



250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
CARMEL MISSION  
BASILICA

**Carmel Mission Basilica**  
3080 Rio Road Carmel, CA 93923 • (831) 624-1271  
[www.carmelmission.org](http://www.carmelmission.org)  
Founded 1771 by St. Junípero Serra



**Carmel Mission Parish  
COVID-19 Update**

**May 2020**



# FR. PAUL'S UPDATE ON THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE MISSION

Dear Friend of Carmel Mission,

I hope that you are safe and in good health during this time of uncertainty.

In the Gospel this week, the disciples of Jesus face great uncertainty and are under a cloud of unknowing. Jesus promises He will not leave them orphans, but He knows they may feel afraid, alone and isolated after his Crucifixion.

Just a few short months ago, many of us were like those disciples, discerning the first rumblings of concern, but having no real comprehension of the havoc that the Coronavirus was to create in our individual lives, our parish, and our world. So much is still uncertain, and we have sustained blows that are unprecedented in our lifetimes. Still though, the promise of Jesus remains, he has not left us orphans.

As we have been unable to gather for worship together, we have developed a "virtual" community online via our website, [carmelmission.org](http://carmelmission.org). Through our streaming masses, daily prayers, and prayer requests we have remained united as a parish family. We continue, through our ministries, to be the helping hands of Christ in our world, serving those who are most vulnerable to the ravages of the virus, among them the homeless and farmworkers in the Salinas Valley.

We have had to face some difficult decisions and challenging circumstances. We continue to adapt our work to serve you and our community. This bulletin is intended to share the news of the difficult situations we have been navigating along with the good works being done to ensure our Mission has a bright future emerging from this pandemic.

I share the great sadness of our community over the closure of our Junipero Serra School. The Catholic education provided here for the last 75 years has greatly benefited all who attended JSS, and indeed, our local community and the wider world. Unfortunately there was no viable path forward for the school in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. In this bulletin you will find more details about the closure of our school.

In the coming days we will be reaching out to by phone hoping to connect with each parishioner, one on one, to see how each of you is faring and what we might do to serve you further.

Your contributions have never been more important. I cannot thank you enough for your generosity. At a time when all other revenue is nonexistent only your support keeps us going and enables us to serve you and those most in need. We greatly value your continued support to keep our spiritual house strong.

We look forward to the time we can welcome you back to worship with us. We also eagerly anticipate the celebration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the Carmel Mission in 2021. This will be a great opportunity for us to come together as a strong and unified community.

Our Savior reminds us that we are not orphans. We can never be cut off from the boundless love and mercy of our God, or from the care and compassion of our brothers and sisters in Christ. As always, our strength and our courage comes from God.

I wish you and your loved ones continued blessings of good health and renewed hope,

Fr. Paul

# REPORT FROM PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL

## Albert J. Nicora, Chairperson

For a number of years our Carmel Mission Parish has been financially supporting Junipero Serra School during what was expected to be a period of below normal enrollment. Staff restructuring and other expense saving measures were implemented to cover anticipated deficits caused by the drop in the number of students attending the school.

Two years ago it was necessary to utilize borrowing to meet the school payroll expenses. At the same time, tuition was increased and major improvements to the school were made, pursuant to an independent study by Catholic School Management Consultants.

While the deficits continued, some positive improvements in the financial health of the school were identified. This led to the adoption of a five year strategic plan leading to a fully sustainable viable school. For the plan to work the positive trends had to continue.

The financial hardships caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have had devastating effects on our Parish and our School. At the same moment when tuition revenue dropped significantly, all other revenue at the Mission, including plate collection, store revenue, weddings and visitor donations, dropped to zero. The massive reduction of revenue required immediate actions to reduce the deficits.

Our Parish Finance Council, after considering all options, reluctantly recommended the closure of the school. Any additional debt burden could not be prudently and responsibly maintained. An independent Diocesan Task Force made the same recommendation to the Bishop.

We are asking each parishioner to now consider making an extra gift to the parish if possible. In future weeks we will need to plan to repay the debt incurred with the closing of the school. Any gift now will help the parish maintain all services and ministries here at the Mission.

We will be able to provide more detailed reports in the coming weeks. At this moment, we do not know the full impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and when we will be able to open our beautiful Mission grounds. We do not know how soon visitors will return when we are legally able to open.

Your gift now, when normal revenues are virtually non-existent, will make a profound impact on the viability of the Mission and our communal ability to serve our community. If you are able, please go to our website and click on the DONATE button now when our needs are great. Thank you for your consideration.

# JUNIPERO SERRA SCHOOL CLOSURE

Kimberly Cheng, Diocese of Monterey Superintendent of Schools

It is with true sadness that we will be closing Junipero Serra School at the end of the 2019-2020 school year. While this decision is difficult, it is final and comes after much discussion, analysis and deliberation.

## Background

A school assessment was commissioned by the Diocese last fall, 2018. Catholic School Management engaged the community in a series of focus group interviews, hearing directly from families about what was needed to help grow the school. A parent meeting was held in February of 2019 to share the findings. Catholic School Management reported areas for growth in creating an up-to-date mission to be competitive, in improving financial management and in focusing on advancement. This was an important way for the school, parish and Diocese to engage directly with the community and indicate the struggles that JSS has experienced. We hired an incredible principal who started in on the recommendations right away. This past spring 2020, during the state of the school address, it was shared that enrollment needed to grow.

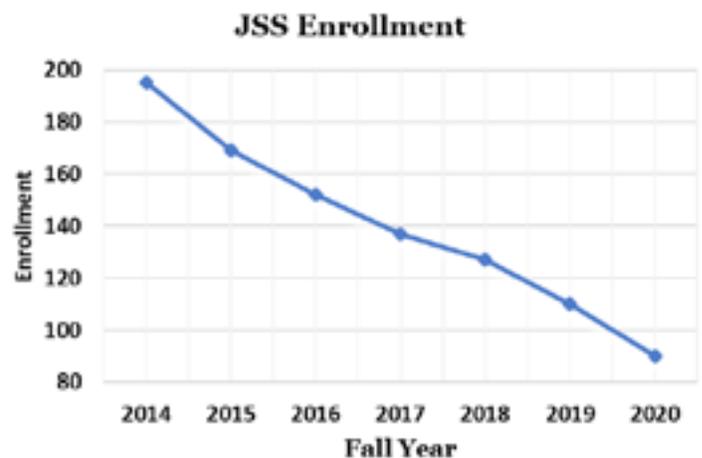
## Task Force

A task force was organized in January 2020 and consisted of the Pastor, the Principal, the School Board Chairperson, the Parish Business Manager, the Parish Finance Council representative, the Superintendent of Schools and the Diocesan Chief Financial Officer. Both the Finance Council representative and the Diocesan Chief Financial Officer are alumni parents. The task force was representative of the community and was comprised of people who care greatly for the school. The group was facilitated by our consultant from Catholic School Management who performed our assessment last year.

The task force was formed to identify opportunities for the school to grow. It analyzed financial and enrollment data, and it was convened to support the pastor and principal in their efforts to lead JSS. The task force was not convened to close the school, but circumstances changed, so the conversations had to change.

## Enrollment

The school has struggled with declining enrollment. Due to this decline in enrollment, the parish has had to subsidize the school because of the school's budget deficit. The subsidy has been pretty substantial.



Year	Enrollment
14-15	195
15-16	169
16-17	152
17-18	137
18-19	132
19-20	110
20-21	90

## Current Circumstance

When the COVID-19 crisis hit, it drastically decreased enrollment projections and eliminated the parish and diocese's ability to provide a subsidy. Projected enrollment for next year, we are looking at a likely scenario of being under 100 students.

While a multi-year plan to financial viability had been set in motion, the economic and financial toll of the COVID-19 pandemic has

resulted in an unsustainable current and projected budget deficit. Alternative models and school configurations were considered, yet it was determined that the uncertainty of the current time combined with the negative impact on projected enrollment and resource development initiatives has resulted in the inability to continue to appropriately provide for the delivery of the quality of Catholic education and experience for which the school is known and valued. This necessitated a recommendation to close the school by the task force to Bishop Garcia, and he conceded that it is time to close after much more deliberation and discernment.

## Long-Term Viability

The continued support for Catholic education is applauded and very much valued. Unfortunately, the decision to close the school is final despite our very best efforts. It isn't a simple matter of raising funds to stay open next year, Additionally, there is the accumulated deficit due to the decline in enrollment, the current deficit, the projected deficit for the next year, and the projected deficits for the following years, and that is assuming that the school will be self-sufficient after three years. The bigger issue is the market landscape of education in Carmel, the demographics of the area and the uncertainty of the COVID-19 crisis makes a parochial school in Carmel unsustainable. This isn't what the community wants to hear, but unfortunately it is the reality of the situation.

## Commendations

We would like to commend the leadership of Principal Steve Henderson and the commitment and dedication of our faculty and staff. In the short time that Mr. Henderson has been our principal, he has transformed our community for the better, which makes the closure that much harder. We have been blessed his innovative ideas, thoughtful approach and commitment to faith. Additionally, our faculty and staff has shown tremendous love and care for our students. Several of our faculty and staff have dedicated decades of their ministry to nurturing the hearts of Junipero Serra School students. This school closure in no way reflects on Mr. Henderson's leadership or on

the efforts of our faculty and staff. Join us in expressing profound gratitude to them for their ministry.

## Next Steps

Over the course of Junipero Serra School's history, this school has positively impacted the lives of countless students and families. We know that parting ways with this treasured school is very hard. Our most immediate concern is that you, our students and our faculty and staff will be supported for what comes next. The Bishop has expressly charged the Superintendent of Schools with working with others from the diocesan offices to support families in making as seamless a transition as possible.

The school's distance learning program will continue as planned and the last day of school will be on Friday, May 29. Report cards will be completed and sent by Friday, June 5. Mr. Henderson and our teachers will work on finalizing plans to close out the year and celebrate our graduating 8th graders, while still following the advice of our public health and local and state officials.

Ensuring the availability of the benefits of a Catholic education on the Peninsula, and throughout the Diocese of Monterey, continues to be a significant priority for Bishop Garcia. We hope that families consider continuing their children's Catholic education at one of our neighboring Catholic schools. In Monterey County, that includes St. Angela's Preschool in Pacific Grove, San Carlos School and Santa Catalina School in Monterey, and Sacred Heart School, Madonna del Sasso School and Palma School in Salinas. The Diocese will provide a \$500 scholarship to each Junípero Serra School student who will continue their Catholic education at another Catholic school in our Diocese. JSS students will have priority admissions. It will be important for families to go through a complete admissions process to be appropriately enrolled.



# Annual Ministry Appeal 2020 Heavenly Sounds

I want to thank all who have contributed to our Heavenly Sounds campaign, even during this period of financial uncertainty. While we still have a long way to go to meet our parish goal and accomplish all that we hoped, the substantial progress we have made so far will allow us to begin to work on the aspects of the campaign most needed as we address the challenges of re-opening our beautiful Mission.

You may remember that we had two fold goals for Heavenly Sounds; to make urgently needed repairs and upgrades to our Casavant organ, and to enhance our sound system inside and outside of the Basilica.

It had been in my mind for some time prior that we needed to enhance our outreach to those members of the community who could not come and join us for worship. I wanted to find a way to connect with them, and encourage them to participate in the liturgy from their homes. In a matter of weeks, this became a reality for all of us. Our streaming Masses and Daily Prayer Messages have been a bedrock for our Carmel Mission family, keeping us connected and praying together in this time of isolation. Some of our parish family suffer this isolation even in non COVID times.

We could not have foreseen this, but the pandemic has required us to rapidly develop the very strategies I had hoped to use to connect with those who cannot be with us in person. Going forward, as we begin to emerge from the pandemic, this will be more true than ever. As such, I am committed to maintaining our ability to stream the Mass as we begin to re-open for public worship. Social distancing constraints will also certainly require the use of our large courtyards to welcome back those who can and who wish to come to the Mass, making the need to bring sound and video capabilities to those spaces even more urgent.

Many of you have commented that the sound of our beautiful Casavant organ, and the music at our streaming Masses makes you feel like you are present in the Basilica with us. Music is such a part of our identity at Carmel Mission; the goals of our Heavenly Sounds campaign strive to ensure the future of this identity for generations to come.

We continue to need your support to make these goals a reality. Please consider a gift to our Heavenly Sounds campaign.

Blessings,

Fr. Paul



For more information, visit our AMA page at [carmelmission.org/2020-annual-ministry-appeal/](http://carmelmission.org/2020-annual-ministry-appeal/)

### *Electronic Giving Makes Perfect Sense in These Times*

Thank you to so many of you who have adopted electronic giving.

#### Quick and Easy - Setup Support Available

- Signing up and making single or scheduled contributions is easy – just click the donate button on [our website](#) and sign up today. We will have someone available during business hours to provide any required assistance.

#### Electronic Giving Saves Money and Time

- Envelope mailings are costly for parishioners and the parish
- Check processing and money handling are time consuming
- Our method of collections are to change as we will have collection boxes to replace pew collections when we come back together
- Accurate contribution tracking is available at all times



### Your Generous Stewardship May 4 through May 10!

Report for week ending on May 10<sup>th</sup>

#### Electronic Donations

Weekday: \$5,744.56

Weekend: \$1,550.00

**Mail Donations: \$6,540.00**

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**Total Collections: \$13,834.56**

**“Liturgy is life for the entire people of the Church.”**

– Pope Francis, August 24, 2017



St. Junipero Serra Celebrating Mass on 3 June 1770

Since its inception, the liturgy has been the lifeblood of the Church for in the liturgy we enter into Christ's own prayer to the Father. As we faced the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the restrictions that were necessary to safeguard public health, we knew that the people of God, our community of Carmel Mission, needed the consolation and connection of the liturgy in their isolation. We have worked to bring the liturgy online through our streaming Masses, and have been overwhelmed by the positive response and support we have received. Though we cannot be together in person we remain united when we pray together.

In just nine weeks, our community has come together online via our website, [carmelmission.org](http://carmelmission.org), creating a virtual community that prays together and cares for each other, staying connected to our God, our Church and to one another.

While the Mass is the highlight of our liturgical week, there are so many dynamic and creative ways we can pray together throughout the week. Our Daily Prayer Messages explore the ways we can pray, talk to God, and listen for His voice in our hearts. Our first streaming Taize Prayer Service was a consolation to

many, and I am happy to report we will be streaming a second such service next week. This opportunity to spend a quiet hour with our God is welcome in the face of the news barrage we encounter each day.

We have also welcomed your prayer requests via the PRAYER REQUEST button on our website. These prayer requests come directly to me and to Fr. Rodrigo and we are honored to take your intentions with us in our daily prayers and private masses. This is a wonderful way to stay connected with each of you and we look forward to receiving your requests.

We look forward to the time when we can welcome God's people back to worship at your beautiful Basilica. While this date remains unknown, plans are underway to develop the safest possible practices that will allow us to come together as a community again. When we are able to open again, we will continue to maintain our virtual community as well. The return to normalcy will be a long road, and our streaming Masses and morning prayer messages will continue to be a vital part of our community for the foreseeable future.

Whether in person or online, each of you is a spiritual stone. As St. Peter says we come to Him, the one that the builders rejected who has become the cornerstone, to be made into a spiritual house acceptable to God. Our spiritual house needs each of you, and we look forward to continuing to serve you in these uncertain times.

# PLANNING FOR THE 250<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE CARMEL MISSION 1771 — 2021



The planning for the 250th Anniversary of our Mission's founding, a significant event for our community and the history of California, has begun.



Come today as a pilgrim to this Mission of San Carlos, which so powerfully evokes the heroic spirit and heroic deeds of Fray Junípero Serra and which enshrines his mortal remains. **This serene and beautiful place is truly the historical and spiritual heart of California.** All the missions of El Camino Real bear witness to the challenges and heroism of an earlier time, but not a time forgotten or without significance for the California of today and the Church of today.

— ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS, ST. JOHN PAUL II  
Basilica of the Mission of San Carlos in Carmel  
Thursday, September 17, 1987

We look forward to presenting a year long celebration of liturgical, cultural and musical events. Learn more at [CarmelMission.org](http://CarmelMission.org)



# CARMEL MISSION ONLINE

We look forward to speaking with you - Stay Connected!

We are planning to reach out and connect with each and everyone in our parish, and will begin calling our parishioners in the coming days. We want to know how you are faring. We also would like to share with you how we have been contending with the circumstances brought upon us by these uncertain times. We want to ensure you know about the steps we have taken to continue our connection with you through our emails, streaming weekend Masses, Daily Prayer Messages and the PRAYER REQUEST button on our website.



We have added a new page on our website named PARISH OFFICE. As we speak with you, we would like to update our parish records. We want to learn what forms of communication are most useful to you. We would also like to hear your suggestions and feedback on how to better serve you and our community.

Though you will be contacting us through our website, we will be here to respond in person.

Please go to [www.carmelmission.org](http://www.carmelmission.org) to find the most up-to-date news on Mission activities. We will post information regarding the re-opening of the Mission as soon as we are able to welcome back parishioners and visitors.

## Sign up for our Weekly Bulletin and Email from Fr. Paul

The Carmel Mission sends out a weekly email with Father Paul's Message, Weekly Streaming Mass, Weekly Bulletin, Parish Updates, and More!

## Follow Us Online



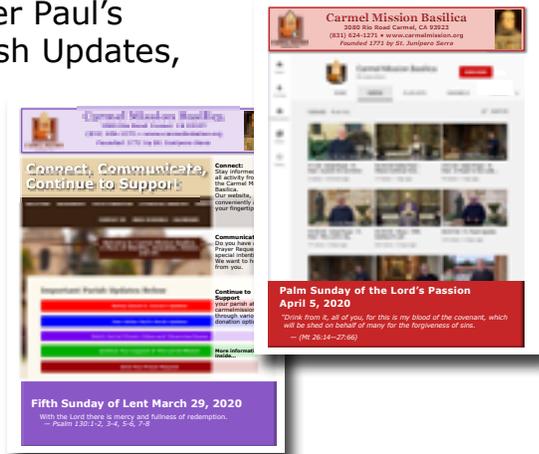
### YouTube:

Watch our weekly Mass, Daily Prayers, and important updates impacting the Mission



### Facebook:

Follow our posts featuring our Liturgical services and historic videos



## Need Technical Help?

Email us at [help@carmelmission.org](mailto:help@carmelmission.org)

# CARMEL MISSION MUSEUM STORE

Our Online Store is Open

We are available to fulfill your orders through our website and email.

We are delighted to assist you remotely. We are in the process of putting most of our inventory on our website, [carmelmission.org/carmel-mission-basilica-store/](http://carmelmission.org/carmel-mission-basilica-store/). Kindly take a look and contact us with any questions.

The Museum Store hopes to provide you with best gift for your friends and loved ones during these difficult times.

We are planning for when you may visit us again. Please check our website for news on when we may re-open the property.



Carmel Mission  
Museum Store

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Welcome to the Carmel Mission Museum Store



St. Teresa Medal



St. Augustine Stone,  
Basilica, NY



1488 Gold Carmelica  
Crucifix Medal



Shining Silver Carmelica  
Crucifix Pendant

The Museum Store not only provides religious items and artifacts but also an environment of welcome to all who visit Carmel Mission.

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**250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**  
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# Carmel Mission Parish COVID-19 Update

