



## St. Gertrude Chicago E-Bulletin

*For the Fourth Sunday of Lent - March 22, 2020*

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During the COVID-19 crisis, we are moving our printed bulletin to an online one. Please know that despite the fact we cannot gather together in community to worship, we can hold each other in prayer.

As Christians, we turn to God in times of fear and uncertainty as we do in times of joy and celebration. Please join us as we pray for God's heart of love, mercy, and truth to dwell in us and show us how to face the challenges posed by the new coronavirus.

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Our [COVID-19 Spiritual Help page](#) on our website is now up and will be expanding in the coming weeks! We will have daily readings, prayers to help with stress and anxiety, faith-based activities for kids, reflections by parishioners, our resident priests, and more. Please visit us [here](#)!

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### [From Father Rich: A Proposal for a Lenten Retreat](#)

*Bulletin for the  
4th Sunday of Lent*

This wasn't what we thought the third week of Lent would look like! Nor any week of any

season of the year! But this is where we are today. So we can decide if we are going to use this time and situation well, or not. Because the sound medical advice is to avoid groups of people, we need to keep our distance from one another. And because so many places are closed for the indefinite future, we will be spending more time home. And if we have children of any age, they are almost certainly out of school for a while and home.

Perhaps we are not exactly quarantined, but we are self-restricting our activities and our social encounters.

Which brings me back to Lent! As you may remember from the readings from Ash Wednesday, and so many of the Lenten prayers, we are always invited into Lent by the practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. I would like to suggest, as an alternative to griping or being over-televisioned, over-media-saturated, and overly bored for lack of things to do and with whom we can or cannot do them, what if we chose to use this time for a Lenten retreat? Nothing too rigorous. But following the guidelines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, we could devote part of each day to this retreat.

Our [website's COVID-19 Spiritual Help page](#) has a link to scripture readings for the Mass of the day. Usually, we have two scripture readings with a psalm in between. Each of these three passages can be taken separately for a meditation period. Depending on our schedules, that could be as short as five minutes, or up to an hour in silent meditation. Oftentimes, it is helpful to spend a few minutes after each meditation writing down where the meditation has led us - also known as “journaling.” (On

# 3/22



Visit Our COVID-19 Crisis Spiritual Resource Page



[Click here for a list of online and televised Masses.](#)

Feast days we might have a second, or epistle, reading, resulting in four possible scripture passages on that day.) If we followed this model of retreat, we might begin the day with the first reading, reflect on the psalm around noon, and in the late afternoon or early evening, go to the gospel passage.

The fasting is already pretty clear. Besides the usual guidelines for Lent (no meat on Fridays, etc.), most of us usually also try to give up something during Lent. Now added to those usual Lenten fasting practices, we have this Coronavirus-imposed limitation to our activities. We are fasting from seeing many people we would like to see and from doing things we would like to do. In place of those activities, how might I use this time? In the spirit of fasting, perhaps this is an opportunity to clean out closets and dressers and prepare to deliver no-longer-needed clothing to charities that are always looking for these kinds of donations (like [Care for Real](#), [St. Vincent DePaul Society](#), [Salvation Army](#), [Goodwill](#)). Perhaps this is a great time to clean out extra kitchen items and stuff that's been sitting in the basement or garage or other places that will no longer be used. If this sounds a lot like simplifying our lives, that's exactly what it is. Which is what fasting is always about -- we try to get down to the basics so we truly remember what is most important -- and that will always be about our relationships to God, to ourselves and to others.

Third is almsgiving. Pope Francis recently reminded us that one of the benefits of fasting was meant to be that when we do with less, we are then able to take some of what we have saved and give that to those in greater need than myself. Connected to this is our Almoner's

program. We have the \$5.00 McDonald gift cards available to be given to any homeless or needy person we may encounter. Even though we are limiting our social interactions, we can still give to the homeless and those who are struggling to survive. If you would like to use the McDonald gift cards, please feel free to stop by the Rectory office Monday-Friday between 8:30 am-12:00 pm and we will be glad to give you some of the gift cards. If you would prefer not to come to the office, we could mail you some of the cards. Just email Sr. Judith at the office at [jzonsius@stgertrudechicago.org](mailto:jzonsius@stgertrudechicago.org), and we'll drop the cards in the mail to you.

It seems likely this unique time is going to last more than a few weeks. So it would be helpful if we deliberately created a new daily schedule that might last for a month or longer. This "ordering" or "re-ordering" of our lives was an integral part of the monastic tradition in our church. Each day is truly a gift from God. In planning how we will use each portion of each day is one way we can be grateful for what we have received. Having parts of each day for prayer, for rest, for doing something productive and something for entertainment and enjoyment are all good things to plan.

Perhaps this health crisis is not only a crisis. Perhaps it is also an invitation we can choose to accept to slow down, to pray regularly for myself and for others -- especially those who are sick.

For most of us who find our lives often being too scheduled, here is an opportunity to slow down and enjoy the moment.

A Lenten retreat. This may be the best opportunity we're going to get for a long time!

Let's use it well.

*J. Rich*

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## Readings for Sunday, March 22

### **First Reading from the Book of Samuel**

***(1 Sm 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a)***

The LORD said to Samuel: "Fill your horn with oil, and be on your way. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen my king from among his sons."

As Jesse and his sons came to the sacrifice, Samuel looked at Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is here before him." But the LORD said to Samuel: "Do not judge from his appearance or from his lofty stature, because I have rejected him. Not as man sees does God see, because man sees the appearance but the LORD looks into the heart." In the same way Jesse presented seven sons before Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any one of these." Then Samuel asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?" Jesse replied, "There is still the youngest, who is tending the sheep." Samuel said to Jesse, "Send for him; we will not begin the sacrificial banquet until he arrives here."

Jesse sent and had the young man brought to them. He was ruddy, a youth handsome to behold and making a splendid appearance. The LORD said, "There—anoint him, for this is the one!"

Then Samuel, with the horn of oil in hand, anointed David in the presence of his brothers; and from that day on, the spirit of the LORD rushed upon David.

### **Responsorial Psalm**

***(Ps 23: 1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6.)***

***(1) The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.***

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. beside restful waters he leads

me; he refreshes my soul.

***R. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.***

He guides me in right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil; for you are at my side with your rod and your staff that give me courage.

***R. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.***

You spread the table before me in the sight of my foes; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

***R. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.***

Only goodness and kindness follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for years to come.

***R. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.***

## **Second Reading - From the Letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians**

**(Eph 5:8-14)**

Brothers and sisters: You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light, for light produces every kind of goodness and righteousness and truth. Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the fruitless works of darkness; rather expose them, for it is shameful even to mention the things done by them in secret; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore, it says: "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light."

**Gospel Acclamation:**

**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of Endless Glory**

I am the light of the world, says the Lord; whoever follows me will have the light of life.

## **A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to John** **(Jn 9:1-41)**

As Jesus passed by he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither he nor his parents sinned; it is so that the works of God might be made visible through him. We have to do the works of the one who sent me while it is day. Night is coming when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva, and smeared the clay on his

eyes, and said to him, “Go wash in the Pool of Siloam” —which means Sent —. So he went and washed, and came back able to see.

His neighbors and those who had seen him earlier as a beggar said, “Isn’t this the one who used to sit and beg?” Some said, “It is, “ but others said, “No, he just looks like him.” He said, “I am.” So they said to him, “How were your eyes opened?” He replied, “The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and told me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ So I went there and washed and was able to see.” And they said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I don’t know.”

They brought the one who was once blind to the Pharisees. Now Jesus had made clay and opened his eyes on a sabbath. So then the Pharisees also asked him how he was able to see. He said to them, “He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and now I can see.” So some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, because he does not keep the sabbath.”

But others said, “How can a sinful man do such signs?” And there was a division among them. So they said to the blind man again, “What do you have to say about him, since he opened your eyes?” He said, “He is a prophet.”

Now the Jews did not believe that he had been blind and gained his sight until they summoned the parents of the one who had gained his sight. They asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How does he now see?” His parents answered and said, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. We do not know how he sees now, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him, he is of age; he can speak for himself.” His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone acknowledged him as the Christ, he would be expelled from the synagogue. For this reason, his parents said, “He is of age; question him.”

So a second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, “Give God the praise! We know that this man is a sinner.” He replied, “If he is a sinner, I do not know. One thing I do know is that I was blind and now I see.” So they said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” He answered them, “I told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?”

They ridiculed him and said, “You are that man’s disciple; we are disciples of Moses! We know that God spoke to Moses, but we do not know where

this one is from.” The man answered and said to them, “This is what is so amazing, that you do not know where he is from, yet he opened my eyes.

We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if one is devout and does his will, he listens to him. It is unheard of that anyone ever opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he would not be able to do anything.” They answered and said to him, “You were born totally in sin, and are you trying to teach us?” Then they threw him out.

When Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, he found him and said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” He answered and said, “Who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?” Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, the one speaking with you is he.” He said, “I do believe, Lord,” and he worshiped him. Then Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see might see, and those who do see might become blind.”

Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not also blind, are we?” Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you are saying, ‘We see,’ so your sin remains.



## Growing in Faith Reflection

The story of Jesus and the woman at the well in last week's Gospel is one of those cinematic and very human stories that we find in the Bible. You can see it unfold before your eyes, as if in a movie. In fact, I find it fun and useful to imagine a couple of actors doing the scene.

How, for instance, would the one actor convey that Jesus is tired after his journey? How would the other say her lines to the request of Jesus for a drink? “How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?” What tone would she use? Would she be meek? Argumentative? Sassy?

And, from there, the scene plays out in a lively give-and-take until the woman says something about the Messiah coming, and Jesus delivers the punchline of the scene: “I am he, the one speaking with you.”

Great literature gives us insight into what it means to be human. In a way, all great literature is sacred-writing. The Bible is “official” sacred-writing and also great literature.

This resonant exchange between two human beings says something about what it means to be human and what it means to be a believer. It also says something about how we meet God.

Jesus isn’t going to be the one who fills my order at Starbucks, but my interaction with the woman behind the counter—or with anyone—is something special and sacred. As Jesus says in Matthew’s Gospel, “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

~ *Patrick T. Reardon for Growing in Faith*

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## Faith-Based Activities and Advice for Kids

Dear Families,

As we all prepare to hunker down for the next few weeks and home school our kids, please remember to keep faith a part of your discussions and include some Lenten activities at home. Below are some links to Lenten activities you can do at home. One of the links below is an article about how to talk to your children about the coronavirus and suggestions for assuaging fears in our kids.

I will also be sending out periodic e-newsletters with specific activities for our Religious Ed children and activities about the regular Sunday readings in place of Kids Word. If you are not on my regular email list please send me an email to add you to my list. Stay safe, stay well, and pray for patience, good health, and all those who have been infected with COVID-19.

Links for Lenten Activities:

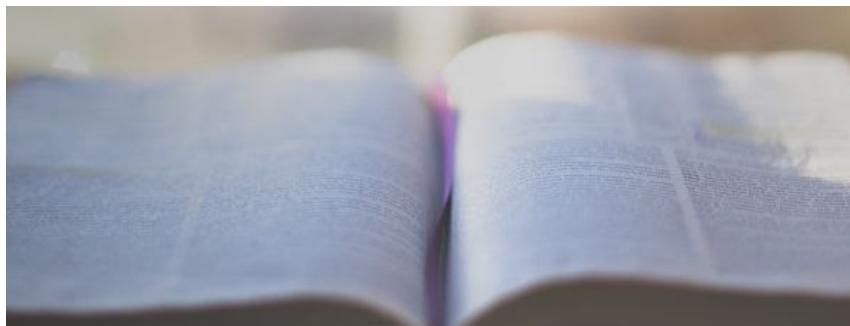
- <https://www.reallifeathome.com/printable-stations-of-the-cross-for-children/>
- <https://www.lovolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/liturgical-year/lent/activities-and-resources/lent-at-home>
- <https://www.thereligionteacher.com/lent-activities/>
- <https://catholicmom.com/kids/lenten-activities-for-children/>

Link to Article about Coronavirus:

- <https://www.theloop.ca/ctvnews/what-should-you-tell-your-kids-about-coronavirus/>

Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns.

*~ Jim Potthast, Youth & Family Minister*



# Daily Scripture Readings

Our website is listing the daily readings for Masses [HERE](#).

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## Mass Intentions

Mass intentions for scheduled mass will be transferred to the private masses the parish priests (Fr. Mike Bradley, Fr. Mike Gabriel, and Fr. Rich Prendergast) will say during this time. If those who requested/scheduled these Masses would prefer to have them moved to a different date, please contact the Rectory and they can re-scheduled them.

- Monday, March 23 - Living & deceased mothers & fathers of St. Gertrude parishioners
- Tuesday, March 24 - Cheryl Veccie +
- Wednesday, March 25 - Purgatorial Society
- Thursday, March 26 - All those suffering due to the COVID-19 crisis
- Friday, March 27 - Brian Dunne +
- Saturday, March 28 - Linda & Early Palomar +
- Sunday, March 29 - Margaret Kollar O'Sullivan +, Jack Taylor +, Carol McGraith +

*(+ indicates the person is deceased)*

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# Volunteer Opportunities

Looking for something to do? [Care for Real](#) is always in need of volunteers! Please reach out to Karen at [volunteer@careforreal.org](mailto:volunteer@careforreal.org). She is overseeing scheduling and shifts available.

Our Alderman, Harry Osterman, is coordinating local needs and service opportunities. You can check these out at his [website](#).

Our Heart to Heart Director, Jane Callahan-Moore, is also helping coordinate outreach to the elderly and shut-ins, including shopping and bringing food to those unable to get to the store. You can contact Jane by calling the Heart to Heart office at 773.973.5464 or emailing her at [jcallahanmoore@stgertrudechicago.org](mailto:jcallahanmoore@stgertrudechicago.org).

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## Please Pray for Our Parishioners and Friends

- Walter Bradford
- Ester Bugler
- Maggie Callaway
- Aida Calvopina
- Geraldine Clark
- Connie Cool
- Mary Fitzgerald
- Joan Harrington
- Gina Heidkamp
- Maria Hertl
- Bernice Kiedysz
- Karey Myers
- Margaret O'Sullivan
- Don Piven
- Charley Scantlebury
- David Sierzega
- Richard Seitz
- Peggy Stoffel
- The Sullivan family
- Elinora E. Tolentino
- Norma E. Viray

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MAY THEY REST IN PEACE



## Rest in Peace

- [Margaret O'Sullivan, daughter of Mark & Cathy Kollar](#)
- Marc Loveless
- Lorraine Walton, Aunt of Kevin Cheers

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## A Prayer During the Health Crisis

*Holy Virgin of Guadalupe, Queen of the Angels, and Mother of the Americas. We fly to you today as your beloved children. We ask you to intercede for us with your Son, as you did at the wedding in Cana. Pray for us, loving Mother, and gain for our nation and world, and for all our families and loved ones, the protection of your holy angels, that we may be spared the worst of this illness.*

*For those already afflicted, we ask you to obtain the grace of healing and deliverance. Hear the cries of those who are vulnerable and fearful, wipe away their tears and help them to trust. In this time of trial and testing, teach all of us in the Church to love one another and to be patient and kind. Help us to bring the peace of Jesus to our land and to our hearts. We come to*

*you with confidence, knowing that you truly are our compassionate mother, health of the sick and cause of our joy. Shelter us under the mantle of your protection, keep us in the embrace of your arms, help us always to know the love of your Son, Jesus.*

*Amen.*

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**Our mailing address is:**

1420 W. Granville, Chicago, IL 60660

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