



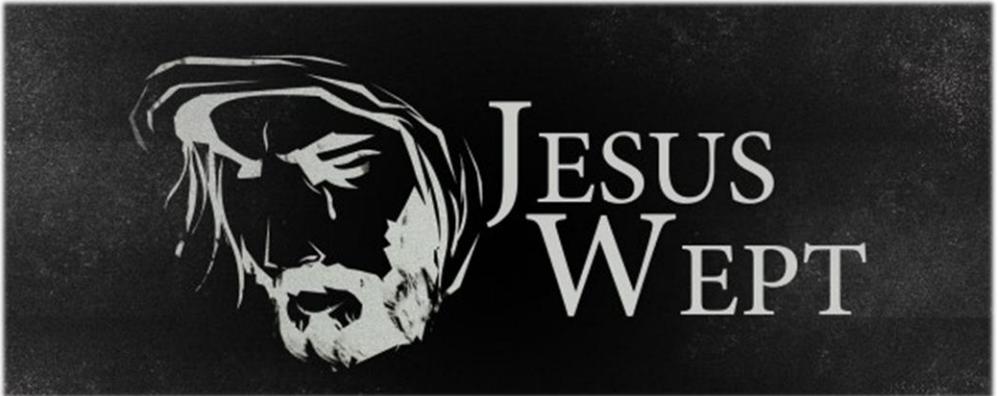
St Francis of Assisi, Parkview
Diocese of Johannesburg
Anglican Church of Southern Africa



29 March 2020

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

God of all consolation and hope
you breathe life into dry bones and weary souls:
pour your Spirit upon us,
that we may face despair and death
in the hope of resurrection;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
Amen



Jesus wept. So the they said, "See how he loved him!"

John 11:35

**WELCOME TO
CHURCH UNUSUAL – LIVE FROM ST FRANCIS**

My dear Franciscans

What an extraordinary outpouring of love and encouragement we received from so many of you over the past week in response to the Church Unusual service. Your emails, WhatsApp messages and phone calls have all expressed deep appreciation. Let us thank God that we have found a way to bond as a family in this time when we are physically separated. God is good.

The 8:30 service last week was streamed to 120 homes! Most of you were sharing it with family and friends so we can conservatively estimate that anywhere between 250 and 300 people were part of the service. That's way more people than we get on an average Sunday. Subsequently the video has had another 180 views. It's reach is beyond anything we imagined, both in numbers and geographic range. People from all over South Africa were able to participate as well as some people from the UK. Cynthia's sister was able to be part of the service from And we know that family members and friends from other countries are planning to join us this Sunday at 8:30.

As we seek to develop our response to the COVID-19 epidemic may I suggest that our slogan for this period should be:

Physical Distance, Social Solidarity and Spiritual Reality

Each of us should live as if we are positive, so we protect those around us.

"In everything do to others as you would have them do to you".

Matthew 7:12

While we may be in lockdown we have not closed down!!!

At St Francis we are bonded together in many ways, chiefly through the reality that we are God's family, and neither God nor family close down. Not ever! We are alive and well even under the tight lockdown of the next 21 days. I think it would be prudent to anticipate that the lockdown may be extended well beyond this initial period.

So what does the lockdown mean to physical church?

1. **The Church building will be closed.**
2. **The physical Office will be closed but the Office staff will work from home**
3. **The Clergy will be available on their telephones.**
4. **Pastoral care** will be limited to telephone contact.
5. **Hospital visiting** will only take place in exceptional circumstances.
6. **Funerals**, if necessary, will be held while strictly observing any regulations set by authorities. The funerary processes dealing with the deceased body will be under strict control, especially the bodies of people who have died from COVID-19.
7. **Council and Executive meetings** will take place via Zoom.

What about Church Unusual?

1. Join us at 8:30 am every Sunday for "Church Unusual – Live from St Francis"

If you are unable to be at the Sunday service, it will be recorded and posted on our Webpage, Facebook and our YouTube page so you can watch it at your convenience.

Services for Holy Week 2020

Palm Sunday Sunday April 5, 8:30 am

Try and make your palm crosses which I will bless

Maundy Thursday Thursday April 9, 6:30 pm

Good Friday Friday April 10, 12:00 noon

Easter Day Sunday April 12, 8:30 am

1. Church @ Home

These unusual times offer new opportunities - one is to grow our homes as places worship and encounter with God.

Some suggestions are:

- a. Intentionally create a "worship space" or focal point, which includes some of the following: candle, icon, cross/crucifix, found natural items
- b. Sit quietly by yourself - or, get your household to gather
- c. Light the candle, and "be"
- d. If it's at 8:30 am on Sunday click on the link and be part of the live service from St Francis from your sacred space at home
- e. During the week read the day's readings as per the Lectionary or, listen to music / a podcast / etc. The readings for Morning Prayer are below.
- f. Do Morning and Evening Prayer as laid out in the Prayer Book

2. Spiritual Communion

The Anglican tradition has a wonderful practice that can be used by those who are unable to physically receive bread and wine; it is called **Spiritual Communion**. The Prayer Book (p 519) says that we can "be certain that Christ comes to us in this way as surely as he does in the Sacrament".

3. Communication Unusual

- a. We are going to have to rely principally on electronic communications: our email list, my WhatsApp Parish Group, our Webpage and Facebook.
- b. We know that there are parishioners who do not have access to these forms of communication. What we are asking is that maybe we can form clusters, for example at Darrenwood or via Mother's Union, where communications can be forwarded.
- c. If you are not receiving WhatsApp messages from me please WhatsApp me on 072 397 2284 with your name and I will add you to the list.

SUNDAY 29 MARCH

READINGS FOR TODAY:

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Psalm 130

Romans 8:6-11

John 11:1-45

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

PRAYERS FOR THE CHURCH

Pray for the **The Bishop of West Malaysia, Moon Hing**. We pray for **Steve our Bishop** and our Diocese, for **Thabo our Metropolitan** and the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, and for **Justin of Canterbury** and the Anglican Communion. We pray for all Christians across the world as we share in each other's sufferings and each other's joys.

A PRAYER FOR THE WORLD

O God, in this time of physical separation may we be united in our desire to care for each other and our world. Strengthen our communication in unexpected ways, keep us listening in deep and meaningful ways, keep us patient in practical and resourceful ways and soften our hearts to help those who need us.

We give thanks for wise leadership, for carefully considered action and global co-operation. We pray for the ill, lonely, afraid and overwhelmed. We think especially of all health care workers and those in essential services. There is blessing in everything...open our eyes to see that this Lent. Amen.

PRAYERS FOR PARISHIONERS:

Birthdays: Sunday 29: Lithule Nyathi; Menen Rensburg **Monday 30:** Laura Shiryapenga **Tuesday 31:** Beatrix Mills; Leano Alagbaoso; Naomi Johnson **Wednesday 1:** Fanelwa Mothudi **Thursday 2:** Jane Pryor; Christine Clayton; Lulama Cele **Friday 3:** Chiara Kriel; Clive Banks **Saturday 4:** Namanda Wanyama

Wedding Anniversaries: Wednesday 3: Glen and Trish Nelson **Saturday 6:** Ceri and Paul Yammin

Families to be prayed for this week: Lian and Teresa DIRSUWEIT; Patience, Mavela, Tanele, Lihle and Mbali DLAMINI; Russel, Melanie, Lucy and Esther DU TOIT; Carol ELLIS

Prayers for those in need of prayer: Susan Alexander; Michael Cruz; Stephen Botha Jentina Frahm-Arp; Marilyn Gianadda; June Impey; Maria Longley and family; the Mgeyane family; Hilary Mudau; Thabani Mudau; the Nelson Family; Wendy Price; Regine Ndlibu; Gerald Strever; Francis Wilson and for **those who have long-term needs:** Pat Cawthorn; Maria Frahm-Arp; Geraldine Matlhare; Elzett Mufamadi; Thandazo Ndlovu; Dudley Spratt,

Years Mind: Jason Renecke; John Butler; Neville Wiggins

Readings for Morning Prayer

	Psalm	OT	Epistle
Mon Mar 30	Psalm 31	Exod 4:10-31	1 Cor 14:1-19
Tues Mar 31	Psalm: 121, 122, 123	Exod 5:1-6:1	1 Cor 14:20-40
Wed Apr 1	Psalm: 119:145-176	Exod 7:8-24	2 Cor 2:14-3:6
Thur Apr 2	Psalm: 131, 132, 133	Exod 7:25-8:19	2 Cor 3:7-18
Fri Apr 3	Psalm: 22	Exod 9:13-35	2 Cor 4:1-12
Sat Apr 4	Psalm: 137, 144	Exod 10:21-11:8	2 Cor 4:13-18