

The Ascension of the Lord May 24, 2020

He was lifted up,
and a cloud took him
from their sight.

— Acts 1:9

“PUSHED” OUT ON MISSION

There is a delightful character in the original *Dr. Dolittle Tales* called the “Pushmi-Pullyu.” It is a beast with two identical halves, with a head at each end. No matter which direction the beast walks, one end is the “push me” and the other is the “pull you.” Today’s feast is a bit like that in the life of the church. In the book of the Acts of the Apostles, it is the ascension of Christ that calls for the Holy Spirit, which consequently sends or “pushes” the church out on its mission. This is the message that we hear from the angels today as they tell the friends of Jesus not to look up into the clouds, but to get busy. It is the message of Jesus himself in Matthew’s Gospel, as he sends them out to baptize. He also tells them, “I am with you always, until the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). And it is this message, confident in faith that Jesus has ascended to shouts of joy, that “pulls” us along to our final destiny. The life of the faithful disciple, sent into the world on mission, will one day know the same risen, ascended glory. —J. S. Paluch Co.

SAINT PHILIP NERI (1515-1595) May 26

In a shop near the Vatican, a group of Americans laughed as the shopkeeper showed off his fluent English and latest souvenir, a key ring whose papal portrait, when pressed, activated a recorded blessing. Through the shop window, two clerics scowled disapproval. The shopkeeper grunted, “They’re a very somber order who’ve left the Church. I recognize them.” “By their long robes?” an American asked. “Many in Rome wear robes,” replied the shopkeeper. “It’s their long faces!” When Philip Neri arrived in sixteenth-century Rome, there was reason to be somber. Swiss Guards had been massacred on Saint Peter’s steps defending the pope. Parts of Europe were abandoning the Church. But Philip resolved to be an “apostle of joy,” drawing especially the young to Christ—and frequent confession and Communion—by his sincere interest in their problems, prayerful example, and gentle humor. His “Oratory,” a movement as well as a place, provided recreation and devotion in a joyful atmosphere of companionship, service, and liturgy. Philip Neri challenges each of us to begin improving Church and world by changing ourselves with unflinching joy.

--Peter Scagnelli, © J. S. Paluch Co.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Mon: Acts 19:1-8; Ps 68:2-3ab, 4-5acd, 6-7ab; Jn 16:29-33
Tues: Acts 20:17-27; Ps 68:10-11, 20-21; Jn 17:1-11a
Wed: Acts 20:28-38; Ps 68:29-30, 33-36ab; Jn 17:11b-19
Thurs: Acts 22:30; 23:6-11; Ps 16:1-2a, 5, 7-11; Jn 17:20-26
Fri: Acts 25:13b-21; Ps 103:1-2, 11-12, 19-20ab; Jn 21:15-19
Sat: Acts 28:16-20, 30-31; Ps 11:4, 5, 7; Jn 21:20-25
Sun: Acts 2:1-11; Ps 104:1, 24, 29-34; 1 Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13; Jn 20:19-23

saint snippets

I am not afraid.
I was born to do this.

St. Joan of Arc

15th-century visionary who advised the French on how to win battles; Patron of France

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May 30

Finance Corner: Your generosity is greatly needed and appreciated!



For the month of **May** offerings: PLEASE mail to St. Philip/St. Teresa Parish, P. O.

Box 339, Occidental CA 95465. Or donate at our website www.stphilipstteresa.org via Paypal or card. *Include your offering envelope # with your donation.*

5/24: Ascension. 5/31: Rural Food. 6/7: Dioc. Priest Ben. Welfare

Mark your Calendar for Future Events & Meetings:

Parish Council [PC]: TBA
Finance Council [FC]: TBA
Liturgy Committee: TBA

St. Teresa Ladies Guild: Contact Diane, 823-6044
St. Philip Ladies Guild: Contact Penny, 559-367-7403

Every Friday, Centering Prayer: cancelled for now
Coffee & Goodies: cancelled for now



Mondays & Wednesdays-Seniors Lunch at 12noon: cancelled for now

✠ ♥ ✠ Mass Intentions ✠ ♥ ✠ Schedule

Fr. Bala is more than willing to fulfill Mass Intentions in his daily Private Mass celebration. (There is a customary \$10 stipend for any Mass Intention.) But it is left to the wish of those who have already submitted (or have yet to submit) to the office their Intentions, as to choice of a private or public Mass. Email to philip.teresa@yahoo.com Or leave a message at the alternate office number: 707-408-2650.

SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

Sunday: The Ascension of the Lord; World Communications Day
Monday: St. Bede the Venerable; St. Gregory VII;
St. Mary Magdalene de' Pazzi; Memorial Day
Tuesday: St. Philip Neri
Wednesday: St. Augustine of Canterbury;
Friday: St. Paul VI

Prayer Requests: Leave a message at 707-408-2650 to add, edit, or delete names.

Teresa K., Pat K., Thomas T., Susan B., Lorri McC., Sarah, Clifford J., Terri A., Fred P., Theresa S., Sara, Mary Anne P., Barbara, Dave C., Jim P., William, Parson P., Dave, Mary O., Bill Z., Daniel, Sally T., Mary K., Michael D., Richard M., Kathleen,, Peter, Rosa S., Susan B., Joyce D., Anita C., George H., Mimi H, Steve, Barry, Lorrin K., Hugh P., Robert S., Britney N., Jacque W., Rebecca A., April K., Jacinta G., Leo A., Ed C. family, Kathy R., Donna W., Jim K., Sherry S., Papke family., Gail F., Marie N., Joseph, Christine, James



Memo from Parish Bookkeeper Val:

“Many more people are using Paypal. They need to know to add their envelope # to every transaction [as a “special instruction”] if they want their donation accounted for [on tax donation record]. Thank you!”

Pastor Speaks...

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I am eagerly waiting for the day our churches will reopen and will be able to resume all our Services/Events both religious and social.

Following the Nation, the State, the County, and the Diocese guidelines and regulations, our parishes and institutions are working together mostly in a harmonious way with regard to religious and social services and events.

Bishop Vasa has been communicating with us the priests through his bulletins, zoom meetings, mails etc in this most difficult time created by COVID-19. I too am trying my best to be in touch with all of you through Sunday Masses and Devotions on our parish website via Face Book. I have been sharing also with you Messages and Appeals from time to time through the Bulletins, Website and through E-Mail list available. Depending on the phone calls and messages, I have been hearing Confessions, giving some Spiritual Counsel, anointing the Sick, and administering the Last Rites. Soon I hope to ask someone to invite the members of the Pastoral Council, the Liturgy Committee, the Guilds, the Office Staff and others to discuss about the possibility of some religious services, like the Adoration to the Blessed Sacrament and Confessions at both our churches.

Please read the following excerpts from the recent Bulletin of Bishop Vasa [to the Clergy]:

“ZOOM CALL: Thank you for your participation in the Zoom Calls this week. I found the Deanery exchanges to be informative and edifying and look forward to our next live interaction.

COVID-19 UPDATE: Governor Newsom Guidance on Faith-Based Office Workspace & Counseling Services: Governor Gavin Newsom announced that as of May 18, 2020, faith-based office workspaces and faith-based counseling services can reopen under certain guidelines. Please take time to review the guidance on office workspaces and limited services at the weblinks below. Guidance on Office Workspaces: <https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-office-workspaces.pdf> Guidance of Limited Services: <https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-limited-services.pdf> At the same time the Governor expressed gratitude to churches for providing emotional and spiritual support to the communities we serve. While the gratitude is appreciated, we all feel that some additional mode of respect for pastors and the faith-communities which they serve would be better. Nonetheless, this recognition does show there is awareness of the need to address the church situation at the State level.

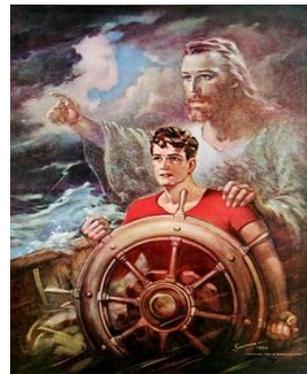
COUNTY / CITY DETERMINATIONS: While we are still bound by divergent County Regulations, the State ‘guidance’ noted above does open for us the increased possibility of opening our offices and even churches for limited services. As I noted on the Zoom Call, schedules for Confessions should be able to be posted, our offices should be able to open with staff as needed and to the extent that you and your staff are comfortable. This is a little step but it is a step in the right direction!”

With prayerful wishes and blessings,
Father Bala

We send our condolences:

Please pray for the repose of the soul of parishioner James Gray,

and for the comfort of his mourning family members and friends.



RURAL FOOD PROGRAM UPDATE: MAY 2020

Under stormy skies, 100 families received nutritional support on May 12. In between rain showers one could hear the expressions of appreciation among recipient families as volunteers filled their vehicles with much needed food. We will maintain our use of social distancing, hand sanitizer, gloves and masks as indicated for the next few months. This program is funded through the Rural Food Collection each month, private donations and volunteers. Thank you for your donations as we strive to meet the nutritional needs of all attendees at our distributions.

RURAL FOOD VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES in the Parish Hall:

Saturday, June 6, 9-10:00 am repackaging.

Monday, June 8, 10:00am – 12:00pm set up.

Tuesday, June 9, 8:30 – 11:00am distribution of food to clients.

“A picture is worth a thousand words.”



Recommended by USCCB:



Catholic Schools need your help!

Catholic education has played an important role in lifting many from poverty to a more hopeful future. This mission is in danger as a result of the economic devastation facing many families across the country. Abrupt unemployment and lost income has meant that families suddenly find themselves unable to make the tuition payments that sustain our schools.

Additionally, our parishes which normally provide financial support to the schools to keep tuition within financial reach for families have lost their Sunday collections with the halt to the public celebration of Masses.

Please take a moment to contact your Members of Congress to ask for emergency aid to Catholic schools and our families in the next Covid-19 Legislation package. Our requests include: equitable access to K12 federal funds for Catholic schools, direct funding to families for tuition aid and tax breaks for K12 tuition payments.

<https://www.votervoice.net/USCCB/Campaigns/74377/Respond>

We encourage you to add your own personal story in the message as well.

Catholic schools urgently need help in this time of uncertainty. By speaking with one voice, we can amplify this problem with Congress and provide help for our families.



Forty equals Fifty

Forty is a number frequently used in Scripture. For example:

- Noah experiences forty days and nights of rainfall before dry land appears;
- Moses spends forty days and nights on Mount Sinai prior to descending with the ten commandments;
- the Israelites spend forty years wandering through a desert in search of the Promised Land, ultimately to find it;
- the prophet Elijah journeys through a desert forty days and forty nights to meet God on Mount Horeb;
- Jesus spends forty days and nights in a desert preparing for his future ministry;
- the disciples are educated and consoled by the risen Christ forty days prior to his ascension.

Why forty all the time? And how do such quantified incidents apply to us? Well, forty signified the number of years one could expect to live in ancient times. Forty therefore became synonymous with "a lifetime." And so, allegorically, even as Noah experienced forty days and nights of rainfall, our lives may also be deluged with troubles yet one day also witness to a rainbow and dry land again.

Or even as the Israelites wandered hungry, thirsty forty years in a desert - for what seemed a lifetime - we ourselves may live to go through so much stress, aimlessness, only to arrive at a land flowing with milk and honey.

Or, taking the forty days the risen Jesus spent widening the vision and hearts of his disciples, so also does the Church transfigure us ever increasingly over our lifetime by way of the Gospel and the Eucharist as a replication of those meals at Emmaus and by the Sea of Galilee.

So much for the number forty. But what about *pentecost*, the Greek word for fifty? Does it have any allegorical meaning? Of course it does! Pentecost marks the close of the fifty-day period after Easter when the Holy Spirit descended upon the early Church. So fifty becomes a symbol of the Holy Spirit, that divine force not immediately visible to us in our everyday world but as present as - say - the number fifty is within the number forty.

"Fifty contained within forty?" Well, just line up all the numbers by which forty can be evenly divided. You'll end up with the numbers 20, 10, 8, 5, 4, 2 and 1. And what do they add up to? Fifty! A latent fifty within the smaller forty - even as the boundless Holy Spirit (the power behind the poetry, music and deeds of compassion that make our world just and beautiful) works imperceptibly within each of us to render us as radiant as the risen Christ himself.

As I mentioned last week, math nowadays can be tedious, much too serious. In the old days of the Church numbers could be fun - and really *count for something*.

--Geoff Wood, 5/24/2020

ALERT! Recently, there seems to be a flurry of spam emails making the rounds on the Internet and scammer robocalls to our phones. Please remember that clergy and parish staff do not ever send out personal requests for gift cards or Amazon donations or international deposits, etc. Always double-check the sender of any email by "hovering over" (not clicking) the sender's email address. Example: If it were really from our pastor, it would be from govindu77@gmail.com or govindu77@yahoo.com.