Spiritual Recommendations for St. Theresa Parish

Let nothing disturb you,
Let nothing frighten you,
All things are passing away:
God never changes.
Patience obtains all things
Whoever has God lacks nothing;
God alone suffices.
~Prayer of St. Theresa of Avila

General Advice

- Given the current circumstances, there are still good spiritual practices and disciplines that we can undertake to grow in holiness
    - This is an important time to put our trust in the Lord
- Each of us still represents the Church as a Catholic. We should be good examples to others and encourage fellow Catholics to continue practicing our faith
- Offer all sacrifices and suffering during this time to the Lord for the salvation of souls
- Check in frequently with family members and friends
    - Offer help to family, friends and neighbors if there is something that can be done
- Maintaining body health is consistent with our faith.
    - Please exercise all due precautions and take appropriate measures to protect personal health and the health of other people.
- There are many other resources, besides what is listed here, which can also be helpful.

Schedule

- As a suggestion, set aside a specific time or times each day to say prayers or perform spiritual activities
- As best as possible, try to keep Sunday holy by doing at least some prayers and spiritual practices
- Pray each morning and evening, even short prayers
- Prayers before and after meals
- The Angelus
    - A traditional prayer offered at 6:00 A.M., 12:00 Noon, and 6:00 P.M.
    - Could be prayed at least once per day or at any time
    - https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/devotions/angelus-383
- Practice good discipline
    - Set daily goals or expectations
- Avoid squandering or merely wasting a lot of time when in its place we could do something worthwhile

Teaching on Mass attendance

- It is not a sin on anyone's part that public Masses are not being offered. When Masses are once again held publicly, no one will need to confess missing Mass as a sin during this period of time.
- While extraordinary, perhaps a good way to think about not being able to attend Mass would be akin to someone being deployed in the military. Sometimes military service personnel do not have access to a Catholic Chaplain through no fault of their own and therefore cannot attend Mass.
- All parishioners are still being prayed for by parish priests at private Masses. Even though no one is allowed to presently attend, the Masses are still being offered and provide tremendous grace to everyone.

Continue to follow the Mass

- App on phone called *ibreviary* that has daily Mass readings, Mass prayers, and the Liturgy of the Hours
    - Liturgy of the Hours is the universal prayer of the Church offered throughout the world. These are prayers all priests and religious continue to offer each day.
    - Anyone can say some or all of these prayers. There are five "hours" in the day. Office of Readings, Morning Prayer, Daytime Prayer (has three possible times, midmorning, midday, and midafternoon), Evening Prayer, and Night Prayer
- Magnificat. This is a print publication but can also be obtained in a digital format. It has many of the above prayers and includes reflections.
- USCCB (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops). They have access to the daily Mass readings
- Bishop Burbidge will be showing video of Sunday Mass. See the Arlington Diocese website
- EWTN. This is a Catholic cable station that shows Mass each day and has other religious programs

Spiritual Communion

- For a variety of reasons, it is not always possible to attend Mass and receive Holy Communion through no fault of a person. It does not replace going to Mass but covers circumstances like our current time.
- Many saints have undertaken this practice, and it is encouraged as a general practice in any situation. This can be prayed at any time of the day and in any place. As a devotion, it can be done every day, not just on Sundays.
- *"My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen."*

Renewed Gratitude for Mass

- This period of time offers a chance to be thankful for the great gift of Mass. Under normal circumstances, Masses in our area are made abundantly available. We can grow, during this time, in gratitude for the gift of gathering around the Lord's altar.

- While attending Mass on Sundays is an obligation (under normal conditions), it is even more so a gift that we can appreciate more deeply, especially when Masses one day resume normally.

Reading Scripture

- In addition to the daily Mass readings, read passages from the Gospel about Jesus healing the sick. It was an extremely important part of His public ministry.
- The Gospel of Matthew is full of accounts where Jesus healed countless individuals.
- James 5:14-15

Continue Lenten Practices

- We can continue whatever Lenten practices we set out to do at the start of Lent. Some of them might no longer be possible. However, we also have the chance to do something else that is now possible.
- No meat on Fridays
- Fasting on Good Friday (April 10)

Stations of the Cross

- This practice is traditionally done on Fridays during Lent but can be done anytime. It can be prayed as a family or as an individual at home.
- This is the version that we pray as a parish

https://www.ecatholic2000.com/liguori/stations/cross.shtml

- The version for children that we pray with the school and RE children

https://www.amazon.com/Cross-Children-Joseph-Picture-Books/dp/089942497X

- Another version that can be ordered
    - *Stations of the Cross--in my pocket.* By the daughters of St. Paul
- Formed (see below under digital formats) and other websites have possible versions of the Stations of the Cross to pray

Rosary and Chaplet of Divine Mercy

- The rosary is a powerful prayer that can be prayed as individuals or in small groups.
    - There is a strong tradition of praying to Mary for protection and help in grave times of need
- Chaplet of Divine Mercy
    - https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/devotions/chaplet-13364
- Other prayers for protection
    - St. Michael the Archangel
    - https://www.ourcatholicprayers.com/prayers-for-protection.html

Praying Act of Contrition

- This can be done every day to ask for the forgiveness of our sins, especially in circumstances where confession is not possible
- *O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you. And I detest all my sins because of your just punishments. But most of all because they offend you, my God, who are all*

good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of your grace to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.

How to baptize in case of emergency

- In the event that a person is in danger of death and requires Baptism, even though the normal minister of Baptism is a bishop, priest, or deacon, any person who has reached the age of reason (age 7) can baptize someone.
- Pour water three times saying, *"Name (person being baptized), I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."*

Renew our Baptismal Promises

- *I renew my baptismal vows, I renounce Satan and all his works and all his promises. I take Jesus Christ for my model and guide and I promise to be faithful to Him unto the end of my life. Amen.*

Spiritual Reading, Videos, and Digital Formats

- Books and other resources available from Dynamic Catholic (website)
- Wordonfire.org
    - See Resources where they have videos and books to read
- Formed.org
    - St. Theresa Parish has a subscription made available to all parishioners. Sign in using our parish zip code (20147).

Guidance for families with children preparing for first Holy Communion and Confirmation

- First Confessions were already completed for those preparing for first Holy Communion
- Keep up current studies from school and RE classes
- First Holy Communion
    - Continue to teach children how to properly receive Holy Communion, what the Eucharist is, the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, and why it is sacred
    - There are many good resources on Formed, Dynamic Catholic, and Word on Fire to consider
- Confirmation
    - Besides the above suggestions, there is a prep-sheet, under Religious Education and Confirmation, on the parish website to continue to study for the eventual confirmation interview with one of the priests

Feast Days, Holy Week, and Easter

- Lent has two feast days that we ought to celebrate or remember with some greater appreciation.
    - Solemnity of St. Joseph—March 19
    - Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord—March 25
        - Lenten practices are dispensed on these two solemnities
- Holy Week—Palm Sunday April 5, Holy Thursday April 9, Good Friday April 10, Easter Sunday April 12