

MESSAGE FROM FR. RITO GUZMAN, MSPS  
ASSOCIATE PASTOR OF SAINT MATTHEW CATHOLIC CHURCH

MARCH 17, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It is with a heavy heart that I write to all of you during this time of concern in our world. After the official cancelation of public Masses in the Archdiocese of Portland, I have been thinking about the beauty and sacredness of the Eucharist. We need to be close to the Lord and there is no better way in the world than to unite ourselves with Christ in holy communion, when we eat his body and drink his blood, soul and divinity.

In her book, *Irresistibly Drawn to the Eucharist*, our foundress, Blessed Concepcion Cabrera writes, “The soul is made divine through this Sacrament and comes nearer to its center, God. It is made one with him, like two flames that become one and cannot be separated...it contains nothing less than the most perfect union of the soul with God” (pg. 38).

The Church teaches that the Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith. Hence, it is very difficult not to be able to partake in this divine feast with you, our beloved parishioners. We will do our best to be united with all of you as we celebrate the Mass and offer our communion for your wellbeing. In times of anxiety and fear, let us turn to Christ and raise our hands to heaven, pleading for the bread of life.

We will experience a deep sense of loss as we distance ourselves from our faith community, for our own good and the good of others. We will grow in desire to return, to worship together, to receive the Lord present in the Eucharist. Let us pray more fervently. Let us become one community growing in Christ, today, more than ever. What we are experiencing will surely become one of the toughest Lenten Seasons in our lifetime, but it will lead to one of the most joyous Easter Season of all times. Pray, hope, and love in the spirit of Christ.

Fr. Rito Guzman, MSpS