

Feast of the Annunciation, March 25, 2020

St. John Fisher, Pray for Us.

The only other time that I have celebrated Mass privately was during the summer months at my previous assignment at St. Charles Seminary when the seminarians were home or at parishes. The quiet is deafening! Your Mass intentions are being honored each day and you are all remembered at the Sacrifice of the Mass. What a wonderful day when we will celebrate the Eucharist together!

All of our instincts and training tell us to go to Church, visit the lonely, gather together in prayer, and other good efforts but this Lent is an emptying of the Spirit. We sacrifice for the common good and health of our neighbors in the health care field and those most at risk from the coronavirus. As everything is flipped upside down, we rediscover the past when Catholics due to uncontrollable situations relied on Spiritual Communion, the rosary and novenas. We now watch Mass on TV or livestreamed on our computers.

Fr. Devlin, Deacon Dan and I join with the staff in praying for your needs and concerned for your spiritual, emotional and physical health. Our staff are generally working from home for safe practices. We keep business hours for visitors to visit the Chapel on Weekdays and Church on Sunday, for delivery of meals, and preparations for funerals. Our staff are very devoted to continuing the service to our parishioners.

The Parish Pastoral Council and Finance Council have been giving advice and counsel about important questions for this time period. This email is part of our effort of parish communications along with the website and Facebook. Please share with others. The weekly bulletin can be found on the website. We are working on the possibility of having Sunday and Holy Week Liturgies livestreamed on the parish website and Facebook. Many organizations are trying to do the same, the availability of the hardware is the main difficulty. Stay tuned for an update of this possibility. We have reached out to Parkview at Naaman's Creek Senior Living Community, Lutheran Knolls Senior Community and parish communion calls to assist them with meals via "Aid for Friends". Concerned parishioners are stepping up with additional meals. Let us know if you are able to help during the coming weeks. Please call your isolated neighbors to brighten their day with your friendly voice.

The parish finances are a dire concern. We have enacted cost-cutting measures but many costs are fixed. Three suggestions come to mind to help during this crisis: 1). Mail in your Sunday Envelopes or Easter Contribution (checks only) 2). Drop off your Sunday or Easter envelope at Parish Center pedestal mailbox (open the fold-down drawer and place in bottom section) (3). Use the WeShare on-line giving for Sunday and Easter giving via the parish website (contributions through a credit card or bank account. These

are difficult times for all with layoffs and cutbacks as the economy slows. We will all do our best effort according to our situation.

I will strive to provide more information as we go forward. We are a people of Hope. Our youth need the example of committed Catholics to help them understand and progress in times of sacrifice. This is a time of fasting but the Joyous Feast is coming for we know that He is Risen. Jesus has conquered sin and death. Be not afraid!

Blessings,

Fr. Robert
McDermott

St. John Fisher Church

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