



MARCH 29, 2020

5th SUNDAY OF LENT

Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life;
whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live."
- Jn 11:25

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254 Merrimack Street, Methuen, MA

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Update:

- Our Parish Offices are closed until further notice.
- All sacramental ministry has been suspended except ministry to the dying. If you have an emergency for the Sacrament of the Sick, please call the office (978) 683-1193 extension 40.
- Public Daily and Sunday Masses have been suspended until further notice. However, we are filming private Daily and Sunday Mass. Please like our Facebook page, follow us on Instagram, or subscribe to our YouTube channel to watch them.
- All public Masses have been replaced with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament with no more than 10 people in both churches.
- St. Lucy Church and Gethsemane Chapel are open all day for prayer. **Note:** The Chapel is closed from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm to film Daily Mass.
- All offertory envelopes can be mailed to the office (254 Merrimack Street, Methuen, MA 01844). Alternatively we encourage you to sign up for electronic giving.

PLEASE NOTE:

MARCH 25, 2020

ST. LUCY'S NORMALLY
SCHEDULED THURSDAY
EVENING ADORATION
AND CONFESSIONS ARE
SUSPENDED UNTIL
FURTHER NOTICE



The pamphlets to pray the *Divine Mercy Novena and Chaplet* which starts on Good Friday, April 10th and ends on Divine Mercy Sunday, April 19th, can be found on the display racks at the entrances of St. Monica and St. Lucy Churches, and in Gethsemane Chapel.



SCHEDULE FOR THE UPCOMING WEEKS

MARCH 25, 2020

The Light Is On for You Confessions on Wednesdays is suspended until further notice.

SUNDAYS

ADORATION

7:30AM-12:30PM *ST. MONICA CHURCH*

9:00AM-12:00PM *ST. LUCY CHURCH*

MONDAYS-WEDNESDAYS

ADORATION 8:00-9:00AM *ST. LUCY CHURCH*

THURSDAYS

ADORATION 8:15-9:15AM *ST. MONICA CHURCH*

**EVENING ADORATION & CONFESSIONS AT ST. LUCY'S IS
CANCELLED*

FRIDAYS

ADORATION 8:15AM-5:30PM *ST. MONICA CHURCH*

CONFESSIONS

4:30PM-5:30PM *ST. MONICA CHURCH*

SATURDAYS

ADORATION

8:00-9:00AM *ST. MONICA CHURCH*

4:00-5:00PM *ST. MONICA CHURCH & ST. LUCY CHURCH*

CONFESSIONS

3:00-3:45PM *ST. MONICA CHURCH & ST. LUCY CHURCH*

The coronavirus and sitting quietly in a room alone

By Bishop Robert Barron

Blaise Pascal said, "All of humanity's problems stem from man's inability to sit quietly in a room alone." The great 17th-century philosopher thought that most of us, most of the time, distract ourselves from what truly matters through a series of divertissements (diversions). He was speaking from experience. Though one of the brightest men of his age and one of the pioneers of the modern physical sciences and of computer technology, Pascal frittered away a good deal of his time through gambling and other trivial pursuits. In a way, he knew, such diversions are understandable, since the great questions -- Does God exist? Why am I here? Is there life after death? -- are indeed overwhelming. But if we are to live in a serious and integrated way, they must be confronted -- and this is why, if we want our most fundamental problems to be resolved, we must be willing to spend time in a room alone.

This Pascalian mot has come to my mind a good deal in recent days as our entire country goes into shutdown mode due to the coronavirus. Shopping malls, movie theaters, restaurants, school campuses, sports stadiums, airports, etc. -- the very places where we typically seek out fellowship or divertissements -- are all emptying out. This is obviously good from the standpoint of physical health, but I wonder whether we might see it as something very good for our psychological and spiritual health as well. Perhaps, we could all think of this time of semi-quarantine as an invitation to some monastic introspection, some serious confrontation with the questions that matter -- some purposeful sitting alone in a room.

Might I make a few suggestions in regard to our retreat? Get out your Bible and read one of the Gospels in its entirety -- perhaps the Gospel of

Matthew, which we are using for Sunday Mass this liturgical year. Read it slowly, prayerfully; use a good commentary if that helps. Or practice the ancient art that has been recommended warmly by the last several popes -- namely, "lectio divina." This "divine reading" of the Bible consists in four basic steps: lectio, meditatio, oratio, and contemplatio. First, read the scriptural text carefully; second, pick out one word or one passage that specially struck you, and then meditate on it, like a ruminating animal chewing on its cud; third, speak to God, telling him how your heart was moved by what you read; fourth and finally, listen to the Lord, discerning what he speaks back to you. Trust me, the Bible will spring to life when you approach it through this method.

Or read one of the spiritual classics during this time of imposed isolation. Keep in mind that, prior to the rise of the physical sciences, the best and brightest people in our Western intellectual tradition entered the fields of philosophy, theology, and spirituality. One of the dark sides of our post-Enlightenment culture is a general forgetfulness of the astonishing richness produced by generations of brilliant spiritual teachers. So take up St. Augustine's "Confessions," preferably in Maria Boulding's recent translation, which reads like a novel, or Frank Sheed's classic translation. Though he lived and wrote 17 centuries ago, the spiritual seeker of our time will discern in Augustine's story the contours and trajectories of his own. Or read the "Rule of St. Benedict," especially the section on the twelve degrees of humility. If you dare, follow "St. Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises," preferably under the direction of a good guide (who doesn't have the coronavirus!). If these texts and practices seem too dated, spend your quiet time with Thomas Merton's splendid autobiography "The Seven Storey Mountain," which, in compelling prose, tells the story of the 20th-century author's journey from self-absorbed worldling to Trappist monk.

And of course, pray. When Merton was once asked what is the most important thing a person could do to improve her prayer life, he replied, "Take the time." Well, now we have more time. Do a Holy Hour every day or every other day. Dust off your rosary, which I think is one of the most sublime prayers in the Catholic tradition. When we pray it well, we meditate on the mysteries of Christ; we call to mind, fifty times, the inevitability our own passing ("now and at the hour of our death"); and we entrust ourselves to the most powerful intercessor on earth or in heaven. Not a bad way to spend twenty minutes. Take the time at the end of the day to examine your conscience -- and not in a cursory manner. Do it carefully, prayerfully, honestly. Ask yourself how many times in the course of the day you missed an opportunity to show love, how many times you did not respond to a grace, how often you fell into a habitual sin.

Now that we're being asked to keep a certain distance from our fellow human beings, embrace the solitude and silence in a spiritually alert way. Go for that long walk on the beach, across the fields, up in the hills -- wherever you like to go to be alone. And just talk to God. Ask him what he wants you to do. Pray for your kids or your parents or your friends who might be struggling. Tell him how much you love him and how you want greater intimacy with him. And please put away the iPhones! Open your eyes, lift up your heads, and take in the beauty of God's creation and thank him for it.

If Pascal is right, many of our deepest problems can be solved by sitting, with spiritual attention, alone in a room. Perhaps through God's strange providence, the quarantine we're enduring might be our chance.

- Bishop Robert Barron is the founder of the global ministry, Word on Fire, and is an Auxiliary Bishop in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

ST. MONICA PARISH**SATURDAY, MARCH 28**

8:00 am Joseph O'Neil
4:00 pm People of St. Monica &
 St. Lucy Parishes

SUNDAY, MARCH 29

7:30 am
9:30 am Nancy Tardif
 Deceased members of the
 Chouinard Family
 Leo Croteau
11:30 am Maurice, Helen, and
 Maurice Jr. Lariviere

THURSDAY, APRIL 2

8:15 am Christine Ferguson

FRIDAY, APRIL 3

8:15 am

SATURDAY, APRIL 4

8:00 am First Saturday Mass
4:00 pm Thomas & Dorothy Bresnahan

SUNDAY, APRIL 5

7:30 am
9:30 am Thomas Conley
 Deceased members of the
 Chouinard Family
11:30 am Richard Curtis

ST. LUCY PARISH**SATURDAY, MARCH 28**

4:00 pm Michelangelo Iuvara and
 Salvatore, Maria and Silvana Campailla

SUNDAY, MARCH 29

9:00 am Angela Iannuccilli
11:00 am Walter Charles
 Pasquale Petralia
 Marie Hajjar
 Salvatore, Rose, and Lucy Sapuppo
 Jocelyne Scrofano
 Catherine Byron
 Victor Nunez and Daves Nunez

MONDAY, MARCH 30

8:00 am Anthony Calderone and Gil Fontaine

TUESDAY, MARCH 31

8:00 am Stanley and Josephine Faucher

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1

8:00 am Ryan Matthew Thistle

SATURDAY, APRIL 4

4:00 pm People of St. Lucy & St. Monica Parishes

SUNDAY, APRIL 5

9:00 am Deceased members of the BVM Sodality
11:00 am Michael Kenny Jr., Deceased members of the
 Reitano Family, Tom Ignati, and Tony Liguori
 John Fitzpatrick
 Sally Bradley
 Giuseppina Cunsolo

**THESE INTENTIONS WILL BE OFFERED AT THE PRIVATE MASSES SAID BY
 OUR PRIESTS. THESE MASS TIMES ARE NOT AVAILABLE PUBLICLY.**

WEEKLY READINGS AND OBSERVANCES**Readings for the week**

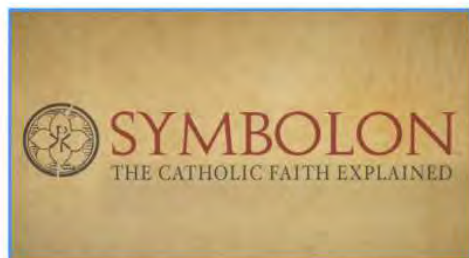
Sunday: Ez 37:12-14/Ps 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8 [7]/Rom 8:8-11/Jn 11:1-45 or 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45
Monday: Dn 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62 or 13:41c-62/Ps 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6 [4ab]/Jn 8:1-11
Tuesday: Nm 21:4-9/Ps 102:2-3, 16-18, 19-21/Jn 8:21-30
Wednesday: Dn 3:14-20, 91-92, 95/Dn 3:52, 53, 54, 55, 56/Jn 8:31-42
Thursday: Gn 17:3-9/Ps 105:4-5, 6-7, 8-9 [8a]/Jn 8:51-59
Friday: Jer 20:10-13/Ps 18:2-3a, 3bc-4, 5-6, 7 [cf. 7]/Jn 10:31-42
Saturday: Ez 37:21-28/Jer 31:10, 11-12abcd, 13 [cf. 10d]/Jn 11:45-56
Next Sunday: Mt 21:1-11/Is 50:4-7/Ps 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24 [2a]/Phil 2:6-11/Mt 26:14—27:66 or 27:11-54

Observances for the week

Sunday: 5th Sunday of Lent
Wednesday: April Fools' Day
Thursday: St. Francis of Paola, Hermit
Saturday: St. Isidore, Bishop and Doctor of the Church
Next Sunday: Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

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FORMED[®] PICK OF THE WEEK



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PRAYER CORNER

Please pray for **Linda Buonanno** and **Guy Labrie** whose Funeral Masses were recently celebrated at our parishes. May their soul and the souls of all our faithful departed rest in peace.

Please pray for our priests/seminarians/vocations daily. Pick up a Pray for Our Priests calendar and a seminarian prayer card at the back of the church or just use this list each day. Our priests and seminarians need our prayers and we should be praying for vocations!

Day	Date	Priest	Seminarian
Sunday	3/29/20	Fr. Nicholas Sannella	Rev. Mr. Daniel Zinger
Monday	3/30/20	Fr. Hubert Desmond	Giovanni Argote
Tuesday	3/31/20	Fr. Francis Mawn	Gabriel Hanley
Wednesday	4/1/20	Fr. Philip Desrosiers	Leonardo Moreira
Thursday	4/2/20	Msgr. William Helmick	Kevin Pleitez
Friday	4/3/20	Fr. Paul McManus	Paolo Strudthoff
Saturday	4/4/20	Fr. Kevin O'Leary	Fernando Ayala
Sunday	4/5/20	Fr. Vincent Gianni	David Campo

IN LOVING MEMORY

Roses for Life for this week
Theresa A. Rickley

Sanctuary Candle for April

St. Monica Parish: **Richard Curtis**
St. Lucy Parish: **Theresa A. Rickley**

Altar Bread for April

St. Monica Parish: **Richard Curtis**
St. Lucy Parish: **Louise N. Salmi**

Bulletin Sponsor of the Week

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BAPTISMS Please call the parish office. St. Monica: 2nd Sun. of the month @ 1pm | St. Lucy: 3rd Sun. of the Month @ 1pm

MARRIAGES Please call the Parish Offices at least six months prior to the proposed wedding date and before booking a reception hall.

BULLETIN DEADLINE Mondays @ 10 am. Please email all bulletin notices to methuencatholicnews@gmail.com

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