



March 18, 2020

Dear Beloved Parishioners,

Every year we embrace our Lenten practices by prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. These are the Lenten practices of our Catholic tradition. These practices help us to force ourselves away from the familiar and enter into uncharted territory.

From the reading on Tuesday, March 17th of the Third Week of Lent, Daniel laments “We have in our day no prince, prophet, or leader, no burnt offering, sacrifice, oblation, or incense, no place to offer first fruits, to find favor with you. But with contrite hearts and humble spirit let us be received.” We will not have the celebration of our Mass, the sacrament of Confession. All other Lenten activities have been cancelled. It has been a challenging Lent for us, but not only for us at St. Patrick particularly, but for the whole Universal Church and the whole world.

We have gone into exile just like the Israelites of old. So, like them let us turn to God in prayer. We must enter into the secret room of our heart and encounter the Living Christ. We must put ourselves under the guidance and protection of the Holy Spirit and the Blessed Mother.

Just like the Israelites of old, they were in exile but eventually they reached the promised land. We shall one day return to the celebration of Mass and Confession. When we do return, let us return with renewed hearts, a greater hunger for the Lord in the Eucharist, and a more pure love for God and neighbor.

Let this time of exile be for us a time to become more prayerful. Let us hunger for what has been taken away from us by this virus.

At this moment we are called to be men and women of deep prayer and trust. We all know that God never abandons us. He promises to be with us always. We know God is in charge and he will bring good out of this exile.

During this time of crisis, I beg you to continue to support our parish financially. You can do this through our online contributions (WeShare), [churchofstpatrik.org/give](https://www.churchofstpatrik.org/give) or whatever way you wish.

Just know that you all in my daily prayers.

In Christ,

Fr. Paul Nguyen