

Saint Paul the Apostle Church

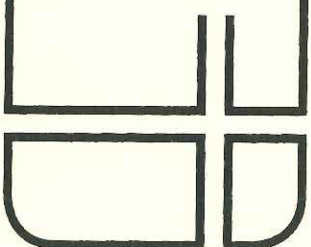
Conventual Franciscan Friars

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Fourth Sunday of Lent
Sunday, March 22, 2020

My dear parishioners of St. Paul the Apostle Catholic Church in Pismo Beach, California. May Almighty God give you His Peace. To say that we are living difficult days is an understatement. We are living an unprecedented time of trial that none of us was ever prepared to experience. This is the fifth day of not celebrating the Holy Mass publicly and believe me when I tell you that it is painful to not have you present for the Holy Eucharist which as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches us is "*the source and summit of our faith.*" It has taken me all of this time to overcome the pain of this suspension of public Masses and closure of the church in order to finally have the energy to reach out to you.

I want all of you to be assured that Fathers Alphonse, John, and myself, along with Brother Raphael are in good health. Fathers Alphonse, John, and myself have gathered for our private Conventual Franciscan Mass and celebrated it with great love for all of you and your loved ones living and deceased. Every Mass Intention has been fulfilled and will continue to be fulfilled. If any of you wish to have Masses said for yourselves, your loved ones living and deceased, that can still be done since we now book them online. All you have to do is e-mail the intention and I will book it for the earliest date available closest to the date you requested as well as give you instructions on how to submit the \$10.00 donation for the Mass. For booking the Mass Intention, please e-mail me directly fatheriacob@stpaulspismo beach.com.

On this Fourth Sunday of Lent, Jesus opened the eyes of a man born blind. It has been my prayer all week leading up to this Sunday and it still is in the days ahead for us to see and embrace Christ Our Light and allow Him to embrace us back to comfort us during these challenging days. This Sunday has traditionally been titled *Laetare* (Rejoice) Sunday, because we have something special to look forward to the Resurrection whose Light has and will conquer the world's darkness.

The Diocese of Monterey website dioceseofmonterey.org has links to where Masses are being celebrated LiveStream from different parishes in the Diocese. Some of you have let me know that you exercised this option along with others around the country which your family members and friends may have shared with you. Another option is EWTN (Eternal Word Television Network) which has the daily Mass available on television and online every day.

I would like to take this time to update you on how to reach us if necessary. The Parish Office is temporarily closed to the public until further notice. Our Parish Administrative Assistant Michael Schacherer and Christopher Garcia who is our Bulletin Editor, Webmaster, as well as Administrative Assistant to the Viva Francis Foundation are working remotely from home. If you e-mail them and/or call their direct telephone extensions, you will receive a response as soon as possible. Father Alphonse, Brother Raphael, and myself remain here onsite and can also be reached directly at our direct telephone extensions.

Please note how special you are to us and that you and your loved ones living and deceased are being remembered with great love during our community prayers as well as at our private Conventual Franciscan Mass.

Several of you in the past week have mailed and/or dropped off in the mail slot your weekly contributions. I want to thank you for that from the bottom of my heart for remembering the Catholic Christian Duty of supporting your community with your time, talent, and treasure. In the coming weeks, we are going to know and feel the negative financial impact this will have on our parish as well as the other parishes and institutions in the Diocese. If you feel you are able to continue your tithing, you are more than welcome to do so. You may send it to us by mail, preferably with your weekly contributions envelope or you may write the envelope number on the check in order for us to keep good and accurate records of our contributions received.

Finally, as I have so many times shared with you in my homilies, there are always going to be tests that will shake us and our faith to the core. This is one of them beyond a reasonable doubt. Let us never forget that his parish which was founded March 9, 1930, during the beginning and hardest days of the Great Depression overcame that ordeal with our country along with what followed, a Second World War where our country demonstrated what a strong heart its citizens have when responding to a challenge and difficult days. That strong responsive heart has endured Post World War Two conflicts, socio-political and economic hardships, as well as 9/11 and its aftermath.

The fact that we are a ninety-year old parish community that has witnesses those historical events, I am proud to say we are St. Paul Strong! And we will overcome this hardship thanks to our strong faith in the same way we have overcome all of the others in the past.

May Almighty God continue blessing each and every one of you with good health and may Our Blessed Mother Mary, Refuge of the Sick pray with and for those in need of healing.

With great love and respect for all of you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Jacob Carazo, OFM Conv." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fr. Jacob Carazo, OFM Conv.
Pastor