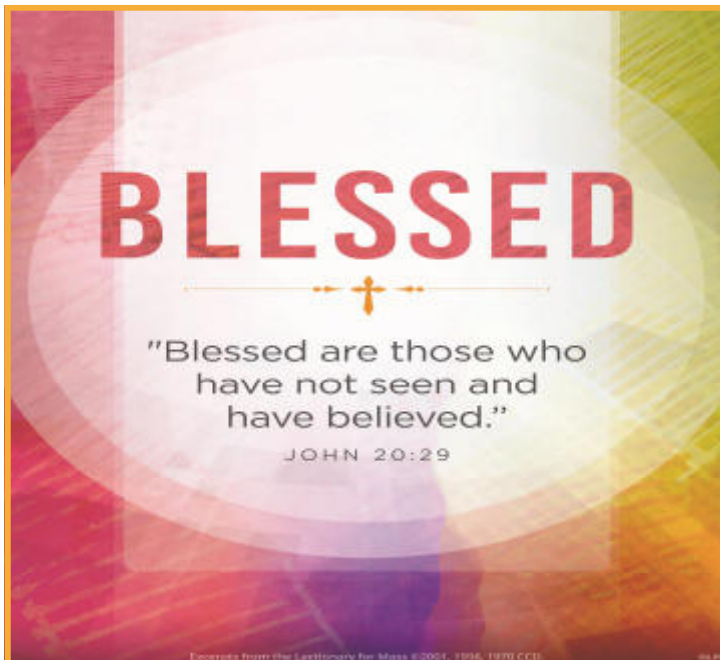




# Saint Matthew Church The PULSE

April 19, 2020

Detroit, Michigan



## From Father Duane's Desk

On this Second Sunday after Easter, although we are still in “lockdown” due to the coronavirus, I want to share with you my personal reflection on a very different Easter Sunday. As I wrote last week, I did celebrate a private Mass on Easter Sunday. As I signed myself with the sign of the cross and said “The Lord be with you;” the “And with your spirit” was not heard in response.

At first, it brought tears to my eyes. To look out at the empty pews, the empty church was heart-rending. Of course, the celebration of the Mass and the sacraments are efficacious, and I knew when I pronounced the words of Consecration “This is my Body;” “This is my Blood” that the Lord was truly present, not only to me as the priest but to all of you who so faithfully filled the pews throughout the year. My sadness was turned to joy — EASTER JOY! — when I realized that the empty church did not mean an empty belief.

I thought after the liturgy just how profound the experience was. I thought about the empty church contrasted with the empty tomb that first Easter morning when Mary, Peter, and John first peered into the tomb and saw that it was empty; it didn't crush them, it gave them hope! Could he have risen as he said he would? Could he be alive and they would see him again? I'm sure it was a strange mix of emotions.

It was that strange mix when I saw the empty church on Easter morning, you, the faithful, were not there; but it didn't mean that you were gone. No, I had the sure and certain hope that we will rise again as did the Lord. In fact, I felt your spiritual presence. I could see and remember faces, for we all sit in our spots, and when I looked around, I could you sitting there where you always do. I could recognize in my memory your voice singing or responding to the liturgy. I could see you standing and talking in little groups to one another after Mass and greeting me at the church doors with “Happy Easter, Father!” Like the empty tomb, the empty church gave me a whole new way to appreciate you as parishioners, as faithful Catholic people, you were there spiritually, and I felt your spiritual presence.

Maybe it was the familiarity of our worship space, maybe it was the smell of candles and incense that always seems to linger, maybe it was a good and holy feeling I always have when I enter the church on Sunday morning; but I felt you there, and I felt your presence in a different and unique way. As your pastor, I felt proud to offer the Eucharist with your intentions in mind praying for your health and safety and that of the world in these strange and seemingly empty times, and knowing that you and I and the Lord that morning were in communion with each other.

Yes, the empty tomb gave way to an enduring faith. The empty church brought about a yearning faith to experience the Lord more closely. Whether we were in our living rooms praying silently, watching the Cathedral Mass on TV, or simply remembering Easter past, we were together spiritually connected by the empty tomb of the risen Lord.

*Continued on Page Three*

## Readings for the Week of April 19, 2020

Sunday: Acts 2:42-47/Ps 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24 [1]/  
1 Pt 1:3-9/Jn 20:19-31  
Monday: Acts 4:23-31/Ps 2:1-3, 4-7a, 7b-9 [cf. 11d]/  
Jn 3:1-8  
Tuesday: Acts 4:32-37/Ps 93:1ab, 1cd-2, 5 [1a]/Jn 3:7b-15  
Wednesday: Acts 5:17-26/Ps 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9 [7a]/  
Jn 3:16-21  
Thursday: Acts 5:27-33/Ps 34:2 and 9, 17-18, 19-20 [7a]/  
Jn 3:31-36  
Friday: Acts 5:34-42/Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14 [cf. 4abc]/  
Jn 6:1-15  
Saturday: 1 Pt 5:5b-14/Ps 89:2-3, 6-7, 16-17 [2]/  
Mk 16:15-20  
Next Sunday: Acts 2:14, 22-33/Ps 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11  
[11a]/1 Pt 1:17-21/Lk 24:13-35

## Second Sunday of Easter

A person was going through a very dark time, questioning the meaning of life, not feeling very purposeful or worthwhile, and feeling disconnected and unappreciated. Suddenly, they gazed up at the night sky, found themselves in awe of all the stars and constellations, and exclaimed, "I am here on purpose and I am loved!" Having been brought by God to this moment of intense connection and awareness, his life changed from that moment on.

If we are always preoccupied with the challenges, obligations, and stuff of daily life, we can easily miss the wonderful opportunities when the resurrected Christ is knocking at our door. If we open ourselves to the fullness of experience, we will find ourselves listening and embracing all that is around us, being caught up in the magnificence of creation's grandeur and knowing in our heart and soul that God is and I am.

While that sounds like a simple, tell-me-something-I don't-know kind of revelation, it is life changing when it takes root in the depth of a person's soul. Stumbling upon this awesome truth and internalizing it doesn't require an assent of the mind. It beckons for a claim on our soul. We find ourselves knowing something profound that cannot be explained or reasoned, but purely is. When we are caught up in an experience and encounter the truth, it doesn't matter how all of the pieces got put together. Truth is simply truth. The "my Lord and my God" responses we utter are not evoked because all of the pieces of faith and life make reasonable sense. The "my Lord and my God" affirmations come when we are lifted up out of our preoccupations and silliness and are in the presence of mystery and mercy.

God is mystery, one who is beyond our grasp but at the same time within our reach, knowable yet unknowable. And when in the presence of mystery, there comes an intense experience of mercy. We know deep within the essence of ourselves — and in the very life of creation — this beating, unconditionally accepting, life-sustaining, profound, mysterious yet familiar presence of love. We have found our peace. "Peace be with you."



## A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

"Whose sins you forgive are forgiven" means the grudges we carry only make us miserable. The Kingdom of God begins in your home where children learn the paths to peace promised in today's Gospel through merciful and forgiving demonstrations by their parents.

## Saying Yes When It Is Hard

Two year olds learn the short word "no" and can use it a lot while they go through that particular stage of development and growth, and although this is obviously misused, there is a proper time to say "no" later in life, especially to sin and pride and self-will.

It is easy to say "yes" when things are going our way, when we get what we want, or when others offer us good things and blessings and help. That is easy indeed! What is harder, is to say "yes" when things are difficult and/or unpleasant, but we still have to do what is best and good in those harder circumstances at that time. Then "yes" can take sweating blood and tears, especially to be grateful while saying it.

We live in times that we have to wisely say both "yes" and "no" - "yes" to follow what is best although it is hard to be responsible just now in such restrictive times that we live in. It is also harder to say "no" to being selfish, or feeling sorry for ourselves or being put upon, and to be not as free as we want, and then to just wish everything would be over and our lives can return to at least more normal. This "no" is hard indeed!

Right now no one is really exempt from our troubles all over the world. Yet, it was just as such hard times that Christians in the past shone with the Light of Christ, for they used hard times like a polishing cloth to brighten His radiance that then shown out from them so brightly and from their faces. We can make these times a blessing, but we have to ask God to see just how do this, and we have to be glad to follow Him when times are hard like now, especially as we are at the end of Lent. Let us reach out in love through prayer to all who suffer, and also encourage and reach out to our friends as we can.

God is with us especially when times are hard, and when we put Him into our hearts to do good. These then can be times that are hard but still good. May Christ help us see all things with hope today!



## A Prayer to the Living God of the Cosmos

*Abiding Presence of Love,  
Your Universe is a pathway to revealing  
Your Divine Presence everywhere.  
Evolution is a cosmic roadmap,  
charting out of chaos, Your creative expressions of Love.  
I am an Earthling, life and beauty surround me.  
With childlike wonder and awe, I seek to know You.  
What my mind cannot comprehend,  
my spirit surrenders and trusts as Holy Mystery.  
Where do You dwell? How do I find You?  
Silence is Your dwelling place, stillness your habitat,  
Your breath of life fills sacred presence in all.  
I often feel Your ever-present communion,  
creative energies, abiding love, enduring peace  
when I honor my kinship with all that is.  
O, Divine Spirit, I open my mind and heart,  
to listen  
to hope  
to respect all beings,  
to live as one global family. Amen!*



### From Father Duane's Desk (cont'd)

Indeed, a different but no less powerful Easter experience. As I viewed the church in a quiet, serene state, I had to ask myself, **WAS IT A MORNING LIKE THIS?"**

Again, my friends, Happy Easter!

Know that I pray for you daily, for your health and well-being, and I ask you to do the same for me. Keep the faith — this too shall pass.

God bless you, Father Duane

### CRS Rice Bowl ~ "For Lent for Life"

Let us rejoice! For Christ our Lord is Risen! This past Lent was not what you expected it to be. Your Easter celebration probably looked different, too. We may not have been able to worship in a church or spend Easter Sunday with our loved ones who live apart from us, and maybe we couldn't get everything we wanted for our Easter baskets. We may be struggling with other challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. But our faith gives us strength, our reason for joyful celebration remains unchanged—Jesus has defeated death and given us eternal hope.

No matter what unexpected challenges arose during your Lenten journey, we hope that Trinh, Yvone, and Maria Ana's stories gave you space to pause and reflect, and inspired your Lenten practices leading up to your Easter celebration. We hope they provided opportunities for connection with your family and with our global human family, especially at this time of physical distancing.

THE DATE FOR COLLECTION OF YOUR RICE BOWLS WILL BE DETERMINED AT A LATER TIME.



### 2ND SUNDAY OF EASTER



### CSA Minute ~ Sharing Christ



The CSA gives us an opportunity to live out our discipleship in Christ through the many benefits our annual appeal provides. These ministries, programs, and services meet the spiritual and physical needs of parishes and countless people throughout the Archdiocese. Our support demonstrates our own Catholic faith as we strive to grow in our love of Jesus as His missionary disciples.

When we embrace the CSA for carrying out the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy, we witness Christ, and in turn, we open doors so others may also develop a deeper relationship with Him. We also extend our personal involvement in our local Church beyond our home parishes.

The CSA enables Archbishop Vigneron, his auxiliary bishops, the clergy, religious men and women, and the lay faithful to carry out Christ's ministry of mercy and love throughout south-east Michigan and beyond — works no one individual or parish could possibly do alone.

During the Suspension of Public Masses, your continued financial support is still vital to the sustainability of St. Matthew Parish. Please don't forget your Sunday Envelope and its importance to the day to day operation of the parish. You may mail it in, drop it off at the rectory, or hold on to them until the return of public Masses. There is, however, another means of making sure your Sunday Envelope contribution is never forgotten or missed. We have established an Online Giving portal on our website: [stmatthewdetroit.com](http://stmatthewdetroit.com). Online Giving is fast, easy, and secure and comes with benefits for both you and the parish!

- Automatic deductions make having to remember your weekly envelope a thing of the past. You set the frequency and the amount, and the system takes care of the rest.
  - Generate your own report of financial giving activity for your tax purposes each year.
  - You can contribute to CSA, special Holy Days, Flower Funds, and Fundraisers.
- This is how you get started:
- Visit [www.stmatthewdetroit.com](http://www.stmatthewdetroit.com), and click on the green "Giving & Donations" button.
  - Click the link for Online Giving.
  - Click the green "Create New Account" button.
  - Enter your information and set up your gift amounts and frequency.
  - That's it! You are all set for recurring automatic contributions.

If you need further assistance, please reach out to our webmaster, Patrick Lusch, at [Patrick.Lusch@gmail.com](mailto:Patrick.Lusch@gmail.com). Thank you and God bless you for all you do!

### Prayer During A Health Crisis

Compassionate and Loving Father,  
In the face of confusion and concern  
impart to us the calm of your presence.  
In You allow us to find hope and healing.

Be with those who serve the sick and  
give them Your caring hands.

Be with those who lead and  
give them Your Spirit of wisdom.

Be with those who have fallen ill and  
give them Your comforting heart.

Wrap your arms around our world and hold us in your love.

Allow us at this time of trial to then  
serve as instruments of that love to all we meet.

We ask this in Your Name. Amen.

## ST. MATTHEW'S PARISH DIRECTORY

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Dan McBride ~ *St. Vincent de Paul / Christian Service*

### WEEKEND/WEEKDAY MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday	4:30 p.m.
Sunday	10:00 a.m.
Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday	9:00 a.m.
Reconciliation	By Appointment
Holydays	9:00 a.m. 7:00 p.m.

**In your prayers...**

*Please remember those in our parish and in our families who are sick or in need of our prayers.*

Chuck Schuster	Michelle Harter
Lolita Dorado	Jo Marie Nardi
Albert Fajardo	David Beaupre
Virginia Fajardo	Kenneth Beaupre
Madeline O'Neill	Anthony Crimaudo
Kurt Beghuyn	Rosemary Schoolcraft
Sebastiano Stellino	Tiffany Gelle
Teresita Covacha	Robert Stark
Richard Gargulinski	Pauline Williams
Joe Petrylka	Bill Solomon
Roger Sharpe	Eloise Parker
Nenette Ferreria	Kelly Kranson
Anthony Mastronardi	Herb Damman
Eduardo Fajardo	John Reinhardt
Kathy Bush	Mike and Theresa Elrick
Glenda Johnson	Doreen Redman
Stephanie Smith	Dennis Corbett
Janet Law	
Laura Alix	
Betty Leone	

## Ministers, Lectors, and Servers

**To all Ministers:  
The regular schedule with respect to your  
ministry  
will resume when public Masses resume.  
Please watch for updates.**

### Mass Schedule

**The Mass Intentions scheduled for the days and times  
effected by the suspension of public Mass  
will be moved forward to future dates  
when public Masses are resumed.**

### ~ Prayers of the Faithful ~ 2nd Sunday of Easter

For the Church, that as the body of the risen Christ here on earth, God's Holy Spirit may guide us in proclaiming the truth and hope of the Resurrection.

Let us pray to the Lord

For those who are suffering due to COVID-19, may they know God's mercy through the community's love.

Let us pray to the Lord

For scientists, health professionals, public officials, and all who are serving the public good in this difficult time, may they be filled with wisdom, strength, and compassion.

Let us pray to the Lord

For our faith community, may the risen Christ be our rock and our guide during this Easter season.

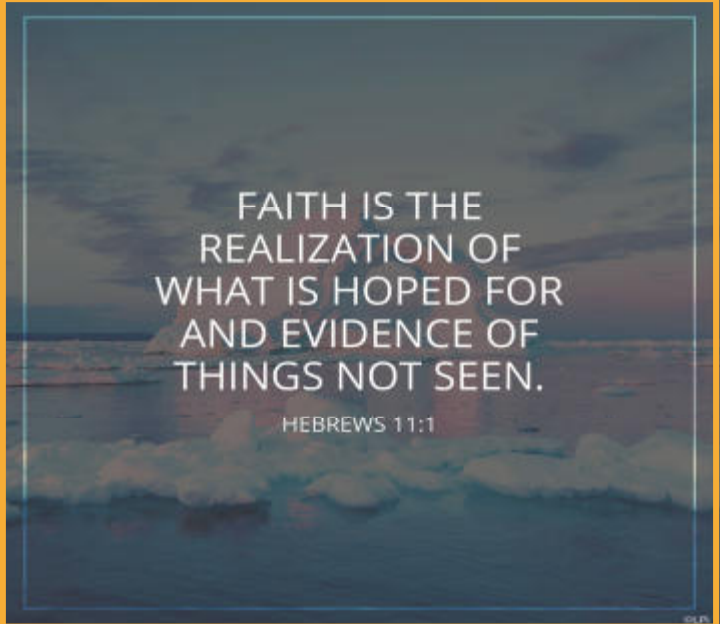
Let us pray to the Lord.

For all the sick of the parish, those who are suffering in the current outbreak of the coronavirus, especially Theresa and Mike Elrick, and those whom we love, especially Herb and Jeanne Damman, Steve Czapski, Jr., Doreen Redman, and Father Duane Novelty. May they experience the healing presence of Christ through his Church.

Let us pray to the Lord

For those who have died marked with the sign of faith, especially those who have died from the coronavirus pandemic, and all our deceased loved ones, may the mercy of God cleanse them so they may enjoy the fullness of his kingdom.

Let us pray to the Lord



FAITH IS THE  
REALIZATION OF  
WHAT IS HOPED FOR  
AND EVIDENCE OF  
THINGS NOT SEEN.

HEBREWS 11:1

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