Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Thank you for your generosity and patience throughout the past several weeks. None of us could have imagined, just two months ago, that our lives would be so completely disrupted. We continue to deal with the impact of an unprecedented health issue, locally, nationally, and globally. We’re all called to do our part as responsible members of society. At the same time, we face the challenges of isolation. Even worse, many are experiencing the strain of economic hardship, and some are suffering the effects of the virus itself. We need to know the love of God now more than ever.

This pandemic has caused us to venture out of our comfort zone finding new ways to communicate. Over these past weeks, volunteers have been calling and checking up on parishioners, Mass is being livestreamed, and our staff has been exceptionally creative in using technology to provide for ongoing formation and education, and to build up and maintain relationships beyond the physical boundaries of our church. Far from a vacation, these have been exceptionally busy days, with a lot of work happening in our parish.

It’s hard to say when we’ll be able to return to church. The only answer that I can offer is that we’ll do so when it’s safe. We’ll gather together when we know that our offering of love is not going to bring harm or injury to others. In the meantime, we are assured that though we may be lonely, we’re never alone. The Lord is always near to those he claims as beloved brothers and sisters.

Because we have been unable to gather in one place, we temporarily suspended the publication of the weekly parish bulletin. Once the celebration of publicly advertised Masses resumes we will resume our normal practice. But in the meantime, we realized that the publication of a monthly newsletter would be beneficial. Our hope is that this will provide an additional resource to keep you up to date with what is happening in our parish.

I cannot thank you enough for your prayers and support during this challenging time. Truly, I have been humbled by the generosity of our parishioners, especially at a time of economic uncertainty. Your gifts to our regular offertory and Diocesan Lenten Appeal speak volumes about your faith and charity. Let us continue to pray for strength, not only for ourselves, but for all those whose lives have been impacted by this pandemic. May the Lord of life, guide and guard us, and keep us safe all the days of our life.

Fr. Michael Sikon
To the Class of 2020
You have every right to feel the varying degrees of emotions that you do right now. I would be wrong to tell any of you that you don’t have the right to feel the way that you do. Life as you knew it came to an abrupt halt, and much of your normalcy was completely stripped away.

Someday you will tell others about this time in your life, and when you do, you might actually smile. During these last several weeks, whether you have realized it or not, you have learned a lesson you’d never get sitting behind a desk. Sometimes the bottom falls out, the world makes zero sense, and you still have to keep going. Sometimes, in the moment, you can’t see the goodness and you struggle and thrash around looking for the light. Someday, after you’ve emerged from the rubble, you will remember the lessons you learned and you’ll seek to share them with others, perhaps even your own children.

The truth is, in this season of your life, God has never left your side. He has always been with you, and since you walked off your college campus or left your high school building behind, he remained steadfast in the chaos. See God uses us in our brokenness. He is here in the struggle and always makes things new. You may feel like you’re in a cave, but I am here to tell you that God does some of his best work in caves. If Christ can emerge from the cave of death and darkness in three days, then my sons and daughters of the King, you too will one day be thankful for the scars of this season. You may not be who you were before, or even who you planned to be, but God’s plan for you and your life is always bigger and it’s always better. Trust in the Lord, for faith is always greater than fear.

Your sister in Christ,
Elisa

---

Penn-Trafford HS~ Although the high school remains optimistic to hold a traditional graduation ceremony in June or July, they will be conducting a senior recognition parade in their honor the night of the original graduation, May 21. Visit www.penntrafford.org for details.

Greensburg Central Catholic ~ is working on the possibility of a virtual baccalaureate Mass. Visit www.gcchs.org

Franklin Regional HS ~ Graduation is being planned for either June 26 or July 24.
God Bless Our Seniors

Zoey Alberts
Faith Anthony
Dylan Armstrong
Lucca Baccari
Katie Bacco
Jeana Bartholomew
Joseph Basista
Emma Bender
Gavin Berardi
Emily Birosckak
Rayne Blatnica
Devin Boehm
Taylor Boulware
Caitlin Brinton
Morgan Bruni
Anthony Carr
Michael Chronowski
Calvin Coffman
Alayna Conrad
Garrett Couch
Madison Cvercko
Daniel Dalcanton
Madison Decesere
Seth Deglmann
Christina DeLuca
Jake DePietro
Jacob Edwards
Hayden Ford
Christina Gabany
Amanda Graves
Tyler Gribschaw
Taylor Hanson
Haley Hofmeister
Jack Hughes
Michael Jordan
Kalina Jubec
Jenna Kaczmarkiewicz
Reno Kearns
Maeve Kelly
Peyton Kelly

R. Zachary Kelly
Jessica Lichota
Nathan Lowry
Jordan Mauro
Samantha McDonald
Christopher McMahon
Luke Militzer
Alayna Moorhead
Corina Paszek
Bailey Perrin
Louis Persia
Madelynn Petrillo
Gavin Polechko
Tyler Porter
Symone Puskar
Emma Rain
Bobbi Raspotnik
Emily Rausch
John Robbins
Maura Rygg
Isabella Saccomano
Anthony Sherwin
Jared Simpson
Mackenzie Smith
Zoe Smith
Jordan Spiegel
Elayna Stengel
Kayla Tamewitz
Rachel Thatcher
Julia Tomasits
Nicole Trappen
Michael Vareha
Julia Vislosky
Chloe Vojnik
Abbey Williams
Samuel Willis
Bridget Wise
Adam Yamrick
Anthony Youngo
Alan Zuchelli
We are still Operating

We recognize that there are individuals within our community that despite being impacted by the pandemic are looking for ways to be generous. For our Church, we ask that you continue to focus your support on the Diocesan Lenten Appeal (DLA) and the regular Weekly Offering. As a parish, we also recognize that there are those truly suffering around us who might need help caring for their basic needs. We kindly ask you to support the following organizations:

CATHOLIC CHARITIES (Diocese of Greensburg)
WESTMORELAND COUNTY FOODBANK
ST. BARBARA “PEOPLE IN NEED” ACCOUNT

If you know of someone who is in need, please give them our parish number 724-744-7474 X 106. This is Jan Shepherd’s (Business Manager) extension and she will contact the recipient directly.

In these trying times, if you find yourself with a little less to give, please still give the gift that is truly more powerful than monetary donations...the gift of prayer! Thank you for your constant generosity!

What about our Fundraisers?

**BINGO...** We enjoyed January, February, and March bingo’s so far this year. Jim Maple and his crew will be ready to start up the bingo machine once we can safely gather. As with everything these days, we don’t know what that will look like, but we DO know one thing for sure...everyone will be ready to get out and have some fun!! January, February, and March Bingo’s profits totaled $6,600.

**FISH FRY...** We sold a lot of fish in our shortened Fish Fry! We served both lunch and dinner. The last week of the fry, March 13 we offered takeout only. We did “get in” four days of fish fries and our net is: $14,950

**SUMMER FESTIVAL...** What does the future hold for our summer festival? Ugh, not sure. What we DO know is that we have an awesome committee that’s ready to do whatever we need to bring some type of summer fun your way. Festival may look a little different this year, we may ask for volunteers in a very expedited fashion, or we may have it a little later in the summer. Bottom line is that we need the funds that are raised, we need to build community again, but we need to remain safe.

You can help us during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During this challenging time, we depend on online donations to continue our ministry. Use WeShare from your computer, smartphone or tablet to set up a recurring donation or make a one-time gift.

**OFFERTORY FOR THE MONTHS OF MARCH & APRIL:**
The last published bulletin was March 8th and it included Feb 16 Ordinary Income.

Feb 23 - $25,765.65
Mar 1 - $17,748.88
Mar 8 - $20,538.49
Mar 15 - $14,369.38 (last public masses)
Mar 22 - $ 9,735.86
Mar 29 - $12,643.36

Apr 5 - $20,070.92 (churches closed on Apr 4)
Apr 12 - $23,544.94
Apr 19 - $31,242.46 (includes a semi-annual donation of $10,000)
Apr 26 - $24,361.45.

**WEEKLY ORDINARY INCOME INCLUDES:**
- Weekly Offertory Envelopes
- EFT Donations
- WeShare Donations
- Holy Day Donations
- Ash Wednesday
- Christmas Collection
- Easter Collection
- Children’s Envelopes
- Loose Checks
- Property Maintenance Donations
- Votive Candles
- Flower Donations

We cannot thank you enough for your generous support during this time. Your financial gifts and your prayers are truly appreciated. Please know that we remember all of you in our prayers!

Grow in the Lord

2020 Diocesan Lenten Appeal

**GOAL:** $127,711
**To Date:** $90,452
We invite you to continue to pray for all our Candidates, Catechumens, Confirmation Candidates, and First Holy Communion Students as they wait to receive the Sacraments. In this unprecedented time, we were required to postpone all these special occasions. They will be rescheduled as soon as we have a clearer idea of when and how we can gather.

Leo Biskup
Emily Clark
Brooke Bressler
Tyler Johnson
Chase Crawford
Niomi Kearns
Palmer DeStefano
Heath Lekovitch
Mackenzie Emricko
Jase Savinda
Liam Heslop
Lily Thoma
Jeremy Kaciubij
Dean Shaffer
Mila Kmetz
Wesley Shuey

Frank Pallitto
Alexis Spitznagel
Brenden Schwer
Hazel Wager
Elyse Wilson
Adaleigh Steele
Adeleyn Carter
Cameron Lipko
Clara Daignault
Hannah Nichols
Carter Griffith
Karson Nichols
Tyler Fuller
Brayden Richards
Declayn Joyce
Audrey Rosebosky

Brady Ruane
Logan Sage
Brayden Slack
Will Weishaar
Emma Gipson
Remmy Novacek
Adrianna Chapkis
Addison Himes
Liam Jordan
Rebecca Tirpak
Jackson D’Uva
Gino Diana
Maren Sloan
Anderson Steinmetz
Logan Spiller
Jonah Cunningham

Jaedyn Nardozza
Bailey Emricko
Jake Nardozza
Charles Fontana
David Newsom
Tyler Freas
Jacob Nied
Natalie Goldsworthy
Benjamin Petrillo
Adam Hapach
John Premozoic
Ava Hersheberger
Santino Premozoic
Madyson Holler
Nicholas Schmitt
Mark Jollie
Brayden Seech

Katherine Dopkowski
Erika Giacomino
Kelly Nicassio
Elana Smiley

Sara Andreani
Marissa Caswell
Antonio Aquino
Marissa Chobirko
Eric Biroscak
Catherine Clarke
Braden Boss
Alivia Conrad
Hayden Coy
Sage Matrisch
Jacob Curran
Megan McCracken
Antolena Damico
Paul Mills
Carson Dolney
Noah Moffa
Emma Edwards

Corinne Kelly
Drew Sherwin
Kathryn Kosmal
Braeden Simon
Madison Kral
Aidan Slack
Bryce Kropczynski
Robert Smith
Sophia Laspena
Gabriel LaSpena
Olivia Laubham
Jonathan Stockman
Isabella Swartz
Carlee Valenta
Gabriel Yant
Joshua Veycheck
Jim Casale continues to care for our campus.

Our Food Pantry continues operations.

Kentucky Project Food order for March trip.

Randy disinfecting our worship space.

...meanwhile back at the Church

Behind the scenes ... Larry and Elisa.

Holy Week/Easter Goody Bags were distributed to our nursing home residents.

Hang onto your Haiti Pails, we will be shipping in the future months.

Kentucky Project has suspended trips to Kentucky until further notice.
May 2020 Newsletter

The staff is working rotating shifts, sometimes at home, sometimes at the Parish Office. The phones are checked throughout the day, so please leave a message and we will return your call. Main Office Number 724-744-7474.

All staff can also be reached by email at anytime. The listing of staff, along with their email addresses, can be found on the following page.

VICTIVE CANDLES
Contact Dawn at the Parish Office and she will light a candle at the Blessed Mother for you. She can also write any prayer requests in the Prayer Book.

dborger@dioceseofgreensburg.org

THOUGHTS FROM THE KEYBOARD
What a weird time this has been, huh? Going to church in your living room? Singing "Alleluia" to a laptop? Texting the sign of peace? And certainly missing the reception of the Eucharist - "Thanks, Jesus, glad you joined us again, wish I could be there with you ..."

For me, it's been quite strange playing for Mass to an invisible assembly and a church full of ... empty pews. No chance to play and sing with my fellow music ministers. No leading the assembly in "Alleluia!" or "Jesus is Risen!" I so miss my weekly encounters with choir and cantors, and collaborating with Ray on the bass, Josh on acoustic, Chuck on the flute, and drummers Joe, and Joe, and Michael.

At the same time, it's been a true blessing to provide a music ministry to my parish family through a different means, the access to people and places that social media brings us these days. Many thanks to Elisa Esasky for getting our "live streaming" going, and for Larry George for offering his equipment and expertise to provide a quality viewing experience to those that are tuning in. I'm honored to be a part of the St. Barbara "Stream Team!" I hope it's been a blessing for you and your families at home.

My biggest blessing through this "Covid" liturgical season has been having our daughter Megan home and my opportunity to play for her regularly as she serves as cantor for the live-stream masses. Although she would rather be in State College with her fellow students, she has been a real trooper through this ordeal and always keeps a song in her heart, and at her lips... even as I write this she is serenading her laptop downstairs (a common practice) as she trudges through her engineering curriculum. Megan loves to sing for our parish and for our Lord, and it's been an unplanned gift to share music, worship, and some unexpected time with her.

In the midst of these blessings, however, I hope that we are all together again soon, worshipping our Lord in prayer, in singing, and in sacrament as an assembled parish family. In the meantime, keep tuning in and singing to the Lord - and to your screen - from the comforts of home. And certainly, please pray for each other and for so many that have suffered tragedy through this time. "My soul rests in God alone, from whom comes my salvation," (Psalm 62).

God Bless You All!

Bob Vareha
WE REMEMBER THOSE WHO DIED OVER THE PAST WEEKS

Eleanor “Dolly” Rutkowsky
Philip J. Solomon
Anthony Beresford
Domenica Hayes
Virginia M. Skena

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord, and let the perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.

POPE FRANCIS PRAYER TO MARY DURING PANDEMIC

O Mary, you always shine on our path as a sign of salvation and of hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick, who at the cross took part in Jesus’ pain, keeping your faith firm. You know what we need, and we are sure you will provide so that, as in Cana of Galilee, we may return to joy and to feasting after this time of trial. Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform to the will of the Father and to do as we are told by Jesus, who has taken upon himself our sufferings and carried our sorrows to lead us, through the cross, to the joy of the resurrection. Amen. Under your protection, we seek refuge, Holy Mother of God. Do not disdain the entreaties of we who are in trial, but deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin.

STAFF

Fr. Michael Sikon
Pastor
msikon@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Deacon Harry Clyde
Permanent Deacon
hclyde@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Fr. Alvin Aberion
Parochial Vicar
aaberion@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Deacon Bill Newhouse
Permanent Deacon
wnewhouse@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Dawn Borger
Pastoral Associate
dborger@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Jim Casale
Facilities Manager
jcasale@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Joan Duncan
Director of Faith Formation
jduncan@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Elisa Esasky
Dir. of Youth & Young Adult Ministry
eesasky@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Mary Ann Kent
Safe Environment / Secretary
mkent@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Stephanie Mele
Parish Secretary
smele@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Jan Shepherd
Business Manager
jshepherd@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Bob Vareha
Director of Music Ministry
bvareha@dioceseofgreensburg.org
**We remember**

**Mass Intentions**

During this time, the public celebration of the Mass has been suspended. The Mass is being livestreamed on our Facebook / Instagram and YouTube Channel. Fr. Michael celebrates Mass privately everyday. Your intentions are still being remembered and prayed for, by Fr. Michael.

During our livestreaming, we are not announcing the names of specific intentions in favor of praying for our entire parish family and those whose life has been significantly impacted because of the pandemic. If you would like to schedule a Mass, please email Mary Ann Kent.

*These are the Mass intentions scheduled from March through May...*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ladies Guild</th>
<th>Paul Volok</th>
<th>Mary Ellen Stilwell</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary &amp; Americo Colench</td>
<td>Russ Wallis</td>
<td>Deceased Members of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chase Yates</td>
<td>Frank &amp; Mary Chanowski</td>
<td>Martiere Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard &amp; Eleanore Mardis</td>
<td>Bob McCracken</td>
<td>George Ward Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bert O’Neill</td>
<td>Enzo &amp; Cosmo DeLeo</td>
<td>Dom Marino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy Musiak</td>
<td>Jim Primm</td>
<td>Sarah, Bill &amp; George Shaffer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shirley Stumpf</td>
<td>Irene Stefancik</td>
<td>Shirley Keeler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butch &amp; Theresa Steffey</td>
<td>Barbara &amp; Raymond Price</td>
<td>Paul &amp; Elaine Shopp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Torchia</td>
<td>Health of Michael Kersten</td>
<td>Bill &amp; Margaret Snyder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joann Merhaut</td>
<td>Lois Gologya</td>
<td>Rose Shula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donald Miller</td>
<td>Paul Varrato</td>
<td>Gregory Scavincky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joyce E. Palmquist</td>
<td>Mark Cochran</td>
<td>Mario Fratto &amp; Richard Pipak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Leonard</td>
<td>Frank &amp; Rose Frontera</td>
<td>Dr. Stanley Cheslock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashley Giordana</td>
<td>Fred &amp; Irene Weber</td>
<td>Barbara McPoland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr. Alice Retzner</td>
<td>Don Wieland</td>
<td>Helen Wright Carosella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim &amp; Betty Ruszkiewicz</td>
<td>Elmer &amp; Anna Potocnik</td>
<td>Ms. Marsha Kayself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joann Merhaut</td>
<td>Rita Martin</td>
<td>Kirk &amp; Topolosky Families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laverne Hubert</td>
<td>Norman &amp; Thelma Baker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ARE CATHOLIC PRIESTS OBLIGATED TO CELEBRATE THE HOLY MASS EVERYDAY?**

That answer is found in the Code of Canon Law where it states:

*Canon # 904* "Remembering always that in the mystery of the eucharistic sacrifice the work of redemption is exercised continually, priests are to celebrate frequently; indeed, daily celebration is recommended earnestly since, even if the faithful cannot be present, it is the act of Christ and the Church in which priests fulfill their principal function."

It is recommended that priests celebrate Holy Mass on a daily basis, but such is not mandatory.
Ascension Thursday
May 21, 2020

Why Thursday?
Historically, this feast is celebrated on Thursday. How was it reckoned? The Book of Acts tells of Jesus appearing to his followers for 40 days after his resurrection:

“After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.”-Acts 1:3

The 40th day after Easter Sunday will always be Thursday, therefore the Church, from very early on, celebrated Christ’s Ascension on this day.

The Feast of the Ascension of the Lord celebrates the bodily ascension of Jesus into heaven. Two of the evangelists give an account:

“Then he led them [out] as far as Bethany, raised his hands, and blessed them. As he blessed them he parted from them and was taken up to heaven.”-Luke 24:50-51

“So then the Lord Jesus, after he spoke to them, was taken up into heaven and took his seat at the right hand of God.”-Mark 16:19

For all Catholics, this is a Holy Day of Obligation.

The Catechism summarizes three important aspects of the Ascension:
1. Christ's Ascension marks the definitive entrance of Jesus' humanity into God's heavenly domain.
2. Jesus Christ, the head of the Church, precedes us into the Father's glorious kingdom so that we, may live in the hope of one day being with him forever.

3. Jesus Christ, having entered the sanctuary of heaven once and for all, intercedes constantly for us as the mediator who assures us of the permanent outpouring of the Holy Spirit. (665-667).

Mass on the Feast of the Ascension will be livestreamed at 2:00pm on Facebook / Instagram /YouTube. Join with your parish family.

Pentecost Sunday
May 31, 2020

Pentecost is usually represented with the color red, which symbolizes the fire of the Holy Spirit. Wear RED on this day, whether we are at church or at home. We will feel the unity of the Holy Spirit!

Pentecost always occurs 50 days after the death and resurrection of Jesus, and 10 days after his ascension into heaven. Because Easter is a moveable feast without a fixed date, and Pentecost depends on the timing of Easter, Pentecost can fall anywhere between May 10 and June 13.

The timing of these feasts is also where Catholics get the concept of the Novena - nine days of prayer - because in Acts 1, Mary and the Apostles prayed together “continuously” for nine days after the Ascension leading up to Pentecost. Traditionally, the Church prays the Novena to the Holy Spirit in the days before Pentecost.

What happens at Pentecost?
Pentecost is the celebration of the person of the Holy Spirit coming upon the Apostles, Mary, and the first followers of Jesus, who were gathered together in the Upper Room.

A “strong, driving” wind filled the room where they were gathered, and tongues of fire came to rest on their heads, allowing them to speak in different languages so that they could understand each other. The Holy Spirit also gave the apostles the other gifts and fruits necessary to fulfill the great commission - to go out and preach the Gospel to all nations. It fulfills the New Testament promise from Christ (Luke 24:46-49) that the Apostles would be “clothed with power” before they would be sent out to spread the Gospel.

May 31. 2020

Pentecost is usually represented with the color red, which symbolizes the fire of the Holy Spirit. Wear RED on this day, whether we are at church or at home. We will feel the unity of the Holy Spirit!

Mass on the Feast of the Ascension will be livestreamed at 2:00pm on Facebook / Instagram /YouTube. Join with your parish family.