St. Polycarp Church
55 Ransom Lane, Smyrna, Delaware 19977
www.saintpolycarp.org

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

WELCOME VISITORS & NEW PARISHIONERS!
We’re glad you’re here!
Please contact the office or visit our website to register in our Parish.

Baptism: Pre-Baptismal class is required. Arrangements are to be made in advance by contacting Deacon Charlie at (302) 653-4654.

Marriage: Arrangements must be made at least one year prior to the date. Contact the parish office.

Anointing of the Sick: Contact the parish office.


RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults): RCIA is for adults who are in need of Baptism, who were baptized in another Christian tradition who desire to become Catholic, or who were baptized Catholic and desire First Eucharist and /or Confirmation. For more information contact Deacon Frank at (302) 653-8279 or DeaconFrank@saintpolycarp.org
Dear People of God,

I hope and pray that all is well with you and your loved ones during this grace filled season of Lent!

There can be no denying that the COVID-19 pandemic has changed life for everyone on the planet. In our instantly connected world we learn of reports from other countries in real time with all too graphic details. Intermingled constantly are updates from points around the country. Neither the numbers or the predictions are encouraging!

Further, necessary social distancing and imposed state lockdowns isolate us with the news reports. Our minds race with “What if…” scenarios. Fear of a zombie apocalypse as seen in movies and on TV, leads people to stockpile everything from cash to toilet paper. American capitalism thrives on supply and demand as greed joins the party.

…And the devil, the master of lies, dances amid the music of chaos in our world. With delight, Satan turns up the volume of uncertainty with thoughts of economic collapse and personal financial ruin. The temptations that the devil offers us to dwell upon concerning the future are almost limitless during this pandemic!

Clearly, obsessing about the future does not help the uncertainty of our lives. It does not provide us with peace. It has no answers to our questions. So why do we spend so much of our time and energy obsessing on the vision that the devil places in front of us? The short answer is free will. God gave us the ability to choose what we focus on. Remember the lesson of the half-filled pitcher! Faith sees what is present in the pitcher and trusts in God to refill the void.

Ironically enough, to understand the path to the future, we must focus on the past. Instead of looking forward into uncertainty, we need to remember the solid foundation of the faith that we stand upon. God has never abandoned His faithful people! He protected them from the flood; delivered them from slavery; led them through the desert; formed covenant after covenant with them; sent the prophets, kings, judges as their world changed; --- and these realities are in the Hebrew Scriptures.

The story of God never abandoning His faithful people continues in the Incarnation and the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ, who conquered even the uncertainty of the grave. As we know, that story continued through the Church persecutions, famine, plague, wars, genocides and all of the other horrors that the master of lies could assemble in our world. People of faith have always survived the unimaginable!

Yet, this promise of Matthew 16:18 requires us to deepen our connectedness with Holy Mother Church. The pillars that have guided His children through the centuries, will likewise support us in the challenges of our time. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass continues to be offered as it has since the earliest days of the Church.

Yet, while the Churches are empty, more people attend Mass through spiritual communion than ever before. Prayer has grown through the gift of modern media. In caring for others through social distancing, we stand on the pillar of fasting. In time, we will learn more fully the wisdom of the Church in this endeavor. As we all know, almsgiving is the third component to our Lenten journey. (Website, Faith Direct, and snail mail all assist in this pillar.)

Yet, we are all frustrated because we are not in control of our practice of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. We have to suffer as we learn new ways to live our faith. We have to die to what is familiar and we don’t know what God will do next to bring us the new life of the Resurrection. This is the Paschal Mystery of our faith that unites our lives to all of the generations that have gone before us. It is also the reality that future generations will look to us as they stand on our example of faith during this pandemic.

May God strengthen us to become part of the ongoing story of the Paschal Mystery!
FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT
MARCH 29, 2020

CELEBRATE THE WEEKEND MASS AT
www.cdow.org OR
www.youtube.com/dioceseofwilm
Msgr. Hurley is scheduled to have this weekend’s Mass from the Cathedral.
It will be posted online at 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 28, 2020.

CANCELED DEANERY PENANCE SERVICE AT HOLY CROSS IN DOVER

FRIDAYS IN LENT – ABSTINENCE FROM MEAT
Fridays during Lent are obligatory days of abstinence.
The norms concerning abstinence from meat are binding upon members of the Roman Catholic Church from age 14 onwards.

LET US PRAY

Priests will be celebrating Masses privately following the Bishop’s directions that there are to be no public Masses.

All Intentions will be honored.
Please join spiritually as the Eucharist continues.

Bread & Wine for the Eucharist are given in prayer for an increase in vocations.

Our Sanctuary Lamp in Church burns in loving memory of Virginia Rohman at the request of George and Mary Grace Hutchinson.

Our Sanctuary Lamp in St. Ann Chapel burns in prayer for victims of the Coronavirus.

PRAYER CHAIN - To request prayers or to be part of our Prayer Chain, email Laverne at laverne427@icloud.com or call her at (302) 653 – 8064

LITURGY

THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS AVAILABLE ON EWTN, YOUTUBE

ETWN airs The Stations of the Cross at 7 am on Fridays and airs The Way of the Cross for Kids at 4 pm on Fridays. Kids can also view their Way of the Cross anytime at https://video.ewtn.com/way-of-the-cross-for-kids/.

Watch The Way of the Cross with text from the Scriptures on YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-8UZ1Hyx4I

EWTN (Catholic programming 24 hours 7 days a week) airs Mass and the Rosary several times a day. Visit www.ewtn.com for a complete list of EWTN’s Programming. EWTN is also on the radio at https://www.ewtn.com/radio.

Mass Intentions for the Week

Monday, March 30
8:30 am Frank Yasack - Fcasni Family

Tuesday, March 31
8:30 am Donald W. Hreha – Dieter & Joyce Raczkowski

Wednesday, April 1
8:30 am Trudy Kasbinski - Walter Kasbinski

Thursday, April 2
8:30 am William Saber - Rita Brown

Friday, April 3
8:30 am Purgatorial Society

Saturday, April 4
4 pm Parishioners

Sunday, April 5 Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord
10:30 am Blessed Virgin Mary Sodality

We Pray for Our Slick

Week I Michelle Collier, Terry Mance, George Davidson, Edward Ryan, Marty Kingston, James Caruso

Week II Jay Schuman, Deacon Charlie Robinson, Andy Kloepfer, Dawn Stachow, Amber Dean

Week III Austin & Dylan Dean, Theresa Devine, Laura Gilmore, Angela Gilson

Week IV Dawn Stachow, Margaret Saporito, Robert Stomczer

Week V Sophia Wilson, Deirdre Moor, Lorraine Macasevich, Jimmy Callahan, Kevin Liselli, Denis Callahan, Allen Huttick, Evelyn Phillips, Christine & Dale Masten, Francis Joyce

Week VI Linda Blow, Ron Pleasanton, April Doyle

We Pray for Our Deceased

Robert Alexander

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord
And let perpetual light shine upon them.
May the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.
**Christian Formation**

A message from the CRE...

Another week has gone by and still changes are happening all around us. Waking up in the morning is not about getting the kids up and off to the bus stop and school anymore or texting our friends about wanting to meet for dinner. It’s more about getting to our News source as quickly as possible to see what the new number of COVID-19 cases are in our area, what new rules or closings have gone into effect, and is everyone we know and love still healthy. I’m not hearing people say, “Have a good day!” or “See you later!” anymore. I’m hearing, “Take care of yourself!” and “Stay healthy!” This is becoming everyone’s new normal.

Things here at St. Polycarp are ever so changing too, but we are trying to keep things as normal as possible for our PSR students and families. Our wonderful Catechists are continuing to prepare lesson plans and activities for our students so that they can continue building their relationship with God and learning about Jesus. Even though we cannot offer catechesis in our classrooms right now, we can offer it to our students at home. Each week I will be sending home a lesson and/or an activity to all of our PSR students through email. We are hoping our families take advantage of this opportunity and work on these lessons together. Our publishing company, Sadlier, with our We Believe series (P/K-Grade 5), is giving our families free online access to our text books during these ever so changing times. What a wonderful gift Sadlier is giving to our PSR students since we were unable to send our textbooks home due to the abrupt cancelation of classes.

My dear families, I know this pandemic has affected our lives and we may feel like our life has been flipped upside down, but our faith in God should never be affected. If anything, we should turn to God even more now. Lean on him and allow him to come into your life and into your home. Pray to God when things all around you may feel like they are falling apart or not going your way. Reach out to your loved ones too. They are probably feeling the same way. Together we can and will get through these difficult times. Let’s keep God in our minds, on our lips, and in our hearts. Keep telling others to “take care and stay healthy”, but let’s once again say, “Have a good day!” and “I’ll see again, soon”!

Prayers & Blessings,

Erica Taylor

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**Social Concerns**

The Catholic Relief Service (CRS) Rice Bowl Box. Please remember to continue adding to the Rice Bowls. They will be collected at a future date.

**Catholic Charities Continues Essential Services**

As the public health emergency continues, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Wilmington remains fully committed to their mission of service to the needy and vulnerable in our communities. They are implementing several changes which will allow them to continue to serve those who desperately need of services while working to protect their employees, clients and the community. View updates at www.cdow.org/charities.

Catholic Charities invites the community to join them in providing support and assistance to those in great need. Please pray for their staff, clients and for the community as we work together to navigate this public health crisis. Please also consider a monetary donation either by mail or online. Given the public health crisis restrictions on in-person involvement, the need for monetary donations is very critical and is gratefully encouraged. All donations will allow them to continue to provide services.

**Pastoral Council**

**Pastoral Council Members Needed**

Are you a good listener? Do you love our parish? Are you ready to investigate, reflect, and recommend goals for our parish?

If you are, then we invite you to become a candidate for our Pastoral Council. New members are needed. We meet monthly with our Pastor. Please contact any member of Pastoral Council or email Cindy Kennedy at kennedy-078@msn.com.

The Pastoral Council advises our Pastor in matters affecting the mission of our parish, while providing vision and guidance to the committees and parish community. The Council works to improve the community spirit and faith life of our parish, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

**The Pre-School Academy**

Accepting Registrations for 2020-2021

The Preschool Academy at St. Polycarp is a faith based preschool for 3 and 4 year olds. We offer morning and afternoon classes. There is a maximum of 12 children per class with 2 teachers. We are now accepting registrations for next year. For more information, please contact Nancy at (302) 653 – 5856 or Theacademy@saintpolycarp.org

www.saintpolycarp.org
In light of the recent situation resulting in cancellations, please consider signing up for eGiving to ensure your contributions are received even when you are not here for Mass. Recurring or one-time gifts or catch-up gifts can be made. Visit faith.direct/DE831.

Please remember that the Parish operations depend on Offertory collections and that your financial support is especially needed. Thank you.

**THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH & UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE:**

Thank you for your patience. As we continue to monitor the coronavirus, we will update our Parish website [www.saintpolycarp.org](http://www.saintpolycarp.org) and email updates as they become available.

**At this time, the Parish Office will remain open, Monday – Friday 9am to 3pm.**

We suggest you call or email first to see if we can assist you by phone or email.

(302) 653-8279

office@saintpolycarp.org

**CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE:**

- All Public Masses
- Adoration
- Stations of the Cross
- Flame of Love
- Divine Mercy
- Confirmation at Holy Cross
- Deanery Penance Service at Holy Cross
- Gatherings on our campus.
- Parish School of Religion (PSR), including Confirmation Class
- The Pre-School Academy
- All Meetings and Events

**Holy Virgin of Guadalupe,**

Queen of the Angels and Mother of the Americas.

We fly to you today as your beloved children. We ask you to intercede for us with your Son, as you did at the wedding in Cana.

Pray for us, loving Mother, and gain for our nation and world, and for all our families and loved ones, the protection of your holy angels, that we may be spared the worst of this illness.

For those already afflicted, we ask you to obtain the grace of healing and deliverance.

Hear the cries of those who are vulnerable and fearful, wipe away their tears and help them to trust.

In this time of trial and testing, teach all of us in the Church to love one another and to be patient and kind.

Help us to bring the peace of Jesus to our land and to our hearts.

We come to you with confidence, knowing that you truly are our compassionate mother, health of the sick and cause of our joy.

Shelter us under the mantle of your protection, keep us in the embrace of your arms, help us always to know the love of your Son, Jesus.

Amen.

-Archbishop Gomez Prayer (Archbishop of Los Angeles, President of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)

**EARLY DEADLINES**

**EASTER BULLETIN SUBMISSIONS**

Due to early publication deadlines, all submissions for our Easter Bulletin must be submitted to submission@saintpolycarp.org by the end of the day this Monday, March 30th. Thank you for your cooperation!