

Palm Sunday

Dear Parishioners:

As we enter the Holy Week please be assured of my prayers and concern for the health and safety of your families. During the past week the Cardinal called me to see how our parish is doing and whether anyone was ill. I was happy to report that we were holding our own and I knew of no serious virus-related cases.

- (1) Thank you for the food drop-offs. I certainly will not starve to death. Your thoughtfulness is deeply appreciated. I have all the fixings from wine, manicotti, eggplant parmigiana, dessert, and espresso, with limoncello to finish it off.
- (2) Thank you for mailing in/dropping off your Sunday offerings. Every little bit helps. Also, at the present time we have reached the 50% of the Cardinal's Appeal goal. I know this is not, understandably, a priority for your families at this time, but, believe me, the majority of parishes in our diocese are, or will be, under water by fall. The success of the Appeal will be a life-line to those parishes until we can make an assessment, as a diocese, of where we are. Some facts: There are 288 parishes in the diocese and 30 parish elementary schools; only 90 of these parishes are financially capable of managing their affairs during this crisis. Because of your generosity, we are one of the 90; 46 parishes can manage but only with very careful financial supervision; 150 parishes will need financial assistance to weather this storm. You should also know that of the 288 parishes, 244 have some form of online giving. We are one of the 44 that do not. In those 244 parishes that have online giving, 10% of Sunday offerings are given online. Not exactly a large percentage. Nevertheless, we have signed up for "We Share" for online giving. You can find the new link on our website. Online giving gives the parish the opportunity to benefit from your generosity even if there is a blizzard, you are on vacation, or we are experiencing a pandemic. If you choose online giving, be aware that if you use a credit card, "We Share" collects roughly 3 ½ % of your donation as a fee. If you have automatic withdrawal from your checking account, the fee is roughly .8%. Think about it. In joining "We Share" we show the diocese that we are part of the team in helping to meet the needs of the diocese.
- (3) Having spent 12 summers as an army reserve hospital chaplain at Tripler Army Medical Center in Honolulu, I ask for your prayers for all medical personnel on the front lines of this pandemic. They and their families are our nation's heroes. I know what is like to protect oneself and a patient with gown, mask, and gloves. It was cumbersome and time consuming, but absolutely necessary. This virus is insidious and is no respecter of status, social standing, religious belief, or ethnic background. Several of our priests have tested positively for the virus. Some are hospitalized, others confined to their rectories. Stay alert. Be careful. We have a long way to go. Support each other. Cherish your family.
- (4) At the present time my intention is to live-stream, on our parish Facebook account, Holy Thursday mass at 7pm, Good Friday Stations of the Cross at 3pm, and Easter Sunday mass at 10am. We had a test run on March 31 with a short prayer service at 6:30pm. It worked! We are establishing a Facebook link on our website, so that if you do not have Facebook, you can access the services through the parish website. We will see how, and if, this works.

- (5) With some of the banks closing their lobbies it may be difficult to find a notary. Just a reminder: I am a notary if you need one.

CARDINAL'S STEWARDSHIP APPEAL 2020:

As of 3/27/2020

<u>Goal</u>	<u>Pledged</u>	<u># of Donors</u>	<u>Donor Goal</u>
\$48,000	\$27,070	53	130

To make your gift online, visit cardinalsappeal.org.

ANYONE IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE? Please contact rectory at 914-631-0529 if you need help during this difficult time (food shopping, etc.).

A PRAYER IN THE TIME OF NEED

Loving Father, our life and our hope, come to our aid in this difficult and uncertain time.

Look with mercy on all who suffer from the coronavirus.

Bless them and their families with Your healing, consolation and peace.

Guide and be with all who care for them.

Give wisdom and insight to those working to stop the spread of this disease, and help them find a way to cure it.

Console our anxious hearts, strengthen our faith, and give us the grace to trust in Your goodness.

Restore communities affected by the virus to wholeness and health, and in Your loving mercy, give Your help and protection to all.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.