

*- St Francis of Assisi-*  
**HEALTH AND WELLNESS MINISTRY**

Christmas 2020

**We asked and **WOW** did we hear back!**

**Here's what St. Francis folks are doing to stay active and healthy!**

During this Covid time I have been walking everyday - at least 4 to 5 miles. I have been walking during lunch at La Cantera (with a mask) and at times I pick different places to begin my walk while walking the Leon Creek Greenway. I do this so that I can see different parts of the Greenway and not get bored walking the same trail. Another type of exercise that I have been utilizing during the cold days has been my elliptical. Now when it comes to my eating habits - let's just say - thank goodness for my exercise.

- Fr. Tony

I find that I had to create an exercise routine that was able to be completed in 15 to 20 mins a day. I have sciatica and noticed with the stay at home directives and gyms closing down I needed an outlet for my exercise routines to keep me healthier and flexible. Found it's better to have a few weights, an exercise ball, exercise mat and yoga gear so I can exercise daily. I've been consistently working out since I was 19, I just turned 64. I also walk 3 to 4 miles a day!

The fact my daughter is expecting a granddaughter in April 2021, I find that it's important to take of myself and my husband so we can enjoy our grandchild and have time with our daughter and her husband. We often go walking together and have had some great conversations and spoken about how much life has changed with Covid 19 as we are both high risk!

- Sharon Grooms

Start the day with a Rosary; Due to Covid attending Mass on line.

Walking each morning 3-4 miles each day around our neighborhood, which gives us a chance to talk to our neighbors (from a distance). This socializing makes us feel more connected until we can safely resume neighborhood activities. Making smoothies to drink usually after we walk. Contents: Celery, Spinach, Carrots and Peppers

Reading spiritually uplifting books; Journalizing this past year.

Joined Oasis for seniors which has numerous mind-stimulating programs and healthy eating programs.

<https://www.oasisnet.org/>

Aiding several elderly neighbors with food and good cheer like home baked goods and conversation. Staying in touch through Zoom, face time, and phone calls.

We try to eat healthy, at least most of the time!

- Rhonda and Elliot Rosado

Hi everyone, I am Mary Claire Cater. I go to Golds Gym 3 days a week. Twice a week, Silver Sneakers balance classes, once a week a seniors chair yoga class. I have been going for several years, and the instructor is excellent. They have closed the pools so I am unable to go to water aerobics.

We try to keep a good protein, low carb diet. Watch sugar intake, and eat lots of fruit, and vegetables, chicken and fish. Hopefully 2021 will be a more peaceful year!

Wishing you all Blessings, Peace, and a Merry Christmas and Healthy New Year 😊

Thanks for all you do!

- The Caters

Here's a super easy comfort food soup recipe. I can't find the nutritional facts on it but based on the ingredients, I am certain it is low calorie and has lots of great vitamins packed in.

I use frozen organic butternut squash from the freezer section. Super easy!

You can top with bacon or croutons if you want to bulk it up. A great side dish or meal starter as well as a main course.

<https://www.hiddenvalley.com/recipe/hidden-valley-ranch-butternut-squash-soup/>

Also, I would like to join up with anyone who would like to bike. This is a great time to hit the trails and there are so many places in SA to get on the paved trail. I prefer a week day but am open to early morning on weekends. Contact [mellinjulie@hotmail.com](mailto:mellinjulie@hotmail.com) if interested in forming a "bike gang"!

- Julie Mellin

I just use You tube every day. They have tons of exercise videos. Just search under Exercise.

- Judy NiCastro

I have been enjoying riding my bike with my teenage son every so often. He keeps me constant on those very hard days when I'd rather not. There are so many nice trails here.

- Sara Martinez

Some wellness routines that I incorporate are yoga at least twice a week. And yoga can include asana (yoga poses) or sitting and doing breath work. I also engage in HIIT exercise (high intensity interval training) about twice a week as well. Another self-care activity is practicing gratitude daily. I write down 3 things I'm grateful for daily in a gratitude book. As well as utilizing a prayer journal I write in daily.

- Frannie Martinez

Covid, in a round-about way, has actually been a help as well as a hindrance in my determination to be healthier as well as more prayerful in 2020. I had to give up my weekly 3-5 mile hike in Friedrick park because of the risk of contact. I had to give up my twice weekly yoga classes for the same reason. But because of my aversion to cooking, especially cooking meat (not eating it), my diet has taken on a frequently vegetarian appearance. Don't know how long that will last but, time will tell.

I have more time to read books now and I've found it easier to maintain my prayer time in the morning, praying with the Christian prayer of the Church and meditation for 45 min to an hour followed by a one mile walk around my apartment complex saying the Rosary. Routines are easier to maintain when I don't have a rigid 'to-do' schedule.

Because I'm sliding down hill toward 80, I'm methodically trying to downsize my life collections by getting rid of things only I appreciate or care about and that I know no one else among family and friends would want. Boxes of donations are frequent.

I'm not very disciplined about doing a yoga routine on my own but I try to do daily stretching and strengthening exercise and am determined to start rescheduling my hike at Hardberger at least once a week.

Oh, and chasing my newly acquired cat around the apartment to salvage the items I would like to keep from the donation box, well, I guess I could call that mental as well as physical exercise, along with my nightly solitaire.

Thanks for maintaining this great parish program.

- Valerie Arcement

Youtube has become a great companion during Covid. I actively and consistently view exercise videos by a coach from Spain, called "Sientete Joven"( Feel young). She has a variety of exercises to cover strength, tone and cardio training. She also includes modifications. The best part is she has many video sessions under 20 minutes. My favorite is Cardio without jumps 20 minutes video. 😊

Another Covid opportunity is more time to read. I am enjoying a health book given to me by my husband called "Younger next year" by Chris Crowley and Henry S. Lodge, M.D. Provides a combination of exercise practices and the biological benefits of staying active after 50. It is funny and captivating. It has changed my definition of cardio exercising and the importance of doing them six days a week.

I appreciate your ministry. Be safe and healthy.

- Josephine Hurtado

Covid has changed our lives to be more indoors but we take advantage of going to the park at least once a week. It is possible to utilize our indoor routine to walk indoors in the house from room to room. I decided to do that and say the Rosary and the Chaplet of Divine Mercy at the same time. I was surprised that I am able to walk a mile each morning just walking from room to room until I finish my rosary. I found that I lost weight and feel so much better for it.

On our visit to Medjugorje a couple of years ago, the messages to the visionaries include Blessed Mother's requests that we pray and fast during Wednesday and Fridays. I decided to fast on those days and find that I am able to keep the weight off.

Once you get into the routine of these, it becomes second nature and I find myself doing these things without even giving it a second thought.

It gets easier with time

- Aline Kundrotas

I love being able to go on runs right before sunset, especially now that it's colder. I don't always feel in need to run though; often I love going on a nice walk too and enjoying the neighborhood! We have also taken in nature in a deeper way, watching squirrels and birds feed and interact, gardening with more focus this year, noticing the beauty of trees and the changing seasons.

- Parishioners

When COVID first hit, we couldn't go to the gym, so my membership at YMCA was wasting away, but was supporting the Y. Anyway, by the time that they opened up, I still was not comfortable. Also we were walking at a large parking lot for a high school close to my house.

While I walked and tracked with my Fitbit, my son would ride his bike or scooter and we listened to music. Then my work load triple increased and so it felt like I was staying longer working on the computer plus my 7yr old was Virtual learning and that was overwhelming since March!



Later, I discovered an exercise video that a mom friend shared. Walk at home videos by Leslie Sansone YouTube video. She is almost 60yrs old and has been teaching exercise videos for 25 years 😊. She looks amazing and they're not intense like some other videos.

I have neck and disc problems and have been going to different doctors for over a year. I just started physical therapy and I am already feeling better since starting the exercise video. My therapist and doctors said to continue my cardio work outs on the video because it has greatly improved my pain levels and movement. My mood is better because I feel better and I have lost some weight, so win-win!



I thank God for the journey and for my health. My 7 yr. old enjoys the exercise video too. He loves sports and loves to dance, so he's great company lol!



Thanks again for the opportunity to share and I hope that it inspires or helps someone else 😊😊. Have a blessed week and Merry Christmas and happy holidays!

- Rosaline Okwura

*What holiday semi-healthy recipes are you thinking about making?* Oven-roasted brussels sprout with diced butternut squash pecan and cranberries drizzled with honey balsamic glaze.

*What sort of wellness routines are you doing these days?* Garage weight training sessions and running 4 miles every 3 days. Long dog walks and stretching before bed.

*What is inspiring you these days?* COVID-19 has served as a warning to live a more active lifestyle and make more healthy choices when it comes to food.

*Are you looking to join up with anyone for safe, socially distanced activities? If so, what sort of things interest you?* Running or hiking at a safe distance with a few friends.

- Giselle Reinhardt-Gillis

We are walking with our dogs every day, and they get very insistent about it which encourages us! Grateful for the beautiful weather that we enjoy when we are out.

- Teresa Hale

Since August 31st I've been walking virtually to Santiago de Campostela. I am 71 miles away from completing my 480.9 mile trek. My goal is to complete my journey by Christmas.

This challenge has kept me focused on exercising, but also motivated me to keep moving and building my endurance for my next challenge. My friend from middle school let me know about the challenge and we also talked Fr. Tony into joining us.

- Amy Nieto

My main goal has been staying healthy and maintaining contact with others outside my family and work.

I am walking- my goal is 85 miles per month- my goal rate is less than 15 min/mile. I also try to alter my routes and listen to podcasts or new play lists to keep things interesting.

We have made a roasted Brussels sprouts and apple recipe which was delicious.

I am praying the Rosary daily (most days 😊) with a zoom group that includes moms from IWHS. It is wonderful to have that support and inspiration in my prayer life.

I would be interested in joining with others for COVID safe activities- exercising, nutrition, - I'm open to other ideas.

- Diane Niemiec

I've added long hikes into Hardberger Park to my exercise routine. Excited about new land bridge. I've also added a weekly yoga session through Zoom.

Regarding food, I have stayed with a mostly vegan diet and do a modified fast in the morning. I have fresh celery juice every morning and usually a banana. Have lost almost 10 lbs. I also do a lot of podcasts and nonfiction reading to educate myself.

- Beverley McClure

A wellness routine for me is crafting! I am really enjoying doing calligraphy and making crafts for others. This gives me a creative outlet to change up the day, and uses a different part of my brain as compared to my analytical job.

I also have enjoyed taking 10-15 minute walks throughout the work day- getting up and moving, even just walking around the block, has helped me to take a break, and even solve a problem I've been stuck on!

- Parishioner

EJ and I have been walking in our neighborhood 3 - 4 times a week. On weekdays, we include a stretch of the path from a trailhead in our neighborhood down to a pond. I named a pair of ducks, and look forward to seeing them to get a picture. They make me smile:)

Happy advent, and Merry Christmas to everyone!

- Ana Ibarra

I've been working out at home in the garage, plus more active in the yard. Admittedly it's been ebb and flow over the months, same with healthy eating...comfort food early in Covid with more wine and pasta, then working back into more veggies, lean proteins, whole grains, low sugar and saturated fats. I find that after a day of hearty exercise, I want to reload with good food that day...then I feel better the next day, want to keep it up, and the wellness cycle begins.

I do a lot of neighborhood walks, along with some light trail running. I've incorporated walking the golf course as a way to play and get in 7 miles, as I spend a lot of time off the fairway chasing my errant shots!

Most recently I've started playing senior league softball; there are leagues for 40+, 50+, all the way to 75+. A great way for outdoor exercise, balance, camaraderie. Weekly practices are open to anyone, all are welcome. It keeps me motivated thru the week to stay fit! <https://www.sassl.org/>

If anyone wants to meet at the CYO fields for safe, distanced informal sporting stuff like throwing a ball, safe soccer, anything you think could be fun and safe for a small group, please let me know.

[Lee.Matecko@gmail.com](mailto:Lee.Matecko@gmail.com) or [healthsfa@gmail.com](mailto:healthsfa@gmail.com)

- Lee Matecko

Thank you to everyone who shared your story. This was very uplifting to see!  
God Bless you and your families, and Merry Christmas to everyone!

- Your Health and Wellness Team