

**For The Bulletin Of
June 21, 2020**



**THE TWELFTH SUNDAY IN
SUMMER'S ORDINARY TIME**

***From Father Robert: Reflecting On
Today's Gospel***

It is nearly the end of June and we are celebrating "Summer's Ordinary Time," the Twelfth Sunday in the long, green season. Easter is over; Pentecost and the feasts that follow have concluded. Now we enter the liturgical period wherein we will read primarily from the Gospel of Matthew (Cycle A), accompanying Jesus throughout this story, growing in our knowledge and awareness of Him.

Matthew has long been known as the "church's gospel." We read the Sermon on the Mount, with its standard form of the Lord's Prayer (as opposed to the short version in Luke). Matthew tells us about the giving of the keys of the kingdom to Peter, and he uses the phrase "upon this rock I will build my church." In fact, the very term "church" appears in this gospel alone among the others. With an infancy narrative, resurrection narrative, and much material

unique to Matthew. So, it's not surprising that the church laced this gospel first in the canon and preferred reading from it at liturgies. Now we settle in to hear Matthew's version of the Jesus story for much of the rest of the liturgical year.

In the reading we hear today, maybe it is fitting that Jesus says to His disciples three times some variation of "fear not" or "do not be afraid." The disciples (and that includes us) are to be fearless. The basis of this fearlessness is the Father, Who knows all – even the most seemingly insignificant things that we do not know (e.g. the hairs on our head). The Father even knows each and every sparrow. We, each human being, is worth more than two sparrows (which themselves were worth only a small coin in antiquity). So, the disciples can rest assured: they can be fearless in facing the world as they are worth a great deal in the sight of God.

With this assurance, with this fearlessness, the disciples are emboldened to acknowledge Jesus and preach Him to the ends of the earth. The danger is for those who know Jesus but choose not to acknowledge Him before others. As far as they are concerned, Jesus will not acknowledge them before the Father.





Living The Paschal Mystery

Fearlessness ought to be a mark of Christian discipleship. It is a quality that motivated Jesus throughout His earthly ministry and allowed Him to face threats and violence. Fearlessness accompanied Him even as He went to His death. Not many of us will be called to make the ultimate sacrifice required for being a disciple of Jesus, though this does happen in parts of the world even today. Instead, our own attitude of fearlessness can manifest itself in caring for those in need and for those on the margins of society. When we overcome our own prejudices and implicit biases, we are dying to ourselves and allowing the spirit of Jesus to rise up within us. So, we are called to live as the disciples of Jesus in the world today, facing the world in a fearless manner, knowing that we are worth a great deal in the sight of our loving God.

Today's gospel raises the reality of fear – and invites, even challenges, us to become aware of the things and even persons of whom we are afraid. Do I have the courage to face my fears and then, with the help of God, to do something about them? Here are several questions to help in your reflection and meditation:

In the first reading, the prophet Jeremiah says to God, “To you, I have entrusted my cause.” Which cause, or causes, are near to your heart at this moment in time? How might you entrust it/them to God's care?

In the psalm we hear, “For your sake I bear insult, and shame covers my face.” Has there been a time in your life where you experienced insult or shame because of your faith? What helped you get through this time?

Jesus tells His disciples, “Fear no one,” and twice He urges them: “Do not be afraid.” How might you embrace this fearlessness in your own life?

Jesus says to the twelve, “Even all the hairs on your head are counted.” How have you experienced this abundant love of God in your life?



Today we honor all our dads, grandfathers, great grandfathers, godfathers, step-fathers, foster fathers, and all those men who nourish and give life in so many wonderful ways.

At the conclusion of today's Eucharist, we will give a beautiful Blessing for Father's on this special day from our *Book of Blessings*. May you experience affirmation, appreciation, and great love in your role and vocation of fatherhood.



From 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. last Sunday, our Reopening Committee invited our parishioners to come to our parking lot and for the first time since March 15th, to receive Holy Communion. With the permission of the bishop, and following all of the guidance given to us, 84 cars carrying 134 parishioners came to share in the experience. Many had tears in their eyes as they received the Lord in sacramental communion for the first time in over three months. Our Reopening Committee did an excellent job of preparing, facilitating, and then following up afterward. Thank you to all of you who participated. We are getting closer to the day when we will be able to return to in-person worship in our church. A new directive from the bishop and diocese was received last Saturday afternoon at 5:00 p.m. and the Reopening Committee reviewed its guidance at their meeting this last Thursday.

There are many things that we need to do before we can reopen the church safely and once we have all those pieces in place, we will share the process with you. The Reopening Committee is required to prepare a plan that must be submitted to the bishop for his approval before we can proceed. Once that permission has been received, we can then move forward with the official reopening of the church. While Contra Costa County has indicated this possibility of Wednesday, July 1st, it depends upon the readiness of each parish to be ready, plan prepared and approved by the bishop, and then the information parishioners need to make in-person worship possible. We are

moving as quickly as possible to make this happen but once again, our first and highest priority is your safety, welfare, and health. We will not do anything to compromise your health and so until we are in a position to do this correctly, and with everyone “on board,” we will not reopen. The Guidelines/Directives will affect all of us and we will share all of that information with you as soon as possible.

Thank you for your amazing patience and understanding as we move into this next phase of response to the Corona Virus and how it affects us as a worshipping community.



Last Saturday I asked our Saturday Cleaning Team, under the direction of Steve Rojek, to clean the church, the bathrooms, and the parish hall. It is the first time that our facility has had such a thorough cleaning since March. Our thanks to: **Jean Rogers, Rose Salamanca, Al Cosce, Carole Miller, Reno and Thelma Benasfre, Alfred Madoshi, Mency Osborne, Finian Anyanwu, and Steve Rojek.**

Also, a special word of gratitude and thanks to **Jack Goncalves** who installed new Italian lighting in the recently-built pergola in the back yard of the rectory; to **Al Cosce** who moved the statues of Mary from the front yard to the back yard, helped me move the fountain to a new position where the wind will not take all the water out of it when it is

windy, and then went with me to Lowe's to purchase and then assemble patio furniture for the backyard (at no cost to the parish). Al also is helping me get the landscaping in shape by trimming, cutting, shaping, pruning all the shrubs/bushes – it's a work in progress!

Catholic school leaders prepare for pandemic future

Jun 13, 2020

by [Peter Feuerherd](#)



St. Anne Catholic School students celebrate St. Patrick's Day in Fair Lawn, New Jersey, March 13, 2015. St. Anne was one of the schools recently closed by the Newark Archdiocese. (CNS/Octavio Duran)

Could Catholic schools be another casualty of the pandemic?

It's too early to tell, according to Kevin Baxter, chief innovation officer for the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA), based in Arlington, Virginia. Stories about recent Catholic school closings — Archdiocese of Newark, New Jersey; St. Louis Archdiocese; Diocese of Camden, New Jersey; Diocese of Paterson, New Jersey; and Pittsburgh Diocese — caused some to wonder if the flurry of such actions over the past two months signaled an unexpected impact of the pandemic. The

economic shutdown has created massive unemployment, [affecting the coffers of parishes](#) that support Catholic schools as well as the paychecks of tuition-paying parents.

"It's a mixed picture. It's not very clear," said Baxter, the former superintendent of schools for the Los Angeles Archdiocese, the nation's largest.

The NCEA estimates that between 70 and 100 schools have been closed during the pandemic this spring. Last year, 98 Catholic schools were closed and 10 new schools were opened, sometimes resulting from a reopening after a merger with a closed school. The decline in Catholic school numbers, particularly in the Northeast and Midwest, are part of an ongoing trend, independent of the pandemic. But the current crisis doesn't help.

Baxter said that at least some of the schools closed this spring were already endangered and the pandemic had little impact on their fate.

That was the case in the Newark Archdiocese, which [announced the closing](#) of nine elementary schools it operates. The board of the independently owned and operated [Cristo Rey Newark High School](#) also resolved to close. Those schools were already in trouble before the pandemic, according to Barbara Dolan, acting superintendent of schools for the archdiocese.

"We recognize that this is an incredibly sad time for our school communities, especially during this pandemic crisis," said Dolan in a statement announcing the school closings May 7.

The archdiocesan statement said that Catholic schools in northern New Jersey are facing increased competition from public, including charter, schools, from other private schools, and from changing demographics that have contributed to decreased Catholic school enrollment. The statement said current plans provide archdiocesan financial support to Catholic elementary schools that will total approximately \$80 million for the next five years. The closed schools included those in urban areas such as East Orange, Elizabeth and Union, as well as more affluent suburbs, such as Caldwell. This spring, students were already engaged in distance learning for much of the second half of this school year, and the schools will be permanently shuttered next fall.

In the Diocese of Trenton, New Jersey, the closure of the Pope John Paul II Regional School in Willingboro was a disappointment for Dafney Stokes, the mother of a first-grader in the school. Pope John Paul II Regional, the product of previous school mergers, only has 113 students, well below what was needed to be viable, noted the diocese.

Stokes is a graduate of Catholic schools and wanted to share that experience with her son. She cannot blame the pandemic for the closure, she said, since the diocese indicated that the school was threatened with closure last year.

An African American, Stokes said it was important to both combine a Catholic school education with the presence of black children, who were a large part of the John Paul II School, located in a largely African American suburb in South Jersey.

"It was important that he go to a school with other children who looked like him," she

told NCR in a phone interview. Willingboro, a major African American hub in the New Jersey suburbs, "had one Catholic school, and now it's gone," she said. She said the school should have done more promotion within the local black community. Many, she said, don't realize how affordable Catholic school tuition is, compared to other private schools, and that it filled a need for parents seeking childcare for children from kindergarten through grade three.

She has now enrolled her son, and his younger brother, at Sacred Heart School in Mount Holly, New Jersey, a 20-minute drive away. As an indication of how important she believes in Catholic school education, she will transport them herself until a bus can be made available.

Pandemic adds to financial problems

While there are long-term issues affecting those schools in New Jersey as well as other places, Catholic school administrators around the country fear the impact of the pandemic and the economic calamity it has caused for the long term, Baxter told NCR. Mary Pat Donoghue, executive director of the Secretariat of Catholic Education at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, credited federal aid under a pair of emergency relief bills passed early in the federal response to the pandemic-caused economic crash as helping some schools stay open.

She said the Paycheck Protection Program in particular, which allowed small businesses and schools to receive forgivable loans to keep employees on staff for up to eight weeks, "probably will keep the number of closures from being worse than it is."

The U.S. bishops conference and NCEA also have been advocating within the Department of Education to ensure that

provisions for school aid in the \$2.2 trillion Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, or CARES Act, are carried out, Donoghue said.

Catholic schools, said Baxter, are more likely than other private schools to educate students from low-income backgrounds. That makes them eligible for more government aid via programs directed to poor students, but also makes them vulnerable to economic downturns as parents who lose jobs are unable to pay tuition.

Catholic schools also will have to absorb the cost of extensive cleaning of classrooms to prevent infection and may well lose out on tuition, as schools may be forced to accept fewer students to maintain social distancing. Masks may well be a part of the standard issue school uniform.

Educators have responded to the pandemic with creating remote learning programs, efforts that might continue into the fall as schools reopen.

The fall, like it will for public schools, will provide a patchwork picture. Some states will reopen schools quickly, while others, more affected by the coronavirus, will have to keep their physical plants closed.

Already, he said, schools are making plans, even while the exact nature of the situation is still unknown. Administrators and principals are planning for allowing for more space in classrooms to maintain physical distancing. There may be different education shifts, with some students coming in for classroom work while others remain at home for distance learning.

The economic impact will vary as well. Some schools, particularly those in blue

collar areas, will suffer as those jobs may not return in the same numbers. Other more prosperous areas, where there is more at-home work, will be less impacted.

Some regions are particularly hard-hit. Baxter noted that schools in the Diocese of Reno, Nevada, are worried about the massive unemployment there caused by the closing of the casino industry, where many Catholic school parents work. High-growth areas in the West, he said, should be less affected. But there are still many unknowns.

Catholic school teachers have been known for being comfortable in mystery, the idea that some things remain beyond human understanding. So, it is with the potential of the new school year.

"There are no experts in this now. It's all new for everyone," said Baxter.

[Peter Feuerherd is NCR news editor. His email is pfeuerherd@ncronline.org. Catholic News Service contributed to this report]



From the Christian Traditions: A Greater Consciousness – From Fr. Tom Bonacci, Director, The Interfaith Peace Center

"My friends, we cannot tolerate or turn a blind eye to racism and exclusion in any form and yet claim to defend the sacredness of every human life." Pope Francis June 3, 2020 Address to the United States.

Recently many Christian Churches read from the famous text of John's Gospel, John 3: 16. The greater text contains the powerful imagery of being "born again" (John 3: 11-16). Actually, a more accurate translation would be "born from above" referring to the actions of Jesus rather than ourselves.

Without entering into a scholarly debate, we can find wisdom in both images that have inspired and transformed people through the centuries. As we look out into our World in this time of crisis, we see a renewed consciousness of what it means to be a human being.

The sense of outrage born of the murdering of George Floyd by those sworn to protect him has disturbed the hearts of people throughout the World. Countless times in human history we have been "born again" from an honest awareness of our failures and our need to do better. It sometimes happens that in times of crisis we are "born from above," that is, we experience a greater consciousness by which we will never be the same.

As repressive regimes threaten the human rights of the citizens it was elected to serve, courageous people from all walks of life rise up, speak out, and march. Think of what is happening in the United States. Could it be that we are being "born from above" as we see in most unlikely places and persons a new way of living, governing, and loving? Consider the police who are "taking the knee" with protesters in an act of mutual solidarity. This simple gesture recognizes the long suffering and marginalization of people of Color.

The time has come to realize that Black and Brown people were and are denied their rights as human beings. Police all over the Nation are standing with protesters giving

hope that finally all people might be protected rather than assaulted for claiming their dignity and God-given rights.

Consider the Governors of States who are now recognizing the systemic racism that weakens and threatens the rights and dignity of all peoples. They are in the process of reviewing the oppressive policies in their States by which citizens are treated as criminals because of the color of their skin. Governor Tim Walz of Minnesota remarked he was made aware of this injustice by the protesters. Rather than threatening to assault the protesters with military assault tactics, Governor Walz allowed himself to be "born from above" with the higher consciousness of what is right and just.

Finally, the protesters marching in our streets are courageous people from all races and states of life. These are difficult days and there will be more difficult days to come but, if we can allow ourselves to be caught up in the breakthrough that is the present moment, we will be "born again" into a renewed understanding of what it means to be human. In fact, we will be "born from above" in our consciousness of what it means to be humane.

Go forward, holy community. Lovingly and courageously embrace the anguish of the present moment. Become aware of the hurts of so many and the failures of those who should have known better. Take responsibly not because you are guilty but because you care. Be the hope you long for as a new way of loving and living emerges.

The church must make reparation for its role in slavery, segregation

Jun 15, 2020

by [Shannen Dee Williams](#)



Statues are part of the Juneteenth Memorial Monument, which commemorates African Americans' emancipation from slavery, at the George Washington Carver Museum, Cultural and Genealogy Center in Austin, Texas. (Wikimedia Commons/Jennifer Rangubphai)

The ever-expanding protests over the epidemic of police violence and systemic racism in the United States, manifested most recently in the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery, have brought our society to another monumental crossroad.

At the intersection of these enduring crimes against humanity and protesters of varying hues and creeds screaming, "Enough is enough," is a global system of anti-Blackness and violence that has strangled Black communities in the United States and across the African Diaspora since the rise of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. That these murders and protests have erupted amid a global pandemic that is disproportionately

killing Black and Brown people only underscores the unchecked ferocity of institutionalized systems of white supremacy in our society.

In recent days, Catholic statements condemning the sin of racism alongside some clergy and sisters at #BlackLivesMatter protests across the country and world offers hope to those who have long struggled against the plague of white supremacy within and outside church boundaries. This is especially true for many Black Catholics who initiated the fight against racism in the Catholic Church in the modern era and Black Catholic women and youth who have been shouting Black Lives Matter since the hashtag emerged from three Black women activists in 2013 following George Zimmerman's acquittal in the murder of Trayvon Martin.

That it has taken so long for the institutional church and many non-Black Catholics to embrace the rally cry of #BlackLivesMatter, however, cannot be ignored. It must be said, too, that the recent Catholic statements on racism and rising protests fall way short when it comes to acknowledging the church's role in the contemporary crisis and direct complicity in the sins of anti-Black racism, slavery and segregation in the modern era.



Carvings depict a caravan of people being taken into slavery at Lake Malawi Museum in Mangochi, Malawi. (Wikimedia Commons/Tim Cowley)

While Catholic social teaching affirms "the right to life and dignity" of every person, the fact remains that the church egregiously violated these teachings through its participation in the trans-Atlantic slave trade and imperial practices of African slavery and segregation in the Americas, Europe and Africa.

In the 15th century, the Catholic Church became the first global institution to declare that Black lives did not matter. In a [series of papal bulls](#) beginning with Pope Nicholas V's *Dum Diversas* (1452) and including Pope Alexander VI's *Inter Caetera* (1493), the church not only authorized the perpetual enslavement of Africans and the seizure of "non-Christian" lands, but morally sanctioned the development of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. This trade forcibly transported at least 12.5 million enslaved African men, women and children to the Americas and Europe to enrich European and often Catholic coffers. It also caused the deaths of tens of millions of Africans and Native Americans over nearly four centuries.

In the land area that became the United States, the Catholic Church introduced

African slavery in the 16th century long before 1619. In fact, at various moments in American history from the colonial era to the U.S. Civil War, the church was the largest corporate slaveholder in Florida, Louisiana, Maryland, Kentucky and Missouri. We must also never forget Roger B. Taney, the nation's first Catholic Supreme Court Justice and a descendant of prominent Catholic slavers from Maryland, infamously declared that Black people "[had no rights which the white man was bound to respect](#)," while denying the freedom petitions of Dred and Harriet Scott and their two daughters in 1857.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, Catholics, including religious orders of men and women, were also the largest owners of enslaved people during the colonial era. In Brazil, which received the largest number of enslaved Africans imported to the Americas, the Jesuits were at the center of the brutal sugar economy. Like their counterparts in the United States, Black Brazilians today, who are mostly Catholic, are fighting systemic racism and one of the highest rates of police murder against Black and Brown people in the Americas.

Following the abolition of slavery, the Catholic Church stood as the largest Christian practitioner of segregation. In the United States, where the history of many Black Catholics predates that of white and ethnic white Catholics by over three centuries, the vast majority of Catholic institutions and religious orders of men and women systematically excluded African-descended people, especially U.S.-born Blacks, from admission solely on the basis of race well into the 20th century.

The historical record is inundated with gut-wrenching examples of Black Catholic faithfulness in the face of unholy

discrimination and segregation in white Catholic parishes, schools, hospitals, [convents](#), seminaries and neighborhoods. Yet, this history is rarely incorporated into dominant narratives of the American Catholic experience.



Sunday Mass at Corpus Christi Church, a predominantly black parish, in Chicago in 1942 (Library of Congress)

The systematic denial and erasure of Black Catholic history denies the fundamental truth that Black history is Catholic history. It also a part of the system of white supremacy that continues to inflict harm on the descendants of the enslaved people who literally built this country and the American church and those who continue to benefit from the brutal history of colonialism, slavery and segregation.

In New Year 2020, I [outlined a plan of action for Catholic reparation](#) for slavery and segregation in Catholic News Service. This included:

- Making formal apologies for the church's own histories of slavery and segregation;
- Stopping the closings of active African American parishes;
- Reinvesting in and expanding the Black Catholic educational system;

- Requiring the teaching of Black and Brown Catholic history in every Catholic school and seminary;
- Endowing scholarships, fellowships and professorships for Black and Brown scholars at Catholic colleges and universities;
- Broadening formal church leadership to include anti-racist women and members of the laity.

I also called upon Catholics to take leading roles in campaigns working to protect Black lives, eliminate racism in the health care system, end mass incarceration and bail, and secure police reform and accountability.



Kenya Turner, a member of St. Martin de Porres Church in Louisville, Kentucky, joins the "Black Catholics Unite: Stand For Justice March" on June 6. (CNS/Courtesy of The Record)

In the wake of uprisings sweeping the world, the obscenely high unemployment rates in the Black community as a result of the pandemic, and the growing use of militarized police forces against protesters, additional actions are warranted. I now wonder if Catholic reparation must also include creating institutions to help establish more formal connections and foster long-term engagement between African American Catholics and African Catholics in Africa.

Over the past few years, significant numbers of African Americans and other members of the African Diaspora living in the West have begun to repatriate to Africa in response to the rise of white supremacist and state violence threatening Black communities.

The earliest documented roots of the Catholic Church are in Africa. Considering the fact that the church is also currently experiencing its greatest rates of growth on the continent, it would be a substantial development for major U.S. Catholic universities to follow the lead of [Webster University](#) in Missouri and begin establishing African American and African-led campuses in Catholic Africa with exchange, enrichment and study abroad programs at every level from K-12 to the university and the adult laity.

While I do not yet foresee a mass Black exodus from the United States, assisting in efforts to reconnect Black people to the land of their ancestors and growth in Africa is essential. Moreover, if there ever came a time when Black Americans did need to flee for their safety, the church could play a leading role.

The denial of the dignity and sanctity of Black life is a part of the DNA of this country. It is also a foundational sin of the American Catholic Church. Black Catholic history reveals that the church has never been an innocent bystander in the history of white supremacy. If there will ever be a chance for true peace and reconciliation, the Catholic Church must finally declare with all of its might and resources that Black lives do matter. The goal for Black people has never been charity; it is full justice, human rights, freedom and the complete dismantling of white supremacy, beginning with the church.

[Shannen Dee Williams is the Albert Lepage Assistant Professor of History at Villanova University. She is completing her first book, *Subversive Habits: Black Catholic Nuns in the Long African American Freedom Struggle* with Duke University Press. In 2018, she received the inaugural Sr. Christine Schenk Award for Young Catholic Leadership from FutureChurch for using history to foster racial justice and reconciliation in religious congregations of women.]



For the past several weeks, we have had difficulty with our live stream, however, last week, Lisa provided the highest quality video of our liturgy. The sound and the picture were perfect! I hope you have been able to take advantage of the liturgy and appreciated the dramatic difference of last Sunday from the previous Sundays. Now, we are working to make sure it will be available, beginning today, at 10:00 a.m. each Sunday. Thank you, Lisa! You may access our liturgy by going to our website, following the directions to the Facebook page, or see it direct on You Tube.



Richard Rohr's Daily Meditation
*From the Center for Action and
Contemplation*



Week Twenty-four

Inner and Outer Freedom

Emancipation

Wednesday, June 17, 2020

For the kinds of freedom and liberation that are needed today, I am going to use the word “emancipation.” Instead of focusing on the mere personal freedoms enjoyed by individual people, *emancipation* directs our attention to a systemic level of freedom.

With the exception of those who are fully emancipated (which are very few indeed), we each live inside of our own smaller security systems of culture, era, political opinion, and even some quiet, subtle agreements of which we may not even be aware.

In the United States, we rightly revel in the fact that we enjoy certain rights and freedoms from restraints (free markets, free speech, the freedom to be secure and to defend ourselves). However, we pay little attention to the fact that these liberties can ultimately only offer us as much freedom as we ourselves have earned from the inside. If we haven’t achieved the inner freedom to love, we are totally dependent on the outer systems which, paradoxically, can never fully guarantee or deliver the very freedoms they promise. Our inability to recognize this has made our so-called freedoms very selective, class-based, often dishonest, and open to bias.

For example, are we really free to imagine that there could be better alternatives to our free-market system? We are likely to be called dangerous or un-American if we dare broach the topic. We believe in free speech, but we know better than to claim that money actually controls our elections, rather than “one person, one vote.” Does our freedom to protect ourselves with gun rights and limitless military spending give us the freedom to use the vast majority of the economic resources of our country for our protection? Even if it means not providing food, healthcare, or education for the same people we say we are securing?

When we place all of our identity in our one country, security system, religion, or ethnic group, we are unable to imagine another way of thinking. Only citizenship in a much larger “Realm of God” can emancipate us

from the confinement of certain well-hidden, yet agreed-upon, boxes we have labeled “Freedom.” In fact, because these are foundational and necessary cultural agreements, we do not even recognize them as boxes.

To be fair, such boxes are good, helpful, and even necessary sometimes! These silent agreements allow cultures to function and people to work together. But my job, and the job of Christian wisdom, is to tell you that “We are fellow citizens with the saints and part of God’s household” (Ephesians 2:19), and thus “Our citizenship is in heaven” (Philippians 3:20). We have been called to live in the biggest box of all, while still working and living *practically* inside of the smaller boxes of society. That is a necessarily creative and difficult tension, yet it is really the only way we can enjoy all levels of freedom. “In the world, but not of the world” was the historic phrase commonly used by many Christians, *whereas today most of us tend to be in the system, of the system, and for the system—without even realizing it!*

So, let’s use the word emancipation to describe a deeper, bigger, and scarier level of freedom: inner, outer, personal, economic, structural, and spiritual. Surely this is the task of our entire lifetime.

Gateway to Action & Contemplation:

What word or phrase resonates with or challenges me? What sensations do I notice in my body? What is mine to do?

Prayer for Our Community:

O Great Love, thank you for living and loving in us and through us. May all that we do flow from our deep connection with you and all beings. Help us become a community that vulnerably shares each other’s burdens and the weight of glory. Listen to our hearts’

longings for the healing of our world. [Please add your own intentions.] . . . Knowing you are hearing us better than we are speaking, we offer these prayers in all the holy names of God, amen.

Story from Our Community:

I work in India and during this . . . time we have seen about 40 million [people] become very poor over night as India went into a complete “lockdown.” Our teams have been giving out food all over the country. Reading your daily devotions of God’s love and care for the poor has been so encouraging. — Elisabeth C.

Knights finally waking up to organization's politicking

Jun 17, 2020

by [NCR Editorial Staff](#)



Members of the Knights of Columbus are seen in their new uniforms Aug. 1, 2017, during the international fraternal organization's 135th annual Supreme Convention in St. Louis. (CNS/Knights of Columbus)

Hundreds of members of the Knights of Columbus have [petitioned the group's Supreme Chaplain](#), Baltimore Archbishop William Lori, in response to President Donald Trump's June 2 visit to the Knights-

owned St. John Paul II Shrine in Washington, D.C. The visit came one day after the administration ordered the use of tear gas to disperse a protesting Black Lives Matter crowd for another religiously-themed presidential photo op.

Lori should respond to the petitioners' concerns about politicking and the organization's own history of prejudice and racism.

Some Knights, [including NCR columnist Fr. Peter Daly](#), have decided to quit after decades of membership; others are threatening to quit.

Clearly, this example of overt partisan posturing proved the tipping point for many members, who likely joined the organization looking for opportunities for service and camaraderie, not political controversy. Even the Archbishop of Washington felt the need to issue a public statement, calling the decision to move forward with the long-planned Trump event "[baffling and reprehensible](#)." A D.C. chapter, made up of black members, agreed, [denouncing the visit](#).

But those who have been following the national Knights organization — and its leader Carl A. Anderson — know this stunt is just the latest in a well-documented history of questionable, partisan involvement on the part of the 138-year-old fraternal organization. Founder Fr. Michael McGivney would hardly recognize today's Knights, which has morphed into one of the world's largest insurance companies, not to mention a successful conservative influencer and funder.

Anderson himself is a former political operative and legislative assistant to Sen. Jesse Helms of North Carolina, a

segregationist who opposed civil rights. During Anderson's two decades at the helm of the Knights, the organization has grown in size and influence. In the past decade, it has [given \\$1.55 billion to charity](#).

But not all those charities are soup kitchens and homeless shelters. Instead, the Knights have funded conservative think tanks and news outlets (including EWTN), the Susan B. Anthony Foundation, individual dioceses and the U.S. bishops' conference, [according to NCR's reporting in 2017](#).

A number of Knights donations over the years have been to anti-gay initiatives, [an earlier NCR report uncovered](#).

One of the largest recipients of Knights' largesse is the St. John Paul II Shrine, initially a project of the Detroit Archdiocese, which lost \$34 million after [selling the facility to the Knights](#) for \$22.7 million in 2011. This, at a time when that archdiocese was closing schools and parishes in poor neighborhoods.



Pope Francis is seated next to Archbishop William Lori of Baltimore, left, and Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson, right, of the Knights of Columbus during an audience with a delegation from the Knights of Columbus at the Vatican Feb. 10 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the organization's active presence in Rome. (CNS/Vatican Media)

When Donald and Melania Trump awkwardly stood in front of the statue of the late pontiff at the shrine, the message couldn't have been clearer than if they had worn "Seeking Catholic votes" signs around their necks. Just as the photo op outside St. John's Episcopal Church the night before, in which Trump awkwardly held up a Bible, was a blatant attempt to solicit evangelical Christian votes. Both electoral segments will be necessary for the president to overcome his declining approval and poll numbers.

That the country had exploded in protests over the unjust killing of African Americans and persistent racism seemed to have been lost on a leader who has exploited racial and other divides to his advantage. It was not lost, thankfully, on those Knights who finally decided to vote with their feet.

Those who choose to remain should continue to pressure the group to return to its roots of fraternity and service. The Knights' forays into right-wing politics works against that mission.

Federation of Fire Chaplains



The Federation of Fire Chaplains rejects racism in any form. As is stated in our Mission Statement, our goal is:

...to achieve a single healing, unifying spirit of love for God and each other.

The Federation of Fire Chaplains is committed to a ministry of healing and unifying the United States, and the world. We need to remember our calling, to bring the presence of God into any situation we find ourselves. I know that in a crisis we all seek answers. To that end, I am encouraging each of you to examine yourselves, examine scripture, and become the source of answers that heal. One passage of scripture for your consideration is Romans 12:17-23. I am also asking our members to commit to praying for healing and for racism and social injustice to be eradicated.

“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” Romans 12:21 NIV

The Reverend James Duncan, Command Chaplain

As many of you are aware, I am the Chaplain for our East Contra Costa Fire Protection District. One of the organizations to which I am required to belong is the National Federation of Fire Chaplains. Our organization has just issued the statement above and I share it with you as a part of our awareness and commitment in Fire Chaplaincy. The other Fire Chaplain professional organization to which I am required to belong is the California Fire Chaplains Association. Together, these two organizations recruit, certify, and provide the required ongoing training that is necessary for Fire Chaplains here in California as well as across our nation.

A litany for parents in these hard times

Jun 18, 2020

by [Christian Mocek](#)



Mary Oliver, in her poem "Praying," writes:

It doesn't have to be
the blue iris, it could be
weeds in a vacant lot, or a few
small stones; just
pay attention, then patch
a few words together ...

In these difficult days, my prayer is more weeds in a vacant lot than the blue iris. I go on long walks every day to calm the disparate thoughts running around my mind. I'm not surprised I'm more anxious, but I'm often surprised at my inability to say anything at all in these hard times.

But as Oliver writes, "prayer isn't a contest, it's a doorway." And, a little over a month ago in a desperate search for a doorway that would lead to solace from the daily meltdowns, arguments, and hard days with my son, I put a call out to my Facebook friends.

I decided that if I couldn't find the words to pray, maybe others could and I could put them together into something we could all use. I wanted to compile a "Litany for Parents," so I asked my friends to share their prayers with me. Then I enlisted a priest friend of mine, Fr. Anthony Cecil, to help me and my wife, Gillian, compile them into a prayer.

With Father's Day on Sunday, I thought this prayer could be a source of solace in these troubled days.

We paid attention then patched a few words together, as Oliver said to do. And in these days, I wonder if that's something we all must do for ourselves and for our world.

Prayer isn't all we should do, of course. As one who lives deeply in the Benedictine tradition of prayer and work — there is work to be done as well. The work of creating a more just world. The work of creating a more interconnected and equitable society.

But as Father's Day nears, I'm also reminded of the work that must be done in our homes. The work of teaching our children about their shared humanity. The work of loving

them the way they should love others. The work of serving them the way they should serve others.

In these hard times, I pray your prayer, even if it's simply patched together, will be a place to find much-needed comfort and encouragement. I also pray that what you hear will move you to work for justice and for peace in our homes and in our world.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
That I may always be thankful for the gift of my parenthood, *Jesus, grant me this grace.*

That I may enjoy the little moments of each day, *Jesus, grant me this grace.*

That I may always be respectful, patient and kind, *Jesus, grant me this grace.*

That I may not speak or act in anger when I am distressed and tired, but listen to my child, and understand their emotions, *Jesus, grant me this grace.*

That I may be encouraging and uplifting while knowing when to set proper boundaries, *Jesus, grant me this grace.*

That I may readily forgive, *Jesus, grant me this grace.*

That I may be attentive to my child, and not to the distractions that surround me, *Jesus, grant me this grace.*

That I may have strength and courage to treat each day as a fresh start, *Jesus, grant me this grace.*

That I replace my fears with hope, *Jesus, grant me this grace.*

That I may play more and worry less, *Jesus, grant me this grace.*

That I may teach my child to see you in others, *Jesus, grant me this grace.*

That I may see you in my child, *Jesus, grant me this grace.*

That I may teach my child to serve you through serving others, *Jesus, grant me this grace.*

That I may teach my child to serve you through my service to them, *Jesus, grant me this grace.*

That I may teach my child to love you through loving others, *Jesus, grant me this grace.*

That I may teach my child to love you through my love of them, *Jesus, grant me this grace.*

That you will watch over and protect my child, *Jesus, I trust in you.*

That you will give me wisdom when I need it, *Jesus, I trust in you.*

That you will help me be just as you are just, *Jesus, I trust in you.*

That you will help me be merciful as you are merciful, *Jesus, I trust in you.*

That you will help me to love, for you yourself are Love, *Jesus, I trust in you.*

Holy Mary, Mother of Jesus and Our Mother, *pray for us.*

St. Joseph, earthly Father of Jesus and patron of fathers, *pray for us.*

Sts. Joachim and Anne, parents of Mary, patrons of grandparents, *pray for us.*

Sts. Zechariah and Elizabeth, parents of St. John the Baptist, *pray for us.*

St. Helena, mother of the Emperor Constantine, *pray for us.*

St. Monica, mother of St. Augustine, patroness of mothers, *pray for us.*

St. Margaret of Cortona, patroness of single parents, *pray for us.*

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, widowed and cared for her children alone, *pray for us.*

St. Gianna Molla, who gave her life so that her child could live, *pray for us.*

Sts. Louis and Zélie Martin, parents of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, *pray for us.*

Let us Pray: O God, who have been pleased to allow me to share in your creative power through parenthood, graciously grant that our home may be a temple of your love, and that, by imitating the example of virtue and charity shown to us in the Holy Family, we, like them, may glorify you in all that we do. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

—*Litany by Christian and Gillian Mocek and Fr. Anthony Cecil*



Returning to in-person Mass, will we be more attentive and intentional?

Jun 19, 2020

by [Judith M. Kubicki](#)



Parishioners at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Sherwood Park, Alberta, receive Communion from their pastor, Fr. Jim Corrigan, June 1. It was the first public Mass since churches were closed amid the COVID-19 pandemic. (CNS/Matthew Bodnarek, Grandin Media)

Since March of this year, the coronavirus pandemic has necessitated church closures across the U.S. and across faith communities. Catholic worshipers have gathered on electronic platforms to participate in Mass; some groups have gathered in parking lots within the safety of their vehicles.

If anyone would have predicted this state of affairs last year, they would have met with disbelief and ridicule. But as June blossoms into summer, some places of worship are slowly and cautiously (we hope) opening up once again. We are collectively breathing a sigh of relief.

We might do well to ask ourselves what the pandemic has taught us. What have we learned about our faith, the centrality of the Eucharist, and the importance of being a part of the local body of Christ that we call parish?

Informally, Catholics have shared a variety of insights about the experience of celebrating Eucharist online. Some have created prayer spaces in their living room with crucifix, candles and fresh flowers. Others have included a display of simple bread and wine on their coffee tables.

Has our experience of quarantine somehow made us more conscious or more intentional about celebrating the symbols in the ritual we call Mass? Has the online sight of the altar and the sacred space (temporarily out of reach) deepened our desire to participate in the liturgy and to participate perhaps more intentionally than we might have done in the past?

On the other hand, have we perhaps wondered why we cannot continue to attend online and be done with parking lot skirmishes and other traveling challenges?

When commenting on what they miss most, Catholics mention the sacramental reception of holy Communion and being a part of or present with a community of faith. What does that tell us about who we are or who we understand ourselves to be? Unpacking the word, "communion," may be a good place to start.

While many people of faith focus on being united with Christ in the reception of holy Communion, there is another important aspect to the deep and profound meaning of communion. As we are united with Christ, so are we also united with each other. Our life's task is to become ever more the one body of Christ that our baptism and each reception of holy Communion calls us to become.

This might also be a good time to recall that Article 7 of the Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 1963) asserts that Christ is present in our liturgical celebrations in multiple modes. Christ is present in the church gathered for worship, the presider who leads the assembly in prayer, the sacred word of Scripture that is proclaimed and in the consecrated bread and wine.

All of these modes of Christ's presence interact with each other in the liturgy and are part of the larger and deeper reality of Christ's presence in the church. Our prayer can be thrown off balance if we focus on one of these modes to the detriment of the others.

Not attending Mass involves giving up a lot more than sacramental Communion. It involves not being present for the proclamation of the Scriptures. It also involves not being a part of the gathered assembly who are, in that time and place, the presence of Christ.



People wear masks as Pope Francis celebrates Mass marking the feast of Corpus Christi in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican June 14. The Mass was celebrated with a small congregation of some 50 people as part of efforts to contain spread of the coronavirus. (CNS/Tiziana Fabi, Reuters pool)

We need to receive that witness from each other; we need to witness to others as well. And this witness needs to be carried out of the church building. In this "in-between" time of not attending Mass in person, we have the opportunity to recall and to live out the fact that God's loving presence is always with us and that we are called to share it with everyone we meet.

Because the eucharistic liturgy is so rich in unfolding Christ's presence, the church does not encourage Communion services, except when there is no one available to preside at the Eucharist, particularly for Sunday celebrations. At a Communion service, consecrated hosts from the tabernacle that were consecrated at a previous Mass are distributed to the faithful.

Perhaps one reason why the assembly sees little difference between a Communion service and the Mass is that, against the guidelines in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (Article 85), many churches

regularly distribute Communion at Sunday Mass from the tabernacle instead of from the altar. How we handle liturgical symbols really does matter.

So, what about the idea of simply continuing to celebrate Mass online? Would that make the church more up-to-date and technologically savvy? Ah, well there is that "little" doctrine of the Incarnation. It is fundamental to our understanding of ourselves in relation to God and also our understanding of sacramentality.

Because the Second Person of the Trinity took on human flesh and was born of the Virgin Mary, our relationship to bodiliness and God's relationship to bodiliness are forever and fundamentally changed. God chooses to communicate with humankind through material or bodily reality since God first chose to take on human flesh.

All of the sacraments have a physicality or sense of embodiment about them that allows us, as human creatures, to celebrate God's action and love in our lives through material reality. That is what we mean by "sacramental."

Christians are baptized into the church with water and oil. We strengthen and deepen our relationship with God through eating bread and drinking wine that have become the body and blood of Christ. Touch is involved in all of the sacraments. Christians are not afraid of touch because God first touched us.

That physicality, when mediated by the internet or other types of platforms is not the direct experience that "being there" can afford. People in the armed services communicate via the web with loved ones. But nothing can compare to the hugs and kisses that are the "real thing." Ask anyone

who graduated online this spring. When love is involved, personal presence is essential.

We are anticipating a return to the "real thing." Will that return find us more attentive, more intentional, more grateful, more generous in the way we celebrate the Eucharist? There is no audience in the liturgy. We are all called to be active participants and members one of another in the one body of Christ.

In the meantime, I would like to offer an alternative prayer of spiritual communion:

"Lord Jesus Christ, you promised to be with your church always, until the end of time. We long to experience your presence more deeply and more intimately even when we cannot gather in person as church to celebrate Eucharist.

We believe that you are present when we gather to worship.

We believe you are present in your ordained minister and in your sacred word when the Scriptures are proclaimed.

And we believe you are present when your sacred body and blood become our food and drink.

Our relationship with you is truly grace. When I am not able to be physically present at the Eucharist with the community, help me to strengthen and deepen my relationship with you as I seek to encounter and serve you, not only in prayer but in all I meet, especially in the poor and needy of our world. Amen."

[Felician Franciscan Sr. Judith M. Kubicki is an associate professor emerita of theology at Fordham University and a past president of the North American Academy of Liturgy.]

Justice Corner by Carolyn Krantz, Pastoral Associate

"You are worth more than many sparrows", says today's Gospel. In other places, other small insignificant birds are used to tell us of God's infinite care of every human being. "As the swallow builds her nest and shelters her young," so God will shelter us. If we are honest, we know that our lives are small and insignificant against the great backdrop of all of human existence, yet Jesus tells us, "Not one of them falls to the ground without the Father's knowledge."

The events of the past few weeks have made us think long and hard about who we are and what we want to be as a nation. They have made us take a hard look at injustice from every perspective: education, healthcare, job opportunities, etc. It has made us look at systems that choke off opportunities for others because of the color of their skin. Last week I suggested that you talk about race with your white friends and befriend your black neighbors as allies. Have you done that? Mother Teresa said, "We have forgotten that we belong to one another." Don't let another week go by in this forgetfulness. Remember the command of Christ that we are "one body." There is no "other" only "we."

We can sit in the discomfort of seeing racism before our eyes, or we can act for change. If we are upset by the violence we have seen, remember Martin Luther King said, "People who are left out of the social contract have no need to adhere to it." That means if regular, normal opportunities for advancement are withheld long enough, the anger will mount. As Rev. Sharpton so eloquently expressed in George Floyd's eulogy, if we cannot change the systems that keep the knee on the neck of people of color, we will see the events of the past weeks replay again and again. We need to design

strategies for change. The Bishops in their document on race (*Open Wide Their Hearts* available on the USCCB website) say, “Indifference is not an option.” We cannot let essential workers (nurses, housekeepers, truck drivers, janitors, etc.) be expendable because they cannot get healthcare or a living wage. Look at your life and see the places where there is an intersection with these concerns. Take a step forward to bend the ark toward justice.

Another news commentator said, “Don't judge the symptoms, but eradicate the disease.” We all can find ways to stand with people of color and change the systems that keep the oppression of racism operative in our immediate circumstance. If you don't do anything else, meditate on the privilege you have had. Were you born into a two-parent household with a father figure in the home? Did you as a child ever have to worry about where the next meal came from? As a teen, did you have to help mom or dad with the bills? Did you have access to a free tutor, or a private education? Name the privilege that you were given that you did not earn. Bring compassion to those who did not have that privilege.

Sometimes in these events it seems that it's people against the police, but that's not it. Are you aware that across the country, 94% of police activity deals with 6% of the population? Or that of the 100 or so police who died in the line of duty, 70% were killed by white people? The system protects racist behavior. It needs reform. We can do that. We can protect police who want to “protect and serve” and create police departments that understand implicit bias and work to treat all people equally.

We are only sparrows in the Father's house, but we can act together to protect and love all the other sparrows. If we want to calm

the rage that comes from 400 years of trauma, fear, and inequality, we have to acknowledge it and partner with people of color to make the time ahead better than the past. We can contact Black Lives Matter, the Color of Change or NAACP and say, “how can I help?” or speak to local officials and have hard discussions. All of this takes prayer because feelings are running high. It takes courage to act in the peace that Christ said is available to us.

Parish Perspective by Peter Degl'Innocenti Pastoral Associate

Park-Through

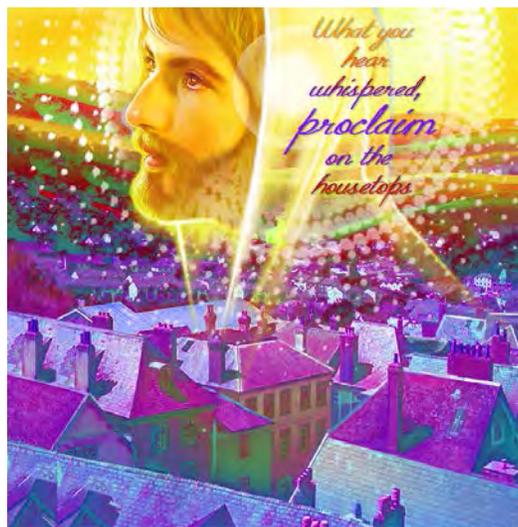
Well, what's new around the parish? Plenty! For starters there is the resumption of the distribution of communion on Sundays. Secondly, there is the new way in which the “live streaming” of the Mass is presented. It is always prudent to check the St. Ignatius of Antioch website for the latest in content and times of scheduled events.

The distribution of Holy Communion, as of last Sunday, is scheduled to begin at 11:30 am. A few people arrived early at about 11:00 hoping that the 10:00 am livestream would be over, and ministers would be ready to distribute the sacrament. We learned that the Mass presented online was video recorded on Saturday evening. The reason for that is that it takes time to make a presentable posting. Editing may be done, and quality control of visual and sound levels checked. Everything should be as best it can be and pre-posted to the internet for viewing without anyone missing anything by being a few minutes late logging-on. It makes a great deal of sense doing it that way.

The actual mechanics of the “Drive Through” line is interesting. In fact, it is more of a “Park Through” line than a drive through. Occupants, wearing masks are to

stop their vehicles, park in place, approach the minister on foot, listen to the “Behold the Lamb of God...” call, respond with “Lord, I am not...”, receive the Eucharist in the hand (still with mask on), walk back to the vehicle away from the minister, consume the host, and then replace the mask before collecting a bulletin and giving your financial offering to the attendants. This gives the most reverence and respect to the sacrament and avoids any possibility of spreading the virus to anyone. After all, it is the body of Christ and we’re not going through the drive-through at McDonald’s. Nor is it as cavalier as the comedian Don Rickles put it about Catholics in line to receive communion with the priest asking each, “Have you been good? OK, here, have a cookie!”

So, there is plenty of time to sleep-in late on Sunday, watch the full Mass recording from the beginning, and make it to the church on time to receive the sacrament we have longed for these passed couple of months. I think you’ll be as lovingly surprised as I was at how good it is to taste and see the goodness of the Lord...again.





June 2020

Hope Solutions Opportunities for Involvement



Fall 2020 Backpack Drive: Would you like to bring a smile to a child's face this fall? Join us in the Annual Backpack Drive. Help equip formerly homeless and low-income students for a successful 2020-2021 school year. With your support, 410 students in Contra Costa County will be ready to start the school year with a positive outlook. The details, including a new process, collection and drop-off guidelines, will be available in the next two weeks. If you and your community are interested in participating in our fall 2020 Backpack Drive, please contact Sandibel Arnold at sarnold@hopesolutions.org.



Summer Camps 2020: Due to COVID -19, Hope Solutions will be hosting our first Virtual Summer Camps. We are looking for volunteers that are interested in teaching or sharing a skill with the children in our program. We are in need of volunteers who are able to pick-up and deliver materials to the children in our program across Contra Costa County. We are also in need of volunteers that are able to provide technical support during Summer Camps. If you would like more information on how you can help us on this new adventure, please contact Sandibel Arnold at sarnold@hopesolutions.org.



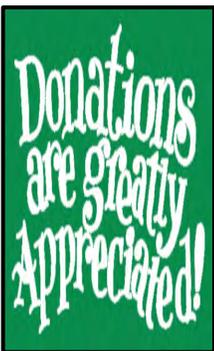
Volunteers to Pick Up and Deliver Beds: Transporting beds to new residents throughout Contra Costa County is a great challenge during these times. A volunteer that can pick-up mattresses and platforms (both in boxes) from our Pleasant Hill office and deliver them to various resident's households throughout Contra Costa County is needed. Deliveries will be PORCH DELIVERIES ONLY, no need to set up beds. If you are able to help, please contact Sandibel at sarnold@hopesolutions.org.



Furnishings: Every month we have families and individuals moving into homes. We try our best to provide furnishings and household items. We are looking for furnishing donations and this month we are in need of a few items, such as cleaning supplies, kitchen kits, bath towels, dishes, pots and pans, and silverware. We are also in need of \$25 gift cards to Target for new families moving into homes. For a complete list of furnishings needed this month, please take a look at the attached Furnishing Request sheet [here](#).



Face Masks: Are you a sewer? If so, we need your help. We are looking for volunteers to sew face masks for our residents. If you are interested in making face makes for our program but movement restrictions are holding you back, we can arrange to drop off materials and pick up completed masks at your residence. If you are interested in sewing face masks for our residents, we encourage you to use these patterns: <https://tinyurl.com/sfwstpy>. Please contact sarnold@hopesolutions.org or call 925-788-3676 to make arrangements for materials.



Seeking In-Kind Donations:

- Feminine hygiene products of all kinds
- Diapers size 1 through 6 and baby wipes for families in our programs
- Cinemark or Fandango movie passes to give to families who participate in our programs
- Welcome Kits for new families moving into permanent housing (laundry basket filled with cleaning supplies, key chain, and \$25 gift card to FoodMaxx or Safeway)
- Paper products (plates, cups), snacks, copy paper for after school programming
- Cleaning Supplies for our multi-site clients (Comet, Windex, Simple Green, buckets, mops, etc.)

Stay Informed! Get all the latest news about Hope Solutions and the housing landscape in Contra Costa County. Read stories about our impact, and the many residents we serve together. Sign up for our mailing list here: <https://tinyurl.com/lgdp3gs>



St. Ignatius of Antioch Church Group to France

Day 1: Sun Aug 29, 2021

Welcome to Paris

On arrival at Charles de Gaulle Airport, a group transfer is provided to your hotel. After checking in, the capital's grand boulevards and world-famous landmarks are yours to explore. Join your Travel Director and fellow guests for a Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant.

Meal: Welcome Dinner with Wine

Hotel: Le Meridien Etoile Hotel Paris, 9 nights

Day 2: Mon Aug 30, 2021

Morning at leisure, Churches & the Louvre

Enjoy a leisurely morning before joining your group in the afternoon for a guided visit with your Local Expert of the Louvre (subject to availability). Walk to nearby Saint-Eustache, one of the most visited churches in Paris distinguished by its dimensions, works of art and its great organ. Continue to La Madeleine, a Roman Catholic Church with the design of a Greek temple. Enjoy the afternoon at your leisure then rejoin your group this evening for a cruise along the Seine river with dinner included (early dinner scheduled at approximately 18:00).

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner with Wine

Day 3: Tue Aug 31, 2021

Depart for Lourdes

Pack your overnight bag and depart for the train station this morning for your first class rail journey to Lourdes. After arrival, get settled into your hotel before joining the group for an evening candlelight procession followed by dinner at your hotel.

Meals: Breakfast, Hotel Dinner with Wine

Hotel: Mercure Lourdes, 1 night

Day 4: Wed Sep 1, 2021

Mass and Healing Baths, return Paris

This morning, view the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes before coming together for mass. Visit the nearby healing baths, inspired by one of the apparitions where Virgin Mary told Bernadette "Go and drink at the spring and wash yourself there!" and has since been a source for renewal and healing for millions of pilgrims. Depart this afternoon on your first class rail journey back to Paris.

Meal: Breakfast

Hotel: Le Meridien Etoile Hotel Paris

Day 5: Thu Sep 2, 2021

Food Market Walking Tour

Later this morning, join your Local Expert for a walking tour of a popular Parisian market. Sample fresh cheeses and learn some of the best kept secrets of French cuisine during this immersive experience. Join us for dinner tonight at Le Procope, the oldest café in Paris (availability permitting). Le Procope was conceived in 1686 and has had continuous operation since, welcoming prominent writers and intellectuals, this historical café is not to be missed.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner with Wine

Day 6: Fri Sep 3, 2021

Eiffel Tower & the Sacred Heart of Paris

Ascend the Eiffel Tower (subject to availability) for spectacular views of Paris. Continue to the Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Paris, commonly known as Sacre Coeur, the second most visited monument in Paris dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Meal: Breakfast

For more information please contact:

Linda Grelli - Sr. Travel Agent
Black Diamond Travel

Tel: (925) 754-5340 Email: linda@blackdiamondtravel.com

Day 7: Sat Sep 4, 2021

Palace of Versailles

Tread in the footsteps of French nobility and explore the opulence and splendor of Versailles (subject to availability). Join a Local Expert as you wander through the palace's extraordinary Hall of Mirrors, the Apartments and Battles Gallery. Stroll through the picturesque Royal Gardens and visit the Petit Trianon to see first-hand how the French Royal Family lived in private before discovering Marie Antoinette's Hamlet and the Royal Chapel. Enjoy dinner this evening at a local restaurant.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner with Wine

Day 8: Sun Sep 5, 2021

The D-Day Beaches

Discover the Normandy region and the D-Day beaches with our Local Expert on this full-day tour. We'll visit the dramatic battle-scarred cliffs of Pointe du Hoc; the American cemetery at Omaha Beach and the almost-intact gun battery at Longues-sur-Mer. You'll also enjoy the superb new Operation Overlord Museum before continuing to Arromanches for views over Gold and Juno Beaches.

Meal: Breakfast

Day 9: Mon Sep 6, 2021

Luxembourg Gardens & Churches

Start your day with your Local Expert with a visit to Luxembourg Gardens, sprawled in front of Luxembourg Palace and conceived in the 17th century. Walk to nearby Saint-Sulpice church, the second largest church in the whole city. Continue to Saint Germain, Paris's oldest church, before visiting the royal chapel of Saint Chapelle, once home to the Kings of France until the 14th century. This evening, join your Travel Director and companions for a memorable Celebration Dinner.

Meals: Breakfast, Celebration Dinner with Wine

Day 10: Tue Sep 7, 2021

Au Revoir Paris

After breakfast, it's time to bid Paris au revoir as you prepare to return home after a memorable break in one of the world's greatest cities. A group transfer is provided to Charles de Gaulle Airport, private transfers available at an additional charge.

Meal: Breakfast

St. Ignatius Church Group to France

10 days/9 nights

Below rates are per person, land only, based on double occupancy with final price determined by traveling group size.

35 - 39	paying guests	\$3,600
30 - 34	paying guests	\$3,700
25 - 29	paying guests	\$3,850
20 - 24	paying guests	\$4,050
SINGLE SUPPLEMENT	paying guests	\$1,260

The above pricing is land only, international airfare is at an additional cost. Travel insurance is optional and in addition to the above prices, please refer to insurance rates below.
 For trips totaling \$3,501 - \$5,000: \$289 per person
 For trips totaling \$5,001 - \$7,500: \$399 per person
 For trips totaling \$7,501+: \$499 per person

Deposit due at time of booking (non-refundable): \$200 per person, + insurance cost if taken, payable by check