

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT – MARCH 29, 2020

WEEKLY MASS SCHEDULE –

Masses will be celebrated for the intentions of the parishioners of St. Mary Immaculate and St. Martin of Tours.

Tuesday, March 31st

1st Reading: Numbers 21.4-9
 Responsorial Psalm: **Psalm 102.1-2, 15-17, 18-20 (R.1)**
 Gospel: John 8. 21-30

Wednesday, April 1st

1st Reading: Daniel 3. 13-20, 24, 49-50, 91-95
 Responsorial Canticle: **Daniel 3. 52, 53, 54, 55, 56 (R.52b)**
 Gospel: John 8. 31-42

Thursday, April 2nd, *St. Francis of Paola (Obl Mem)*

1st Reading: Genesis 17. 3-9
 Responsorial Psalm: **Psalm 105.4-5, 6-7, 8-9 (R.8a)**
 Gospel: John 8. 51-59

Friday, April 3rd

1st Reading: Jeremiah 20. 7, 10-13
 Responsorial Psalm: **Psalm 18.1-2ab, 2c-3, 4-5, 6 (R. see 6)**
 Gospel: John 10. 31-42

Saturday, April 4th, *St. Isidore (Obl Mem)*

1st Reading: Ezekiel 37.21-28
 Responsorial Canticle: **Jeremiah 31.10, 11-12ab, 13 (R.10d)**
 Gospel: John 11. 45-56

Sunday April 5th, *Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord*

Gospel: Mt 21.1-11.
 1st Reading: Isaiah 50.4-7
 Responsorial Psalm: **Psalm 22**
 2nd Reading: Phil 2.6-11.
 Gospel: Mt 26.14–27.6



POPE FRANCIS' PRAYER TO OUR LADY, HEALTH OF THE SICK:

O Mary, you shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope.

We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick. At the foot of the Cross you participated in Jesus' pain, with steadfast faith.

You, Salvation of the Roman People, know what we need.

We are certain that you will provide, so that, as you did at Cana of Galilee, joy and feasting might return after this moment of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform ourselves to the Father's will and to do what Jesus tells us.

He who took our sufferings upon Himself, and bore our sorrows to bring us, through the Cross, to the joy of the Resurrection. Amen.

We seek refuge under your protection, O Holy Mother of God.

Do not despise our pleas – we who are put to the test – and deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin, Amen!

- Pope Francis, March 2020

Please continue to remember our sick parishioners and all the sick and those who look after them:

Don Woodham, Wayne Robinson, Maverick Southern, Margaret Morris, Defina Segatti, Felix Kozak, Argene Pellegrini, Tom Wunder, Kaelynn Heines, and family and friends.

READINGS FOR THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT:

1st Reading: Ezekiel 37. 12-14

God will open the graves and restore the people of Israel

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 130 1-8

With the Lord is forgiveness and mercy

2nd Reading: Romans 8. 8-11

The Spirit of God Dwells in you

Gospel: John 11. 1-45

Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead

A Brief Reflection on the Readings:

The concept of the grave brings to mind the place of the dead, the place of no return, the place where there is no life. In the first reading, God promises life and liberty to the Israelites offering to open up the graves and raise His people to bring them back to life. In the second reading, St Paul reminds the Romans that they must strive to overcome their sinful natures so as to live in union with Christ.

The idea of a life-giving God as seen in the first reading is continued in the gospel reading where Jesus brought back to life Lazarus who was already dead for some days to the amazement of the two sisters who were already in mourning for the death of their beloved brother.

Here Jesus wanted to prove a point not only to the two sisters, Martha and Mary but also to all of us today: He is a God of life and not of death, a God that heals and gives strength to His people. This is quite instructive and consoling in such a time as this when the whole world is battling the ravaging scourge of COVID-19 pandemic, assuring us that we can never run out of options with Him. As people of faith and hope in the resurrection, we know that God is always with us no matter the situation or whatever life may throw to our face.

Jesus who is the resurrection and the life continues to offer us life in the face of all our life struggles including dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic for He accompanies us in the celebration of the sacraments, when we gather in His name to pray and when we read and study the words of sacred scripture.

Let us continue to allow Jesus to lead the way in our lives, actions and values and for sure he will raise us up from all our weaknesses, failures and sicknesses and give us life and life in abundance.

THE SUNDAY THAT WILL SURELY GO DOWN IN HISTORY

Beloved Parishioners:

I want to believe we are all keeping well and healthy together with all our families. Please, may we continue to do all in our powers to stay safe and healthy in these very different and difficult times. As children of God, may we never forget that we

are never alone especially at such a time like this but always remember that the good Lord is always with us and will neither abandon us nor forsake us.

As scripture rightly says “can a mother forget her nursing child? ...even if these may forget, but I will not forget you” (Is 49:15).

I would like to share a few thoughts with you beloved parishioners at St Mary and St Martin on this day of our Lord, Sunday March 22, 2020. This day will definitely go down in my history books for obvious reasons. Today at Mass exactly about the same time we usually gather on a Sunday, it was totally an unusual gathering from what we are used to as I was all alone at Sunday Mass, the first of its kind in my many years of priestly ministry, and yet I could still hear members of the choir rendering those beautiful Lenten songs from the choir loft upstairs with all the people of God gathered in spirit around the Eucharistic table and the Lord blessing each of us and our families as I lifted up the precious body and blood from the high altar.

That was quite a consoling moment for me and for all of us because I know for sure that in these unsettling and uncertain times when what fills our minds and thoughts are but the fear of the unknown and what the next day might bring our way with the COVID-19 pandemic ravaging the entire globe and shutting down our normal and usual lives with the speed of light, but I still know that the battle is not totally ours because we are never alone in this whole journey for the good Lord knows all that concerns us and surely accompanies us every step of the way and even in the most difficult and perilous times like this, and together we shall eventually get through these times of trial better and stronger.

Please, be assured of my prayers especially at the celebration of the Holy Eucharist and during these most holy times and days of our liturgical life and celebrations. May we never falter at such times as these but remain strong and steadfast in the face of such uncertain times in an uncharted territory in the hope and belief that it shall all end in praise and thanksgiving to God in the end. Please, continue to stay safe and healthy with your loved ones and families and please remember to also keep me in your prayers in these trying times as well. With prayerful wishes and blessings to you, your families and all your loved ones. Always in the union of prayers,

Father Gordian- Your Pastor

PARISH NEWS AND UPDATES:

As a result of the current COVID-19 outbreak the Diocese of Hamilton is implementing these further directives regarding our pastoral practices in the diocese effective immediately:

- All Sunday and Weekday Masses are cancelled until further notice
- No public celebration of Holy Week Ceremonies: A decree has been issued from the office of the Bishop regarding Holy Week ceremonies and the celebration of the Paschal Triduum

To this end, the Chrism Mass, Palm Sunday celebration and the Sacred Triduum will not be celebrated publicly this year, given the COVID-19 pandemic, but pastors have been granted the faculty to celebrate the Mass of the Lord's Supper without the people and also read the Passion of the Lord and say the Universal prayer on Good Friday with the people of God in mind, especially those who have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The decree reads in part, "Having reviewed the *Decree: In Times of COVID-19*, issued by mandate of Pope Francis and published by the Offices of the Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments (Prot N. 153/20) on March 19, 2020, I, Douglas Crosby, O.M.I., hereby decree the following to be observed during Holy Week and the Sacred Triduum 2020 in the diocese of Hamilton. The decree can be accessed in full on the parish website or the diocesan website.

- If you have an urgent pastoral need, or someone needs emergency pastoral care (the sick and the dying) please do not hesitate to contact the parish office.

In this time of need, parishioners are encouraged to pray for one another and for those whose lives may be affected by this virus. The Rosary, prayerful reading of Sacred Scripture and other devotions are greatly encouraged.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Please note that **all Churches** will remain closed as all public Masses, devotions, parish gatherings and events have been suspended until further notice, including:

- **Confirmation- March 2020 - Postponed**
- **First Reconciliation- April 2020 - Postponed**
- **Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of The Lord - April 12, 2020**
- **Capital Campaign Kick-Off Weekend- April 2020 - Postponed**
- **First Holy Communion - May 2020- Postponed**

PRAYER DURING COVID-19:

Lord Jesus, Good Shepherd and Divine Physician, hear our pleas. We implore your mercy in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Guide our efforts to eradicate COVID-19 and make preparations to care for those most vulnerable.

Assist all professionals, first responders, nurses, doctors, administrators and volunteers who work to eradicate this disease.

May our actions be marked by your steadfast love and selfless service and never by panic or fear.

May our government leaders be open to the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and may they use the Cardinal Virtues to respond to this pandemic according to your will.

Bestow your comfort and healing to the sick, sustain and strengthen them by your grace. May they know your closeness as they carry the cross of illness. And may all you have called from this life come to worship you eternally with all the saints as you grant consolation and peace to their family and friends. Amen.

Holy Mary, Health of the Sick, **pray for us.**
St. Joseph, Hope of the Sick, **pray for us.**