Our Lady Queen of Martyrs welcomes persons with disabilities. Special seating and wheelchair area reserved at all Masses. Hearing devices available.

This abbreviated bulletin has been issued for our website to ensure parishioners have the most current information. Our staff continues to work remotely and can be reached by email. Let’s keep one another in prayer during these unsettled times.

Our Lady Queen of Martyrs welcomes persons with disabilities. Special seating and wheelchair area reserved at all Masses. Hearing devices available.
In accordance with recommendation of the Diocese and Bishop Barres, all Masses and Liturgical Celebrations at Our Lady Queen of Martyrs are suspended till after April 14. This includes all Holy Week celebrations. Exceptions will be made for funerals and weddings as mentioned in the Diocesan Statement below.

Let us keep one another in prayer in these difficult days and continue to support one another. Parish offices continue to operate remotely, and Parish Social Ministry is available for support. Please keep in mind there may be delays in responding to requests. Please be patient as we work through these difficulties. Email is the best way to reach us at this time and staff email addresses are listed on our newly renovated website.

God Bless us all and protect us!
Fr. Steve

Important notice from Diocese of Rockville Centre

As of March 15, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control announced that it is recommended that all events involving 50 people or more be suspended or postponed. In an effort to promote health and safety of all people, the Diocese of Rockville Centre announces the following measures:

1. **Beginning Monday, March 16, 2020 at 3:00 PM, all Masses (weekday and weekend), meetings, and non-essential activities in our parishes are suspended or postponed through Tuesday, April 14, 2020.** This will include all Holy Week and Easter Liturgies. However, these will be televised and available online (see below).

   This includes all Confirmations, First Communions, First Confessions, etc. When these events are rescheduled, they will be announced by local parishes. Funerals and weddings may be permitted if necessary, but should be limited to immediate family and remain under 50 people in attendance. Baptisms should be postponed unless absolutely necessary and should observe the same limits.

2. Churches may remain open for private prayer at the discretion of the Pastor. However, they must observe the recommendation of fewer than 50 people permitted.

3. The Catholic Faith Network (CFN) will provide televised and online daily Masses, including Holy Week and Easter Liturgies, as well as other devotional and spiritual programs. (Optimum channel 29/137, Verizon FiOS TV channel 296, and Spectrum channel 162/471.) CFN is also available on selected cable and satellite systems and through 24/7 live stream at CFNtv.org. You can also watch CFN on Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV, Android, or by downloading the CFN iOS mobile app at the app store by searching “Catholic Faith Network” or “CFN”.

4. Your local parish may also offer live streaming of liturgies. Please check your parish web site for availability.

5. Currently, our Catholic Schools are closed through March 20, 2020, following the measures taken by Nassau and Suffolk public schools. However, we continue to monitor the situation and will adapt and update as needed. Our parish Religious Education programs will remain suspended until Tuesday, April 14, 2020. Again, we continue to monitor the situation and will adapt and update as needed.

6. In an effort to participate in the statewide efforts to halt the spread of the COVID-19 virus, effective on Wednesday, March 18, 2020, the administrative offices of the Diocese of Rockville Centre located in Rockville Centre and Massapequa Park will be closed through Monday, April 13, 2020. Offices are scheduled to reopen on Tuesday, April 14, 2020, at 8:30 am. These locations will be thoroughly cleaned during closure. All employees will be working remotely, with business being conducted by email, telephonically or electronically, as best as possible.

For the latest information visit [www.drvc.org](http://www.drvc.org).
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Do you know someone in your life, either in your family, or at work, maybe a friend, who is very good at seeing what is wrong in other people’s lives, but in their own world they have no perception of what’s wrong? They lack what we call, “insight”. So that they see clearly the fact that your shoes aren’t shined but miss the fact that theirs have holes? That’s a silly illustration, but it makes the point. Sometimes the lack of insight can be serious, as in someone’s behavior becoming quite dangerous. The inability to be honestly self-reflective blocks their ability to see clearly as they really are. Take my silly illustration and give it a context – the person who can’t see clearly, picks on you for your dirty shoes, while theirs have holes in the soles, and it’s snowing, and they have pneumonia. Obviously, your shoes being dirty makes perfect sense, it’s snowing, and you have been out int the weather. But their lack of insight enables them only to see your dirty shoes and blocks them from seeing how their shoes may be adding to their illness. Often times lack of insight goes hand in hand with mental illness. Many patients often don’t have insight into their own situation. Instead everyone around them is crazy – but not them! That’s an extreme version of lack of insight, but for the most part, all of us can be BLIND to the things we don’t want to see, even as glaring as it may appear to those around us. It’s a self-preservation mechanism in the mind. Most of the time it can be attributed to the need to change our behavior or the need to deal with a situation that is too painful, or we perceive to be too difficult to change. So, we become blind to them in order to keep functioning.

Our Gospel this weekend is a perfect example of this lack of insight. A man born blind – born into sin, is freed by Jesus and his sight is restored, (an added bonus). The Leaders of the people attack Jesus for healing him on a Sabbath. Think of the absurdity of it all. Jesus restores the man’s sight. He performs a miracle! The man was born blind, bound to spend his life begging, dependent on his family and friends to make his way in the world. Jesus frees him from all of this and restores his sight, and all that the Leaders can do is find fault. Who is really blind here? Who lacks insight? Jesus presents them with perfect evidence of who he is, but fear of change blinds them. Fear of what it will cost them, holds them back, so they hide behind the law and instead accuse Jesus of blasphemy.

What about our own lives? Are their things we are refusing to look at, or are we better at finding the problems with the person next to us? It takes real honesty, sometimes heartbreakingly so, and a strong dose of humility to see ourselves and our own weaknesses, but we never go it alone. Like the man born blind, we have strength in Jesus. He can help us in our blindness, but again, like the man born blind, we have to ask and truly want to see. It may be painful, but he will not leave us, or fail us if we put our trust in him. As we journey on this Lent, let’s ask for insight, that we truly have the sight to see and heal our blindness-es and make of our lives a true gift to God!

Happy Lent,

Fr. Steve
Bill Ayres' Reflections on the Fourth Sunday in Lent

A reading from the first book of Samuel

Saul was the king of Israel but he had fallen out of favor with the Lord. It was time for a new king who would be faithful and just. “The Lord said to Samuel: fill your horn with oil and be on your way. I am sending you to Jesse of Jerusalem for I have chosen my king from among his sons.” Samuel knew that Jesse had seven sons but which one would it be? The Lord said to Samuel. “Do not judge from his appearance or from his lofty stature, because I have rejected him.” So Jesse presented all of his sons and the Lord rejected all of them. But there is a surprise, Jesse has one more son whose name is David. “The Lord said ‘There, anoint him, for this is the one.’” Why would God choose someone so seemingly inappropriate and so young? “Not as man sees does God see, because man sees the appearance but God looks into the heart.” The heart of David was good and strong.

Yes! That is the way God chooses, not by appearances but by looking into our hearts. Let us look into our hearts especially now as we live in daily crisis. God is there.

Responsorial Psalm: “The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I should want.” The Psalm continues. “In verdant pastures he gives me repose; beside restful waters he leads me; he refreshes my soul.” Whatever you are going through that is painful, stressful or despairing, God will refresh your soul, even now.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians

“Brothers and sisters: You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light, for light produces every kind of goodness and righteousness and truth.” “Therefore, it says: ‘Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.’”

This theme of darkness and light has been used throughout history because both elements-darkness and light are so powerful and relate to our everyday experience. Entering a dark room, having the light go out suddenly and having to read without good light can be challenging and even scary. Light brings sight, warmth and comfort. So, as the author says “Christ will give you light.”

In these times of darkness, ask Christ to give us, give you, LIGHT.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

This is one of the longest Gospel stories and it has one clear meaning and one deeper meaning. Jesus meets a man born blind. In this culture at this time someone is to be blamed for the blindness, usually, the blind person’s parents. That is why the disciples ask Jesus, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither he nor his parents sinned, it is so that the works of God might be made visible through him.” Jesus then rubs the man’s eyes with clay and tells him to go and wash in the Pool of Siloam. The man does and when people ask him how he could now see, he tells them about Jesus healing him. Then the Pharisees ask him and he tells them the same
story. Some of them condemn Jesus. “This man is not from God, because he does not keep the Sabbath.” Others ask the formally blind man, “What do you have to say about him since he opened your eyes.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

The Pharisees, who were supposed to be the truly religious people, condemned Jesus because he healed on the Sabbath and did not follow the letter of the Law. For Jesus, the Law of Love that came from his Father was the true Law. The Pharisees remained in darkness but the man came into the light and could see because of his faith in Jesus.

Do you ever feel a sense of darkness in your life or in your very soul? It can come from within for any number of reasons: illness, disappointment, the loss of mental or physical abilities or a loss of faith. It can also originate from outside events, threats or broken relationships. Often, it is a combination of more than one source of angst. It may even be just one thing in the midst of an otherwise happy life. Where can you find the light in the midst of darkness? Is it from some action you can take? Can you ask for someone’s help? The one source of healing and light that is always there is your Spirit, your lifelong partner who lives within you. Keep saying hello.