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[www.ourladyofvictory.net](http://www.ourladyofvictory.net) ❖ <https://www.facebook.com/ourladyofvictorychurchtallmadge>

22 July 2020

Dear Parishioners:

We continue to ***lean on the Lord***, as the words to the African-American Gospel Song remind us:

*“We’ve come this far by faith, Leaning on the Lord; Trusting in his holy word, He’s never failed me yet.  
O . . . can’t turn around, We’ve come this far by faith.”*

We have come this far by faith . . . and will continue to move forward, in faith, leaning on the Lord who is the source of all hope.

While the dispensation from the obligation to attend/participate in Sunday Mass throughout the Diocese of Cleveland and the State of Ohio remains in effect, the public celebration of Mass resumed on May 25<sup>th</sup>, nearly two months ago, and the public celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation/Confession followed on June 20<sup>th</sup>. For those who have returned, worship looks a little different with individuals welcoming you at the doors, providing sanitization for your hands, masks being worn, aisles marked for one way to enter and one way to exit, pews marked for availability, physical distancing, the absence of congregational singing, and more, all having been implemented to keep everyone safe to the extent we are able. Still, it has been wonderful to see, for those who have been able and ready to return, so many of you in person once again.

We have also continued to livestream on Facebook, and upload to Vimeo and YouTube, Masses and other prayer experiences for the benefit of all as we fully recognize not all are able nor ready to return. As Pope Francis has stressed throughout his Pontificate thus far, the Church is not a building but the People of God, beyond the building and throughout the community. We are very much a Church gathered and dispersed, all bonded together in Jesus Christ, and all together in prayer when Mass is celebrated and when other prayer experiences are offered.

The past several months have been extremely challenging for all of us with so many relational and other changes that have taken place, out of necessity, to do what can be done to help mitigate in some way the spread of the coronavirus. While many are concerned, stressed, weary of the limits that have been imposed by this disease on us and all, we continue to “lean on the Lord”, seeking God’s grace and strength to persevere so that we might help one another through these unprecedented times.

For each of our members, we want to remain connected to you, and you to us and others, in any way possible. While we will continue to do occasional mailings, we also provide daily email messages along with daily Facebook posts. If you have email but are not receiving a communication from us, please, contact the Parish Center Offices to make certain we have your email address and we will add you to the list of email communications. Also, a reminder to all in our Parish that, if due to the current Pandemic, you have experienced a financial challenge, let me know. We have designated a limited amount of funds from our Poor Fund to provide assistance directly related to or as a result of the current Pandemic. Again, contact me directly should you have a

need, and we will see how we might be able to assist. While the available funds are limited and the level of assistance also limited, I/we will do what we can to help.

As we look to the future and the slow but deliberate efforts to restore Parish life as we are able in the weeks and months ahead, we are looking for your assistance to help us determine needs and priorities.

To this end, we have developed a Survey that we are asking each household to complete by **Friday, August 7, 2020.**

At the end of this Parish communication, you will find a hard copy of this Survey should you choose to complete that or not have access to the internet. **This Survey is also on-line at: <https://forms.gle/mGC9THifz1sLdx438>, or simply visit the Parish Website ([www.ourladyofvictory.net](http://www.ourladyofvictory.net)) and click on the link on the main page of the site found under the heading “Forward with Christ”.**

Our preference is that, for all who are able, to complete the Survey on-line as the software helps to gather and consolidate the information received and saves our having to input it. If you are not able to do so, please, complete the hard copy found at the end of this Parish communication and either drop it in the Collection boxes at Church, by the Parish Center Offices, or mail it to the Parish Center Offices. *For multiple individuals in a household, the Survey can either be completed to reflect the responses of the entire household or done separately by other members of the household.*

The Survey is anonymous for those who wish to remain anonymous, but we do ask that if you are looking for a response, that you do include contact information.

Again, the completion of this Survey is greatly appreciated as it will help us to better determine the needs and priorities of the Parish at this time and in this environment, to the extent we are able.

Last of all, but no less important, I wish to, again, extend my gratitude to so many who have been so faithful over these past several months in faithfully carrying out your Stewardship of Time, Talent and yes, Treasure. All of which are needed now more than ever as how we do what we do has changed, and, at this time, the “who”, as it pertains to Parish Staff, continues to be fewer than before the Pandemic.

We have just recently completed our Fiscal Year, which ended June 30, 2020. While the complete Financial results are not yet ready, I/we do have a good idea of where our parish stands financially as well as how the Pandemic has impacted our Parish. Our Parish is not immune to the financial challenges so many in our Parish and community are faced with.

While very early on in this Pandemic (mid-March), I/we made the difficult decision to layoff Staff, there were also other expense reduction measures that were taken amid the uncertainty of the times, some of which remain in place while others could not continue given the re-opening of the Church building for Public Worship and of course the need to maintain a skeleton Staff to keep the mission and the ministry of the Parish going, albeit in new ways.

Additionally, while some activities have currently been put on hold, there are still other needs that require attention in light of being able to keep the mission, ministry and buildings open to the extent they are.

The net effect of all of this certainly helped soften the reduction in Offertory over the past several months but did not eliminate it completely. I am also grateful to the generosity of those who, during this time, either made

additional contributions or increased what they were giving. Again, this has helped, but unfortunately, did not eliminate the shortfall completely.

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**For the period of March thru June of this year, Offertory was down \$4,600 verses the same time last year, and below Budget by over \$14,800.** While this may not seem significant, given that the variance **prior** to the onset of the Pandemic was approximately **\$4,600 ahead of the previous year**, this was a negative turnaround compared to the previous year of approximately **\$9,200**.

In these first three weeks of the current Fiscal Year, which began on July 1, 2020, we have already experienced a shortfall of nearly **\$5,800** to last year.

Again, I am grateful to all who have continued in these very challenging times to do what they can. Still, even in these times, the carrying out of the mission and the ministry of our Parish requires the financial resources to do so, and we cannot do that without the spiritual and financial support of the Parish community.

I am asking all to please *prayerfully* consider helping to not only make up these shortfalls, within the first quarter of the current Fiscal Year, but also strengthen the ongoing weekly financial support ***to the extent you are able***.

You may wish to do so in a weekly or monthly contribution separate from your normal contribution. If so, please place that in a separate envelope and simply mark it “Help with Shortfall”. Of course, you may choose to do so on-line through Faith Direct. Again, you can accomplish that and indicate it as a separate contribution to “Help with Shortfall”.

Whatever you are able to do is greatly appreciated, and, if your circumstances at this time do not allow you to make a financial contribution, your prayerful support and the prayerful support of all is certainly a gift for which we are most grateful.

As we continue to move through these very challenging times, know that each and every one of you, and all in our community and our world, continue to be in my daily prayer. May God keep you safe and well.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Reverend Michael A. Matusz,  
Pastor  
*Lean on the Lord!*

**Our Lady of Victory *Loving God. Loving Others. Making Disciples.***



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TOGETHER  
MOVE FORWARD  
HOW WE WILL

