

Greetings to all from St. Teresa of Calcutta Parish

This is the inaugural edition of an ongoing newsletter that will feature various parish ministries of St. Teresa of Calcutta Parish. We are blessed with over 30 separate groups who work within our community to address the spiritual, mental and physical well-being of our parishioners.

Highlighted here are some of the ministries that are working to continue their mission to serve our parish within the coronavirus regulations.

St Vincent de Paul

The Saint Vincent dePaul Society continues to take phone calls. We are not doing home visits but are getting all pertinent information over the phone. We will secure all required documentation and signatures from our clients when the pandemic crisis is over. For the health and welfare of our pantry volunteers and because of our church and parish office being closed, the pantry has discontinued operation until further notice. Clients calling requesting food will be given the grocery gift cards that are donated to SVdP by our very generous parishioners and we have monetary donations that are exclusively for the food pantry to replenish the gift cards, if the need arises. Because the Cathedral Kitchen depends on our monthly sandwiches, in March SVdP made a donation of \$300.00 to the Kitchen. When the crisis is over and the rent and utility moratoriums are lifted, you can be assured that our phone line will be blowing up with requests from our clients to help them get back on their feet but as we all know - God is good!

--Annette Fleming

Ministry with the Deaf

We are contacting Deaf Members by Video Phone (VP), emails and texting —touching base and speaking with their family members.

There was an on-going communication with other Pastoral Workers from different dioceses, Boston, Cleveland, Illinois (Rockford), and Milwaukee; from

National Catholic of Deaf (NCOD) and ICDA —organizing a schedule for ASL Masses - Live Stream for daily and Sunday Masses, and Stations of the Cross.

For those of our community who have access to a computer—they would be able to connect with Facebook and Twitter from the above schedules; and then, posting on our FB page.

But, since most of our people don't have a computer to view Live Stream of Diocesan and local parish Masses, etc., we are trying to find ways to offer them some spiritual connection.

This past Sunday, we arranged and coordinated a group VP-conference call. We were able to check-in with a group of 10 for our Prayer Service — sharing the gospel and a brief homily. We also discussed Holy Week situation.

--Fr. Hugh Bradley

Spirited Business Works

Our group normally comes together on the last Friday of the month. We meet in person at McLaughlin Hall from 7:20 AM - 8:30 AM & a few times a year we meet at Joseph's House to prepare and serve breakfast. In normal circumstances "life is not easy" so our meetings are a great forum to share your struggles in a safe room of empathetic and faith filled individuals. Personally I come away from these meetings energized, a little wiser through the sharing of life experiences & a sense of hope that we are there for each other through the ups and downs of life.

Our faithful members agreed that we must keep this going through the challenging situation we are all facing now. So, this past Friday morning, same time 7:20 AM we met via a Zoom meeting. This use of technology was uncharted waters for a number of us, but with the help of Josh Wiener (our self-taught Techie) we were able to navigate through our normal routine & see each other on the screen (or listening in on the phone) as we shared on our topic "Keeping the Faith in the midst of Fear."

We all felt that this was a comforting experience during

this time of isolation. We agreed that we will conduct this Zoom Meeting every Friday morning to create a source of community for all of us during this challenging time.

If you are interested in joining us please email me at petedunn@financialguide.com or call me at 856-397-1139.

--Pete Dunn

Dinners to Doorsteps

We provide meals for individuals and families who are ill, disabled, living alone, parents of new babies, anyone who is unable to cook for either themselves or a family member and we also provide meals for families who have had a financial hardship. When someone calls me that they need help with meals I find out if they or any of their family member have health issues, allergies or diet restrictions. This important information is given to each volunteer who cooks for the Ministry.

Every family who we provided meals for remain confidential. I am available 24 hours 7 days a week for all our families we help. I organize the meal schedule every Sunday with each of my volunteers. Neither myself or any of my volunteers accept any monetary donations. If anyone would like to make a donation it is made directly to the parish by the person making the donation. I do take food donations and have several organizations that donate produce and grocery items on a weekly basis. All grocery items are can goods which is a big help but right now it has been a bit challenging to plan my weekly meals.

Stores have been out of ground beef and chicken which I use for almost every meal for my families. Another issue I have been having is getting my grocery order delivered as I need it because of the crisis we are in now. I used to be able to make my grocery order the day before I needed it but now it is when a time slot is available. Then when I do get a time slot and make my order some items are removed because of the shortage in stores right now. The last 3 weeks I have not been getting everything I have ordered but I have made the

most of what I have gotten and all the families are still able to get their meals.

This Ministry is very important to me as I know firsthand what is like to have to decide between monthly bills and making sure there is food on the table because of a financial hardship. I absolutely love what I do for this Ministry and our Heavenly Father has blessed me in many ways. My hope for this Ministry is that we reach more people in our community who are struggling and do not know where to turn for help. We are here to help. If anyone would like to volunteer or if you know a family or individual who is in need of our services please contact me, Michele Santiago at 609-598-1787 or my email grandmarose73@yahoo.com.

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me"

Matthew 25:35

--Michele Santiago

Stephen Ministry

Every day you see people who are hurting: those who have lost a job, lost a loved one, gone through divorce, battling an illness or dealing with any number of issues that may leave them needing someone to reach out to them as they make that long journey through the valley of a life crisis.

St Teresa of Calcutta is a Stephen Ministry parish. We have 15 specially trained fellow parishioners who provide "one to one Christ Centered care" to people who are experiencing any number of life's challenges. They have been commissioned, after 50 hours of training and ongoing continuing education, by our parish, to give caring, non-judgmental, empathetic support. They ask questions that help people identify their feelings and work through their difficulties, relying on God to be the source of any cure. Anything shared with them is strictly confidential. No one will know if you have a Stephen Minister.

During this time of the Covid 19 virus we should be especially aware of those who are experiencing feelings

of separation, anxiety and even despair. Although it is not possible to carry on the ministry in the normal manner, our dedicated Stephen Ministers are continuing to reach out to their Care Receivers in safe ways, to ensure that our Christ centered care may continue during this period. They are ready to serve you, the parishioners of St Teresa of Calcutta parish.

One way to tell that our parish cares is to minister to each other by expressing God's love to those around us. Is God calling you to take a more active role in helping others? Or, are you going through a time of trial? If so, you might benefit from a one on one conversation with someone who listens and cares in a nonjudgmental way. In either case, Stephen Ministry may be just what you are looking for. To find out more, please e mail: stephenministry@stteresaofcalcuttanj.org. You may also call the parish office at 856-858-0298.

—Jack Callahan

Web Site and Electronic Communication

In normal times Electronic Communication is not the first thing that comes to mind when you think of the church. But In this time of Social Distancing, electronic and social media have become important ways of keeping us connected to each other and to our spiritual lives.

This ministry encompasses our Parish website www.stteresaofcalcuttanj.org, our Facebook page and electronic communications through Constant Contact.

Using the Parish website and Facebook, Fr. Yvans has been able to provide live stream prayer services and daily and Sunday mass. Also posted to the Parish website and the Facebook page each day is a Reflection written by a member of the parish community. We encourage you to take advantage of these resources.

In addition, electronic communications are sent when important news needs to be shared via email. If the parish has your email address, you will receive emails.

If you know of someone who is not receiving emails, and would like to, please ask them to send their email

address to BTCParish@gmail.com so they can be added to our email list.

And, when things are back to the old normal and our parish is back to its usual level of activity, please keep these resources in mind when you are looking for news about parish happenings or want to publicize an event.

— Sharon Schwalm

Parish Council

The current Parish Council was installed in October and consists of 15 members, nine returning from the previous year and six newly appointed members. Each of the members has taken several of the Parish Ministries to serve as a liaison with in order to help with the flow of information down from Father Yvans and the Parish Council as well as to bring items back to Father and the Council. The alignment of Parish Council Member to their ministries are shown on posters in the back of both churches as well as on the Parish Web Site; <https://stteresaofcalcuttanj.org/>. I cannot say enough about the dedication and the response to the call to service of all of the members of the Parish Council.

The Council has begun a once a month social after the 8:00 am, 9:30 am and 11:00 am Masses with each one highlighting one or several of our Ministries. These serve to not only make people aware of all of our ministries but help to develop a sense of community as we gather for some refreshments and brotherhood after our Celebration of the Mass.

The council teamed up with the Stephen Ministry members as well as the Missionary Disciples ministry members to reach out to parish members by phone to see how they were dealing with the stresses of the COVID-19 virus. As the social distancing regulations continue (and get stricter) we may reach out the second time. If you have an issue during this time, feel free to reach out to the a council member directly or through the Parish Council e-mail (stcnjparishcouncil@gmail.com) and we will try and connect you with a ministry or other organization who can assist.

One of the goals of the Parish Council is to try and break down some of the walls that separate our ministries. We want the ministries to collaborate and in so doing take on other missions that they may not take on alone. To try and start this process the council held the first meeting of the ministries where we gathered information about all of the ministries at Saint Teresa Parish and distributed it to each ministry. We then gave the ministries (well, most of them as we ran out of time for the last few) a chance to give a short overview of their ministry. We want to have the document that was distributed be a living document and keep it fresh and up to date. If any of the ministries have changes, please send them into the council e-mail (stcnjparishcouncil@gmail.com) and we will keep it up to date and continue to distribute an up to date version to all of the ministries.

Coming out of the Meeting of the Ministries, the Parish Council decided to create this ministry Newsletter. The purpose is to keep all of the ministries informed of what else is going on in the parish and allow them to find places they can assist with other ministries. There will be articles about both upcoming events and also reports about the results of previous events. We will distribute this through the e-mail list as well as posting on our web site. We please ask all ministries to consider sending in articles to keep other ministries as well as the whole parish informed of things going on around the parish.

I would like to again personally thank all of the Members of the Parish Council for their work and dedication to Saint Teresa of Calcutta Parish, and to Father Yvans for his trust and faith in all of us.

- Hal Schwalm

PLEASE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT OUR PARISH

With the COVID-19 social-distancing regulations resulting in suspension of public Masses and other church services, please remember to continue to send in your weekly donations so that our parish is able to meet its usual monthly expenses. The most convenient way to contribute to parish income is to sign up for electronic giving via this link:

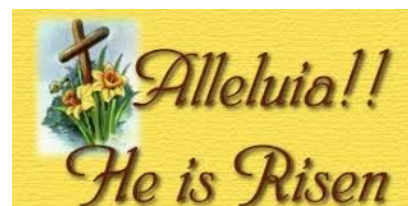
<https://www.parishgiving.org/index?e=3DA0043C8C73467C59E03B049A49777C606BEAEE3CF1C745>

You may also send your weekly envelopes directly to the parish office:

Saint Teresa of Calcutta Parish Office
809 Park Ave
Collingswood, NJ 08108

or drop your envelopes at the parish "dropoff and pickup" mailbox on the left wall as you face the front door.

THANKYOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT



EASTER MESSAGE 2020

This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad! All of us feel the same way, celebrating Easter in a different way this year. Easter is a time to celebrate our faith in the resurrected Christ. This is the basis of our Christian life. It is also a time that families travel to visit, to get together for dinner and for other Easter celebrations. This year, the coronavirus takes away one of the biggest feasts in our Christian faith. We do not gather in the church to celebrate Jesus Christ's Resurrection, but we gather with family to proclaim Jesus is alive and acclaim "Christ is Risen"! We use this opportunity to pray for our brothers and sisters who have lost their lives and for their families and friends. We are praying for the safety of all who remain so the Lord will continue to guide and protect us. May this time be a moment to express our gratefulness to Jesus for giving his life on the cross for all of us. This is what distinguishes Christians from unbelievers. We know that Jesus Christ died for our sins and his resurrection is our resurrection. We believe He has power over the world and what is going on in it.

Jesus broke the chain of death! Jesus said to Mary, Lazarus' sister, "I am the resurrection and the life. If

someone believes in me, even if he dies, he will live". The Devil thought that he could silence Jesus with death, like the Coronavirus thinks that he could stop us from praising God or being a brother or sister to one another. This strange situation caught us all by surprise because we could never imagine that we would become church scattered, not able to celebrate Easter in our own church. However, the same God who raised Jesus from the dead will continue to prove that He is God. We believe that he will continue on the road with us. From being in this mode of staying at home for the whole Lenten season, I am sure that your faith in the Lord is deeper. Our Christian faith is not limited to reminding us that Christ is risen and that our life does not end with death. Passover and resurrection will soon bring a new spring after the Covid-19 ends. This is a time to be encouraged to take our spiritual life seriously, to reflect on being an engaged Catholic Christian. Jesus invites us to live fully, to overcome everything that is pushing us down into a tomb of discouragement, our fears and our hopelessness alive. Let us ask the Lord to inspire us to start breathing fully again as he states in the gospel (John 10,10): "I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full" (John 10,10).

As Church scattered, this Easter allows us to celebrate Easter in a way that we have never done before. We all miss our local gathering masses cheering "Jesus is risen Alleluia!" Yet we can still say it. "He is risen". As we celebrate this Easter feast, let us allow ourselves to live a life of resurrection-like resurrected sons and daughters of God. We need to fight to stay awake and to develop our spiritual effort to get out of despair and doubts. We need to constantly experience the real presence of the resurrected Lord in all the events of our lives, even in this time of the coronavirus situation.

Saint John writes, "For God so loved the world that he gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life" (Jn. 3: 16). Paul reminds us in his letter to the Romans, "Indeed, only with difficulty does one die for a just person, though perhaps for a good person one might even find courage to die. But God proves His love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us" (Rom 5: 7-8). The cross truly does demonstrate and reveal the love

of God the Father who sacrificed His only Son for us. God showed us what real love is by giving his Son and made it possible for us to share and experience that love: "We love, because he first loved us" (1 Jn. 4: 19). Therefore, Easter is a season to remember the new commandment of love Jesus gave us after instituting the great sacrament of love, the Holy Eucharist: "I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." Let us rejoice and be glad for being part of the plan of the Salvation of the world. Let us give him praise and worship Him with sincerity of heart during this Easter Season and for the rest of our lives.

We spend this time in the desert with the Lord. We know that the Lord has been to villages and towns to heal the sick. Let us continue to pray so He continues to do what He has done in the past in our towns and cities. I am sincerely missing celebrating Easter with you, but I will offer mass for you and for your family on Easter and every day. I will continue to remember all the healthcare workers who dedicate their lives. We are praying for all the scientists who are working hard to find a cure for this virus so our world can come back to normal. We are praying also for all the families to increase our strength as we endure this difficult time and to continue to abide in God more than before.

I understand, too, that this is a time of financial hardship for many. Please do what you can to continue to support our parish financially. We encourage you, if possible, to sign up for the electronic giving on our parish website. It is a great and convenient way to support the parish directly. Also, you can either mail your donations or drop your envelopes at the parish "dropoff and pickup" mailbox on the left wall as you face the front door.

May God bless you all! Have a blessed Easter Season. God is good. All the time.

- Father Yvans Jazon
Parish Administrator

