What We Have Seen

We have seen a lot in the last few weeks: Images that are deeply disturbing. Images that are achingly, frustratingly familiar. As human beings, we know that we cannot un-see what we’ve seen. As people of faith, we know that we must not turn our eyes away.

What we have to do is contemplate the images before us, and question them: what exactly do I see happening here? What else might I see from a different perspective within this frame or by moving in closer or standing outside it? What story does this picture tell? What’s happening and why is it so?

Our questions begin with what we know to be most true about everyone in the succession of images that have cascaded past us. Every single person we see is created in the image and likeness of God; every single one breathes the breath of God’s own spirit. All of the people we see are created for, live in, and are destined to be saved in a community, as a people. The dignity of each person and of our common life are the foundation of our understanding of how our faith moves in the world.

But now the questions can get harder, more painful to answer: What’s wrong with this picture? Where do we see people cherished, honored, protected? Where are they mistreated and abused? Where are the bonds of community strong and where are they frayed? And why? What is the story behind this picture? What has led up to this moment?

As people of faith, we know well the power of what is seen. In Exodus 3:7-8, God says to Moses, “I have seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt. . .

I know their sufferings and have come down to deliver them.” What is seen can move the heart of God, moves God to create all things new. ‘Doubting Thomas’ wants to see and touch the print of the nail in Jesus’s hands; this sight will cast Jesus in a new light for him, deepen his understanding, and move Thomas from fear to faith (John 20:24-28). Jesus himself inaugurates his ministry with the announcement that the blind shall see (Luke 4:18), telling us that sight is the healing action of God at work.

Given all that we’ve seen, are we willing to let what we see shape how we act? How might we be moved to bring people out of enslavement? How might we bring the sort of healing that means that God is present and at work? How can we be like Thomas, gazing on and even touching painful, fatal wounds, yet allowing them to awaken faith and hope within us?

As we read these images as ‘the signs of our times,’ let us look for where God speaks to us from them. Let’s seek where God is present and at work and shun where falsehood and idolatry might lead us astray. Let us be attentive to their call to live the gospel, moving ever closer to the life that God created and destined us for.

—BJ Brown
To Read and Study

To find the full text of the US Bishops’ 2018 state, *Open Wide Our Hearts. . .A Pastoral Letter Against Racism*, visit usccb.org/Issues and Action/Racism. You’ll also find recent statements and videos from US Bishops about the death of George Floyd, prayer resources and study guides.

The Ignatian Solidarity Network has compiled a wide range of statements, articles and reflections on racism, including an *Examen for White Allies*. Find these at ignatiansolidarity.net and scroll down to Racial Justice Resources.

Two *National Catholic Reporter* articles deserve particular attention: search for the June 4th article “El Paso Bishop Mark Seitz: Black Lives Matter” and the June 1 article “The Assumptions of White Privilege and What We Can Do About It” by Fr. Bryan N. Massingale.

Please remember our sick and homebound brothers and sisters, our ministry at Pennsylvania Hospital and all those who have asked for our prayers.

*George Bernato, Debbie Brooks, Ann Crowther, Jane Crowther, Mary Kay Crowther, Barbara Epting, Allan May, Jerry McAndrews SJ, Owen Petrzelka, Philip Press, Matthew Smith, Sara Smith, Sharon Winge and Pat Yusko.*

*If you wish to have someone included on the parish prayer list, please call BJ Brown at 215-923-1733 or email bjbrown@oldstjoseph.org.*

On Re-opening Old St. Joseph’s

The full text of Fr. Walter Modrys SJ’s June 4 letter on re-opening Old St. Joseph’s is available on the home page of our website, oldstjoseph.org.

*The front page image is: The Incredulity of St. Thomas by Caravaggio c. 1602*
INFORMATION

Pastor
Fr. Walter Modrys SJ (pastor@oldstjoseph.org)

Parochial Vicar
Fr. Francis Hannafey SJ (fhannafey@oldstjoseph.org)

In Residence
Br. Robert Carson SJ
Fr. Ed O’Donnell SJ (eodonnell@oldstjoseph.org)

Pastoral Associate
BJ Brown (bjbrown@oldstjoseph.org)

Business Manager
Eric German (germane@oldstjoseph.org)

Director of Music
Mark Bani (music@oldstjoseph.org)

Parish Offices
(office@oldstjoseph.org)

Religious Education (PREP) Coordinator
Christine Szczepanowski (prep@oldstjoseph.org)

Faith, Food & Friends Director
Deborah Hluchan (faithandfriends@oldstjoseph.org)

Director of Hospital Ministry
Tom Volkert (hospitalEM@oldstjoseph.org)

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 7:00 PM

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

Hearing Enhancements
Old St. Joseph’s is equipped with an audio hearing loop. Switch on the T-coil function of your device to use the loop. Booklets with the Sunday readings are available in the rear of the church.

Registration
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. They can be returned to the parish office by mail or in person.

Sacrament of Reconciliation
A priest is available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation Monday through Saturday from 11:30 AM–12:00 PM or by appointment.

Sacrament of Baptism
If you want to arrange a baptism, please contact Fr. Hannafey (fhannafey@oldstjoseph.org) at least two months before the desired date.

Eucharist for the Homebound
To arrange to receive Communion at home, please contact the parish offices.

The Sacrament of Anointing
The Sacrament of Anointing (the sacrament of the sick) is offered 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
If you want to be married at Old St. Joseph’s, please visit our website, oldstjoseph.org and read the material under the heading Weddings. Please call the parish office at 215-923-1766 at least nine months before your desired wedding date.

Rite of Christian Initiation
If you are an adult wishing to be baptized, or to receive First Eucharist and Confirmation, or are a baptized non-Catholic seeking full communion with Catholic Church, please call the parish office or email rcia@oldstjoseph.org.

Mass of Christian Burial
To schedule a funeral or memorial Mass, ask your funeral director to call the parish office.

Parish Pastoral Council
(osjpc@oldstjoseph.org)

Parish Finance Council
Paul Shay, chair

Historic Preservation Corporation Board
Fr. Walter Modrys SJ, president

Adult Education
Rita O’Brien and Jeanmarie Zippo
(adulted@oldstjoseph.org)

Eldership
Pat Nelson (eldership@oldstjoseph.org)

Parish Life
Joe Casey (parishlife@oldstjoseph.org)

Ignatian Spirituality and Formation
Len Mancini (osjspirituality@oldstjoseph.org)

Women, Faith and Fellowship
Rana McNamara (wff@oldstjoseph.org)

Young Adult Community
(osjyac@gmail.com)

Altar Servers
Maria Ramirez (altarserver@oldstjoseph.org)

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion
Bill Stewart (EM@oldstjoseph.org)

Hospital Ministry
Luanne Balestrucci (hospitalEM@oldstjoseph.org)

Homebound Ministry
Neal Hébert (homeEM@oldstjoseph.org)

Lectors
Lou Anne Bulik (lectors@oldstjoseph.org)

Ushers
Nikola Sizgorich (ushers@oldstjoseph.org)

Children’s Liturgy of the Word
Peggy Connolly (clow@oldstjoseph.org)
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K.J. Alexander

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