

Old St. Joseph's Church

Est. 1733 | Philadelphia's Jesuit Parish

321 Willings Alley
Philadelphia, PA 19106
Phone: (215) 923-1733
www.oldstjoseph.org

March 25, 2018 | Palm Sunday

Going to Confession

The seven sacraments are sort of like individual stocks on the stock market. At any particular time, one sacrament may be very popular. But times change, and a century (yes, in church history, we think in centuries!) or two later that same sacrament may fall out of favor. It sounds funny – maybe even irreverent – to speak of sacraments that way, but the history of the sacraments does reflect that kind of up and down pattern.

Take the eucharist, for example. It's true that the mass has always remained a staple of Catholic life and piety. But receiving communion has certainly gone through this variable popularity. At one point, receiving communion became so rare that the Church had to put in a special rule that everyone had to receive at least once a year. And that rule wasn't addressed to "fallen away" Catholics who never

go to mass. It was addressed to people in the pews who just never got on the communion line to receive. They thought they were not worthy, as if anyone really could be truly worthy for such a gift.

In those days, going to confession was far more popular than receiving communion. What a change from today's practice. Many people – mostly conservatives – have remarked that a lot of people seem to be receiving communion now a days who obviously have not gone to confession in a very long time. Very few priests could complain today about the long hours spent in the confessional – a common experience for parish priests "in the old days."

What happened to going to confession? Why the precipitous decline? How come its "stock" has fallen below what seemed possible just a few decades ago?

One point to make: Of all the sacraments, the one least directly affected by the reforms of Vatican II seems to be confession. The eucharist, for example, at least the way we celebrate it, was revolutionized by the Vatican II reforms. Going to mass today is a far different experience from what it was in the 1950's. (Some people complain about the difference and want to return to the old ways.) But going to confession seems to be unchanged. You still stand on line, go into a booth or a closet in some dark corner and are supposed to whisper the list of your sins to a priest. It doesn't take long for most people (since others may be waiting on the line outside), and for the priest the lists become rather repetitive. Then just recite the act of contrition – if you can remember it – get a blessing and be on your way. You feel good when it's over, but is it really all that spiritual? And what you say to the priest is always a worry. Apparently, many Catholics, even church goers – have decided it isn't really worth it.

When I came to Old St Joe's, I was surprised that the practice of "going to confession" was pretty rare in the parish. I wondered why that was the case. I got the impression that we as a parish had reflected very little about this whole matter. So I decided to make this our parish Lenten project, to talk about the celebration of God's forgiveness

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as expressed in the sacrament of reconciliation. We just concluded the three-part lecture series on this topic. About 60 to 70 people attended each of the three talks, which showed there is a certain amount of interest and concern among our parishioners.

On Tuesday night, March 27, at 7:30 we're going to offer a COMMUNAL PENANCE SERVICE. Those who attended some of the presentations know that the Church has done a lot of rethinking about "going to confession." A couple of points:

1) Let's not call it "confession," but reconciliation, because in the sacrament we meet the merciful and all-forgiving Jesus. God's forgiveness comes to us through the death and resurrection of Jesus and is mediated through the community of the Church. That's infinitely more important than anything we say or do in confession.

2) Sin has more to do with the "failure to bother to love" than with breaking the rules. So when you want to examine your conscience, think of the beatitudes as much as the ten commandments. That may affect what you want to say "in confession."

3) Our sins injure not God, but one another and indeed the entire community of the Church. Therefore, we need to ask for forgiveness from the community as well as from God. This social aspect of sin is expressed by our coming together to pray to our Father as his sons and daughters.

4) The sacrament of reconciliation is celebrated not just by confessing our sins, but even more by our communal prayer; hearing the word of God proclaimed, praying a communal prayer of contrition, singing hymns of praise to God. This is the rite of the sacrament of reconciliation promulgated by Vatican II, which shamefully has been largely ignored in much of the Church's common practice.

So we are going to gather on March 27 and together pray for God's mercy and forgiveness. Part of the ritual – for those who wish – is to approach a priest privately to acknowledge one's sins and to receive sacramental absolution individually. We hope that this manner of celebrating the sacrament will help us better experience the presence and power of the God of mercy in our midst.

Father Walter Modrys, S.J.
Pastor

ANNOUNCEMENTS



On Sunday, April 8, the music at the 11:30 AM Mass will be dedicated to the memory of **Pat Montenegro**, Old St. Joseph's former music director. Pat began working at OSJ in May 2015 and passed away unexpectedly on April 6, 2017 at the age of 46.

The flowers in front of the St. Joseph statue this week were donated in loving memory of **Emilio Marcolongo** by his daughter Lois.



The Tuesday Evening Lenten Series Concludes



March 27: *Communal Penance Service*
in the church at 7:30 PM.

Note: There will be relaxed parking!

Lenten Scripture Study

Fr. Dougherty will conclude with the Book of Qoheleth, also called Ecclesiastes, on Thursday, March 29 in the Drexel parlor at 1:00 pm.
All are invited!

HOLY WEEK 2018

Tuesday, March 27 - **Communal Penance Service:** 7:30 PM
Holy Thursday, March 29 - **Confessions:** 11:30AM – 12:30PM;
Mass of the Lord's Supper: 7:30PM; **Compline:** 10:00PM
Good Friday, March 30 - **Stations of the Cross:** 12:05PM;
Commemoration of the Lord's Passion: 3:00PM
Holy Saturday, March 31 – **Easter Vigil Mass** at 7:30PM
Easter Sunday, April 1 - **Masses** at 7:30AM, 9:30AM, & 11:30AM
There is no 6:30pm Mass on Easter Sunday!

Invitations for Holy Thursday...

At the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday liturgy, we will celebrate the Washing of Feet. As we have done in recent years at Old St. Joseph's, those who wish will be invited to come forward to have a foot washed and dried by the ministers. Jesus washed his disciples' feet as a sign that all of us are called to serve one another. May this rite deepen our understanding of Jesus' words, " as I have done for you, you should also do."

YAC Altars of Repose Walking Pilgrimage: After the Mass of the Lord's Supper (Holy Thursday on March 29th at 7:30pm), the altar will be stripped, crosses and statues will be covered, and the Most Blessed Sacrament will be moved to a side altar (called the Altar of Repose). Pilgrims will then leave OSJ and go visit other Altars of Repose to pray before the Blessed Sacrament, basically keeping Jesus company in the Garden on his last night. Anyone interested in making a walking pilgrimage to other Altars of Repose can meet us in the OSJ courtyard after Holy Thursday Mass. Have questions? Reach out to Ian at ismith3636@gmail.com.



The annual OSJ Easter Egg Hunt will take place immediately after the 9:30am Mass on Easter Sunday, weather permitting, in the North Park area next to the church off Walnut Street. **Donations of candy-filled plastic eggs can be dropped off at the front desk of the rectory up until Saturday, March 31st.** Thank you for your generosity! Volunteers are needed to place the eggs and help coordinate the hunt. Please contact Luanne Balestrucci at lbalestrucci@yahoo.com to volunteer.

Hallahan High Alums

John W. Hallahan CGHS Alumnae Association is sponsoring their annual "50 years & Beyond" luncheon on Wednesday, May 2, 2018 at Connstatter Volksfest-Verein, 9130 Academy Road. Cost is \$35.00 per person and \$20.00 for religious. If you are a graduate of Hallahan for over 50 or more years and are interested in attending this event, please contact, Chairperson, Marge West Kiefski '66 at 215-913-4482 or at mmkiefski@aol.com or the Alumnae Office at 215-568-3081 for more information.

Roman Catholic High School Open House

Roman Catholic High School will hold a Spring Open House intended for 6th and 7th grade students and their families on Sunday, April 8th from 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM. Registration available online at RomanCatholicHS.com. For additional information or questions regarding the event contact 215-627-1270 x 146/159 or admissions@romancatholichs.com.

Please remember our sick and homebound sisters and brothers

Karen Lockyer	Ed Tomezsko	Tony Corvaia
Rick Bravo	Mary Jacobs	Joanna Pearl
Joseph Burke	Jerry McAndrews SJ	Lucy Pearl
Christine Mari-Mazzola	Lydia Staley	Marie Jacobs
Pat Farris	Charlotte Croce	Mary Lou Jennings
Allen May	Catherine Keddie	Jack Lees
Debbie Brooks	Hannah Poole	Patricia Yusko

Please pray also for our ministry at Pennsylvania Hospital

Names will be removed after four weeks unless a request is renewed.

Note from the Pastor

Bringing Communion to the Homebound

When people are ill or indisposed and confined to home, they can remain connected to our shared worship by receiving Communion at home. If you or a family member, friend or neighbor (with their approval of course), would like to receive Communion at home, contact the Parish Rectory so that we can arrange for a parish Eucharistic Minister to visit.

Date	Mass Intention and Presider	Calendar Events
Mon 26	12:05 PM: <i>Old St. Joseph Memorial Society</i> Presider: Fr. Modrys SJ	
Tues 27	12:05 PM: <i>George M. Olivier III (D)</i> Presider: Fr. O'Donnell SJ	12 Noon: Food, Faith, and Friends (Barbelin) 7:30 PM: Communal Penance Service (Church)
Wed 28	12:05 PM: <i>Edward & Mary Britt Family (D)</i> Presider: Fr. Dougherty SJ	
Thurs 29	11:30 AM: Confessions 7:30 PM: Mass of the Lord's Supper 10:00 PM: Presider: Fr. Modrys SJ Compline	HOLY THURSDAY
Fri 30	12:05 PM: Stations of the Cross Presider: Fr. Modrys SJ 3:00 PM: Commemoration of the Lord's Passion Presider: Fr. Modrys SJ	GOOD FRIDAY
Sat 31	7:30 PM: Easter Vigil Presider: Fr. Modrys SJ	HOLY SATURDAY
Sun 1	7:30 AM: Presider: Fr. Dougherty SJ 9:30 AM: Presider: Fr. Modrys SJ 11:30 AM: Presider: Fr. Modrys SJ <i>There will be no 6:30 pm Mass today.</i>	EASTER SUNDAY 10:30 AM Egg Hunt (North Garden)

Financial Stewardship

Due to the early Palm Sunday bulletin deadline, the collection totals for March 18 will be reported next week.

The following collections are now active on the Online Giving Website:

- Church in Latin America** through April 1
- Church in Africa** through April 1
- Easter Flower Memorials** through April 8
- Easter Music Memorials** through April 8
- Holy Thursday Collection** through April 15
- Good Friday Collection** through April 15
- Easter Collection** through April 22

Old St. Joseph's provides Online Giving, a convenient, safe, and flexible way to make one time or recurring donations to the fund of your choice—Sunday Offering, FF&F, and so on. Sign up on our parish website on the Online Giving tab under Important Links.



Catholic Charities Update

If you are a registered parishioner, you should have already received your Catholic Charities mailing from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. If not, there are forms and envelopes in the back of the church for you to use to make your pledge. Old St. Joseph's has been asked to contribute \$38,800. To date, we have donated \$11,500, or 30% of our assessment. Thank you for your generous support of the Archdiocese's social ministries!

Readings for the Week

Monday	Isaiah 42, Psalm 27, John 12
Tuesday	Isaiah 49, Psalm 71, John 12
Wednesday	Isaiah 50, Psalm 69, Matthew 26
Thursday	Exodus 12, Psalm 116, 1 Corinthians 11, John 13
Friday	Isaiah 52, Psalm 31, Hebrews 4, John 18-19
Saturday	Genesis 1-2, Psalm 104 or Psalm 33, Genesis 22, Psalm 16, Exodus 14-15, Isaiah 54, Psalm 30, Isaiah 55, Isaiah 12, Baruch 3, Psalm 19, Ezekiel 36, Psalm 42 or Isaiah 12 or Psalm 51, Romans 6, Psalm 11, Mark 16
Sunday	Acts 10, Psalm 118, Colossians 3 or 1 Corinthians 5, John 20 or Mark 16

INFORMATION

Rectory Office Hours

Monday through Friday: 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM

Sunday: 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Mass Times

Monday through Saturday: 12:05 PM

Saturday Vigil Mass for Sunday: 5:30 PM

Sunday: 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 AM and 6:30 PM

Holy Days: 12:05 and 7:30 PM

Medical Emergency

In the event of a medical emergency when the need for a priest is urgent, please call the rectory.

Hearing Enhancements

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Registration

Persons who want to register as parishioners should complete a parish registration form and return it to the rectory office by mail or in person. Registration forms are available in the rectory office during normal office hours, on the bookcases in the back of the church and online at www.oldstjoseph.org.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Monday through Saturday: 11:30 AM to noon and by appointment

Sacrament of Baptism

Persons wanting to arrange for a baptism should call Fr. Dougherty at the parish office at least two months before the desired date to arrange catechesis and the baptism celebration.

The Sacrament of Anointing

The Sacrament of Anointing (the sacrament of the sick) is administered during the 12:05 PM Mass on the first Saturday of each month. Homebound or hospitalized persons wanting to receive the Sacrament of Anointing should call the parish office.

Sacrament of Matrimony

Persons wanting to be married in the parish should call Fr. O'Donnell at the parish office at least nine months before the desired date.

Rite of Christian Initiation

Unbaptized adults who are considering baptism into the Catholic Church, baptized Catholics who have received no other sacraments and who want to be confirmed and to receive First Eucharist, and baptized non-Catholics who are considering full communion in the Catholic Church should call Fr. O'Donnell at the parish office.

To arrange Mass of Christian Burial, the funeral director should call the parish office.

OSJ Staff

Pastor: Fr. Walter Modrys, S.J.

(pastor@oldstjoseph.org)

Parochial Vicar: Fr. Edward O'Donnell, S.J.

(eodonnell@oldstjoseph.org)

Fr. Edward Dougherty S.J.

(dougherty@oldstjoseph.org)

In Residence: Br. Robert Carson, S.J.

Business Manager: Eric German

(germane@oldstjoseph.org)

Director of Music: Mark Bani

(music@oldstjoseph.org)

Liturgy Coordinator: Sr. Asunta Thanh, acj

(liturgy@oldstjoseph.org)

Administrative Assistant: BJ Brown

(office@oldstjoseph.org)

Faith, Food & Friends Director: Deborah

Hluchan *(faithandfriends@oldstjoseph.org)*

PREP Coordinator: Christine Szczepanowski

(prep@oldstjoseph.org)

OSJ Councils and Boards

Parish Pastoral Council: *(osjpc@oldstjoseph.org)*

Rana McNamara (co-chair), Richard Le (co-chair)

Parish Finance Council: Paul Shay (chair)

Historic Preservation Corporation Board: Fr. Walter Modrys, S.J. (President)

Parish Committees and Chairpersons

Adult Education: Rita O'Brien and Jeanmarie

Zippo *(adulted@oldstjoseph.org)*

Parish Life: Joe Casey *(joetcasey@aol.com)*

Ignatian Spirituality and Formation: John Bitterman *(osjspirituality@oldstjoseph.org)*

Social Justice: Bethany Welch

(socialjustice@oldstjoseph.org)

Ministry Leaders

Altar Servers: Maria Ramirez,

(mathra71@yahoo.com)

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion:

Bill Stewart *(wstewart@kaplaw.com)*

Hospital Ministry: Luanne Balestrucci

(lbalestrucci@yahoo.com)

Homebound Ministry: Neal Hébert

(neal9536@gmail.com)

Lectors: Lou Anne Bulik, *(labulik@yahoo.com)*

Ushers: Nikola Sizgorich, *(niksiz@icloud.com)*

Children's Liturgy of the Word: Peggy Connolly

(pmcon@comcast.net)