STAR OF THE VALLEY
Catholic Church
495 White Oak Drive
Santa Rosa, CA 95409

We members of Star of the Valley Parish gather around the central act of Catholic worship, the celebration of active participation in the Mass. As a Eucharistic centered people, we reach out to heal, console and listen in the spirit of truth and justice, with a preferential option for the poor, thus advancing as individuals and as a community into the image of Christ.

Pastoral Staff
Rev. Msgr. James Pulskamp, Pastor
Rev. Patrick Leslie, Assisting Clergy

Contact Numbers
Parish Office Phone: 539-6262
Parish Office Fax: 539-8620
Answering service when the Office is closed.
E-mail: sov@sonic.net
Website: www.starofthevalley.org

Parish Office Hours
Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Located in the Msgr. Fahey Parish Center
495 White Oak Drive, Santa Rosa, CA 95409
*This is the church and parish’s mailing address.
Sharon A. Charlton, Office Manager
Anna Jean, Office Secretary

Welcome New Parishioners
Please sign the book next to the side door in the back of the Church.

Mass Times
Weekday Masses: Tuesday–Friday Suspended
Oakmont Gardens: Wednesday Suspended
Sunday Masses: Saturday Suspended, Sunday Suspended

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Suspended

Sacrament of Reconciliation
Saturday Suspended. For appointment, email or leave a message for Msgr. Pulskamp.

Anointing of the Sick
For appointment, email or leave a message in the office.

Ministry to the Sick & Homebound
Suspended during Coronavirus shelter-in-place order.
Contact the office to arrange a visit or receive Holy Communion after the shelter-in-place is lifted.

April 19, 2020—Second Sunday of Easter
Divine Mercy Sunday

Divine Mercy Sunday
When Pope St. John Paul II canonized Sr. Faustina, he also, on the same day, surprised the entire world by establishing Divine Mercy Sunday as a feast day for the entire Church. According to the Pope, all Masses said on this day, the Sunday after Easter, were to be in honor of the Divine Mercy. Our Lord told St. Faustina, “I desire that the Feast of Mercy... be solemnly celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter... The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion (in a state of grace on this day) shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment.”

The Image of the Divine Mercy
Jesus appeared to Sister Faustina with rays of red and pale light streaming from the area around His heart. His hand was raised in blessing, recalling the scene of Easter Sunday night (see John 20: 19-23).

He asked Sister Faustina to have this vision painted along with the words, “Jesus, I Trust in You!”

He presented this image to remind people to trust in His mercy, and to come to Him for mercy:

*I am offering people a vessel with which they are to keep coming for graces to the fountain of mercy. That vessel is this image with the words: Jesus, I trust in you.

Jesus explained that the rays represented the blood and water which flowed from His pierced side and taught Sister Faustina the prayer:

O blood and water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fount of mercy for us, I trust in you.
Sunday, April 19th’s Readings


Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 118—Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting.

Reading II: 1 Peter 1:3-9—God has given us new birth.

Gospel: John 20:19-31—My Lord and my God!

From Your Pastor

Folks, this homily with a story for Sunday should tide you over until we all meet again for Mass. Know that I’m praying for you in my daily prayers and Masses. I miss you all.

Stay well!

Msgr. Pulskamp

2nd Sunday of Easter

The apostles encounter the risen Christ on two occasions in today’s Gospel. The risen Christ brings them peace, joy, renewed faith, and empowers them to be people of mercy and forgiveness.

The risen Lord has also called and empowered us to be people of mercy and forgiveness. Unfortunately, it is not always easy to forgive. We often are so consumed with anger, hurt, and hatred that we can’t or won’t bring ourselves to follow Jesus in his love, mercy and forgiveness. But forgiveness is possible, it’s been done before, sometimes heroically.

A Powerful Story of Forgiveness, by Anita Smith

A wife forgives the people who shot and killed her husband, Ronnie, as he was going for his morning jog in the city of Benghazi, Libya. She addresses the following letter to the Libyan people.

My husband and best friend Ronnie Smith loved the Libyan people. For more than a year, Ronnie served as a chemistry teacher in a school in Benghazi, and he would gladly have given more years to Libya, if unknown gunmen had not cut his life short on December 5, 2013.

Ronnie and I came to Libya because we saw the suffering of the Libyan people, but we also saw your hope, and we wanted to partner with you to build a better future. Libya was very different from what we had experienced before, but we were excited to learn about Libyan culture. Ronnie grew to love you and your way of life, as did I. Ronnie really was “Libya’s best friend.”

Friends and family from home were concerned about our safety, as were some of you. We talked about this more times than I can count. But we stayed because we believed the Libyan people were worth the risk. Even knowing what I know now, I have no doubt that we would both make the same decision all over again.

Ronnie loved you all so much, especially his students. He loved to joke with you, tell stories about you, help you with your lives and challenge you to be all that you could be. He did his best to live out his faith humbly and respectfully within a community of people with a different faith.

To his attackers: I love you and I forgive you.

How could I not? For Jesus taught us to “love our enemies”—not to kill them or seek revenge. Jesus sacrificed his life out of love for the very people who killed him, as well as for us today. His death and resurrection opened the door for us to walk on the path to God in peace and forgiveness. Because of what Jesus did, Ronnie is with Jesus in paradise now. Jesus did not come only to take us to paradise when we die, but also to bring peace and healing on this earth. Ronnie loved you because God loves you. Ronnie loved you because God loved him—not because Ronnie was so great, but because God is so great.

To the Libyan people: I always expected that God would give us a heart to love you, but I never expected you to love us so much. We came to bless you, but you have blessed us much more. Thank you.

Ronnie would want his death to be an opportunity for us to show one another love and forgiveness, because that’s what God has shown us.

I want all of you—all the people of Libya—to know I am praying for the peace and prosperity of Libya. May Ronnie’s blood, shed on Libyan soil, encourage peace and reconciliation between the Libyan people and God.

In conclusion: The risen Lord has called and empowered us to be people of mercy and forgiveness. It is not always easy to show mercy and to forgive. However, it can be done and has been done. There may be people in our lives that we have yet to forgive. Why wait? Now would be a good time.

Prayer Intentions


Please also pray for those who have died: Msgr. Gerard Fahey.

Easter Flowers

Thank you to Dennis Ciecko, Flower Committee Head, for beautifying our church for Easter while everyone was sheltering-in-place.
Living Easter Today
The heart-breaking events afflicting the World today invite us to an uncommon consciousness. Suddenly, we find ourselves in a world of confusion, upset, alarm, and hope. As we suffer the reality of sickness and death, for the first time in a long time, we see clear skies, cleaner water, and people of unbounded generosity. While nothing justifies the pain and sorrow we are now witnessing, the catastrophe invites us to seize an important opportunity to appreciate what really matters in life.

We are called to be ourselves. Life is short no matter what the circumstances. We must seize the day in offering the World the gift of ourselves. We constantly hear about “essential workers” but each and every one of us is an essential person to another person. In times like these, we discover we are not defined by our jobs but who we are as persons, our character, and those we love.

It is more than fascinating that people would recognize a blue sky and clearing oceans and streams in the midst of such turmoil. As industry slowed, traffic thinned, planes grounded, and cars parked, the skies cleared and the waters freshened. The Ancients, like the Taoists, have always experienced in Nature the medicine that calms the human spirit. Jesus invited his disciples to experience the flight of the birds and beauty of the wildflowers. Great spiritual teachers, who confront the powers of greed and selfishness, have often found solace in the rhythms of the natural world (Matthew 6: 26-34).

It is more than heartwarming that so many people have come to the rescue of the sick and dying. Professional physicians hold the hands of perfect strangers to give them comfort in their last moments. Sophisticated restaurants are now a place where the unemployed are fed with food and welcome. The homeless are finding shelter in a society which only a few weeks ago was baffled about their plight. We now live in a World where no one is a stranger. Long before we ask, “Where do you come from?”, we ask, “How are you?”

Christians believe that the fullness of God became flesh in fullness of the humanity of Jesus. Jesus said something that revealed the depth of his relationship with God and the richness of his own person. He spoke, of course, in the language of his deeds. He reminds us of the nurses and doctors, the grocery clerks and delivery people, the mothers and fathers, the friends and companions, for whom these tragic times reveal the character of their souls. Jesus said, “No one takes my life, I freely give it” (John 10: 18).

Not a day goes by when somebody somewhere is not freely giving of their life. What we see so clearly now, in this moment of heart-break, has happened and will continue to happen as long as people have the courage to be their true selves.

Blessings to you for freely giving of yourself, Natalie Svistooff & Fr. Jim Strommer CP. Executive Director and Director of Ministry Christ the King Passionist Retreat Center

Wellness Calling Tree
Our Wellness Calling Tree volunteers want you to know that they will continue to check in with you weekly, in order to maintain our parish unity, until the shelter-in-place order is lifted. We would also like to thank our “Calling Tree Warriors” for doing an incredible job of staying in touch with those parishioners who want to receive a weekly phone call.

So You’re Aware
Last week a woman was aggressively confronted, by a man who was a stranger, in the vicinity of Oakmont Drive and White Oak Drive. As you walk outside enjoying the beautiful spring weather, stay alert, safe, and healthy.

Parish Security Team Schedule
Thank you to our SOV volunteers for continuing the service of ensuring that our church and parish center are secure. April 20-26: Bob Chapman, April 27-May 3: Tom Beirne, May 4-10: Pat Barclay. Please wear protective gloves for your safety.

Masses Online
Live streamed Masses at various Parishes in the Diocese of Santa Rosa: http://srdioce.org/livestreammass. Scroll down to find the list.
- St. Eugene’s daily and Sunday Masses: www.youtube.com/channel/UC2ueqwT5jZnglWxqOENTP4Q
- Bishop Robert Barron, Archdiocese of Los Angeles, and/or Fr. Steve Grunow celebrate daily and Sunday Masses: https://www.wordonfire.org/daily-mass/
- Pope Francis daily Masses and activities: http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/events/month.dir.html/2020/4.html Scroll down to the date wanted and click on the activity.
- Sunday Mass at St. Ignatius Church in San Francisco on You Tube and daily Mass on Facebook: https://www.stignatiussf.org/
- Mass with Fr. Harry Schlitt of God Squad TV: https://fatherharry.org/

Seeds of Resurrection
As Christians, we are called to find the seeds of resurrection. Even within this seeming darkness of COVID-19. Can you notice those seeds? I love this quote by author Robert Wicks, “If we remain sensitive to the presence of God in faith and in prayer, and in the darkness of confusion and suffering, the darkness will teach us, it will become (new) light.” (Crossing the Desert. p.42.)

May our world be healed; may we learn from this time of exile, may we remember the words of Jesus as he greets his followers, “Peace be with you” and may God hold us all in the palm of his hand. Amen.

Jean Bowler is a member of the Office of Mission Effectiveness Board of Holy Cross Province
**Peace in Believing**

Wonderful as the news of the Resurrection was for all the disciples, it must have been unsettling as well. They really did not fully comprehend it yet. They were still emotionally traumatized by Jesus’ death. They probably felt more than a little guilty for abandoning him in his final hours. Certainly, they feared that they could be next. They knew the tomb was empty and heard Mary Magdalene say that she saw him alive, but most of them are likely confuse and anxious when they barricade themselves in the locked room. Jesus, knowing just what to say, greets them with “Peace be with you” (John 20:19). Even after they rejoiced with the confirmation that he was truly alive; Jesus repeats his words: “Peace be with you” (20:21). Soon Jesus will give them their mission, the power to forgive sins, and the Holy Spirit. But all that can wait. First, Jesus gives them peace.

Now that they are at peace and realize that Jesus truly lives, the disciples can concentrate on their mission. In order to devote themselves to worshiping God, celebrating the Eucharist, and spreading the Good News, they live and work together, sharing their food and possessions. Their community is idyllic, for they are continually comforted by the knowledge that they are united with the Lord and one another.

Poor Thomas. Because he was not with the others the first time, he is singled out as unbelieving. Nearly two thousand years later he is still known as “Doubting Thomas.” We are all Doubting Thomases. None of us have seen Jesus in the flesh. None of us can hold up a photograph or watch a movie clip of him. None of us have a sample of his DNA or some conclusive proof of his identity. Still, we believe. For belief is not the presence of indisputable proof; it is acceptance despite its absence.

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**Fr. Rick Wendell Witness Testimony Video**

To view and listen to Fr. Rick Wendell tell of his death and conversion experience click on: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HA4QgR1nVfI  This video (1 hour 16 minutes) tells how Fr. Wendell received proof that God/Jesus is real, and is well worth the time.

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**Welcome**

I open to the love and presence of God and I let go
I let go of my desire for survival and security.
I welcome all thoughts, feelings, emotions, persons, situations, and conditions.
I let go of my desire for power and control.
I let go of my desire for affection, esteem, approval and pleasure.
I let go of my desire for survival and security.
I let go of my desire for change any situation, condition, person or myself.
I open to the love and presence of God and God’s action within. Amen

—Father Thomas Keating

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**A Rainbow of Masks**

Joe Hansen, administrator of Green Acres Manor, an Assisted Living Facility in Kenwood, requested help in obtaining masks for his 14 caregivers. We all know how impossible masks are to purchase.

Joe sends out frequent status updates on our loved ones and how they and the staff are managing during the pandemic since none of us can visit them. I asked Joey Cuneo, president of the Star of the Valley Women’s Club, if she would distribute an email to our members asking for cloth masks. My phone started ringing 15 minutes later with offers from our seamstress members, friends of members, and relatives of our members.

Cathy Hardy called me with information about Village Sewing Center where Joe was able to obtain some masks. Pat Moran and her daughter, and Paula Scull, each contributed beautifully made cloth masks in a variety of colorful fabrics. Bonnie Butler, a neighbor of one of our members, has volunteered to sew. I’ve heard from Betsy Smith and Kathleen Clark who are relatives of members.

Thank you everyone for stepping up and answering the call. Now we have a mask ministry!

I’m so happy that we are able to do something for Monica and Joe Hansen who fund our donut Sundays, and support the Big Event, as well as the Alzheimer workshops that have helped so many of us learn how to deal with dementia.

Gratefully, Ruth Fulger

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**Mary Magdalene**

Mary went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen Jesus.”

The Easter story of Mary Magdalene is about finding new life when all seemed lost. It is about discovering joy where there was thought to be only sorrow.

It is about finding hope and claiming the courage to speak boldly about the truth of your experience, and to find the courage to bring that message to the world.

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**Our Star Witness**

Mary of Magdala was first to witness and testify to Jesus’ Resurrection. She is called “apostle to the apostles” for good reason. Mentioned by name in the gospels more often than most apostles, Mary traveled with Jesus and helped support his ministry financially. The question is how do we witness to resurrection in our own life and times? In a world swept up by fear, contagion, and death, how can we witness to hope and to life? Let “the Magdalene” be an inspiration.

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**Donate Your Car, Boat, RV or Golf Cart**

Thank you, Phil Marvier, for selling another donated golf cart which brought $520 to our parish. All the cleaning, fixing, and paperwork were handled by Phil. If you have a vehicle to donate to the parish, call Phil at 539-7055.