

Dear Parishioners,

August 25, 2020

Hope your summer has been good, and you had some time to find ways for entertainment even during this quarantine summer. I hope and pray you all stay safe. It seems in Wisconsin many schools are reopening. I hope and pray that the school administrators in our area make sure that the environment is safe for the children, teachers and support staff to return, and create a choice for children to learn virtually if parents do not feel returning to school is safe.

Our Religious Education staff in both parishes have decided to have classes virtually in 2020-21. They are diligently training catechists to teach via Zoom, and they have created wonderful programs and activities for the children. I encourage parents to enroll their kids. Even though the catechists teach virtually, parents will need to be the motivators. Wouldn't it be great if the whole family had some God talk besides just school lessons? If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to call the parish.

Since the reopening in May, our Parish has been extremely busy. The office staff and pastoral staff have returned in full capacity and the offices are open to the public. That is a good thing because our ministries are extremely busy. We confirmed 37 young adults on August 19th. Their Confirmation was an evening filled with the Holy Spirit. In the past 13 weeks, we have had 14 funerals, 11 baptisms and nearly 7 weddings between St. James and St. Theresa parishes. Surprisingly, weddings have been permitted to be blessed by priests in venues where the reception takes place. Fr. Dennis celebrated a wedding in a venue in Elkhorn, and I married one couple in the Marian rock garden right outside St. James and another in the couple's parent's backyard. These are twists and turns of the pandemic.

One of the more positive twists has been a change in the Archdiocese directives that allow Parishes to resume fish fry's, with modifications and restrictions. We are happy to announce that our first ever St. Theresa DRIVE THRU Friday Fish Fry will be held September 11 from 4:30-7:00 PM. Look for details in the bulletin or on our Facebook page. We look forward to seeing you in the Drive Thru!!

We are even busy online. Our YouTube Masses have been averaging 227 views per Mass. Since most views are from families, we figure that we are reaching about 700 people every weekend Mass. Our in-person Mass attendance has been averaging 35 attendees on Saturday and 30 on Sunday. There is still plenty of room for you and your family to celebrate in person.

Our Stewardship Committee recently surveyed the Parish on a variety of topics, one of which was the time of Sunday Mass. There was overwhelming support to move the time of Sunday Mass earlier from 10 AM to 9 AM. Based on that feedback, **we will be changing the Sunday Mass time to 9 AM, effective September 6, 2020.** That is the same date that the Sunday Mass dispensation ends, and it does not appear the bishop will be extending it. I am sure there will be exceptions and am waiting for the directives from the Archdiocese. I hope and pray that this virus situation improves, and that people will have a safe environment to come, pray and worship.

Take care and God bless.

Fr. Loyola