



STELLA MARIS PARISH
OUR LADY "STAR OF THE SEA"™

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Dear parishioners,

*As I write this letter, I'm thinking of the challenging days ahead. The Prophets of old would remind people of the importance of staying close to God. As we go through this time of turbulence and uncertainty with the corona virus, we too need to stay close to God. This is a time of prayer for our Nation and the world. Pope Francis designated this year as: **"The Year of Grace."** I believe our Lord inspired him to do so knowing our need for grace during these difficult hours. Bishop Ricken declared this year - beginning March 19th as **"The Year of St Joseph."***

*As I was praying about this patron of Our Church and our family, I believe St. Joseph will watch over us as he did Our Lady and the Child Jesus. Looking at the days ahead I wonder if this great patron will encompass the days of abstention with the last Mass in our diocese being **March 19th the feast of St Joseph, spouse of Mary** and the first Mass being **May 1st 'The Feast of St. Joseph the Worker'** leaving 42 days between them for fasting and prayer. I believe these two great feasts may be **"the bookends,"** that will protect everyone who is faithful to our Lord.*

Bishop Ricken mentioned Pope Francis prayed the rosary at 9 pm on the feast of St Joseph, 3 pm our time and the hour of mercy and invited us to join him. Please, pray the rosary every day for the end of the virus and for everyone's safety. For parish updates, see the COVID-19 RESOURCES section on the Parish web site which will give you broadcasting times for Mass and other important parish information. I also ask you to please continue generously supporting your parish financially during this time to help us continue to serve you.

This week the Governor issued a directive that all residents are to stay home unless in need of groceries or medical supplies, because of this directive it's now necessary to close the church until further notice as we want to keep everyone safe. I ask you not to worry but please follow the directives of our government and Church leaders as they are trying to keep us safe. Know I am offering the Mass intention everyday for the person who has been assigned to that day. Please pray for me as I pray for you.

God Bless you,

Father Tom Farrell