



Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa
Pro Cathedral

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My Dear Parishioners,

Blessings, peace, and good health to you all! Before all else, I want to assure you that all of you have continued in our prayers here at the Mission as we pray for a rapid containment of the coronavirus. Let us pray especially for those who have died, those who have contracted the virus, and for our medical and scientific professionals throughout the world as they work diligently to develop a vaccine.

We are now completing our second week of living the “stay-at-home” order. By now we have all begun to feel the challenges and struggles of our new, albeit temporary, reality. But I want to say “Thank You” to all of you who are abiding by that order to the best of your ability. To do so is truly an act of love for all our sisters and brothers: that we desire the good health of one another and we are willing to sacrifice our own comforts to assist in that effort. So, again, I say Thank You for living God’s command to love our neighbor.

Many of you are likely wondering about our parish celebration of Sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, and First Eucharist. We currently have three adults and nine children who have been prepared, and are very excited, to receive the Sacraments of Initiation. Normally this would take place at the Easter Vigil, but as we know that will not be so this year. Bishop Garcia has set a *tentative date* for May 30 at the Vigil Mass of Pentecost for our diocese to welcome our newest Catholics (keep in mind this is subject to change depending on circumstances). Youth/Adult Confirmations are still scheduled for May 10 at a bi-lingual Mass (combining the 11:00 English and 12:30 Spanish Masses) at 11:00. Again, depending on circumstances this too is subject to change. First Communion are currently scheduled for Masses on the weekend of May 16-17, but they also are subject to change. All Baptisms for April have been cancelled and will be rescheduled for a later time when we are assured that all will be safe.

Like you, we are aware of just how disconcerting living in the unknown is. Many of you have already planned for family celebrations of these beautiful Sacraments and without confirmed dates such planning is complicated. We will do our best to keep you informed as we receive information from Bishop Garcia about moving forward. May God bless your patience and may your desire to receive these Sacraments only continue to grow within!

Finally, I want to repeat what many of you may already know with regard to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The Apostolic Penitentiary of the Holy See, via Bishop Garcia, has offered two distinct recourses for the faithful to seek forgiveness due to circumstances of this pandemic (Following is a direct quote from Bishop Garcia to the priests):

1. “Where the individual faithful find themselves in the painful impossibility of receiving sacramental absolution, it should be remembered that “perfect contrition,” coming from the love of God, beloved above all things, expressed by a sincere request for forgiveness (that which the penitent is at present able to express) and accompanied by *votum confessionis*, that is, by the firm resolution to have recourse, as soon as possible, to sacramental confession, obtains forgiveness of sins, even mortal ones (cf. CCC, no. 1452).”

- Perfect contrition requires
 - o the love of God
 - o the sincere desire for forgiveness
 - o the ardent commitment to receive the sacrament of reconciliation when available
2. “The gift of special Indulgences is granted to the faithful suffering from COVID -19 disease, commonly known as Coronavirus, as well as to health care workers, family members and all those who in any capacity, including through prayer, care for them.”
- a) This is a time of suffering, especially for those who have contracted COVID-19. As such, it may be a time for us to “rediscover ‘the same redemptive suffering of Christ’ (*Salvifici Doloris*, 30).”
 - b) A *Plenary Indulgence* is “granted to the faithful suffering from Coronavirus, who are subject to quarantine by order of the health authority in hospitals or in their own homes if, with a spirit detached from any sin, they unite spiritually through the media to the celebration of Holy Mass, the recitation of the Holy Rosary, to the pious practice of the Way of the Cross or other forms of devotion, or if at least they will recite the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer and a pious invocation to the Blessed Virgin Mary, offering this trial in a spirit of faith in God and charity towards their brothers and sisters, with the will to fulfill the usual conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion and prayer according to the Holy Father’s intentions), as soon as possible.
 - c) “Health care workers, family members and all those who, following the example of the Good Samaritan, exposing themselves to the risk of contagion, care for the sick of Coronavirus according to the words of the divine Redeemer: ‘Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends’ (*Jn 15:13*), will obtain the same gift of the *Plenary Indulgence* under the same conditions.”
 - d) An Indulgence is “the expression of the Church’s full confidence of being heard by the Father when – in view of Christ’s merits and, by his gift, those of Our Lady and saints – she asks him to mitigate or cancel the painful aspect of punishment by fostering its medicinal aspect through other channels of grace” (John Paul II, *General Audience*, September 29, 1999).
 - e) A *Plenary Indulgence* removes all the temporal punishment due to sin (*CCC*, 1471).

Finally, sisters and brothers, we are working hard to be able to LIVE STREAM our Triduum celebrations (Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord’s Supper, Good Friday Service, Easter Vigil Mass, Easter Sunday Mass). Directives from Rome have been very clear that these celebrations are *not* to be pre-recorded...only via LIVE STEAM. Please continue to look at our parish website as we will post the necessary information there concerning Holy Week services.

Again, all of you remain in our prayers. We love you, we miss you, and we look forward to the day when we will gather in our beautiful Mission once again!

May the Good Lord bless you!

Fr. Kelly