



14TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

When the sabbath came he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished. - Mk 6:2

Sacraments

Weekend Mass Times

Saturday Vigil	5:00 pm		
Sunday	7:30 am		
	9:00 am		
	11:30 am		
	6:00 pm		

1st Sunday Spanish 1:30 pm

Daily Mass Times Mon. - Fri. 6:30 am, 8:15 am

Holy Day Mass Times 6:30 am, 8:15 am, Noon 7:00 pm

Reconciliation / Confession

Saturday 3-4:30 pm & by appointment

All Other Sacraments

Please call the office for information. Please note for marriages please call the office at least 12 months in advance.

Clergy

Fr. Giovanni Gamas Pastor Fr. Julius Kaburu Parochial Vicar Fr. Ignatius Haran Pastor Emeritus Dennis Gorsuch Jim McFadden William Goeke Deacons

Parish Office

Mon.- Fri. 8:30 am- 4:30 pm 307 Montrose Drive, Folsom Phone: 916-985-2065

Website: FolsomCatholic.org Social Media: @FolsomCatholic

Bulletin

FolsomCatholic.org/bulletin

Bulletin Date	Ads Due by 5pm
Jul 14	Jul 3
Jul 21	Jul 11
Jul 28	Jul 18
Aug 4	Jul 25

Welcome to St. John the Baptist Catholic Church

We are a community where we welcome all as members of the Body of Christ. We are welcoming, faithful, passionate, joyful, authentic, sacramental, loving and charitable.

Today's Readings

Ez 2:2-5 / Ps 123:1-2, 2, 3-4 (2cd) / 2 Cor 12:7-10 / Mk 6:1-6a

"Our eyes are fixed on the Lord, pleading for his mercy." (Ps 123)

Gospel Meditation

By Father John Muir

Recently I watched a bunch of YouTube videos on how to optimize willpower in the face of weakness. The message was: do not accept your weakness. Crush it. Dominate it. In one video, however, at the end of a rant by a willpower coach, the muscular stoic admitted, "You'll never actually get what you want, no matter how hard you try." Amazingly, he admitted that willpower alone is not sufficient for us weak-willed humans.

What does God want us to do with our weaknesses, if crushing them with willpower won't work? For example, what should I do with my tendency to arrogance and self-isolation? Or my procrastination? Or my intellectual and physical limitations? Or my selfishness?

The counter-intuitive answer is clear in this week's words from St Paul, "I will rather boast most gladly of my weaknesses in order that the power of Christ may dwell in me (2 Cor. 12:9)." Boast of our weaknesses? Paul isn't promoting weak-mindedness or laziness. Rather, he perceives that Jesus loves us not despite our weaknesses but because of them.
Boasting of our weakness means claiming human will is not all we have. It means turning to God whenever we feel weak, which–let's face it–is almost all the time. When we do, we learn to love our weaknesses, because it's there that we meet the strength of Christ. This week, I challenge us to find ways to boast not in willpower but in weakness.

Scripture Reflections

First Reading

The Lord encourages Ezekiel to be courageous in his role as a prophet, regardless of the response of the Israelites. Can you think of a time when you had to be courageous in facing uncertainty?

Second Reading

Paul learned a "thorn in his flesh" that was given to him to teach him that God's grace alone should be sufficient for his ministry. What are some obstacles in your life you have had to overcome?

Gospel

We hear how the villagers of Nazareth were "offended" by Jesus and lacked faith in him. How do you support family or friends who have been hurt by others?



At St. John the Baptist Parish, we welcome all as members of the Body of Christ.

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Meet our new Pastor, Fr. Giovanni Gamas



My name is Father Giovanni Gamas. I was born on March 15, 1979 and raised on the island of Bohol in the Philippines to Timoteo and Norma Gamas. I have four brothers and a sister. I am the second to the eldest. my older brother is also a priest. My sister is a graduate of geodetic engineering and is also a teacher. One of my younger brothers is a lawyer, the other one is a computer engineer but is also studying law. The youngest one is a geodetic engineer. My father is a retired geodetic engineer. My mother is a retired high school teacher. My grandparents were all farmers.

I grew up in a very Catholic family and my parents were active members of our local church. My father was a past grand knight of the Knights of Columbus and my mother was a member of the Catholic Women's League. My brothers and I were all altar boys when we were growing up. We

served at Mass every Sunday. My parents were

very religious and our Catholic faith had a great influence on my decision to become a priest.

My education began in public elementary and intermediate schools, but continued in a Catholic High School. When I was in 4th grade, I started thinking of becoming a priest, there after I took more interest as my education continued to be focused around Catholicism. During the course of my studies I learned to speak four languages: Cebuano (my native dialect), Tagalog (our national language), English and Spanish (I studied Spanish for 10 weeks in Morelia, Michoacán, Mexico In 2004). After graduating High School, at the age of 17, I enrolled in a Seminary College in Tagbilaran City, Bohol, in the Philippines, following in the footsteps of my older brother. I graduated from Seminary College in 2001 with a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy. Thereafter, I applied at the Diocese of Sacramento to continue my priestly studies in the United States. I came to the United States in December of 2001; upon my arrival I studied at Sacramento City College for a semester. Then, I was sent to Mount Angel Seminary in Oregon to continue my



theological studies. I graduated from Mount Angel in May of 2007 with a double Master's Degree in Theology and Divinity. After a long journey (11 years) of seminary formation, at the age of 28, I was ordained a priest on June 29, 2007 by Most Reverend William Weigand at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, in Sacramento together with six other men. They called us the "Magnificent Seven".



After my ordination, I was assigned as the parochial vicar of St. Joseph Church in Elk Grove for a few months. Then, I was moved to St. Basil Parish in Vallejo and stayed there for almost 3 years. After that, I was assigned as the parochial vicar of Holy Rosary Church in Woodland for 2 years. Then, the Bishop assigned me as the Chaplain of St. Francis High School and parochial vicar of St. Joseph a Church in North Sacramento. After that I was appointed Pastor of St. Monica Church in Willows and stayed there for almost 5 years prior to being assigned to St. John Vianney where I served as pastor for the past 6 years.

Promote Your Business While Supporting Our Parish Donna Touros 916-284-4438 Dtouros@4lpi.com

Ad sales from business owners help cover the printing cost of our church bulletin. Donna Touros from LPi, our bulletin printer, will be securing new ads for our church in the coming weeks. It is the support of the business community that helps to make our church thrive. Please consider purchasing a print and/or digital ad as your participation makes our bulletin successful, and you attract customers!



Jesus established the Eucharist as a means of uniting himself intimately and powerfully with his followers in every age. (Lectio Eucharist Bible Study)

Just a Reminder

Keep Our Church Clean & Silence Your Phone Please help us keep our church clean. Food and drinks are not allowed in the church. As a courtesy to everyone at Mass, please remember to silence your cell phone.

Mass Intentions

Sunday, July 7th

7:30am Amber Merrill+ 9:00am Greg & Liz Sinclair (35th Anniv) Gloria Marquez+ 11:30am Liliana Libbon (birthday) 1:30pm People of the Parish Tony Sanchez (birthday) 6:00pm Anna Marie Castro+

Monday, July 8th 6:30am Grandparents+ of Thomas Family 8:15am Cora Gonzales+ Stanley Brock+

Tuesday, July 9th 6:30am 8:15am Robert T. Blask+

Wednesday, July 10th 6:30am 8:15am Shelly Koski+

Thursday, 11th 6:30am Adelaida Brenner+ Beatriz LeCam (in thanksgiving)

8:15am

At St. John the Baptist Parish,

time in conversation with our

Lord is at the center of our lives.

Friday, July 12th 6:30am 8:15am Aisling Murphy-Collins+

Saturday, July 13th 5:00pm Jim Reed+ John Knight+

Observances We Celebrate This Week

Monday St. Junipero Serra Wednesday St. Thomas Friday St. Anthony Zaccaria St. Elizabeth of Portugal Saturday St. Maria Goretti

July is Dedicated to: **The Precious Blood of Our Lord**

Pope Francis' Monthly Intention for July For The Pastoral Care of The Sick

Let us pray that the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, bestows the Lord's strength to those who receive it and to their loved ones, and that it may become for everyone an ever more visible sign of compassion and hope.

Intercessory Prayers Prayers for the Sick

We pray for our sick parishioners, family and friends, and those in need of healing of the body and soul.

Adaline Dalupan Agnieshka Ossowska Luisa Penman Baby Gianna Brooks Benedict Doan Charlene Agles Dave Hodson Eberardo Madueno Elzira Elfilali Gloria Marquez **Gordon Ferriss** John Leonard John Said Johnny Johnson

Lilia Tanjoc Karen Spiess Kyle Pasterski Macy Knadle Marmo Lil Ocampo Matthew Awbrey Michael Long Paul Halloran Paulita Narciso Percy Park Vien Tran

Prayers for Our Troops

We pray for our military personnel abroad and at home, and for their families.

Andrew Pecha Brandon Heffel Carl Crossman David Tressler Dylan Flynn

John Lopez Joshua Penman Marc Jules Ocampo Michael Dalupan Samuel R. Rodriguez

Prayers for the Recently Deceased

We pray for the souls of all who have recently died, our family members, friends, and parishioners. May they rest in peace.

Allan MacDonnell Anastia Umma Bill Platz Bruce Hamman Cirilo Garcia, Jr. **Elaine Dougherty** Fe Abano **Gabriel Morales Gloria** Marquez Jim Reed Joana Marie Daysor **Jonamel Elemino** Jose Antonio De la Cruz Mario Palma Mary Steiner McInnis Maureen Bradshaw Mimi McCall Pat Bagley Phyllis Batt Roger Lopez Rory O'Bar Rudolfo Guese Sarah Maya Theresa Thomas Timothy J. Andrade

Prayer Requests

Prayer requests for the sick, military or recently deceased may be made by calling our Parish Office. Names will appear for two months. Please visit the parish office for Mass Intentions.





Adoration

The Adoration Chapel hours are: Mon-Thu 9am - 8pm, Sat 9am - 5pm and Sun 7am -11am Friday Adoration is in the church: 9am to 7pm

The Adoration Ministry has immediate need for dedicated adorers for these hours listed. To sign up please contact Veronica Thomas at thomas_vera@yahoo.com

Monday: 6-7 pm 7-8 pm 10-11 am 11-12 pm 4 - 5 pm 5 - 6 pm 12-1 pm Tuesday: 9-10 am 2 - 3 pm 4-5 pm Wednesday: 12 - 1 pm 5 - 6 pm 6 - 7 pm 7 - 8 pm 9 - 10 am 11 - 12 pm 12 - 1 pm 6 - 7 pm Thursday: 7 - 8 pm Friday: 6 - 7 pm 9 - 10 am Saturday: 10 - 11 am 11 - 12 pm 12 - 1 pm 1 - 2 pm 2 - 3 pm 3 - 4 pm Sunday: 8 - 9 am 9 - 10 am 10 - 11 am

Respect Life Ministry

Parish contact: Joanne Dudgeon 916-607-2228

A Prayer for Life

Father and maker of all, you adorn all creation with splendor and beauty, and fashion human lives in your image and likeness. Awaken in every heart reverence for the work of your hands, and renew among your people a readiness to nurture and sustain your precious gift of life. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen

If anyone is interested in praying with the Respect Life team at the abortion mill, call Joanne.

Our Lady of Fatima Procession

July 13, Saturday, following 5pm Mass Vestibule Contact: Henry Altamirano 925-899-7769

Join us for our monthly processions on the 13th of the month from May to October at 5:30pm except in July at 6:15 pm and October at 5 pm. We need four men each onth to help carry the statue of Our Lady of Fatima in the procession.



Prayer for Truth

Dear Lord, Your prophets were those who spoke Your Truth.

Help me to be a speaker of truth as well, one who reminds of Your love, encourages the lowly, and points ever more deeply to You. Amen.

Companioned Prayer Ministry

St. John's Prayer Circles Immaculate Heart of Mary: Mondays, 9:45 am, Church Chapel Sacred Heart of Jesus: Wednesdays, 9:45 am, Church Nave Contact: Michelle Hendricks mhendricks@CompanionedPrayer.org

Come experience this prayer of listening to God in prayer...

Have you noticed how Companioned Prayer circles are scheduled to meet in the silence of our church, in the presence of Jesus in the tabernacle for the purpose of entering the sacred silence of God found within each one of us? This sacred space is reserved and planned to be free from exterior distractions such as computers, cell phones, non-essential talking, and other exterior noises so that there is an opportunity for each person to focus on and listen to God in prayer. If you would like to experience the love and compassion of Jesus as your companion within a quiet way of listening to God in prayer, accompanied by a faith companion, come pray with us.

Live the Liturgy Inspiration For the Week

When Jesus taught in the synagogue of his native place, he didn't fit the image of the Messiah the people expected. They dismissed him. Let's learn from their example and remember that God often comes to us in forms that are surprising — even challenging.



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A BASSA

VBS 2024

"Scuba - Diving into Friendship with God" July 29-August 2, 2024 Time: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Daily Sign-in: 8:45 a.m. - 8:55 a.m. Location: Gallagher Hall Ages: Kindergarten through 5th grade Fee: \$30 per student Contact: Shannon Langer slanger@folsomcatholic.org

Registration can be done online. We hope to see you there.

We are also looking for volunteers to prepare and run this amazing weeklong event. We are looking for Middle and HS students to be part of our prep team. Prep dates will be every Tuesday starting June 25, 11-6pm in the Parish Hall.

Registration and more information can be found at folsomcatholic.org/VBS. Registration is due by July 19.

The National Eucharistic Congress is COMING SOONS

Eucharistic Congress July 17-21, 2024 Lucas Oil Stadium Indianapolis, Indiana www.eucharisticcongress.org

A Catholic Experience Unlike Any Other.

Our Catholic family will gather to experience profound, personal renewal through the power of Christ's love. Like a new Pentecost, this transformation will flow out from Indianapolis to bring revival in our communities as the Church returns to her first love—the source and summit of our faith. Please keep these members of our parish in prayer; *Rachel Boyd, Rachel Marsh, Aaron Santos, and Riley Silva* as they prepare, journey and participate in this profound revival experience.

(Practicing) Catholic

Recognize God in Your Ordinary Moments By Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

A Prophet and His Native Place

"A prophet is not without honor except in his native place." It could be the slogan of high school reunions everywhere.

I speak from experience — I didn't go to my high school reunion, but I do live in the same area in which I grew up. Ghosts from the past lurk in every grocery aisle and gas station. Former classmates fill my prescriptions at the pharmacy. I am always sure to see an old teacher or two at the Fourth of July parade.

If my teenage self knew that this was her future, she would be horrified. She wanted to grow up and move away, not because she didn't like living in this town, but because she wanted to reinvent herself. And you can't reinvent yourself in your native place. In your hometown, you'll always be exactly what you are — no more, no less.

The same was true for Jesus, who was probably the only person actually worthy of admiration at his high school reunion. When he returned to his native place, he was what he had always been — God and man, Messiah, miracle-worker. This is not something he became, it was always within him.

But the people of Nazareth cannot accept it. Why?

Well, probably for the same reason that I wanted to reinvent myself when I was 16. We don't often see anything worth venerating in the "right now" of our lives. We think happiness is a promotion or a pay bump away. We think we'll finally be holy when we find the time to take that silent retreat. We think we will be beautiful when we lose ten pounds.

The Nazarenes lived with God right under their noses, and they didn't realize it. So, when he came in all his greatness, the dissonance was too much to bear, and they rejected him. They didn't want that God — the one they had dismissed or overlooked or ignored. They wanted a different one. A shinier one. One that didn't look like the "right now" of their lives.

But that's where God is, folks. He's in the right now, and nowhere else. He's waiting there for you, with all the happiness, holiness, and beauty your life needs.

Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and among his own kin and in his own house." — Mark 6:4



2nd Collection

This Sunday our second collection is for our RE Program and SJND.

SAVE THE DATE

2024 Knights of Columbus Pacific Islander Aloha Festival and Scholarship Fundraiser August 10, 2024, Saturday Gallagher Hall 5pm to 10:00 pm

Lot's of good Fun, Food, Entertainment, Raffles, Silent Auction, Photo Booth. We are selling "tickets" starting June 15 &16 (every other weekend) through August 3/4. NO TICKETS WILL BE SOLD ON THE DAY OF THE ALOHA FESTIVAL

Divine Mercy Ministry

Loaves and Fishes Breakfast Feeding July 24, Wednesday Contact: Catherine Scott, 831-402-4681 Greta Tecson, 916-337-2014

The Divine Mercy Ministry continues to be grateful for the generous response received in the collection of food for the homeless. You are truly sharing God's love with others less fortunate with your contributions. The collection cart remains in the church vestibule for dropping off your donations. Items most requested:

- cup-of-soups, raisins, nuts
- peanut butter and cheese crackers
- hot chocolate packets, oatmeal packets
- bottled water, fruit juices
- nutritious granola bars, fruit cups
- jelly/jam
- ceramic cups

Fresh fruits are welcome and should be dropped off the day before, on Tuesday during church open hours. Bibles, holy cards, rosaries and religious reading materials are also appreciated. All donations will personally be handed out at Friendship Park with smiles of caring and encouragement.

Are you interested in driving or helping serve, call Greta or Catherine.

Saint of the Week Examples of Our Faith Born Caterina



de' Pazzi, to a noble family in Florence, St. Mary Magdalen de' Pazzi (April 2, 1566 – May 25, 1607), has been called the "ecstatic saint" or "The Passion Flower of the Eucharist," because of the trance-like state, or ecstasy, she entered for long periods after receiving Holy Communion. An ecstasy is when a person's internal and external senses are completely occupied by God, so much so that the individual is entirely unaware of anything other than God.

Caterina learned to meditate at age 9, and took her first communion at age 10, which was young for her time. She was so moved by the experience that she took a personal vow of virginity. She longed to be able to receive the blessed sacrament every day and so at 16, she entered the Carmelite convent of Santa Maria del' Angeli, which had a special dispensation to celebrate the Eucharist daily.

As a novice she took the name Mary Magdalen. In 1584, she became so ill that the sisters feared she would die and so she was allowed to profess her vows from a stretcher in the chapel. What followed was a miracle. For 40 days she would enter a state of ecstasy lasting several hours after receiving Holy Communion. She recovered from her illness and her sisters recorded the teachings she offered during the ecstasies, they are collected in "Revelations and Intelligences." Her years of ecstasies and visions, which she saw as witness of her sins rather than a reward for her holiness, were followed by five years of temptation, doubt, and suffering.

She led an exemplary life of service as mistress of novices and postulants, and eventually the superior. She died on May 25, 1607, after a long excruciatingly painful illness. She was beatified by Pope Urban VIII in 1626 and canonized by Pope Clement IX in 1669.

St. Mary Magdalen de' Pazzi, pray for us!

MA Read the Gospel and Color



T^{igsir} Mission for the Week

Read today's Gospel with your family. Talk about ways that people sometimes turn Jesus away. Pray together, asking God to keep you close to Jesus.



Dear God, help me to listen to you and to accept the help that you want to give me. Amen.



Mk 6:1-6a

Have you ever felt left out? Jesus did. In today's Gospel, Jesus visited his relatives and old friends. These were the people he grew up with, the people who knew him the best. All of a sudden Jesus was not acting like he used to. They heard that Jesus was healing people, raising people from the dead, and telling evil spirits to leave. Jesus was even teaching about God's kingdom, like he really knew what he was talking about! Well, Jesus' old friends and neighbors did not like it one bit. How sad for them.

God's own Son wanted to help them, but they didn't want it.

දිදු Puzzle

Unscramble words from today's Gospel.

Jesus taught wisdom	power miracle town			prophet heal faith			
Jseus	J	е	S	<u>u</u>	S		
pwero	—	_	_	—	_		
phetrop	_	_	_	_	_	_	—
fathi	_	_	_	_	_		
tnow	_	_	_	_			
wisomd	_	_	_	_	_		
taghtu	_	_	_		_	_	
mirclea	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
hale	_	_	_	_			

D'S CORNER

"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." Our parish is enriched with many ministries, please consider learning about and engaging in one or more of our ministries. Call the contact listed .

Welcoming Ministries

New Parishioner Welcoming Ministry Joyce Starosciak, 916-740-4628

Greeter Ministry Lori Hopper, 916-337-0139 Ushers Stanley Posis, 916-705-9192

Prayer Ministries

Companioned Prayer

Michelle Hendricks, mhendricks@companionedprayer.org Mondays, Immaculate Heart of Mary Prayer Circle Wednesdays, Sacred Heart of Jesus Prayer Circle 9:45 am, Church Chapel

Divine Mercy Devotion/Cenacle Leilani Badley, 703-855-6241

-Chaplet/Rosary/Morning Prayer -Cenacle - Leilani Badley, 703-855-6241 -Cenacle-Spanish - Nury Pun, 916-212-7201

Eucharistic Adoration

Veronica Thomas, thomas_vera@yahoo.com Sign Up for adorers is in the vestibule

Marian Cenacle (Marian Movement of Priests) -English – 1st Wednesday of the month, 10am Sally Gomez, 916-693-2411

-Spanish – Every Saturday Carmen Gaytan, 916-757-3893

Our Lady of Fatima Henry Altamirano, 925-899-7769

Spiritual Growth Ministries

Adult Scripture Study Lee & Teresa Weider, 916-398-1116

Couples for Christ Myrah Empleo, 661-993-4721 **Faith Untapped**

Rachel Marsh, 916-945-6992

Lay Mission Project Laura Wicklman, 916-933-8471 **Praise & Worship**

David Brauer, dabrauer@hotmail.com **Religious Education**

Shannon Langer, 916-985-7338 Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) Shannon Langer, 916-985-7338

WINGS (Women in Growth Spiritually) Trista Gooderham, 612-382-7655

Youth/Young Adults Ministries Aaron Santos, asantos@folsomcatholic.org

Parish Committees/Councils

Finance Council Patty Robertson , 916-220-3600 Liturgy Committee Barbara Bowden, 916-984-9476 Pastoral Council

Shannon Frazier, 916-761-2912

Outreach/Charity Ministries

Bereavement Hospitality/Receptions Parish Office, 916-985-2065 **Filipino Apostolate** Lili Rehwald, 916-220-2483 **Gabriel Project** Debbie Sultan, 916-337-5786 Grace Quilters Ministry Catherine Scott, 831-402-4681 **Knights of Columbus** Tom Ireland, 310-347-7180 **Ministerio Pastoral Hispano** Beatriz LeCam, 916-765-3569 **Pastoral Care Ministry** Dan Dunne, 916-817-1675; Sunday Candice Ralston, 916-806-8090; Tuesday **Prayer Shawl Ministry** Catherine Scott, 831-402-4681 **Prison/Restorative Justice Ministry** -Folsom Prison - Fr. H. Gomez, 916-985-2561 x 4206 -CSP Sacramento - Greg Mellor, Catholic Chaplain, 916-985-8610 x6425 **Respect Life Ministry** Joanne Dudgeon, 916-607-2228 School Ministry (St. John Notre Dame) Keith Martin, Principal, 916-985-4129 **Senior Visitation** Charlene Agles, 916-984-9602 St. Vincent de Paul (311 Montrose Dr.) Mercy Knight, 916-985-4630 **Liturgical Ministries Altar Servers** Hugo Schmidt, 916-817-4541 Children's Liturgy during Mass Rachel Boyd, 916-296-3712 **Extraord. Ministers of Holy Communion** Steve & Mary Anne Ashley, 916-479-2214 Lectors Patti Midtlyng, 916-837-8322 Liturgical Environment Arlette Peterson, 916-220-5968 **Music -** *See choir director after Mass.* **Additional Ministries Children's Babysitting at Mass** Parish Office, 916-985-2065 Family Fellowship Rachel Marsh, 916-945-6992 **Gift Shop** Connie Aley, 916-337-3607 Security Ministry Jim Miller, 916-220-4311 Women's Game Day Every Wednesday, Garden Room, 11am - 4:30pm. Roberta Puzio, 916-933-2561

"Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will."

9

Why Do We Do That—Catholic Life Explained Face-to-Face Confession

In today's digital world, do we really need to be face-to-face with a priest to confess our sins? Would Facetime or Zoom ever be allowed?



The question of whether or not Catholics can celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation virtually (via social media, by phone, or in some other way) is a question that has actually been around for several years. The recent COVID-19 pandemic brought the question back in a new way, especially as many parishes were forced to introduce a sort of "social distanced" confession, with the sacrament being celebrated outdoors.

In reflecting on this question, however, there are a couple points that we want to keep in mind. First, as the Code of Canon Law observes in different places, the faithful have a right to the sacraments of the Church and the Church's ministers have a responsibility to make them accessible. At the same time, however, we always have to be sure that we respect the nature of the sacraments themselves.

Although modern forms of technology and communication can help us in our work of evangelization catechesis, t he Pontifical Council for Social Communication has reminded us that, "Virtual reality is no substitute for the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the sacramental reality of the other sacraments, and shared worship in a flesh and blood human community. There are no sacraments on the internet" (The Church and the Internet, no. 9). Although our encounters with others on the internet and via social media can be considered "real" in one sense, in the sacraments we encounter Christ in a personal and ecclesial way. It is never just a private experience but is always grounded in the life of the Church and this means that it must truly be personal, including the contact between the confessor and the penitent. While the convenience or ease of online celebrations might be appealing for many reasons, at heart, we always want to keep in mind the fullness of the Church's tradition and the meaning of the sacraments.



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