



**May 1, 2020**

Parish address 611 Sycamore St. Cincinnati, OH 45202

Parish phone 513-721-4045

Parish email address [office@stxchurch.org](mailto:office@stxchurch.org)

Parish website [www.stxchurch.org](http://www.stxchurch.org)

Most recent parish bulletin [www.stxchurch.org/Bulletin](http://www.stxchurch.org/Bulletin)

Find the upcoming readings for weekday and Sunday here at the US Catholic Conference <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/index.cfm>

## TRANSITIONS

**May 1**— Fr. Robert Thesing S.J. begins ministry as Temporary Parochial Administrator (interim pastor) **WELCOME TO THE PARISH FATHER THESING!!**

**June 1** — Fr. Cy Whitaker, S.J. will serve as an assisting priest during the summer.

**September 1** — Fr. Paul Lickteig S.J. arrives after his tertianship in Australia to begin ministry as the 22nd pastor of St Xavier Church.

*Due to unusual days and schedules, we do not yet have dates for final Masses and celebration events for Fr. Fairbanks, Fr. Gamber, nor Fr. Veigas. TBA*

## Farewell message from Fr. Fairbanks, S.J.

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." Dickens captured well the feeling of late 18th century Europe, and those are not so different from our own. At the end of April 2020, I am feeling too the motions of good times and bad. April 30 was my last day as pastor, and starting May 1 our parish welcomes Fr. Bob Thesing S.J. as the interim pastor until Fr. Lickteig arrives in September.

It is with sadness that I depart, and I will certainly miss you all. I am most grateful to Fr. Thesing, especially for taking over amid two separate crises--the worst of times. The first crisis is obviously the Covid pandemic, and the second is my own health misfortune. Early Sunday morning a week back, I suffered a mild heart attack and was taken quickly to Good Sam to be checked by expert cardiologists. Via angiogram, they found a small blockage and decided it best to treat the ischemia with medicines. I am very grateful for their attention and care, and that I was out and back to the Jesuit community Tuesday afternoon.

However, it is Jesuit policy that anyone who has spent significant time in a foreign country, city, or location of risk (i.e. a hospital) ought to undergo a 14 day quarantine before coming back into the house. So, I find myself next door on the campus of XU with 14 days to pray, relax, recover, read, take lots of pills, and lots of naps. Indeed this will be a time of retreat for me, "the best of times." I will be able to pray for each of the St Xavier parishioners, and I will keep in prayer any intentions that I receive from you.

Later this spring, before I leave for Chicago, I hope we can arrange a time for a "final Mass" and reception. Although the exact time is unclear now, we will keep you posted as directives appear. For now, thank you for your prayers and best intentions which may be sent to the parish office at St X: 611 Sycamore, 45202.

## My Letter of Gratitude: April 30, 2020

Dear friends and parishioners,

Today marks the end of a beautiful journey of grace for me at St Xavier Church. Tomorrow, I will step down as pastor, and former pastor, Fr. Bob Thesing S.J., will serve as your parish administrator until the permanent pastor arrives in September. In the days ahead, I plan to savor the abundant blessings received here during my upcoming two-week "retreat" at the start of May. And I will do so by remembering each of you by name.

On Friday May 1, First Friday and Feast of St Joseph, I will celebrate a private Mass of Thanksgiving at the very same time as the Jesuit community gathers for daily Mass at 5:00 pm. It will be a time of **holy gratitude** to God for all the graces received in the last seven years as your pastor. Times of transition offer a mixture of sadness, anxiety and confidence: sadness because I am leaving a place that has become my spiritual home for the last 7 years. Anxiety goes along with the tenor of these uncertain days, health issues, and with the fluid transition to my next assignment in Chicago. The future that awaits me is still not clearly in view. But ultimately, I have a sense of confidence because I know deep down that God will be as faithful tomorrow as in the past. "Give me only your love and your grace, that is enough for me."

I am so grateful to all of you for the many small ways you have inspired me and (yes) *called me* to be a better priest, a better person. That is the Christian vocation: to hear the call of the Lord in the people around you, and then to respond with trust – to go forward with eyes fixed on the Heart that created you from dust. In an extra special way, I want to thank and bless my fellow Jesuits (especially Fr. Joe Casey, S.J.) who have guided and supported me in the ways of parish ministry.

Oh, I cannot thank my staff enough. These pastoral people love you and the Lord more than you can know. They have offered time and talent to the fulfilling of our mission to live the Gospel. And I must acknowledge every single one of our faithful St X volunteers: those 10% who seem to "do everything" and help when the need is greatest. You know who you are! You are ministers too, and often unnamed and unseen. Indeed the Lord has seen the important work you do, and He will bless you with His Spirit to carry on with new leaders to come.

I give thanks to our benefactors and alumni for whom this parish owes its very structure and body. Many hearts are set on fire the moment they walk into the doors. I know mine did. In a way my departure is a closing of the full circle. It was in November 1987 when I walked through the front door of church hoping to find yet one more brochure that explained how to join the Jesuits. I found the last brochure and read it as I sat in the last pew by the statue of St Thérèse. I joined the Society two years later, and from that time until now, this holy community has given life to me and so many others. It has been a privilege to be at a parish of so many empowered leaders working towards a shared purpose: inward reflection / outward ACTION!

Especially when folks found out about my recent health crisis, I have been taken by the outpouring of gratitude and prayerful words and blessings. Even though we are not able to embrace and touch, I know that our spiritual companionship will endure beyond any "distancing" that will happen in months to come.

When the doors open again, if you ever find yourself in the "Windy City" don't hesitate to get in touch. I will belong to the Jesuit community at St. Ignatius and using my Gmail account: [pafairbanks@gmail.com](mailto:pafairbanks@gmail.com). In the meantime, our deepest connection remains the Eucharist: may He empower us to deeper faith, hope, and love.

The Heart of Christ will set us on fire to praise honor and serve those most in need. A · M · D · G

*The Lord told Moses, this is how you are to bless the people:*

*The Lord bless you and keep you;*

*The Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;*

*The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. (Num. 6:24-26)*

— Rev. Patrick Alexis Fairbanks, SJ

### The ROSARY

During the month of May, the month dedicated to Mary, Pope Francis has requested we pray the rosary. Since we are unable to be together in church at St. Xavier, we have set up a zoom link. Please join us every evening, when you can, at 7:00PM to pray the rosary together. The link is:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/74582340220>.

Meeting ID is: 745 8234 0220.

Hope that you will be able to join us.

## Opportunities to stay in touch

We want to stay in touch with you during this time that we are not able to gather as a community. Below are ways that you can connect with us:

- Phone: Our Parish Office hours are modified, but we will gladly return your call. You can reach us at (513) 721-4045.
- Website: Visit [www.stxchurch.org](http://www.stxchurch.org) for important announcements, opportunities for Sunday and weekday liturgies, daily Gospel readings and reflections and other resources for you and your family.
- Email: Sign up to receive important email notices and our weekly **Newsflash**. You can subscribe on the front page of the website.
- Bulletin: We are continuing to publish an electronic version of our bulletin each week. You can find this on our homepage or receive a copy via email or snail mail. Just call the office and let us know (513) 721-4045.
- Facebook: Connect with us on Facebook page, updated daily. Search for "St Xavier Church" and click "Like"

Please let us know if you have changed phone numbers, prefer a cell phone number or have a new email address so we can reach you more easily. Call the Parish Office at 513-721-4045 or email us at [office@stxchurch.org](mailto:office@stxchurch.org). This will help us to reach you more easily.

We also want to emphasize, in a humble yet sincere way, that **we still need your financial support**. If you are able, we ask that you continue to support St Xavier with your regular Sunday Offering. There are simple and secure ways you can do this:

- Visit our website at [www.stxchurch.org/Donations](http://www.stxchurch.org/Donations) and click the round **Donate** icon.
- Mail your Sunday Offering to: St Xavier Church, 611 Sycamore St. Cincinnati, OH 45202

Your generosity is greatly appreciated and will help us fulfill our mission.

For now, please stay safe and healthy. We look forward to welcoming you back to the church soon, where we can join in prayer together! Fr Fairbanks

**Live Stream from Bellarmine Chapel on the campus of Xavier University**

[www.bellarminechapel.org/livestream](http://www.bellarminechapel.org/livestream)

**Live Stream from the Cathedral of St Peter in Chains**

<https://www.stpeterinchainscathedral.org/>

We are continuing to publish our weekly Sunday BULLETIN, and so you can find a copy of the latest edition here: [www.stxchurch.org/Bulletin](http://www.stxchurch.org/Bulletin)

### **RCIA: catechumens and candidates – Our New Catholics**

In light of the alternative schedule for the Easter Vigil, the Archdiocese has advised parishes to look to the Solemnity of **Pentecost** (May 31) as the Sunday on which we welcome new members into the Catholic Church. Our 9 candidates and catechumens will receive the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist at this time. Please stay tuned for more information.

### **St. Xavier Diary**

This diary offers updated report of ideas from the St Xavier community. These notes and updates may supply you a sense that our community is one of faith and fellowship, even in these difficult times. We are called to great faith and spiritual communion. If you wish to add any ideas or send

your own suggestions for prayer, reading, education, fellowship, family faith, etc. please submit an email to Diane in the parish office at [office@stxchurch.org](mailto:office@stxchurch.org). Please know that we keep faithful to the daily Mass intentions listed in the bulletin, and we continue to keep you all in prayer. Our bulletin will continue to be published, and it is available on our website [www.stxchurch.org](http://www.stxchurch.org).

### **Daily Mass with the Jesuits**

As you may know, the Jesuits celebrate a weekday Mass Monday through Friday in the house chapel on the campus of Xavier University. [HERE](#) is a behind the scenes look into the chapel: You may join them each day at the link on the front page of our parish website: [www.stxchurch.org](http://www.stxchurch.org)

### **Meat and Seafood Delivery**

As we want to help out local parishioners with their food service during these stressful days, St Xavier would like to recommend you choose some very nice selections from "Michael's Finer Meats and Seafoods." In an effort to continue assisting our communities with every opportunity to stay safe and to stay at home for social distancing. We are now offering an online ordering website for anyone who wants to order the same restaurant quality steaks, seafoods and specialty products that your favorite local restaurants use. This online system will delivery directly to your home.  
[www.shop.chefswarehouse.com](http://www.shop.chefswarehouse.com)

Our region would be Midwest (Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana) You can also see the link here <https://www.stxchurch.org/meats> for the menu items, contact the provider Trent Mason at 614-527-4900 ... mention St Xavier Church, and they will be sure your foods are shipped right to your door. Call or email Trent Mason at [tmason@michaelsmeats.com](mailto:tmason@michaelsmeats.com) if you have questions. This is an easy way to shop during these days, and you are helping out local parishioners. Thanks.

### **FIRST COMMUNION and CONFIRMATION**

We will be announcing later dates for the celebration and reception of First Communion and Confirmation by our parish young people. Until that time, please lift up these young children in your prayer as they prepare themselves for First Communion and Confirmation soon. Susan Stewart-Pirone, Margaret Meyers, Grace Sychay, Alexander Siller and Braxton Rhinehart for First Communion and Brennan Bucher for Confirmation. We are grateful to John Kollar, Emily Conklin, Mary Fetick and Clare Krumme for preparing them. May the grace of our loving God envelop these young people as they will soon receive these Sacraments.

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*Diane M. Roden*

