

Week Behind/ Week Ahead

To the Parishioners of Saint Joseph Parish

From V. Rev. Felipe Pulido

Date: May 29, 2021

Week Behind

Covid 19 Protocols Update -- After consulting on May 19 with the vicars of the Diocese as well as the Executive Committee of the Council of Priests, Bishop Joseph Tyson has asked that parishes make no major changes to the celebration of Masses until at least July 1. That is when Gov. Jay Inslee anticipates a full re-opening of the state which should bring significant easing of the restrictions currently in place to protect the public during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Briefly, maintaining the "status quo" means following Phase 3 guidance for religious services, including 50 percent occupancy limits for indoor Masses; the wearing of masks; and sanitizing of church facilities after services have concluded. Communion will continue to be distributed in the hand only, and only under the species of Bread. The dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass remains in effect.

After hearing from the vicars and executive committee, Bishop Tyson concluded it would be difficult for parishes to implement "vaccinated" and "unvaccinated" sections in churches that would allow fully-vaccinated churchgoers to remove their masks during worship or other events in church.

"It is important that we be as united as possible when we pray together," Bishop Tyson stated. "Sometimes that means we need to make sacrifices." While the bishop continues to encourage Catholics to be vaccinated, and has affirmed that it is morally permissible to receive any of the vaccines currently available, the diocese will not impose vaccination as an obligation for parishioners to be able to attend Mass.

With great hope, we are approaching the end of the pandemic. Please continue your diligence in providing a safe environment for worship.

Saint Joseph Catholic School – On Wednesday, May 26, Father Cesar, Deacon Michael Kelly, Deacon Lalo Chavez, and I played a friendly 3 on 3 basketball game against this year's winners of the basketball tournament in the school. The basketball game was a way to reach out and let the students know that priests are approachable, regular people who enjoy hobbies, sports, good fun, and lots of laughs. It did not take long before the game between the Saint Joseph School kids and the priests, who called themselves the God Squad, went from a friendly game of hoops to a competitive match that resulted in an 8 - 7 win for St Joseph students, I want to thank Jack Aitoro our P.E. teacher and Principal Perry Kelly who organized the event. Everyone had a lot of fun at the game.

Priestly Ordinations —In Holy Family Church on Friday, May 28, Bishop Joseph Tyson ordained Deacon Michael Kelly and Deacon Lalo Chavez as priests for the Diocese of Yakima. Rev. Juan Vertiz from Seminario Hispano de Santa Maria de Guadalupe in Mexico City and Rev. Ezequiel Sanchez from Mundelein Seminary in Illinois traveled to Yakima for Father Lalo and Father Michael, respectively. We are grateful for the faith and dedication of the newly-ordained priests, and we assure them of our prayers and best wishes as they continue to serve the Diocese of Yakima. Please continue to pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

Multilingual Rosary – On Saturday, May 29, we prayed the last rosary during the month of May in front of the Grotto of Our Lady, the Virgin Mary, which is located on the south side of the Small Church. Thanks to all the people who showed up every Saturday to pray. Special thanks to members of our different communities who prayed the rosary in Korean, Burmese, Tagalog, Spanish, and English. We give special thanks to Mary’s protection of our Saint Joseph community, and we ask for her continued guidance as we seek to follow her Son as faithful disciples.

Week Ahead

Father Riccardo Keolker – Father Riccardo will be taking a short vacation in June from Tuesday, June 1, to Tuesday, June 8. The Sunday Liturgy Reflection on Wednesday, June 2, will be presented on-line by Father Felipe and Father Cesar. A special thank you to Father Riccardo for his great work in the parish. We are most grateful for his Sunday liturgy reflections and Sunday Masses. His wisdom and spiritual guidance have been critical to the formation of parishioners at Saint Joseph’s.

Father John Vogl – Father Vogl will be gone from Tuesday, June 1, to Sunday, June 20. This “fisher of men” will spend 20 days in central Oregon catching fish instead. We are grateful for his hard work to support us at Saint Joseph Parish.

Corpus Christi Procession — On Saturday, June 5, we will be having our first annual Eucharistic Procession organized by Catholic parishioners of the Tri-Cities area. The procession will start after the 8:00 am Mass at St. Patrick Catholic Church. The procession route, approximately 1 mile long, will be walked on South 14th Avenue to Pasco’s Memorial Park; there will be pauses in the park for prayer and Adoration. The procession will end back at the parish for Benediction and the final blessing. Everyone is invited to this wonderful event as we honor our Lord Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. We are grateful to Fr. Robert Turner, pastor of Saint Patrick Parish, for coordinating this service.

Saint Joseph Catholic School’s Eighth Grade Graduation – On Friday, June 4, we will be having an in-person graduation ceremony for our 8th grade school students and their families. We are so happy to share in the excitement of this year’s graduates and we wish them the best for their next academic adventures. Even though COVID 19 again made this a very difficult year, the students have been great examples of faith, hope, and love. In addition, they continued to grow in mind, body and spirit. Congratulations, eighth graders, for jobs well done!