



## SPIRITUAL FOOD FOR LENT

Living in Awareness of the Presence of God

"God Sees You." This reminder was painted on the wall of the playground at St. John Bosco's schools and youth centers. Like a Google or Apple phone which is listening to what is being said and tracking where you have been (FYI, "airplane mode" just delays the information being sent.), God is attentive to ALL His creation.

If God "forgets" you, you would not be in existence. You would be no-thing. Even that shell of our body would be non-existent. *'For in him we live and move and have our being.'* As some of your own poets have said, *'We are his offspring.'* (Acts 17:28) We believe that God is not just watching but is as near as our breath and sustains our existence... of both the bad and the good. We may not "get it" but God is God and we are mere stardust that he has lovingly formed. *"You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother's womb. I praise you, because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; and my soul knows this very well."* (Ps 139:13-14) Only the arrogant might believe that they get to decide if God exists and that they can understand his plans and purposes. Like a teenager who thinks he knows everything, compared with God we don't even have the understanding of a five year old. Be humble. We all have much to learn.

God sees us but am I aware of Him?

When I am AWARE of someone's presence it can effect my words and behavior. As a priest I know that I change how people speak and act when they realize I am with them. "Sorry I said that, Father. I didn't know you were here." Yet the truth is that what they said was wrong to say EVEN IF I were not there. My presence doesn't make their words or actions RIGHT or WRONG. My being there just reminds them of the truth they have learned to ignore: if you have to hide it from those who love you, you already know it is wrong. If you have to sneak or hide, you already know you shouldn't be doing it. Be aware, God sees you even if Fr. Bill doesn't.

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Does God need my genuflection? Does God need my prayers and my kneeling? Does God need a place for worship? The answer to these questions is NO. The one in need of ALL these things is ME. I need people, things and actions to keep me aware of God's presence. And again prayer is lifting my mind and heart to Him. Like my phone getting the most recent update, I need to stay connected and AWARE that God is with me and in me. I need to be AWARE that Jesus is in those I meet... and I do accept that at times that is hard to see, but that is still on ME not the other as I claim to know the Lord and belong to Him through Baptism. When we are CONSCIOUS and AWARE that Jesus is with ME, I do act differently.

When I am at a sporting event and know that the parents know that I am a priest and their children's religion teacher, I do bite my tongue when the referee or umpire "blows" a call or seems to be biased against our children or school. When parents from nearer the beach come to our gym for a game and practice "social distancing" with our children, as though their ethnicity or skin color were signs of leprosy or some virus I will not name, I try to treat them with kindness and respect as I believe Jesus loves them too. (By the way, pity these people who fail to recognize the image of God when they meet Him.)

My clerical black shirt is not just a reminder to you, it is a reminder to me: "Bill, you represent Jesus and His Church." People are not just judging me, they are also receiving my testimony about Jesus and His Catholic Church. Not only does God see us, the world sees us... and the testimony of our lives matter.

Crosses, medals, scapulars and all sacramentals are resources to help me and those I encounter to meet Jesus and help us live lives "Stayed on Jesus." They help me recall and stay aware as pictures and mementos of people I have known do.

Know that what we do and what we say matters even if we think, "This is private." God knows. You know. And even if you don't realize it... to those you meet, it shows... Don't loose your flavor (salt) or try to hide under a basket (light) and YOU, both in our good and bad, are His witness to the ends of the earth.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is a great resource to help keep my mind and heart focused and aware of Jesus. I choose to consciously and intentionally make time to be in His Real Presence in the Eucharist. Although He wants to truly be alive withing me, I am the one who has been given the power to accept and let Him dwell within me (sanctifying grace) or keep socially distant from Him. Adoration gives me "Face Time" with one I claim to love.

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Adoration allows me to dedicate time to Him. Don't you appreciate being with people you love? I know I miss seeing and being with so many of you. Adoration is a private time with my Lord who loves me. Mass is "us-time" with Jesus. Adoration is Jesus making time to be with me. He listens. He comforts. He encourages. He challenges. He fills me with His Spirit as I go forth into the world to "Glorify the Lord with your lives." God doesn't need my adoration. It is His gift and resource for us. Also, during this time when we long and hunger to eat His flesh and drink His blood I do encourage you to make a "Spiritual Communion" when at Adoration.

When we live life aware of the presence of God, we ARE better people. We are better able to give authentic testimony: "Preach the gospel always and use words when necessary."

Thank you for helping me to be a better man and a better priest, and if I haven't told you recently, I love you and I miss you.



With my prayers and best wishes,  
Fr. Bill

PALM SUNDAY is next weekend on April 5th. Blessed Palms will be available (until we run out) in the parking lot beginning at 8am until 1pm.

DAILY ADORATION "Drive-In " Adoration is available in our parking lot from 8am until 3:15pm. Turn your car into a place of prayer while visiting our Lord and Savior's Real Presence.

HOLY THURSDAY "Drive-In " Adoration is available in our parking lot from 8am until Midnight.

**ANointing OF THE SICK** call 424-543-4681 and leave a message. Danger of death calls get priority.

**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE** may be available for parishioners through the Cardinal Macintyre Fund. Contact Juanita for the documentation and bills which parishioners need to get this one time grant.

I do need your help. The earliest we will have public mass is April 19th. Our parish needs your assistance. Without Sunday services our income is minimal yet bills continue to arrive. Please mail in your Sunday donation or donate to our parish at our website. Thank you for your generosity. ([www.stjeromelax.org](http://www.stjeromelax.org))

Remember all those who work in healthcare, especially our parishioners:

Mary Asoera	Josie Bennett
Dorothy Ikeri	Nancy Wagas
Tess Abraham	Dinobi Nwosu
Liz Ortega	

And all those who are not mentioned.

Please do send us the names of those involved in healthcare during these challenging days.

([rshaw@stjeromewestchester.org](mailto:rshaw@stjeromewestchester.org))

### Deceased

Condolences are extended to the family and friends

#### Dr. Tom Patugalan, Jr.

(cousin of Zeny Pera, who gave his life in service to fighting Covid 19 in New York)



#### Terri Chacon

(Mother of Grace Chacon)

May they rest in peace



### Please Pray for the Sick

Hector G. Amezcua	Jamie Brazile
Vincent Butt	Hazel Chu
Rorrie de la Vega	Agatha Ezeani
Xavier Galindo	Mark Gauerke
Anne Gingras	Michelle Gonzalez
Dindo Honrado	Monique Isaac
Eileen LaCasse	Tom Lenert
John Marcello	John McCreary
Louise Meehan	Caroline Metz
Allene Muccia	Nina Mueller
Scott Petty	Sam Quatto
Eileen Reyes	Maria Ross
Dianne Smith	Betty Spindler
Gary Steed	Natalie Tun
Brooklyn Dvi-Vardhana	Cynthia Flores Zapata

5550 THORNBURN STREET  
WWW.STJEROMELAX.ORG

LOS ANGELES, CA 90045  
310-348-8212

### CHURCH STAFF

Our Pastor:	Fr. Bill Bolton	424-543-4681
Business Manager:	Juanita Rivera-Wiemken	310 348-8212
For calendar request & statements email: <a href="mailto:juanitarw@gmail.com">juanitarw@gmail.com</a>		
Secretary/Bulletin Editor:	Roxanne Shaw	310 348-8212
<a href="mailto:rshaw@stjeromewestchester.org">rshaw@stjeromewestchester.org</a>		
Coordinator of Youth Ministry:	Lara Ratlef	213 841-6775
<a href="mailto:sjlaconfirmation@gmail.com">sjlaconfirmation@gmail.com</a>		
St Jerome's Catholic School (pre-K to 8th gr):		310-670-1678
<a href="http://www.st-jeromeschool.org">www.st-jeromeschool.org</a>	Principal: Mr. Tom MacDonald	