

SPRITUAL COMMUNION

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament, I love you above all things and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now, 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.

SAINT MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

Saint Michael the Archangel, Defend us in battle. Be our protection against the Wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray; And do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, By the power of God, cast into hell Satan And all the evil spirits that prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.



Pope Francis’s prayer to Mary during Coronavirus 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, Salvation of the Roman People, 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.

St. Edward and St. Stephen Catholic Churches

300 NW 5th St. Fairfield IL 62837, phone 618-847-7931
Email: stedwardcatholicchurch01@frontier.com
Website: stedwardfairfield.com

812 N. Main St., Flora IL 62839, phone 618-662-6261
Email: ststephen_flora@yahoo.com
Website: ststephenflora.com

Rev. Father Charles Anyaoku, Pastoral Administrator
Rectory Phone: 618-662-6261 Cell phone: 618-641-8978

MISSION STATEMENT

We, of St. Edward Catholic Church, Fairfield, united as a family of God’s people strive to live out the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ through a community spirit of love and service to one another. We endeavor to touch the lives of all with God’s living presence and love.
We hope to achieve these through:
Participating in the sacraments and providing for the spiritual needs of all; the young and the elderly, those with special needs and those who are no longer very active in the parish.
Providing a welcoming environment to all including new members who might like to join our parish and those who visit to worship with us.
Using our gifts and talents for the life and growth of our parish and for the greater glory of God.
Providing a comprehensive system of support services that will assist the poor and the needy as far as our scope can reach.

MISSION STATEMENT

St Stephen Church aspires:
To be united in the love of God and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
To proclaim the word of God by a life of witness in our community and beyond.
To give the glory through assisting the weak and the less privileged.
Putting things back together, binding, healing, affirming, serving, restoring and educating the people of God.
To serve together in reconciling with one another and with God. Sharing our gifts and ourselves for the sake of the Gospel.

St. Edward Weekend and Daily Mass Schedule

Thursday, 6:30 p.m., Friday, 8:00 a.m.
1st and 3rd Saturday, 5:00 p.m.
Sunday 10:30 a.m.
Sacrament of Penance (Reconciliation) Friday, 8:30 a.m.
1st and 3rd Saturday, 4:20 – 4:40 p.m.

Parish Office: Peggy Garrison, Office Hours Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday, 8 a.m. to noon. Rectory and Office 847-7931, Fax 847-7393, Parish Hall 847-7512
New Parishioner Register at Parish Office
PSR Coordinator Diana Zurliene, RCIA Coordinator Ginny Barrett, Music Director Denise Zurliene
Pastoral Council – 3rd Thursday, Men’s Club – As announced Youth Ministry 3rd Sunday—5:30pm,
Food Pantry Distribution 2nd Saturday, 8 a.m.

Baptism, Marriage, Vocations, Sacrament of Anointing & Care of the Sick, contact Fr. Charles Anyaoku or call St. Edward or St. Stephen Parish Offices.

St. Stephen Weekend and Daily Mass Schedule

Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.
Thursday, 8:00 a.m.
2nd and 4th Saturday 5:00 p.m.
Sunday 8:30 a.m.
Sacrament of Penance (Reconciliation) Wednesday after mass, 2nd & 4th Sat. 4:20– 4:40 pm.,
Sun 8– 8:20 am. or by appointment

Parish Office: Trudi Herdes, Secretary, Office Hours Monday & Wednesday, 8 a.m. to noon,
Office, Fax & Social Room 662-8121, Rectory 662-6261
New Parishioner Register contact Fr. Charles, Trudi Herdes or Dorothy Uebinger 662-3711

Music Director Diane Briscoe, PSR Coordinator Paul Duquaine, RCIA Coordinator Cheryl McCarty, Sacristan Sam Pierce
Knights of Columbus – 1st Wednesday, 7 pm
Finance Committee – 3rd Wednesday, 7 p.m.
Altar Society - As announced
Pastoral Council - 4th Wednesday, 7 p.m.
Food Pantry Collection - First Weekend

Palm Sunday

April 5, 2020

ST. STEPHEN MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK
NO MASSES OR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

Please submit bulletin information to Beth Fancher, call 618-676-4292 Or email bafancher@wabash.net by noon on Wednesdays.

PRAYER INTENTIONS: Linda Griffy, Bill Marks, Nicole Wheaton, Velma Oliver, Clara Wilson, Ray Vaughn, LaVonne Kemmerer, Patience McKnight, Mildred Garrison, Pat Venable, Clarice Schweighart, Irene Winka, Steve Dudzik, Ruth Wilson, Roger Wells, Rhonda Ryker, Don & Mary Bunnell, Marilyn Wheaton, JR Means, Lois Houlihan, Cory Britton, Ed Perk, Georgia Klingler, Celeste Replogle, Georgianna Weber, Luke Miller, Helen Powless, Marie Elwat, Cindy Bloemer, Kennah Hiestand, Jean Quinn, Betty Greenwood, Claire Karasch, Judie Powless, Claire Fopay, Harrison Hilliard, Larry Hagen, Becky Dulaney, Maria Pemberton, Joyce Heuerman, Fritz (Frank) Zimmerman, Mary Patridge, Clara Keys, Jim McCarty

On Good Friday, there will be a special collection for Holy Land and Food Pantry This Weekend

If you do not have an envelope for the Holy Land contribution, please put this in a plain envelope marked Holy Land and place in Father Charles mail slot on the west side of church.

Don't forget to continue with your weekly contributions. St. Stephen's depends on weekly contributions to pay bills. They can be mailed to the church, put in the mail slot on the west of church, (Father Charles mail slot), or in basket on the table outside the social room. The Church Office will be open 8 a.m. to 12 noon, Monday and Wednesday. Do not use white mailbox on south door for envelopes. This is the First Weekend of April which is our monthly Food Pantry donation. Please include this with your weekly contribution. The Food Pantry is very important to our community and depends on contributions to serve those in need.

Bulletins are being emailed weekly and there are copies in white mailbox at south entrance. Do not use this mailbox to put envelopes in. Call Beth Fancher to received emailed bulletin if you have not received one and let her know if you have changed your email address in the last couple of years. 618-676-4292 bafancher@wabash.net

The most common reason for making an Act of Spiritual Communion is when a person cannot attend Mass. An act of Spiritual Communion increases our desire to receive sacramental Communion worthily.

A Prayer for Spiritual Communion 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 in my body, my soul and my whole being. 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

Palm Sunday

April 5, 2020

ST. EDWARD MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK
NO MASSES OR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.
The Scripture readings are below for your convenience.

PRAYER INTENTIONS: Garland Keck, Kim Buchanan, Lanora Neavill, Leon Chamness, Tom Colvin, Jack Ciesielczyk, Jalain Thompson, Nanette Williams, Julie Griffith, Gina Williams, Emilee Stanley, Maddox Oppenheimer, Sara Kerchner, Charles Drechsel, Eva Decker, Matthew Rorban, Andrew Mayo, Robyn Meagher, Andrew Luna, Elaine Jeffers, Homer and Shirley Clark, Alice Zurliene, Tim Dittmer, Terri Venturelli, Linda States, James Rawls, Glory Almon, Cathy Newville, Luke Dewees, Adam Reyling, Ruth & Ralph Langhauser, Teresa Williams, Randy White, Raymond Garrison, Noah Gollner, Mary Jean Ochs, Rusti Grogan, Ed Nelson, Wallace Hart, Mark Fleming, Mary Murphy, Ginny Barrett, Ernie Sork, Donna Sullivan, David Ochs & all priests who are sick.

Weekly Contribution 03/30

Envelopes(17)	\$1,534.00
Loose	00.00
Total	\$1,534.00
We need	\$1,887.00

Building Fund	\$270.00
Easter Flowers	10.00
CRS	10.00
Holy Land	10.00

Please submit bulletin information to Peggy Garrison at the Parish Office by noon on Wednesdays.

Our Daily Scripture Readings:

Mon: *Holy Week*

Is 42:1-7

Jn 12:1-11

Tues: *Holy Week*

Is 49:1-6

Jn 13:21-33,36-38

Wed: *Holy Week*

Is 50:4-9a

Mt 26:14-25

Thur: *Holy Thursday of The Lord's Supper*

Ex 12:1-8,11-14 1 Cor 11:23-26 Jn 13:1-15

Fri: *Good Friday—The Passion of The Lord*

Is 52:13—52:12 Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-9 Jn 18:1—19:42

Sat: *The Easter Vigil in The Holy Night*

Gn 1:1—2:2, Gn 22:1-18, Ex 14:15—15:1, Is 54:5-14, Is 55:1-11, Bar 3:9-15, 32—4:4, Ez 36:16-17a,18-28, Rom 6:3-11, Mt 28:1-10

Sun: *Easter Sunday of The Resurrection of the Lord*

Acts 10:34a, 37-43 Col 3:1-4 Jn 20:1-9 Mt 28:1-10

St. Edward and St. Stephen News

Respect Life Corner- They did not yet understand. (John 20:9) How fitting the Gospel reading today reflects our times. You would think the apostles would be beaming with joy in the realization that Christ did what He promised them He would do: Rise from the dead, defeat sin, with the offer of eternal life with Him! Instead, we hear about panic, misunderstanding and confused faith. They wonder if Jesus’s body has been stolen. They are shocked by the empty tomb and while some of them start to believe, they haven’t seen the risen Lord...yet. Christ enters into suffering himself and becomes the healing salve, the cure, of the world. In our sinfulness, we put Christ on the cross. He responds with His divine mercy and love, transforming suffering forever. In fact, His cross is life saving for us and world, especially during this time. We have faith that whatever we feel, wherever we are in our faith, Christ is with us. His resurrected love is the other side of darkness. We are better off because of His suffering. **Learn, Act, Connect, Pray-** Christ has risen for all of us. Let’s go out and meet Him. The apostles rejoiced when they had a personal encounter with Him. Let’s thank Him for His care and intervention in our lives. Through His salvation, we find eternal healing.

In the hopes that we can celebrate a Mass honoring the Sacrament of Matrimony for couples celebrating 25, 30, 40, 50, and 60 and up years of marriage on Sunday, June 7th, at 1:30 PM, at the Cathedral of St. Peter, I am asking for those names and addresses by April 28th.

Give this information to Trudi at St. Stephen and Peggy at St. Edward before April 28.

The season of Lent continues to the Mass of the Lord’s Supper, April 9, Inclusive.
Everyone 14 years of age or over is bound to abstain from meat on Good Friday and all Fridays of Lent. Everyone 18 years of age and under 5 years of age is also bound to fast on Good Friday. On these two days of fast and abstinence, only one full meatless meal is allowed. The other meatless meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to one’s needs, but altogether they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted on these two days, but liquids, including milk and fruit juices are allowed. Then health or ability to work would be seriously affected, the obligation of the law is modified. Those that are excused from fast and abstinence outside the age limit include the physically or mentally ill including individuals suffering from chronic illnesses such as diabetes. Also excluded are pregnant or nursing women. In all cases, common senses should prevail, and ill persons should not further jeopardize their health by fasting. Because Lent is a special season for all Christians, we should not lightly excuse ourselves from these penitential practices.

Guadalupe Project: Anyone wishing to make a monetary contribution to the Guadalupe Project may place their donation in an envelope labeled “Guadalupe” and put it in the collection basket .

TO ALL PARISHIONERS: Someone is sending emails with my name on it. In case you receive any strange mails bearing my name, first verify its authenticity by calling me at this number 618-641-8978 before responding. Thank you - Fr. Charles	RCIA – Rite of Christian Initiation If you want to know about our faith, or would like to join us, contact Father Charles at 618-662-6261, Cheryl McCarty at 815-343-1502, Ginny Barrett at 618-335-6926, or Mary Murphy at 618-599-5018
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One thing I ask of the Lord, and this I long, to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. That should be our daily prayer. That should be our daily desire. That should be our daily wish.

St. Stephen News

St. Stephen’s Annual Rummage Sale has been CANCELLED

The Bible Study of the Passion and Resurrection Narratives of Jesus CANCELLED

There are several chalk boards that will be removed from the walls in the Social Room before repainting the room. If interested in purchasing the boards or donating towards the purchase of the paint, contact Jacquie Lueking or Deb Duquaine. Bids will be accepted. 

Please let Beth Fancher or Trudi Herdes know what dates you are celebrating birthdays, anniversaries or any special events i.e. births, graduations, marriage, etc.). We would like to put these dates in the bulletin.

If you would like to contribute to the cemetery fence fund, please place your donation in an envelope marked 'cemetery fence.' and drop it in the collection basket. Thank you.

The next three Altar Society rotating chairmen are: Donna Myers, Beth Fancher, Jill Fehrenbacher.

MASS INTENTIONS If you would like to have a mass intention said for a loved one who has passed, special intention or blessings received, please place name of intention and \$10 in an envelope and drop in the collection basket. If you would like specific date, try to get the information to Trudi as soon as possible.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) If you or someone you know would like to learn more about the Catholic Church, or is interested in joining or returning to the Church, contact Father Charles at 662-6261 or Cheryl McCarty at 815-343-1502.

Prayer Chain: When a parishioner has an intention & requests prayers, Erin Pierce will initiate the prayer chain. She will contact Fr. Charles, who will determine the prayers. An email will be sent to all members, who will pray for the intentions. Each member should endeavor to assure the obligation is met. Call Erin 662-2266 erinmp1968@aol.com

Goodsearch: If you would like to help earn money for St. Ann's general fund visit Goodsearch.com and register making St. Ann's your charity. Please type in St Ann’s Altar Society (no punctuation). Make it your homepage or just use it to search or make online purchases.

SCRIP: Please consider purchasing SCRIP cards after weekend Masses. There are several retailers & restaurants participating in the program. St. Ann's buys the cards at a discounted rate and sells them at full face value. When you buy a card you receive a card worth the purchase price, Contact Erin or shopwithscrip.com.

Congratulations to our April Birthdays; April 1, Jim McCarty, April 8, Myranda Greenwood, April 13, Cheryl McCarty, April 17 Emily Milner

Congratulations to our April Anniversary couples: April 2, Cole & Myranda Greenwood, April 8, Jim and Diane Fleener

St. Edward News

CONGRATULATIONS TO ZACH & ANNIE MATTHEWS ON THE BIRTH OF THEIR FIRST CHILD ON FRIDAY, MARCH 27TH. WELCOME THEODORE GREGORY.

CLOTHESLINE VOLUNTEERS:

If anyone is interested or available to volunteer at The Clothesline please contact Leslie Robison (842-9602--even if you are not sure but just have questions). Morning shift is 9-12:30 and afternoon shift is 12:30-4pm. Thank-you.

2020 Schedule: May 6th & 23rd; June 11th & 29th.

TO ALL ST. EDWARD PARISHIONERS:

IN ORDER TO OBEY THE SOCIAL DISTANCING CONCEPT, THE BISHOP HAS DECIDED AND DIRECTED THE PASTORS TO CANCEL ALL LITURGICAL SERVICES AND MASSES. PLEASE BEAR WITH US AT THIS MOMENT. LET US UNITE IN PRAYERS THAT GOD WILL COME TO OUR NEED. BE ASSURED OF MY PRAYERS.

PLEASE CONTACT ME AT 618-641-8978 OR PEG GARRISON AT 618-599-2098 WITH ANY QUESTIONS.

FATHER CHARLES, PASTOR ADMINISTRATOR, ST. EDWARD CATHOLIC CHURCH

CANCELLATIONS

Weekday & weekend liturgies

Stations of the Cross PSR CLASSES

Bible Study Youth Ministry

WILL TRY TO KEEP EVERYBODY UPDATE, PLEASE STAY SAFE

COLLECTIONS: Just a reminder if at all possible to please mail or drop off at Rectory office your weekly contributions. Your financial support remains an integral part of parish life and the continued operation of our parish and it's mission of Christian Service. Any questions please call Peg Garrison or the rectory office. Thank you.

THANK-YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HAVE BEEN MAILING IN THEIR WEEKLY DONATIONS. IT IS VERY MUCH APPRECIATED. ALSO, TO DATE WE HAVE COLLECTED \$3,496 OF OUR PARISH GOAL OF \$4,582. FOR CATHOLIC SERVICE & MINISTRY APPEAL.

St. Stephen News

TO ALL ST. STEPHEN PARISHIONERS: IN ORDER TO OBEY THE SOCIAL DISTANCING CONCEPT, THE BISHOP HAS DECIDED AND DIRECTED THE PASTORS TO CANCEL ALL LITURGICAL SERVICES AND MASSES. PLEASE BEAR WITH US AT THIS MOMENT. LET US UNITE IN PRAYERS THAT GOD WILL COME TO OUR NEED. BE ASSURED OF MY PRAYERS. **PLEASE CONTACT ME AT 618-641-8978 OR Trudi Herdes WITH ANY QUESTIONS.**

Father, Charles, Pastoral Administrator, St. Stephen Catholic Church, Flora

CANCELLATIONS:

Weekday & weekend liturgies

Stations of the Cross, PSR CLASSES, Bible Study, Parish Meetings

Thank you to the following people who delivered Meals on Wheels in March: Lou Sulsberger, Pat Ridgeway Jean Guerrettaz, Bernie Brown, Nancy Klobnek, Jacquie Lueking, Lora Dulaney, Phil & Beth Fancher, Jill Fehrenbacher, Cheryl McCarty, Melanie Porter, Mary Beth & Tom Lancaster, Don & Mary Talmant, Zimmerman Family, Susan Schroeder, Dorothy Uebinger. Thank you for helping with this wonderful ministry.

NEW MINISTERS We thank those who are preparing to serve as Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers Lectors: Mary Beth Lancaster, Andrew Koester and Justin Fleener. Eucharistic Minister: Andrew Vahling.

Thank you to the **15 households** that have already pledged to support the mission of the Church to teach, preach, minister and serve in the name of Jesus through their financial support of The Catholic Service and Ministry Appeal. So far \$3,002.92, has been pledged. If you have not yet responded, please make every effort to do so.

The envelopes for donating towards the purchase of Easter flowers are at both entrances on the bookshelves. Flowers can be donated in memory of a loved one. Place donation in the envelopes and put them in the offertory baskets during mass.



Do you like to sew? Would you enjoy spending a little time sewing with an old-fashioned sewing circle? Clay County Health Department's hospice program is in need of lap quilts for the hospice patients. They provide the fabric. All you need is a sewing machine and sewing notions. We would gather in the Social Room to visit and sew. You've never made a quilt but would like to come? No problem. We will teach you. Call Cheryl McCarty, 815-343-1502 for more information.



HOME BLESSINGS - Contact Ted Whitehead to set up a time for Father Charles to come and bless your home. For more information see Ted or Father Charles.

We are in dire need of altar servers. Altar servers can be children who have received their first communion as well as any adult. All are welcome.

Praying and Giving Together Amid COVID-19

Hello St. Edward & St. Stephen families,

I pray that you and your loved ones are healthy and have the resources you need amidst the current restrictions. We know these measures are designed to protect our wellbeing and that of our broader community and world.

For many of us, particularly when we're now told to stay home for weeks at a time, our initial reaction is to gather all we can and hunker down to weather the storm. As a Christian family of faith, this is also a time – perhaps the most important time – to consider our need for spiritual unity and the needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Praying Together

Though our family of families at St Stephen may be physically separated from one another right now, we are blessed with several ways we can unite in prayer and devotion. I encourage you to consider any number of the following to join as a St Stephen family:

1. Livestream Masses: YOUTUBE is available for all parishioners.
2. Virtual Prayer/Scripture Groups: parish website is available for all.
3. Prayer and adoration: we shall be receiving prayer sample daily. please join us in family prayer.

Giving Together

Cancellation of Mass is leading to significant losses in our offertory income, which is placing all our ministries and operations at significant risk. Many people in our parish and community depend upon your regular, weekly offertory contributions and, during this current challenge, they are needed more than ever.

Please consider giving, where you can make a weekly offertory contribution to our St Stephen family and keep the vital ministries and services we provide going. We ask you to prayerfully consider maintaining your regular weekly donation level or even increasing it during these times.

If you prefer to make an offertory donation through cash or check, our parish offices will be open 8am – 12 pm and someone will be available to assist you.

The fact that this pandemic is occurring during our Lenten journey offers each of us important reminders about the role of faith, hope and charity in our daily lives and in whom we place our trust. I believe we are being called by Jesus Christ to a renewed sense of solidarity. This is a time for unity in prayer, not for isolation; it is a time for hope, not despair; it is a time for generosity, not self-focus. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another (Jn 13:35).

(Continued. Praying and Giving Together Amid COVID-19)

May God grant you peace during this difficult time and may He manifest His love and presence to you in abundant ways. If you have any concerns, please contact the Parish Office or call Fr. Charles' number 618-641-8978

Thank you for your continued support of St Stephen

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Rev. Fr. Charles Anyaoku

CORONAVIRUS

During the Season of Lent, many of us have taken on the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Due to Governor Pritzker's Shelter in Place order and Bishop Braxton's directives to be followed in the parishes in the Diocese of Belleville, Bishop Braxton stated:

In light of the executive order, please observe the following guidelines for the Sacrament of Reconciliation which is in effect until further notice. A note about the Holy Father's recent issuance of a plenary indulgence is included with this letter.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Given that our churches are closed and a stay-at-home order is in effect:

- individual confessions are currently not possible; this includes virtual or phone confessions, which are never permissible, nor drive-thru confessions. Despite the good intentions around such novelty, we must attend to our underlying theological tradition of the sacrament, as well as support the stay-at-home order and its intended purpose – to keep people safe in their homes at this time.
- in keeping with longstanding pastoral practice when penitents' access to the sacrament is restricted, they can be assured that their sins are forgiven if they make an act of contrition with a firm resolve to approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation after the stay-at-home order is lifted.
- the faithful should be encouraged to pray particular prayers or meditate on passages of the bible that you recommend to assist them in seeking the mercy and forgiveness of God and the grace of reconciliation.

We can serve our people well with pastoral tenderness if we recall for them that our Lord knows their hearts and desires to reconcile their lives to Him and He awaits their presence in the Sacrament once the stay-at-home order is lifted and our churches are re-opened.

CORONAVIRUS (continued)

In the new decree In Time of COVID-19 (II), issued by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments for the pandemic, there is a part: Palm Sunday. The Commemoration of the Lord’s Entrance into Jerusalem in parish churches and in other places the third form is to be used.” Using the third form in the Roman Missal, there is no instruction on the blessing of the palms. I would like to know if, according to the decree, parishioners in parish churches will not be able to receive the blessed palms this year since there is no blessing of palms in the third form of entrance for Palm Sunday. Second, is it allowed for a priest to bless the palms outside the Mass? Following the degree from the Congregation our Office of Worship does not include the Blessing of Palms.

Bishop Braxton has stated earlier that we are to set aside the palms and when the Order of Shelter in Place is lifted the Palms would be made available.

With respect to the custom of keeping blessed palms at home, the Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy comments on this practice:

“139. Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday, or Passion Sunday’ which unites the royal splendor of Christ with the proclamation of his Passion.

“The procession, commemorating Christ’s messianic entry into Jerusalem, is joyous and popular in character. The faithful usually keep palm or olive branches, or other greenery which have been blessed on Palm Sunday in their homes or in their workplaces.

“The faithful, however, should be instructed as to the meaning of this celebration so that they might grasp its significance.

They should be opportunely reminded that the important thing is participation at the procession and not only the obtaining of palm or olive branches. Palms or olive branches should not be kept as amulets, or for therapeutic or magical reasons to dispel evil spirits or to prevent the damage these causes in the fields or in the homes, all of which can assume a certain superstitious guise.

Palms and olive branches are kept in the home as a witness to faith in Jesus Christ, the messianic king, and in his Paschal Victory.

In the light of the above, one can perhaps understand the internal logic of why the text of the decree excludes the blessing of palms in parish churches.

Even if it were possible to guarantee a safe distribution of palms in a year when millions of Catholics are suffering the far greater deprivation of being able to attend Mass and receive Holy Communion, delaying the receiving of a blessed palm is a small sacrifice to pay in this very special Holy Week.



Thursday of the Lord’s Supper – 09 April 2020

Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14, Psalm 116:12-13, 15-16bc, 17-18, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, John 13:1-15.

Who Washes Feet During Supper? Jesus did it first – something only servants and slaves did. Jesus did it because it was both important to him and model for us. What do we learn? Nothing is too menial for Christians. No act of hospitality is foreign to Christian behavior. No service is beneath our stature. In fact, because of Baptism into him, service is our mission. We spend time before the Eucharist tonight to remind us that in receiving him as Communion, we are nourished to be like him.

- After this Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper, whom will I stoop down and serve?

Friday of the Passion of the Lord (Good Friday) – 10 April 2020

Isaiah 52:13–53:12. Psalm 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-16, 17, 25. Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9. John 18:1–19:42.

Who Would Be So Obedient? Jesus would – even unto death! This high priest – the mediator between God and all humanity – is not remote. He is near. He is close. He is one like us in all things but sin. He knows what our lives are like. He teaches us that obedience to God is to do whatever it takes to be faithful. Therein lies our salvation – doing what it takes, rooted in God’s saving grace.

- Following this Good Friday, what good work will I do?

Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord – Saturday night, 11 April 2020

Easter Vigil in the Holy Night of Easter

Genesis 1:1–2:2. Genesis 22:1-18. Exodus 14:15–15:1. Isaiah 54:5-14. Isaiah 55:1-11. Baruch 3:9-15, 32–4:4. Ezekiel 36:16-17a, 18-28. Romans 6:3-11. Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23. Matthew 28:1-10.

A Shocking First Morning. Two Marys come to the tomb at dawn and are shocked by a great earthquake, an angel coming like lightning, and soldiers shaken with fear. “Do not be afraid,” the angel says to the women. The same words spoken to mother Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds by other angels years before. The same words spoken by the Risen Jesus to his disciples after his resurrection. The same words spoken to us today. And every day.

- What do I fear that I need to stop fearing?

- How will this risen and renewed life fill me with grace?

- What will I do this Easter week to share life, bring life, be the very presence of the life-giving Christ the Lord?

Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord – Sunday, 12 April 2020 Mass during the Day
Acts 10:34a, 37-43. Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23. Colossians 3:1-4. OR 1 Corinthians 5:6b-8. Sequence –
Christians, to the Paschal Victim. John 20:1-9. OR Luke 24:13-35.

Acts of the Apostles. All during Easter Time, we read and hear the Acts of the Apostles. Those many acts are not mere history. They launch us into Church life today. This Risen Lord, present among us, is so astounding, we cannot remain our old selves. We, too, are new – because of Baptism, because of this new Easter Day, because Christ is within and around us. We, too, act in new ways.

- How will I shine new life into another's life today?
- How will I bear witness to Christ among us by some word or deed?
- How will I rejoice?

Peace and blessings,

Office of Worship
Department of Pastoral Services
Diocese of Belleville

Phone: 618.722.5040

Email: dclark@diobelle.org
Website: <https://dps.diobelle.org>