily and quickly it is next to impossible to contain it. Another priest there, Fr. Valentine, age 78, died April 29, and Msgr. Nicholas Schneider died today, May 5th. Many others there have tested positive for COVID-19 as have many of the staff even though they have been on “lockdown” since mid-March.

Archbishop Carlson has extended the suspension of public masses until May 15th. The risk of COVID-19 is not abstract or theoretical. The deaths of these wonderful men shows the virus rapidly spreads aggressively regardless of age or position. If masses start too soon there is a danger it would quickly spread to other priests and parishioners. We are ordaining 2 men to become priests this year, and 6 others to be transitional deacons this year and priests next year. If we start masses too soon we could risk losing so many priests (their average age is in the 60s—so they are “vulnerable”) it might take a generation or more of vocations to replace them.

LATER THIS WEEK THEY MAY ANNOUNCE A DATE WHEN MASSES COULD RESUME WITH SOCIAL DISTANCING. REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES WILL FOLLOW.

WE WILL NOTIFY YOU WHEN MASSES WILL BEGIN BY PHONE CALLS, EMAILS, AND OUR PARISH SIGN.

FINANCIAL CONCERNS & UPDATES:

Special THANK YOU to many who signed up for on-line giving or who have mailed or dropped off checks in the last six weeks. We cannot survive without you.

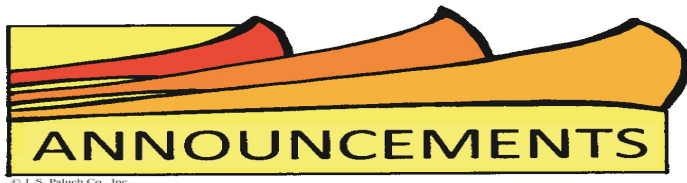
Even when we do not gather for mass many parish expenses continue. We have applied for the PPP Loan (Payroll Protection Program) and that will greatly help with payroll and utility expenses for a few months. Please be as generous to the parish as possible. Let me know if you have any spiritual needs.

Our weekly bulletin is posted on our website and emailed to people when we have an email address. We also mail bulletins to those home-bound without computers.

These are unusual times with the pandemic and economy. These are also times to appreciate the many blessing we have. Thank God for whatever health we have, for our families, for the technology to keep in touch, for our parish community. I am praying for the parish and each of you every day.

May you experience God's presence in your life.

May God bless you in a special way,
Deacon John



The Archdiocese of St. Louis has created a comprehensive landing page with the latest parish and school updates, statements from Archbishop Carlson, resources and prayers in response to the Coronavirus. You can access that page here: <https://www.archstl.org/coronavirus>

Marriage/Family Life Update:

“The Archdiocese of Saint Louis Office of Marriage & Family Life is dedicated to preparing couples for a joy-filled sacramental marriage with all the beauty and graces it offers. To service this mission during this time social distancing and gathering restrictions due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19), Marriage Preparation classes from the Archdiocese of St. Louis will be presented as live webinars. The class dates and times remain the same as published on the archdiocesan website <https://www.archstl.org/marriage-family-life/for-marriage/marriage-prep/fbclid/iwar34qze4mzva4hq8uv2ohk8nh-svp9r7zvqpyfhzgbogqssjscahlj1vkx8>

SLUH is pleased to offer MULTIPLE virtual opportunities to future Jr. Bills and their parents to experience our brotherhood, our academics, and our robust athletics and co-curricular opportunities including InsideSLUH Visits, a Campus Tour, Office Hours, and Feature Zoom Events with SLUH Subject-Matter Experts. Visit our Virtual Admissions Office



St. Louis Friends of Birthright Virtual Run for Life and Learning

Looking for a fun and safe way to support Moms in need? The Friends of Birthright Run for Life and Learning has gone Virtual! To register or donate, visit:

run4lifeandlearning.eventbrite.com. Complete a Run/Walk distance of your choice (6K, 1 mile, 0.25 mile) individually or with your immediate family anytime between Monday, June 1 and Sunday, June 7. Post your time and/or photo to our Facebook page, or email us, and receive a race t-shirt. Proceeds enable women who are financially stressed by an unplanned pregnancy to continue their education. Please email us at run4lifeandlearning@gmail.com for sponsorship opportunities.

Dynamic Catholic, Alive! – Spiritual Heartburn and Typology

The disciples recounted how their hearts were burning within them when Jesus opened the Scriptures to them. One of the many beautiful elements of the Faith is Biblical typology, the fulfillment of elements of the Old Testament in the New Testament. Common examples are Noah’s ark prefiguring the Church, the Flood prefiguring Baptism, and Moses prefiguring Jesus Christ. As we rejoice throughout this blessed Easter Season, let us pray with the Old Testament and see how Christ fulfills what is found in it. St. Augustine wrote, “In the Old Testament the New Testament is concealed; in the New Testament the Old Testament is revealed.” Through typology we can experience spiritual heartburn, the best kind, and more fully appreciate God’s plan in salvation history. archstl.org/dynamic



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The Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) provides telecommunications services to allow individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, and/or have speech disabilities to conduct official business with and within the Federal government. The U.S. Census Bureau is an Equal Opportunity Employer.



Form 0-448
September 2018



Schedule For The Week

Sunday, May 3 8:30 a.m.	Mass-Suspended
Monday, May 4 10:30 a.m.	Senior Exercise-Cancelled
Tuesday, May 5 7:00 p.m.	Choir-Cancelled
Wednesday, May 6 9:00-10:00 a.m.	Parish Hall Walking-Cancelled
Thursday, May 7 9:00 a.m. 9:30 a.m.	Small Faith-Cancelled Quilting-Cancelled
Friday, May 8 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. 9:00-10:00 a.m.	Adoration-Cancelled Parish Hall Walking-Cancelled
Saturday, May 9 4:00 p.m.	Mass-Suspended

4:15-4:45 p.m.	CONFESSIONS—with Fr. Pete St. Luke's Parish
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Sunday, May 10
8:30 a.m. Mass-Suspended

Weekly Offering



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Register for simple & convenient
Online Giving at:
[https://
www.osvonlinegiving.com/1357](https://www.osvonlinegiving.com/1357)

April 18th/19th: 1st Collection: \$2,317.00 2nd Collection: \$350.00
Online Giving: \$1,687.25

April 25th/26th: 1st Collection: \$920.00 2nd Collection: \$136.00
Online Giving: \$1,564.25

May 2nd/3rd: 1st Collection: TBD 2nd Collection: TBD
Online Giving: \$702.25

OFFERTORY COLLECTIONS: I want to remind you that collections remain essential to the continued operation and existence of our parish and our mission. Thank you to all who use online giving. It helps so much during times like this, snow days and vacation times. It is EASY to sign up for online giving at www.osvonlinegiving.com/1357. You may make one-time payments or set it up for automatic payments--it is very flexible. Otherwise, please mail or drop-off your contribution. Many expenses continue.

Stewardship

Jesus said to His disciples: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me". John 14:1

"Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father." John 14:12

We may think that the Lord is asking way to much of us while we are experiencing difficult times in our world, but imagine if you had been one of the first disciples. They were losing the physical presence of Jesus, and being asked to continue doing what He taught them in three short years. At that time, much of what He was asking of them seemed foolish and dangerous.

We have over two thousand years of Christianity to guide us and still feel like it is a daunting task. Don't overthink the message of the Lord. We are essential parts of the Body of Christ. We have Holy Scripture and the life of Jesus to guide us. We have prayer, grace and the Sacraments to relieve our "troubled hearts". We can wake up each day and ask Jesus to guide us through the day with peace, love, generosity, caring and compassion in our hearts. As Christians, we are not alone....We are all in this together!

Readings for the Week

Monday: Acts 14:5-18; Ps 115:1-4, 15-16;
Jn 14:21-26
Tuesday: Acts 14:19-28; Ps 145:10-13ab, 21;
Jn 14:27-31a
Wednesday: Acts 15:1-6; Ps 122:1-5; Jn 15:1-8
Thursday: Acts 1:15-17, 20-26; Ps 113:1-8; Jn 15:9-17
Friday: Acts 15:22-31; Ps 57:8-10, 12; Jn 15:12-17
Saturday: Acts 16:1-10; Ps 100:1b-3, 5; Jn 15:18-21
Sunday: Acts 8:5-8, 14-17; Ps 66:1-7, 16, 20;
1 Pt 3:15-18 or 1 Pt 4:13-16; Jn 14:15-21 or
Jn 17:1-11a

STAY WITH US, LORD

Walk with us, Lord,
along the road of resurrection!
Explain for us, so slow to believe,
the things that Scripture says of you.
Break the bread of the Eucharist with us
whenever we share our lives
with our brothers and sisters.
Stay with us
each time night approaches
and the daylight fades in our hearts!

—From Come, Lord Jesus by Lucien Deiss, CSSp, copyright © 1976,
1981, Lucien Deiss. Published
by World Library Publications. p.168

Prayer For A Pandemic

May we who are merely inconvenienced
Remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors
Remember those most vulnerable.

May we who have the luxury of working from home
Remember those who must choose between
preserving their health or making their rent.

May we who have the flexibility to care for
our children when their schools close,
Remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel our trips
Remember those that have no safe place to go.

May we who are losing our margin money
in the tumult of the economic market
Remember those who have no margin at all.

May we who settle in for a quarantine at home
Remember those who have no home.

As fear grips our country,
Let us choose love.

During this time when we cannot physically
wrap our arms around each other,
Let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace
of God to our neighbors.

Amen.



Prayer: Historic Saint Paul Catholic Church, Lexington, KY

PARISH PASTORAL STAFF

Deacon John Flanigan, Parish Life Coordinator
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johnflanigan@hotmail.com
Father Peter Blake, Sacramental Minister
314-644-2144
Deacon Clyde McEntire, Deacon (Retired)
Kathleen O'Reilly, Parish Nurse, 314-644-6805
Father Michael Esswein, Pastor 314-962-5955

PARISH STAFF

Eva May, Administrative Assistant, 314-645-3307 Ext. 202
Colleen Eichler, Campus Manager, 314-645-3307 Ext. 206
Daniel Jenkins, Maintenance Assistant

Parish School of Religion

Karen Lightfoot, PSR Coordinator, psricmaplewood@gmail.com
St. Vincent DePaul Help Line
314-289-6101 ext. 2226

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

Tim Yohe, Chair
Nikki & Todd Bircher
Deacon John Flanigan
Laura Miller
Mary Bankston
RJ & Suzee Irwin
Becky Konersmann
Ken Amend

Schedule

We will announce when Masses resume.

SVDP Food Pantry: Saturdays from 9:30-11:00am

Ministry Schedule-Suspended

Saturday EM's: *Suspended until Masses resume*
Saturday Lectors:
Saturday Servers:
Saturday Usher Captain:
Saturday Gifts:
Sunday EM's:
Sunday Lectors:
Sunday Servers:
Sunday Usher:
Sunday Greeters:
Sunday Gifts:



Hope and Healing

“There is no grief like the grief that does not speak.”
Henry Longfellow.

The grief over an abortion experience is often so deep that it seems to be silent. Women and men may bear this burden for years thinking that there is no hope of forgiveness or peace. Project Rachel/Project Joseph offers free, private, professional counseling for anyone who is suffering because of an abortion experience. Call Project Rachel/Project Joseph at 314-792-7565 to begin your journey of healing and reconciliation.



Suspended until mass resumes.

Please email the church to reschedule a Mass Intention-scheduled from March 16th-present or call Eva May at 314-776-7172.

Please Pray For:

Jim Higgins, Eileen Lencz, Jim Haislip, Alice Hezel, Gary Gray, Ellen Simmons, Chuck Ellermann, Mona Tillman, Heidi Barks, Madelyn McClure, Paul Rygelski, Mary Johnston, Jim White, Everleigh Lauber, Jack & Pamela Warner, Pam MacDonald, Nancy Maurer, Linda Amend
Paul Bredenkamp (brother of Mary Bankston)
Terry & Ron Kippenberger (family of Rita Kippenberger)
Lisa Massack (sister of Joshua Capstick)
Jamie Jackson (Granddaughter of Annabelle Moran)
Pam Brown (former parishioner)
Tony Simmons (son of Tom & Ellen Simmons)
Sr. Barbara Paul (former parishioner)
Jan Pilla (daughter in law of Eddie Pilla)
Nick Simmons (son of Tom & Ellen Simmons)
Carl & Susan Case (brother and sister in law of Pat Curtis)
Mary Lucas (friend of Al & Maureen Daniels)
Drew Becker (son of Paul Becker)
John Biondo (brother of Maria Gray)
Deimeke Family
John Graves (brother of Karen Bish)
Lisa Hanley Blake (daughter of Celene Hanley)

PRAY FOR THOSE SERVING OUR COUNTRY

Col. Peter White, USAF, son of Jim & Lucy White
Senior Chief Matthew J Paul, USN, son of Maria and Gary Gray
William Patrick Flynn, USN, son of Patrick & Michelle Flynn

To add your loved one's name (s) contact Eva at the rectory. 314-645-3307 or email at icmaplewood@gmail.com

CONFESSIONS—with Fr. Pete

Available at St. Luke's Parish
Saturdays 4:15 to 4:45

A mom's hug lasts long after she lets go.
—Anonymous

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