



Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa
Pro Cathedral

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Dear Parishioners of Old Mission San Luis Obispo,

I pray that this letter finds you healthy in body, mind, and spirit! Frequently I think of sitting down and penning a letter to share with you the recent happenings here in our parish. Then it occurs to me, the more it seems things have changed the more they have remained the same and so what would I write?

While little has indeed changed regarding our responses to the COVID-19 reality, here in the office we have been very busy adapting and planning how faith and parish life can continue. I would like to share with you information concerning a number of areas: Religious Education (Sacramental preparation and general elementary catechesis); Confirmation Preparation (youth and adult); Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA); Ministry to the Homebound; Sacraments of Baptism and Marriage; Weekend Mass Schedule; and financial assistance.

Religious Education: We are currently unable to hire a new Religious Education Director due to the uncertainty of finances, but Corina Onato (our Office Manager and former DRE) has volunteered to work closely with our catechists in providing for our young people. The plan is as follows:

- Religious Education registration begins with reception of this letter through the end of September to assure that we order sufficient resources. You may register your child on-line at our website: www.missionsanluisobispo.org or through the office;
- There will be 4 classes divided as such: 1st Grade, 2nd and 3rd Grade (preparation for Reconciliation and First Holy Communion), 4th and 5th Grade, 6th and 7th Grade. Each Class will have a catechist;
- We will be working with our 4 primary catechists from September – December helping them to record 20-30 minute class sessions that will be posted to our website. As well, we will assemble a packet of materials for each child: 11 individual envelopes containing the resource material (bi-lingual) for the particular topic/teaching and activity materials to support the teaching. There will be 2 classes each month from January – May and one for June. Children will be asked to turn in their activity at Sunday Mass or to the parish office;
- First Reconciliations will be scheduled during Lent and First Holy Communion will be celebrated on Father's Day weekend of June 19-20, 2021 (unless things change);
- It is our hope that this will provide a good foundation for Religious Education when we are able to gather for in-person classes once again.

Confirmation Preparation: Father Kelly will continue teaching the Confirmation class for our youth using a model much like we will use for Religious Education of our children. These classes, too, would begin in January looking toward a celebration of Confirmation for Year II candidates in June. Father Gabriel will continue working with adults who have received baptism and First Communion but have not yet been Confirmed. The model for Adult Confirmation classes has not yet been determined.

Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults: Our new RCIA Director, April Riforgiate, is already busy meeting with a team of people who will assist with this very special process. She will likely be reaching out to several others for help in providing hospitality (appropriate to COVID-19 limitations); prayer leaders; mentors/sponsors; and God parents. This is a marvelous way for long-time Catholics to re-engage in the Catholic faith and learn new ways of living our faith.

If you are not Catholic but have been considering the possibility or if you know someone, a family member, a friend, or a co-worker who has expressed an interest in the Catholic faith, I encourage you to contact April here at the office (you may leave a message) and begin a spiritual journey that will change your life and theirs.

Ministry to the Homebound: Unfortunately we are still very limited by COVID-19 regulations with regard to this ministry. However, if you are a family member of one who is homebound and you both feel comfortable, I would invite you to consider taking Communion to your loved one. To make arrangements to do so, please give us a call at the parish office.

Baptism and Marriage: Bishop Garcia has strongly encouraged us to celebrate the Sacraments outdoors following our current guidelines. We have already celebrated a number of baptisms and weddings making use of the beautiful grape arbor. Father Gabriel will be providing a baptism preparation class in English once each month and Father Kelly will do so in Spanish. Baptisms are generally celebrated once each month on a pre-scheduled Saturday morning.

We have continued preparing couples for marriage throughout these past several months, even though many couples have chosen to postpone the actual celebration of their wedding into next year. If you are planning to marry in 2021 please contact our parish office so that we can make the necessary arrangements and begin the preparation process with you.

Weekend/Daily Mass Schedule: As participation in Sunday Mass has continued to increase, it has become clear that we need to add to our schedule. Therefore, beginning August 29, Mass will be celebrated outside in English at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday; 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. on Sunday; and in Spanish at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday. We will continue to live-stream the 9:00 and 11:00 Sunday Masses for the homebound and those who do not yet feel comfortable attending in-person. Daily Mass will live-stream at 7:00 a.m. and remain available on our website for later viewing. Please continue checking our parish website for the most current information: www.missionsanluisobispo.org.

Financial Assistance: THANK YOU to all who have continued to provide for the financial needs of our parish during these difficult and challenging times. Please know of my on-going gratitude for your generosity. We have worked very hard to adjust our parish budget to mirror our current situation, but there continues to be significant costs to operate a parish like the Mission. Might I encourage you to consider electronic giving, especially if you have found it difficult to provide your donation in person. The process is simple and you will be guided through it by “clicking” on the Donate heading in the upper-right-hand corner on our website or by calling our parish office.

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. Kelly Vandehey