

Dear Fellow Parishioners of Saint Joseph Parish,

I never thought in all my years of priesthood that I would ever send a letter like this one talking about how to deal with parishes not being able to gather to worship and/or celebrate mass for a prolonged time. This time is very difficult for all of us. Not only are we dealing with the possibility of sickness and death for ourselves or others because of a new life-threatening virus but also with isolating ourselves from each other in order to avoid the virus. As social animals, we, human beings truly struggle with that kind of risk & isolation. During this unbelievable time and difficult situation, we must do something to reassure and help each other through it. I hope this letter will begin to help us do the best we can to weather this situation.

Let us begin with the most important matter. That is our faith. We truly believe that nothing is more powerful than God's ability to be present to us and make our lives the best that they can be. With that in mind, know that I am continually praying for everyone and I encourage everyone else to continue to pray for our whole parish and its members as well as all those who are in need. Secondly, if there is anyone in need, and I or anyone in our leadership can be of help, please, let me know. We want to be there for you. I am not sure what we can do always but we want to do whatever we can do to be there for you and aid you appropriately. We are constantly searching for ways to help you and will now outline the initial ways that we want to stay connected and remain as helpful as possible. Even though public mass will not be celebrated & all events are cancelled, I will continue to celebrate mass, offering your mass intentions.

This letter is the first attempt to stay connected because we are seeking the best way to stay connected to as many parishioners as possible. Going forward, we plan to stay connected through our website (www.stjosephoneida.org) and Facebook page (www.facebook.com/StJosephOneidaWi). We realize that everyone may not have computer access, but we hope that you know someone who can keep you informed of what is being posted on our pages. The bulletin did not make sense to continue since there are no events to make known in the traditional way and people are not leaving their houses. The bulletin for the weekend of March 22/23 is available in a bin outside the church's main entrance. Other items like the Compass and daily reading books will also be put there. I hope to use our website and Facebook page to post homily summaries, bulletin columns and other updates as needed. Please take advantage of one of the many options to watch mass on television, online, or listen to it on Relevant Radio 1050AM. Some of these options are listed at the end of this letter.

Here is our new normal. The office is not open to parishioners. We are trying to prevent the spread of the virus as much as possible while also following the lead of the diocese. A staff member **will try** to be there from 9-11 a.m. Monday through Thursday to answer calls and make sure some basic business is done. We want to make sure that we check the mail and the phone messages as much as possible. We know how important keeping our parish financially sound is after all that we have learned in the last few months so we encourage you to continue to assist us by sending your financial support through the mail or by using the secure, online giving option on our website's home page - the "Make a Donation" option is about 3/4 the way down on the left side of the screen. If you need any help with that process, contact us. You can call me on my cell phone at 920 421-0025 for any major need. Leave a message if I do not answer right away. Do not be afraid to tell us what we need to do to make this situation the best that it can be for our parish. Thanks for understanding and helping.

I hope to see all of you sooner rather than later as we make the most of this difficult time.

In Christ's love,

Reverend David C. Ruby, Pastor (pastoroneidacatholic@gmail.com)

and the parish leadership

Dave Baranczyk, pastoral council chair,
Tom Smits, finance trustee,

Ray Blaser, finance council chair,
Shelly Vann, secretary trustee
920.819.0466.

Sunday Mass

ABC affiliate WBAY at 5:30am | CW14 at 8am | Relevant Radio 1050AM at 9am

10:30am CBS affiliate WFRV Local 5 with Bishop Ricken