

St. Joseph Parish

A photograph of a wooden cross and a crown of thorns against a purple background. The cross is on the left, and the crown of thorns is on the right. The text "FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT" is overlaid in the center.

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

6180 E. Willow Street Long Beach, CA 90815

T: (562) 594-4657 F: (562) 431-7424

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Closed Noon - 1:00 for lunch)

stjosephlb.org



Parish Finance Council

The following address was given to all parishioners at all the Masses during the weekend of March 8-9. Thank you for reading this and for following through on our invitation!

A CANDID CONVERSATION FROM YOUR FINANCE COUNCIL – PART ONE

Throughout our lives we are faced with addressing topics we find uncomfortable, such as: talking about the birds & bees with our kids; discussing end-of-life wishes with an aging family member; telling a close friend about something they need to hear about but don't want to hear. Another very common uncomfortable topic is finances.

Whenever we have made a Special Request, the generosity of our community has been tremendous. How many times have we applauded when we've heard that we broke another record with:

- Call to Renew,
- Together in Mission,
- Our Annual Missionary Appeal
- Movement for a Better World
- The Annual School Fund
- the Gym/Hall remodel,
- This year we generated almost \$500,000 for these special projects whose funds can only be used for their designated and specific purpose.

We've all experienced the impact of rising prices over the last 4 years and St. Joseph Parish is not immune. Our day-to-day costs to fulfill our mission in the community and do basic repairs and maintenance to our facilities have gone up almost 24% over the last 4 years – that's 6% a year. This increase in costs is consistent with the inflation rate in the United States and what you have experienced in your own homes. But just like all of you, St. Joseph's utilities, lay salaries, insurance and day to day costs to fix things when they break are what is driving the increase in expenses. Many of you read Msgr. Kevin's weekly letter and during the past few weeks you've seen transparency in highlighting our expenses. Wasn't that an eye opener that we pay \$510.00 each day to insure this large and beautiful campus?

Unfortunately, during the same 4-year period of time, our Sunday Collections which we use to cover our day-to-day operating costs, have only increased 1% each year. Here are some amazing facts:

- 14 parishioners contribute 40% of the total collection each weekend.
 - o Let me say that again – we are grateful that an average of 14 parishioners give 40% of the collection each week.
- Almost 600 families receive envelopes – only 135 families use them on Sunday.
- We are grateful that 159 families offer their gift through Faith Direct, our electronic giving system.
- Only 35% of our registered families give on any Sunday

- We estimate that 20% who attend Sunday Mass give nothing at all.
- For those that do give, they have not changed their giving levels for some time, maybe many years.

So why are we raising this now? Through the first 5 months of this fiscal year (beginning July 1, 2024) the parish is operating in a deficit. So that there is no confusion, we are only talking about the Parish itself and not the School. The Parish and the School have separate budgets, and the School is doing fine and is not part of this discussion.

So, our ask is that you please reflect and pray on what you have heard here and all the good we do as a community at St. Joseph.

- Please consider increasing your general offertory each week/month if it's in your means.
- We'd love those members of our community that have yet to lean in, to begin to monetarily support our costs and our mission.
- For those already giving, when was the last time you increased your donation amount? Maybe it's been years since you increased your offering.
- Please consider what more you can do to help each week. We all should do our part and not be so reliant on so few.

A little each week, across everyone, can help quiet this uncomfortable yet realistic and transparent conversation.

For our part, we plan to continue to monitor expenses actively and thoughtfully. We will keep you informed on our collective progress, and we will provide more frequent updates on our finances in the bulletin.

God bless you, your families and our St. Joseph community.

PART TWO – PRESENTED BY MONSIGNOR KEVIN KOSTELNIK

Does the Lord ever look at you and say, “Whoaaa– slow down – you give too much to Saint Joseph’s!” This financial conversation started several months ago when one of our finance council members asked me “Msgr. Kevin, when was the last time you increased your weekly gift to Saint Joseph’s?” At first, I thought... that was bold and brazen... but I appreciated the challenge and honesty so I answered, “When I arrived here, eight years ago, I signed up for Faith Direct, and I have never increased my gift.” And I probably never increased it because nobody ever asked or invited me to. It was so automatic, that was the problem. So, for a couple of weeks, I prayerfully discerned my current economic status, examined my charitable giving patterns went online and increased my faith direct gift.

Some of us are struggling economically, some are blindsided by debt, money can be a great stressor in life. But this I know - generosity is an indicator of the health of your soul.

Yes, I can confirm that in working with the finance and parish councils and pastoral team, we are not wasteful or extravagant in our spending or budget planning. Don’t worry, we don’t have to call in Elon Musk. We are careful and thoughtful and appreciate how your tithings are to be spent.

This is the first time as Pastor I’m talking about the offering, the weekly offering. Two of those startling statistics hit me: first 14 parishioners pay 40% of the bills every month through their Sunday offering. Second, this past year we generated half a million dollars for all the special projects. We will not have any more major special projects in the future. There will always be Together in Mission and the Fair but for today, we invite you to think about your weekly or monthly offering. It’s time to start taking care of our home. As you heard we are in a deficit, it’s not dire, however we need your help. We have eight staff members who work very hard for all of you. If we continue down a path of being in a deficit, then, within the next year, we will probably have to cut hours or even a position. The staff here are amazing and they serve all of you, and to let someone else go means I would have to do more, and I can’t! I am the only priest here. We’re not going to give a number or a percentage increase - that’s between you and God but we do ask you to have a conversation with God:

- Do you have a plan of giving for Saint Joseph’s?
- Is Saint Joseph’s in your weekly budget?
- Do you have a plan of giving when you come to Mass. Or is it just automatic. Do you just open your wallet, pull something out and drop it in?
- Do you understand it’s a sacrifice, originally given to you by God in the first place?

PART TWO– PRESENTED BY MONSIGNOR KEVIN KOSTELNIK

We're going to change the offertory process here beginning at this Mass - emphasizing the sacredness of preparing our gifts. It's an important part of the ritual, just as much as bread and wine are being offered up, so your gifts, representing yourself, your life, your family are offered to the Lord. To put a gift in the basket is a big deal, a generosity moment – it is a holy moment. So, we're going to pass the baskets so that everyone will have a chance to offer something. When you're holding the basket, quietly say, "Lord, I offer you myself, my sufferings, my intentions for the week." If you give through Faith Direct say "Lord, I offer my gift through Faith Direct." We're going to slow it down because the Roman Missal instructs: "It is desirable that the participation of the faithful be expressed in the offering of financial gifts to relieve the needs of the church."

As I mentioned, generosity is an indicator of the health of your soul. When you give, you extend hope to all of us. God does some incredible things with generosity. Generosity is part of God's plan for you.

This year, Saint Joseph celebrates its 70th year of life. There is good news as we proclaim the gospel and celebrate the vitality of our parish community.

- Volunteerism continues to increase as you share your time and talent.
- Welcome retreats are transforming us.
- We have a record number in the OCIA as 16 adults are joining the church at Easter.
- We have a record number of high school youth celebrating Confirmation this spring.

Saint Joseph's will always be here for you.

- Do you want to send your child to school here – we'll be here for you.
- Do you want your grandchild, the fourth generation to be baptized here? We'll be here for you.
- You want your seven-year-old to make their first communion here? We'll be here for you,
- You want to honor your spouse's funeral after 52 years of marriage? We'll be here for you to pray your loved ones into the kingdom of heaven.
- St. Joseph's will always be here for you.

Finally, I pray that your giving be planned, purposeful and enthusiastic! Spend this week praying about your gift giving to Saint Joseph and if it's been a long time since you've increased your gift, please consider doing so within your means. I promise you... that your generosity will be blessed by God! May our hearts be united with the theme of a popular religious app – **"We understand Jesus. We get Jesus. We understand generosity. We get generosity!" Amen.**



Letter From Our Pastor

Dear Parish Family:

Welcome to the First Sunday of Lent! As we commence our Lenten journey, this Sunday we journey with Jesus into the desert, where he will spend 40 days in fasting and prayer. His retreat will lead him to a confrontation with Diabolus, the personification of lies and blasphemy, a sort of division among people, and between people and God. Jesus had faith in the Father, who had given him a mission to love and forgive. Jesus' inspiration will always come from the person of the Holy Spirit. During our Lent, as we try to get closer to God, Diabolus will try to intervene disrupt your Lenten journey. Call upon the power of the Holy Spirit who has already defeated the work of Satan!

Last weekend, a member of the Finance Council and I discussed where we have been, and where we are going with the Finances at Saint Joseph's. The complete text of our presentation is at the top of this bulletin. As I mentioned last weekend, two things stand out. First, 14 parishioners provide 40% of the Sunday collection every week. Second, over \$500,000 was distributed to all the special projects during this past year. Now it is time to take care of our home as many of those special projects are now complete. Thank you for your continued generosity. After last weekend's presentation, in a four-hour period. Faith Direct recorded 30 parishioners signing up or increasing and upgrading their weekly contributions. Blessings upon all of you who generously give to St. Joseph's.

I hope you can join us for some of our special events during this Lenten March:

- For the four Fridays of March, we have Adoration at 6:30 PM and Stations of the Cross at 7:00 PM.
- On St. Patrick's Day, Monday, March 17, Sr. Eva and I will offer a Lenten reflection at 7 PM in the church, followed by a St. Patrick's Day party in the courtyard
- Calling all sinners - on Tuesday, March 25 we will have our annual Lenten Penance Service at 7:00 PM and several visiting priests will be available for you to be able to go to Confession.

Blessings on all your good Lenten works,
Msgr. Kevin



Photos From Our Pastor

These most recent photos show that work has commenced on the outside walls. The construction involves four layers: the first layer is called lath, the second is scratch coat, the third is brown coat and the fourth is color coat!!



St. Joseph Parish

Season of Lent Schedule

**March 17th - Lenten Evening
of Recollection
with Sr. Eva & Msgr. Kevin at 7pm**

**March 25th - Communal Penance Service
at 7pm**

**Adoration &
Stations of The Cross
Held on the following Fridays:
March 7th, 14th, 21st & 28th
Adoration 6:30pm
Stations of The Cross 7pm**



Beyond Chocolate, Digging Deeper into Lent.



with

Sr. Eva & Msgr. Kevin

Monday - March 17 | 7 PM - 8:30 PM

Followed by a St. Patrick's Party
in the courtyard.

Location: St. Joseph Church
6180 E Willow St. Long Beach, CA 90815
(562)594-4657

Lenten Guidelines and Practices

Lenten Fasting and Abstinence

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are obligatory days of universal fast and abstinence. Fasting is obligatory for all who have completed their 18th year until the beginning of their 60th year. Fasting allows for one full meal and two smaller meals not to equal one full meal. Abstinence from meat is obligatory for all who have completed their 14th year of age.

Fridays in Lent are obligatory days of abstinence from meat for all who have completed their 14th year. As always, anyone for whom fasting or abstinence would pose a health risk is excused. For example, pregnant women (breastfeeding mothers) or people receiving medical treatment are not obligated to fast. Nevertheless, people especially in this category are invited to practice another form of fasting besides food.

OCIA



Janet



Riley



Vanessa



Blake



Chantal



Sean



Jennifer



Nigel



Keng



Brian



Melissa



David



Jesus



Brad



Mike



Elizabeth

Pray for our candidates and elects!

OCIA Prayer

Lord, we pray for those in the OCIA process who journey to you. Strengthen their faith. Open their hearts to the fullness of your love. Deepen their understanding. Set their hearts on fire for the kingdom of God. We ask this through Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life for all.
Amen!

Weekly Prayer

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

'We cried to the LORD, the God of our fathers, and he heard our cry.' (Dt 26:7)

Psalm:

Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble. (Ps 91)

Second Reading:

For, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (Rom 10:9)

Gospel:

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert for forty days, to be tempted by the devil. (Lk 4:1-2)

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Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

Jesus is desperately hungry when the devil tells him to turn stone into bread. But his divine will is stronger than the weakness of his human body, and he resists the devil. In this season of fasting and self-denial, let's remember Jesus' strength.

Observances for the week of March 9, 2025

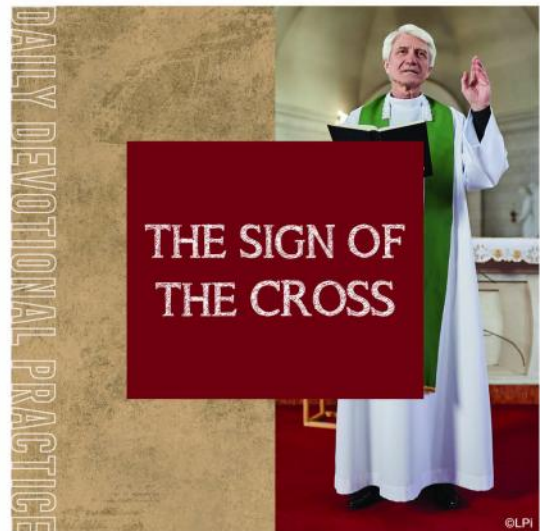
Sunday: 1st Sunday of Lent; Daylight Saving Time begins

Next Sunday: 2nd Sunday of Lent



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SUNDAY, MARCH 9, 2025 | 1ST SUNDAY OF LENT



Devotions, *Explained!*

Christians have been making the sign of the cross since ancient times. It is not only an important component of formal liturgies and sacramental rites, but also a daily devotional practice whereby the faithful invoke the blessing and protection of God.

Prayer of Identity

Dear God,
Claim me as Your own.
When I lose my way, remind me that I am Yours.
When I'm plagued with doubt, fill me with Your love.

Amen.

Worship & Meditation

Readings for the week of March 9, 2025

Sunday:

Dt 26:4-10/Ps 91:1-2, 10-11, 12-13, 14-15
(see 5b)/Rom 10:8-13/Lk 4:1-13

Monday:

Lv 19:1-2, 11-18/Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 15/
Mt 25:31-46

Tuesday:

Is 55:10-11/Ps 34:4-5, 6-7, 16-17, 18-19/
Mt 6:7-15

Wednesday:

Jon 3:1-10/Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 18-19/
Lk 11:29-32

Thursday:

Est C:12, 14-16, 23-25/Ps 138:1-2ab,
2cde-3, 7c-8/Mt 7:7-12

Friday:

Ez 18:21-28/Ps 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-7a, 7bc-8/
Mt 5:20-26

Saturday:

Dt 26:16-19/Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 7-8/
Mt 5:43-48

Next Sunday:

Gn 15:5-12, 17-18/Ps 27:1, 7-8, 8-9, 13-14/
Phil 3:17-4:1 or 3:20-4:1/Lk 9:28b-36



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Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

One of the most fascinating moments in American history is when George Washington could have become the king of the newly liberated United States and didn't. At the height of his power and fame, on Dec. 23, 1783, he resigned his commission as Commander-in-Chief, and went home. The astonished King of England remarked that in doing so, Washington was "the greatest man in the world." Greatness is often defined by what we could do but don't. Greatness is measured by the temptations we overcome.

Jesus' greatness is revealed in his victory over temptations, too. The three offered him by the devil contain, we might say, all potential possible temptations: food, power and fame. They correspond to the triple human needs of body, soul and spirit. In overcoming these three, he says "no" in essence to every and even the greatest temptation. We see that every desire of his humanity — body, soul and spirit — is perfectly united to God, to love. This is a power available to each member of his body. It is the path to true greatness. How can we, who so easily fall into even small temptations, find the power to overcome large ones? By entering into the great dynamics of Jesus' temptations.

Lenten challenge: This first week of Lent, list some concrete ways you can overcome temptations that correspond with your desires. For example, you may give up snacks between meals, choose not to participate in an activity of which you are an expert, and decide to reduce social media posting by 50%. It may not seem like much, but by saying "no" to the tyranny of food, power, and fame (in this example), you'll discover true greatness.

— Father John Muir

SUNDAY, MARCH 9, 2025 | 1ST SUNDAY OF LENT

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"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." -African Proverb

March 19 6:30 PM Committee Meeting: Join us in the Parish Life Center as we prepare to support 108 families from our Easter Food and Book Distribution. Share your insights to improve our ministry!

April 12: Easter Food and Book Distribution: As a parish community, we will support 78 families. Help wanted! ***Easter is our most challenging holiday to recruit drivers!*** Contact Jill Salinaz (562) 822-7367 or jmsalinaz@yahoo.com. So meaningful to kids!

Family Adoptions: Would you like to adopt a family to support for Easter? Call Donna Luciene at (562) 421-4993 or e-mail Rose Bauss cr.bauss@verizon.net.

Opportunities: food-drive delivery- deliver food from food drives, purchase additional from cash donations. For these and many other opportunities to serve, call Tim Clark, 562-431-4385.

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The next weekend in Los Angeles is on March 28-30, 2025



Register Now

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PILGRIMS of HOPE

24 Hours for the Lord

FRIDAY, MARCH 28 - SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 2025

20 PARISHES ACROSS THE ARCHDIOCESE OF LOS ANGELES will be open for 24 hours for prayer and the Sacrament of Reconciliation from the morning of March 28 through the morning of March 29.



Visit hope.lacatholics.org/24-hours or scan here for the locations and schedule.

Follow @LACatholics for more Jubilee news and events!



Book Club

CHERISHED BELONGING

THE HEALING POWER OF LOVE IN DIVIDED TIMES

GREGORY BOYLE

AUTHOR OF CAPTAINS OF THE HEART

Our next Book Club meeting is **Wednesday, May 14th at 7pm** on Zoom

Cherished Belonging: The Healing Power of Love in Divided Times by Gregory Boyle

"In a world increasingly marked by division and discord, beloved Jesuit priest Gregory Boyle offers a transformative vision of community and compassion." Cherished Belonging: The Healing Power of Love in Divided Times: Boyle, Gregory: 9781668061855: Amazon.com: Books

All are welcome. For more info, email agoodlife@msn.com

Senior Group



Our next get together will be at the
El Dorado Restaurant on
Monday, March 10th at 9:30 am.

Please join us for a nice time catching up with old friends and meeting new friends. When you arrive, tell the server that you are with St. Joseph and he/she will direct you to the area we are gathering in. Everyone will order and pay for his/her own breakfast. We look forward to seeing you there. For future reference, we meet there on the 2nd Monday of every month, at the same time.

Looking forward to seeing you!

In Memoriam



Edward Derrico

Funeral Mass at St. Joseph Church
Saturday, March 29th at 12:00 pm

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let
perpetual light shine upon them.
May the souls of all the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

~Amen~

St. Joseph Grief Support

Grief support



If you think you can't survive grieving, and
Your dreams feel shattered, consider joining
Our support group:

Tuesday 9:30 -11:30 a.m. each week

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Bereavement Minister, maypace@gmail.com

Or 562/833-6370

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Did You Know?



Safe adults have superpowers

If you are a safe adult in a child's life, you have the ability to provide a safe place for that child to disclose abuse, discomfort, or any other concerns. This gives safe adults the ability to work together to potentially stop abuse and change the course of a child's life. When children know that adults are willing to listen to them and advocate for them, they are more willing to share their problems and concerns. To learn more about how to use your "safe adult superpower," read the VIRTUS® article "Superpowers: Safe Adults Have Them" at lacatholics.org/did-you-know/.

Our Parish

PASTOR: MSGR. KEVIN KOSTELNIK

stjoseph@stjosephlb.org

Deacon Shane Cuda

sfcuda@yahoo.com

Deacon Tom Halliwell

dcntom@stjosephlb.org

Sr. Eva (Adult Faith Formation Director)

sreva@stjosephlb.org

Office Manager

Brenda Pineda

(562) 594-4657

Office Assistant

Joyce Castaneda

(562) 594-4657

Pastoral Council

Shelley Padilla

(562) 594-4657

Finance Council

George Zuluaga

Zuluaga@aol.com

Safeguard The Children

Parish Office

(562) 594-4657

Parish Bulletin Editor

Brenda Pineda

bulletin@stjosephlb.org

Website Coordinator

Mike Santy

msanty@verizon.net

St. Joseph School: Margaret Alvarez, Principal

(562) 596-6115

siknights.net

Fax: (562) 596-6725

Assistant Principal:

Madison Alba

Religious Education: Marc Leon, DRE

(562) 598-0519

marc@stjosephlb.org

Children's Formation (1st-8th Grade)

michelle@stjosephlb.org

Administrative Assistant:

Michelle Johnson

High School Ministry & Confirmation:

Liz Moreno

OCIA:

Sr. Eva

sreva@stjosephlb.org

Parish Ministries & Organizations

Baptism Preparation

Brenda Pineda

(562) 594-4657

Director of Music

Vivian Doughty

(562) 594-4657

Eucharistic Ministry

Tonet Risko

riskotonet@yahoo.com

Lectors

Steve Koppenheffer

lectorsstjosephlb@gmail.com

Meditation

Frank Mckown

(310) 633-1744

Esther Ministry

Virginia Young

estherministry1@gmail.com

Hospitality Ministry

Deborah Rollinger

(562) 594-4657

Movement For A Better World

Tim Clark

(562) 431-4385

Senior Group

Marilyn North

(562) 519-0154

Knights Of Columbus

Marty Vezzetti

(702) 401-5247

Engaged Encounter

Paciano & Molly Diaz

Ktmr@Sbcglobal.Net

Natural Family Planning

Greg & Beth Gath

(562) 377-5877

Precious Life Shelter

Cynthia San Jose

csanjoselaw@aol.com

Boy Scouts

Jeff Baer

(562) 537-6722

Sacristans

Joe Dang

(562) 493-2198

Homebound Ministry

Patty Brunter

pjbstampin@aol.com

Bereavement Ministry

May Pace

(562) 833-6370

Cursillo

Tom & Marie Newton

tjn8343@gmail.com

Parish Fair

Pete Wroblecky

sjspringfair@gmail.com

Environment

Jessica Gil

bpax.g4@gmail.com

Family Altar Servers

Monica Wissuchek

stjfamilyaltarservers@gmail.com

Welcome Christ Renews His Parish

Diane Ohde

stjlbwelcome@gmail.com

Mass Schedule

Saturday Vigil

5:00 p.m.

Sunday

Mass on the Grass

Outdoors

8:30 a.m.

Indoor Mass

10:30 a.m.

12:30 p.m.

Daily Mass (M-W)

8:00 a.m.

Reconciliation

Saturdays

3:45-4:30 p.m.

Inside Church

Adoration

First Fridays

8:00-9:00 a.m.





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