



Embracing God's People • Equipping Disciples • Accompanying Believers

April 10, 2021

Surrexit sicut dixit! He is Risen as he said!

Brothers and Sisters,

This weekend we celebrate the great Feast of The Divine Mercy.

I appreciate that the devotion promoted by St. Faustina has a special place in the hearts and minds of many believers. Further, it was given new life and energy in the Church because of the encouragement it received from Pope John Paul II. While the formal devotion itself might be new to some, the message that lies at its heart is the same message that lies at the heart of the gospel of Jesus. That the mercy of God is the core of the message, the good news of Jesus, is no surprise to believers, even though at times we might be hard pressed in our own lives to keep it front-and-center for ourselves.

In a world where the fracturing of our society is considered normal, and when we are more likely to experience disrespect and disregard for fellow human beings rather than empathy and respect, the message of St. Faustina and the invitation to be a people who are compassionate and merciful because we ourselves stand in need of God's own compassion and mercy in our lives, is a message worth embracing.

Gratitude Overflowing

I would like to take a moment to express a word of profound gratitude to all who have shared words of encouragement and blessing with myself and with the priests of the parish. We are moved by your remembrance, and deeply touched by your goodness and well-wishes.

It is appropriate at this time to also acknowledge and give thanks to the **benefactors** and **donors** who sustain our church and our parish ministries through their generous and thoughtful gifts. It is no exaggeration to say that in these months the generosity of those who went out of their way to get their gifts and donations to us have made a world of difference. Too often this aspect of our discipleship can easily be overlooked, but it is only with the goodness and

This Week's Letter

- [Gratitude](#)
- [Expanding Sunday Schedule](#)
- [Newly Baptized, Confirmed & First Communion](#)
- [Volunteer – Make a Difference](#)
- [ALPHA – Growing in Faith](#)
- [April Donation/Drive-By](#)
- [The Further Adventures of Mollie Loftus](#)

General Information

- [Mass Schedule \[Protocols\]](#)
- [Reconciliation \[Protocols\]](#)
- [Sacrament of Anointing](#)
- [Pastoral Visit](#)
- [Tuesday Morning Coffee](#)
- [Friday Night Zoom with the Pastor](#)
- [Religious Education](#)

Forward this email to a friend who might enjoy it

generosity of our benefactors that we can continue to provide ministry and services with which our parish has long been synonymous.

Though faced with the same economic challenges experienced by so many during the pandemic, along with some unique challenges particular to churches and places of worship, we nonetheless continued our support of MEND, the Guadalupe Center, the SFV Rescue Mission Homeless Shelter, Catholic Charities, and the Pregnancy Counselling Center, to name a few. We were very aware that our local partners in making the world a better place were confronting challenges in the same way we were, and we felt it was important to support their efforts, even if not to the same degree as we were able prior to COVID.

Donations were also what made possible our transition to ZOOM for a variety of purposes, from worship to the provision of ongoing religious education and catechesis for the young people in our community, to novel ways of meeting and gathering in a time of social distance and limited opportunities for interpersonal engagement. The development and rollout of native livestreaming resources was made possible during these times, only by the extraordinary generosity of those benefactors who saw the need and helped to realize the potential. It is important for me to single out Mary Janus and her tireless efforts to move that project forward in the final months of her time with us.

I wanted to highlight this goodness, this stewardship, this facet of Christian discipleship, because no matter how much or how little our benefactors gave, when taken together, each individual gift was multiplied and went to make a difference for so many. **Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!**

If you'd like to make a one-time gift, or to participate in our ongoing offertory program, please point your browser on over to our parish website, and to our [donate page](#).

Expanding our Sunday Schedule

As we continue to "reopen" our Church building for public worship, welcoming parishioners back to their "spiritual home" here at Lourdes, I am very happy to share with you that we are looking forward to re-instituting our Saturday evening 5:30pm vigil mass in the near future. We have sufficient "homecoming volunteers" to **recommence our Evening Vigil mass on Saturday, April 24th**. While we are unable to provide for an outdoor option for this particular mass, we are nonetheless delighted to welcome our congregation for indoor worship. Please note that the doors will be closed as soon as the liturgy gets underway, to allow our volunteers to particulate fully in the mass. Please plan appropriately.

Once again, I take this opportunity to remind everyone of the **dispensation from the "Sunday Obligation"** which was shared with us a full year ago by Archbishop Gomez, **continues to be in effect**, and will continue to remain so until it is deemed that the threat presented by the pandemic has receded sufficiently.

[\[TOP\]](#)

RCIA - Neophytes

For our newly baptized, and for those who received the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist for the first time, our Easter Vigil provided the occasion of a wonderful celebration of faith for the people who have journeyed and prepared together these many months. In truth, the preparation took place far beyond the

months of formal preparation here at Lourdes. Paul Amico, Ronald Bowler, Abbey Dubon, Alex Leyva, Juan Lopez, Nadia Lopez, Franky Magana, Valerie Sanchez, & Marcela Venegas came to this point on their faith journey along many paths and experiences, throughout which God prepared their hearts and minds for the celebration of sacraments at Easter Vigil. They have been accompanied by family and friends, and have grown through the many and varied experiences of their lives throughout these years. The faithful work of God in their lives continues, and we are delighted to have been able to be part of their journey. We continue to hold these, our brothers and sisters, in prayer, as God continues to bring to fulfillment the good work begun in them.

Our gratitude, too, goes to the men and women who served as sponsors to these neophytes, as well as to Sr. Sharon and the faithful group of parishioners who form our RCIA team.



[\[TOP\]](#)

Share Your Gifts

Speaking of the wonderful job our volunteers do for the rest of us, keep in mind that we can always use a few extra hands, especially when accompanied by cool dispositions. We currently have openings for service in the following roles:

- Weekday Lectors (8:30am)
- Weekday Ushers (6:30am & 8:30am)
- Check-in / Greeters (Weekdays and Sundays)
- Saturday Evening Vigil 5:30pm – (Greeters/Check-in, Ushers, etc.)
- Livestream operators (8:30am Weekday Mass, and Sundays)
(If you can send an email or watch a video on your device, we can train you for the rest)
- Bereavement Assistance

To volunteer, please don't hesitate to reach out to Diane at the parish office if you've got any questions or would like more information (818-349-1500 Ext. 101), or go online to [register](#) as a Lourdes Volunteer. Appropriate training for each of these roles is provided, and there are opportunities to serve both indoors and outdoors.

[\[TOP\]](#)

A New Season of ALPHA



A new season of Alpha got underway on Wednesday evening. If you're looking for a way to explore Easter Faith or to engage with others who also have questions about faith, then consider exploring those questions together with others.

ALPHA takes place via the ZOOM platform, on Wednesday evenings. The first gathering took place last Wednesday, April 7th, and the gathering will continue through the Easter Season. Look for more information on the parish website, or if you have any questions, email alphaoll@ollnr.org.

Consider enjoying this wonderful opportunity to explore questions of faith, and to come to a deeper understanding of what it means to be part of a community growing together in their relationships with one another and with Jesus.

[\[TOP\]](#)

Donation Drive-by Scheduled

Our next Donation/Drive-by is scheduled to take place on the morning of Sunday, April 25th and will run from 9am through 1pm to afford participation of everyone either arriving or departing for Sunday morning mass. This event will focus on providing canned goods for MEND, and on collecting **Stationary and Stamps** for an initiative coordinated by **"Get on the Bus"**. Those not familiar with the "Get on the Bus" initiative can read about it on their [website](#). The program ordinarily involves the transportation of children to visit with their moms or dads on or close to Mother's Day or Father's Day. Obviously, with pandemic considerations in play, this is not possible, but our hope is to gather enough stamps and stationary to allow children to easily write to their incarcerated loved ones, providing them with an opportunity to nurture their important family relationships despite the difficult circumstances they face.



Blessings on you all.

The Further Adventures of Mollie Loftus

Easter break has been a very full and busy time for Mollie & Anna (not to mention for mom and dad). Mollie's artistic endeavors have been continuing to unfold. Baby Anna continues to grow and learn from everyone around her. And mom and dad are thriving in the chaos!

Good Friday saw Dad take delivery of a new lawn mower. The lawns surrounding Mollie's home are sufficiently expansive that her Dad has been planning a ride-on mower for some time, now. The planning and the saving all paid off, and the new addition to the toolshed finally arrived.

Of course, this also meant that there are new experiences in store for my nieces. I've already communicated with my brother that perhaps Mollie's helmet that she uses while bicycling could also be used when helping Dad mow the lawn(?).



When life presents us with new opportunities, or new experiences that are of potential significance for us, we are often confronted with a possibility for growing and become more than we previously were. I confess, that there are times when I enjoy the comfort of the way things are, and I will not actively seek out new opportunities or experiences. There are times, however, when I cannot just go along for much longer with the status-quo of my life, and I find myself having to move forward, to imagine things differently. I find myself stretching to wrap my arms around some new experience that holds the promise of new life, or of growth and development.

Beyond anything of my choosing, there are often times when life just throws a curve-ball and I can either engage, or curl up in a corner and dis-engage, hoping that "this, too, shall pass". It can often appear to us that life unfolds and invites us to live into the unfolding (or not!). It's not necessarily something that we sought out for ourselves, but nonetheless we find ourselves confronted with choices that can help us to grow more deeply into becoming the person God dreams for us to become.

The gospels that tell of how the first disciples received the news of the resurrection are very human and reveal many of the post-resurrection responses of the earliest Christians. Mark's gospel (the first to be written) tells of the women being afraid to share the news of Jesus' resurrection with anyone (Mk 16:8). Mary Magdalene's witness was dismissed (Mk 16:11), as was that of the two disciples who had been out walking (Mk 16:13). The eleven were decidedly in a mode where they were not open to experiences beyond those with which they were familiar. Apparently, resurrection from the dead was not very familiar to them! But to whom would it be, in fairness? And yet, the persistence of the truth of the resurrection of Jesus eventually brought the eleven to believe, and from there, the whole world was transformed. Not only did the lives of the eleven change forever, but in truth, its no exaggeration to say that the trajectory of history for the whole world was irrevocably altered.

When we lean into life trusting that God will bring grace and blessing from the change and from the opportunities that confront us, we are surely not disappointed. To avoid the change, to refuse the opportunity, to draw back from the new

experience may not bring any newness of life to us, but it can too easily bring us to regret and even persistent frustration with ourselves at our reluctance to embrace the blessing.

As we are beginning to emerge from these COVID-days, perhaps we might choose reflect on what opportunities for change and growth we have experienced, and whether or not our openness (or lack thereof), might be an occasion of grace and blessing for ourselves, for our families, our neighbors, and even our world.

“He said to them, “Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature.” (Mk 16:15)

God’s blessings on you and yours in this Easter Season.

Fr. David

[\[TOP\]](#)

Schedule of Masses

Effective March 7th

Sunday:

7:30am (English – Indoors & Patio)
9:00am (Indoors, Patio & Livestream)
11:00am (Indoors, Patio & Livestream)
12:30pm (Indoors, Patio & Livestream
- Spanish)

Effective March 8th

Weekday

Monday – Friday

6:30am (Indoors & Patio)

Monday – Saturday

8:30am (Indoors, Patio & Livestream)

****Access to parking lot through driveway**

immediately EAST of Church to avoid school carline**

NOTE: **Saturday Evening Vigil Mass at 5:30pm resumes, April 24th**

[Protocols for Participation in Sunday \(in-person\) Worship](#)

[Protocols for Participation in Weekday \(in-person\) Worship](#)

NOTE: In the event of inclement weather, it is possible that outdoor participation may be unavailable.

[\[TOP\]](#)

Confession/Reconciliation

As LA County is judged to be in the “Orange Tier” of our pandemic response, the Sacrament of Reconciliation continues to be available **by appointment**. Call the parish office (818-349-1500, Ext. 101) or [email](#) to arrange for a mutually acceptable time for the celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation.

The sacrament is also **available Saturday afternoons** from **4pm – 5pm** at the **Moran Center** without appointment.

[Protocols for Participation in Sacramental Reconciliation](#)

Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick / “Last Rites”

Those seeking to avail of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick are asked to call the parish office at 818-349-1500. During “office hours”, staff will assist you and arrange for a priest to visit. Outside of office hours, an option to have your call forwarded to an “emergency line” is available, and you will be connected to a priest who will arrange a visit with you. This effectively means that priests continue to be available to share the sacrament 24/7.

Be advised that at this time hospitals and healthcare facilities may not permit visitors, including priests, to enter their facilities. Everyone is asked to carefully consider whether delaying the sacrament may be prudent.

Pastoral “Visit”

To arrange a “visit” with Fr. Fili or Fr. David, please feel free to call the parish office (818-349-1500 Ext. 101) or to [email](#) for an appointment. Pastoral “visits” are available via phone or by zoom call, depending on preference.

[\[TOP\]](#)

Tuesday Morning Coffee with the Pastor

On Tuesday mornings, following the 8:30am mass livestreamed from Church, parishioners are invited to join an informal get-together by means of the zoom platform. Grab a cup of tea or coffee, and come spend 30-45 minutes in conversation with fellow parishioners. To receive the ZOOM details for the gathering, call (818-349-1500 Ext. 101) or [email](#) the parish office.

[\[TOP\]](#)

Friday Night Zoom with the Pastor

Originally conceived as an informal Q&A inspired by those who participated in our ALPHA process, these Friday nights continue to be occasions when parishioners get to submit questions for reflection and consideration. **The 3rd Friday evening of the month at 7pm** is an opportunity to gather with fellow parishioners and to explore questions of faith, current events, or simply enjoy the occasion to ask a question you've always wanted to ask, but never really had the opportunity. To receive the ZOOM details for the gathering, call (818-349-1500 Ext. 101) or [email](#) the parish office.

[\[TOP\]](#)

Our **Religious Education** staff continue to work with **Families of Faith**, our family-centered approach to growing in faith and preparing for sacrament. All sessions take place remotely using a video-conferencing platform suitable to our needs. For more information, please [email](#) or call Sr. Frances Kennedy. Leave your information/question at the RE office number 818-349-1285, and Sr. Frances will return your call.

[\[TOP\]](#)