

## Youth, young adults remain close to our Lord in Holy Week

No powers of hell or pandemics can stop Catholics from celebrating Christ's life, death and resurrection during Holy Week.

There may be no public Masses occurring in the Diocese of Allentown, but that has not stopped the desire to grow closer to Jesus Christ in this time of a world crisis. It may just take a dash of creativity and a nudge from the Holy Spirit, but youth and young adult Catholics realize it is more important than ever to remain close to our Lord.

ACTION (Active Christian Teens in Our Neighborhood), the youth group of St. Teresa of Calcutta, Mahanoy City and St. Richard, Barnesville, embraced the digital era and created a virtual Stations of the Cross for Good Friday.

"For 32 years, we did a Living Stations in a church or the streets," said Director Debbie Walker. "This year, for our 33rd year, we couldn't do anything like that."

After a brainstorm, the idea for virtual stations was presented to the kids. They all wanted to volunteer to read and were happy to see this tradition continued.

Fifteen high-schoolers in ACTION videoed themselves holding a picture of the station and doing a reading about it. Some videos featured siblings or pets, and it is available for viewing on Facebook at "Saint Teresa of Calcutta Parish - Mahanoy City."

"We got a lot of good feedback congratulating the kids on what they did," said Walker. "It's just so hard to be away from them for this long. It was so emotional when they were sending in videos – seeing their faces and hearing their voices when you haven't seen them in so long – it was really wonderful to see that happen."

Walker is looking forward to getting back to serving the community hands-on through food drives and other volunteering events.

Attending Mass virtually has been Elizabeth Buerke's go-to activity with her family during Holy Week and beyond.

They live-streamed Masses and a Good Friday service from local parishes, like St. Ignatius Loyola, Sinking Spring and St. Margaret, Reading, and other churches like St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York, for all of



way for us to participate in Mass while using our abilities to glorify God," said Buerke, 21, of Reading. "We cantor and participate in choirs, so music has always been important to us."

Holy Week was also filled with religious movies about Jesus Christ, like "Jesus of Nazareth," "King of Kings" and "The Greatest Story Ever Told." "Jesus Christ, Superstar" was included in the lineup as a silly movie – Buerke noted it was not really religious, but fun.

Buerke is also a frequent podcast listener and has joined Facebook groups of fellow listeners. One example is "The Gathering Place," a podcast with those from "Blessed is She," a conclave of Catholic women. Annie Sarlo, secretary of the diocesan Secretariat for Catholic Life and Evangelization, is also an advocate for evangelization through new media. She suggests using a video chat platform, such as Skype or Zoom, to pray a rosary or delve into Scripture with friends.

"While having my coffee – the true secret to the contemplative life – I read Scripture, reflect on it and talk to Jesus about it," said Sarlo.

Another recommendation is to set up a sacred space within the home. Putting together images of saints, statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary or a crucifix can help inspire prayer. Including holy texts like the Bible or those inspired by saints are also good to have on hand, said Sarlo.

Holy Week. Buerke's family is a musical one, so they prefer watching Mass with music.

"Having music is another

"I recommend taking just 15 minutes per day to be still and silent, to read a Scripture passage, like something from the Gospel of John, and to reflect on it."

*By Jillian Clemente*

Above, Jordan Karmonick of ACTION youth group presents the Second Station of the Cross.

Right, a sacred space in the home can help inspire prayer. (Photo by Jillian **Clemente**)

---

[Copyright \(c\) 2020 AD Times, Edition 5/28/2020](#)

[Powered by TECNAVIA](#)

---

For personal, non-commercial use only.