



Dear Parish Families,

The current pandemic that we are living through has created unprecedented challenges for nearly all facets of our society. There have been many headaches and strains upon family life, but also many gifts and “silver-linings.” God is constantly, unceasingly reaching into our messy, sometimes quite dark world, seeking us out, drawing us up from confusion, doubt and fear. Faith in God’s providence is needed now more than ever.

It is important to reflect during these times on the fact that our God once came as a poor, vulnerable baby, into the meanest living conditions of a backwater village in a distant outpost of the Roman Empire during the reign of a despotic, violent maniac named Herod. After 33 years humbly working, teaching and healing, he suffered the worst of torments and died at the hands of His chosen people, all out of love for us. In His all-conquering love, He is not afraid of the darkness that resides in the human heart, or in the world around us. He desires us for eternity, after all, not just for the 70+ years we, on average, live on earth.

The challenges that this pandemic have caused are real and daunting. We are not able to do much of what we previously held dear to us in our daily, weekly or monthly routines. As a Church, we must discern how God is calling us to continue His work of bringing the faith, hope and love we have received from Jesus to this generation, in these circumstances. Much may need to change, but much *grace* will be provided. God never abandons us. “And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.” – Matt. 28:20

On this note, over the past few months, the Archdiocese has been putting together a **pre-K-5th grade faith formation program** that responds to the challenges we are facing and compels us all to re-think how we view the parish’s role and, with it, religion’s role, in our lives as families. The overarching goal of this program, called “Project Nazareth”, is to *equip* and *empower* parents to bring the faith formation of their children into their home. It does so in a way that *avoids overwhelming* you, already busy as you are. It is also meant to eliminate the need to have your children spend yet another hour behind a computer, looking at a screen on a day of the week they are hopefully getting a day off.

I understand that you might have questions and hesitancy after reading the above. I encourage you to take the time to look through the structure and sample of the content of “Project Nazareth”, soon to be released, and prayerfully consider how much of a blessing this can be for you and your family.

In Christ,

Aaron Giard, Director of Lifelong Faith Formation