



# CENTRAL WASHINGTON CATHOLIC

*El Católico de Washington Central*

Pāchu Washintin Chmuk Tātpas

## Holy Week Changes Announced

Because of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, most Holy Week services in the Diocese of Yakima will not be celebrated in public. Bishop Joseph Tyson has granted a dispensation for parishioners of the diocese, and visitors, from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.

However, parishes throughout the diocese also are making great efforts to stay connected with parishioners in many ways: opening churches for prayer before the Blessed Sacrament daily, spread out over many hours to follow state and federal regulations and recommendations; offering the Sacrament of Reconciliation; bringing Holy Communion to the sick; and using social media to livestream Masses and devotions such as the Rosary and Stations of the Cross.

In addition, as early as April 1 and no later than April 15, every parish in the Diocese will be able to offer parishioners access to the online service FORMED, which has a great collection of Catholic movies and presentations for faith formation. Through the generosity of the Peter Flanigan Family Foundation, and with support from the Diocese of Yakima, this resource will be free to parishes for the next two years, and at a substantially reduced price for at least a year after that.

Below are pastoral guidelines decreed March 19 by Bishop Joseph Tyson regarding the celebration of Holy Week:

**Palm Sunday.** Unless the current restrictions and guidelines for group sizes have been lifted, this Mass will be celebrated in a non-public way. It should be livestreamed if possible. Palms should be blessed and parishioners notified of how they can be received throughout the weekend and early in Holy Week.

**Holy Thursday.** Again, unless the current restrictions and guidelines have been lifted, Mass of the Lord's Supper will be celebrated in a non-public way. As the Roman Missal permits a morning Mass "in case of genuine necessity," the Mass will be celebrated in the morning. It should be livestreamed if possible. **The Washing of Feet is omitted.** The sacrament will be reserved in the church and available for adoration by parishioners in small groups (no more than 10) throughout the day.

*Continued on page 2*

## Father Alex Trejo: A Lenten Journey from Suffering To New Life

*By Christine Corbett Conklin*

It has been a difficult Lenten journey for Father Alex Trejo, pastor of Our Lady of the Desert Church in Mattawa. Yet, as on that first Easter morning so long ago, new hope and life are dawning.

Father Trejo was diagnosed with coronavirus in early March. After feeling ill for a few days and being given medication by his doctor for what appeared to be a type of flu, he kept getting "worse and worse," he recalled in a phone interview with the *Central Washington Catholic*.

Developing pneumonia, he was admitted to Kadlec Hospital in Richland on March 7.

Under isolation in the Intensive Care Unit, "my first thought was that I surrender myself to God," he recalled. "I prayed, 'If You want me to recuperate, this is Your will.'" During the long days ahead, Father was often alone in his hospital room, with a nurse coming in periodically to check his vital signs. Bishop Joseph Tyson visited several times, bringing him inspirational books.

"I started thinking about Lent," Father Trejo said. "I was thinking, this is my Lent, my time to talk to God more. It was a kind of journey with Jesus." As someone who is very dedicated to Marian devotions, he also prayed to Blessed Mother for her protection.

"I thought about death, that maybe I was going to die," Father recalled. "For this journey, this suffering, I was thinking of the suffering Jesus had. I had a little bit of the suffering He had. I offered this illness for those (others) who are suffering, ill." Amazingly, Father Trejo did not panic, despite his very serious condition. "I trust in God," he said. "I feel okay with God's will."



*Father Alex Trejo*

MARCH 2020 *Letter*

And now, happily, the tide has turned. Father was released from the hospital on March 18. He is recuperating in Yakima, in self-quarantine and feeling "much better."

For others in the community in need of hope, Father Trejo says, "Don't panic. You need to trust in God, to have confidence that everything will be okay. Take care of yourselves and follow the guidance of the government and the health department."

Easter, with its celebration of the Resurrection of Christ, will have particular significance for Father Trejo this year, as he celebrates a return to health.

"God has given me a chance to see how I can be a better person, to look at what I can fix in my life," he reflected. "God has given me another opportunity to continue to serve the people of God."

Please keep Father Trejo and all of our ill brothers and sisters throughout the Diocese of Yakima in your prayers.



*Father Trejo distributed Holy Communion at a December Mass.*

## A Message from Bishop Tyson...

Dear Friends:

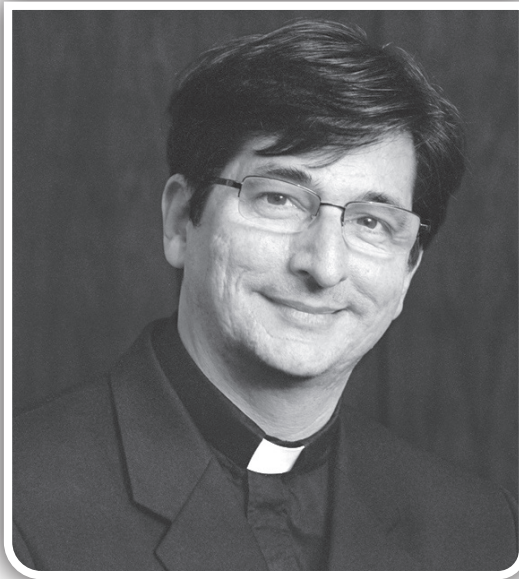
My hope and prayer for you is that this special on-line issue of the *Central Washington Catholic* might be one that helps you in the unusual way in which I am asking you to fast spiritually.

Needless to say, it was not easy for me to decide to suspend all public masses in the Diocese of Yakima. Yet, as many of you know, I was discerning this question while at the same time attending to one of our priests with the coronavirus, Father Alex Trejo, whom we feature in this issue.

How might we spiritually fast this Lent? How might we fast from the Eucharist? The writings of our retired Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI proved particularly powerful for me to review even as critical and harsh comments flew across social media platforms as well as into my email inbox.

At the top of my pile of books right now is Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI's book "Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith: The Church as Communion." In the early chapters, he recalls the unusual way St. Augustine prepared for death. He did so by fasting from receiving the Eucharist. Benedict recalls how shocking it was for him to ponder this gesture of St. Augustine, especially given the deep connection St. Augustine made in his homilies and other writings between the Body of Christ gathered at worship and the Body of Christ received in the Sacrament of the Most Holy Eucharist.

Yet Pope Benedict notes that St. Augustine wanted to die and enter into



**Bishop Joseph Tyson**

eternity humbly. He wanted to be in solidarity with the public sinners "...who seek forgiveness and grace through the pain of not receiving the Eucharist." Benedict goes on to ask some probing questions: "Do we not often take things too lightly today when we receive the most Holy Sacrament? Could such a spiritual fasting not sometimes be useful, or even necessary, to renew and establish more deeply our relationship to the Body of Christ?"

On Good Friday, we have no celebration of the Sacrifice of the Mass even though we usually distribute communion reserved from the previous Holy Thursday Mass. Yet Pope Benedict recalls the early liturgy of the Church where, most

likely, from apostolic times, not only was there no Sacrifice of the Mass on Good Friday, but NO communion was distributed. On Good Friday, there was a complete and absolute fast from the Eucharist.

Friends, we are living that kind of Good Friday right now. We are fasting from the Eucharist so that others may live, through our social distancing efforts. We are uniting ourselves in our hunger for the Eucharist, with the suffering of Christ on Good Friday who dies with the words, "I Thirst." His hunger and His thirst become ours this Lent.

Nobody expected this very unusual Lent. Yet as the old English root of the word "lent" suggests, this Lent has become a time for us to "lengthen" and "grow" in ways we never thought possible. My hope and prayer is that this fast from the public celebration of the Eucharist points us to feast on the richness of Christ present in the Word of God, present in our prayer – and in ourselves and one another, especially the poor and sick.

I hope this hunger leads us to a deeper appreciation for our Sunday celebrations of the Eucharist when they do resume, as well. Be assured of my prayers for you and my remembrance of you in my private celebrations of the Eucharist.

With every best wish and blessing,

Yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Joseph J. Tyson  
Bishop of Yakima

## Holy Week Changes Announced *Continued from page 1*

**Good Friday.** Unless the current restrictions and guidelines have been lifted, the Passion of the Lord will be celebrated in a non-public way at 3 p.m. It should be livestreamed if possible. At the end of the service, at the pastor's discretion, a cross may be set up in the church for public veneration in a way that does not allow it to be touched (i.e., avoiding the traditional gesture of kissing the cross). Parishioners in small groups (no more than 10 at a time) may be allowed to venerate the cross through the afternoon and evening. Pastors should encourage parishioners to venerate the crosses they maintain already in their homes, and consider livestreaming devotions such as the Stations of the Cross.

**Easter Vigil.** As this celebration is to take place entirely at night, this Mass will be celebrated beginning no earlier than 8 p.m. (15 minutes after sunset). Unless the current restrictions and guidelines have been lifted, **only those to be baptized or received**

**into the full communion of the Catholic Church, and their sponsors and immediate family may participate, and then only if the group size will not exceed 50 persons,** with proper distancing. The preference for attendance is first for those to be fully initiated (baptism, confirmation and eucharist). The Mass should be livestreamed if possible. A sufficient amount of water should be blessed so that parishioners who come to pray in the church during times of Adoration on Easter Sunday may take water home in sanitary containers they bring themselves. Parishes may choose to buy small holy water containers to make available to families.

**Easter Sunday.** Again, unless the current restrictions and guidelines have been lifted, Masses this day will be celebrated in a non-public way. The only exceptions will be Masses for those being received into the full communion of the Catholic Church, their sponsors and immediate family, and then only if the group size will not exceed

50 persons, with proper distancing. Such a Mass should be livestreamed if possible. All Catholics who have not fulfilled their obligation to receive the Eucharist at least once in the year prior to this day are dispensed.

### Central Washington Catholic

MARCH 2020 • Volume 61 • Issue 3

PUBLISHER

Most Rev. Joseph J. Tyson

MODERATOR

Monsignor Robert M. Siler

EDITOR

Christine Corbett Conklin

TRANSLATIONS

Indiana Blandón

The Central Washington Catholic (ISSN 0195-1831) is published monthly by the Diocese of Yakima, 5301-A Tieton Drive, Yakima, WA 98908-3493.

Submission schedule: Deadline for the submission of material is at noon on the first day of the month of publication.

Email: [robert.siler@yakimadiocese.org](mailto:robert.siler@yakimadiocese.org)

If you have been abused or victimized by a member of the Catholic clergy, please believe in the possibility for hope and help and healing. We encourage you to come forward and speak out.

The Yakima Diocese has a sexual abuse hotline for those who wish to report some incident concerning that issue as regards a bishop, priest, deacon or diocesan employee or volunteer. (888) 276-4490

# A Lenten Reflection: Why Does God Allow Suffering?

In the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, that age-old question comes to mind, "Why does God allow us to suffer?"

There is no quick and simple explanation. However, Father Robert Spitzer, S.J., founder and president of the Magis Center in California and former president of Gonzaga University, offered some helpful thoughts on the subject in an article entitled, *Why Would a Loving God Allow Suffering?*

"Why not nip the entire suffering business in the bud – at the beginning of the world?" Father questions. And, "if God does not directly cause suffering ... what or who are the true direct causes of suffering?"

Father Spitzer goes on to explain that, among the causes of suffering, is something known as "suffering by natural forces (e.g., tsunamis, earthquakes, drought, disease, old age, etc.)."

He reminds us that, "According to Jesus, God does not want anybody to suffer. Indeed, He should be likened to the most compassionate and affectionate

of parents ... who would gladly suffer in the place of his/her child, but realizes that this child must ... deal with the challenges of life as a free human agent. God suffers with everyone who suffers, and God intends to redeem every scintilla of suffering in His providence for all eternity."

We must remember, Father Spitzer says, that "God the Father sent His only begotten Son into the world to suffer with us and for us – so that He could be a companion with us in our suffering and bring us to our eternal salvation. God may allow suffering to occur in the world ... but His intention is to transform it into love. If He does not do this now, He might do it later; if He does not do it later in this world, He may do it in the eternal world which is to come."



Father goes on to quote St. Paul's Letter to the Romans (Romans 8:18-27): "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us ... because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious freedom of the children of God ... Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit

Himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words ..."

There are no easy answers. However, it is comforting to know, as Father Spitzer points out, that God is with us on this, our journey of Lent, our time of suffering. We have the promise of incredible happiness and freedom from all suffering one day in Heaven, if we live our lives according to His plan.

# Help Others Through Rice Bowl Program

There's still time to get a "Rice Bowl," that small cardboard container in which to place donations throughout the Lenten

season. Monies collected through this annual program help Catholic Relief Services (CRS) to assist our brothers and sisters around the world, particularly in response to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

Funds collected in the rice bowls are distributed both around the world and in local communities also to combat hunger – 75 percent of every

donation goes to CRS' humanitarian efforts around the world, while 25 percent is returned to the diocese to support local efforts to alleviate poverty. Last year, 24 grants of \$750 each were awarded to non-profit organizations in the Yakima Diocese.

Catholic Relief Services is the official international humanitarian agency of the Catholic Church in the United States.

Check with your parish office for the availability of a Rice Bowl in your area. At the end of Lent, Rice Bowls may be returned to your parish office. For further information on CRS, visit [www.crs.org](http://www.crs.org) or call Leanne LaBissoniere, diocesan Rice Bowl coordinator.

## Visit our Website!

**Faith Education Funding Available**

College Scholarships   Religious Education Programs   Tuition Assistance

**Job Posting: Executive Director**

The *Central Washington Catholic Foundation* is seeking a full-time Executive Director. The Executive Director is the key management leader and is responsible for overseeing the administration, programs and strategic plan of the organization. The position reports directly to the Board of Directors.

(509) 972-3732   [www.cwatholicfoundation.org](http://www.cwatholicfoundation.org)

We take your injury personally.™

Yakima  
Ellensburg  
Sunnyside

**ABEYTA  
NELSON**

**INJURY LAW**

[abeytanelson.com](http://abeytanelson.com)  
509.575.1588

The more things change,  
the more they stay the same.

Ford trucks have been getting the job done since 1911. Wearing out? Not an option. Overwhelmed? Not on our watch. Ford trucks have always been engineered and built so tough, you'd think it could outlast the next ice age. So that no matter what the job, it'll be there to get it done.

**KM KELLEHER MOTOR COMPANY**

"Our family serving your family since 1911"

[www.kellehermotors.com](http://www.kellehermotors.com) 602 N. Pearl Street | Ellensburg | 509-925-1911

# NEWS

## From Around the Diocese

### Scholarship Deadline Nears

The deadline is rapidly approaching for applications for three college scholarships, offered through the Central Washington Catholic Foundation.

The **Celebration of Faith Scholarship** is awarded to up to five practicing Catholics from the Diocese of Yakima attending or planning to attend a Catholic college or university. Emphasis is on a commitment to serve the Church through past activities and future plans and goals. Current recipients will be eligible to reapply and will compete with new applicants. Recipients can expect to receive \$2,000.

The **John Rodriguez-Kranz Memorial Scholarship** is given to a graduating senior of A.C. Davis High School in Yakima. Emphasis for scholarship is overcoming adversity through personal growth. A recipient of this one-time scholarship can expect to receive \$1,000.

The **Mary Ellen Chott-Mahre Scholarship** recipient will be attending, or plan to attend, a Catholic college or university and demonstrate a commitment to serve the Church through past activities and future plans and goals. Priority for this renewable scholarship is given to students graduating from Naches Valley High School who attend St. John Parish in Naches. A recipient can expect to receive approximately \$8,000.

A completed application form and all accompanying documentation must be submitted no later than April 15. For more information, visit [cwcatholicfoundation.org](http://cwcatholicfoundation.org) or call (509) 972-3732.

### Summer Youth Camp Planned

Registration is still going forward for the third annual Catholic Youth Camp in our area!

With a theme of "Ocean of Mercy," the camp is open to students who will be entering fifth grade in the fall through 2020 high school graduates. It is scheduled for June 21-26 at Lazy F Camp in Ellensburg.

Formerly known as Central Washington Catholic Youth Camp, the activity has been rebranded as Cor Cristi Camp, with a new website. You can register at [CorChristi.net/camp](http://CorChristi.net/camp).

This quality, weeklong adventure for your kids or grandkids will include daily Mass and the Rosary; Adoration; Reconciliation; priests, sisters and seminarians in attendance; daily faith talks; plus songs and games; swimming; inner tubing; a climbing wall; zipline; and camp fire every night!

Please get your campers registered while there is still space. For questions, contact Director Michael Drollman at (509) 699-1235.

### Medjugorje Pilgrimage Still Planned

Do you need some inspiration in your life? Plans are still underway for a pilgrimage to Medjugorje, Bosnia, with added time in Italy, from October 28 to November 10.

Father Richard Sedlacek, pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Selah, will serve as spiritual director on this journey which will visit the site where Blessed Mother is reported to have appeared in 1981.

For more details, including costs and itinerary, or to register for the pilgrimage, contact Gary at (877) 333-9290 or visit [magnificattours@aol.com](mailto:magnificattours@aol.com).

## Seven New Deacons Ordained for The Diocese of Yakima

On February 28, Bishop Joseph Tyson ordained seven men of the Yakima Diocese permanent deacons. The ceremony was held at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Kennewick.



In his homily, Bishop Tyson spoke of the tradition of "Judas Dancers," who, in folkloric Mexican dances, dress as Judas Iscariot and shake bags of coins, a reminder of his betrayal of Jesus on Holy Thursday. The tradition ultimately points to the power of the cross of Christ, who transformed the betrayal into forgiveness of the world's sins through His sacrifice.

"Not even the powers of hell can prevent Jesus Christ from saving us if our hearts are open," the bishop said. Pointing to the special liturgical garment the new deacons were wearing, he added that "You, the newly ordained permanent deacons, by wearing the Dalmatic in the shape of the cross will take on this mission of Christ. As ministers of charity, your mission is to take the power of Christ's cross to the most peripheral and abandoned parts of our world. It is a tall order and a steep command."

"How can you do this? By staying close to the Gospel of Jesus Christ which I will hand to you today," the bishop said. "Meditate on the Word of God. Pray with the Word of God. Be absorbed by the Word of God."

Bishop Tyson also mentioned the fourth century deacon St. Ephrem the Syrian, who linked the Word of God to the image of a "tree of life" giving each Christian "blessed fruit from each of its branches," similar to the rock from which God provided water to the people of Israel during their 40 years of wandering in the desert.

"This is what our parishioners look for you to do," the bishop concluded. "They need you to bear the cross of Christ as a witness and an example to them. They need you to bring the spiritual food and drink that is the Word of God. With the Judas Dancers of Pajacuarán, they want to know the possibility that God can come into the darkest corners of their lives."

Congratulations to our new deacons (pictured above, from left to right, with Bishop Tyson) who will serve in the following parishes: **Edilberto Sánchez Hernández**, St. Joseph, Kennewick; **Enrique Galeano**, St. Juan Diego, Cowiche; **José Luis Ochoa**, St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, Benton City; **Germán Gonzalez Aparicio**, St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, Benton City; **Juan Garcia**, St. Joseph, Kennewick; **Gustavo Valdivia**, St. Joseph, Kennewick; and **Germán Farias**, St. Joseph, Kennewick.

Let's keep these men and their families in prayer as they join Bishop Tyson and the priests of our diocese in ministering to all of us.

## Group Makes Blankets to Help Diocesan PREPARES Program



St. Paul's in Eltopia is a tiny church with an aging population. Dorothy Fangman saw promise there, and once she pointed it out, so did everyone else. Dorothy created a blanket-making ministry, and for 14 years, the Altar Society has been meeting to do what they can to keep children warm. Last month, the Society made 50 blankets for PREPARES during their get-together. Dorothy passed on in 2018. With tears in her eyes, her daughter said, "Each time we are gathered here sewing these blankets, I feel close to her." The Altar Society would be happy to show other parishes the secrets to their success!

Volunteers and employees of Catholic Charities of Central Washington delivered about 70 Valentine's Day boxes to disabled and elderly residents of our Diocese.

The boxes contained food and toiletries, with donations from many area schools, churches and individuals. Other contributions came from Johnson Orchards, Tree Top, Wray's, H.R. Spinner Corp. and E.V. Reformed Food Pantry.

