

St. Anne Catholic Church

MOTHER OF MARY

March 2020

OFFICE OF THE PASTOR

Dear People of Saint Anne,

In the midst of a pandemic, where do we turn? While I do not consider myself an alarmist, the virus will continue to spread. It will come to a place we know or a place we have visited, it will touch a family we know, or even a family member of our own. The question is not if, but when and to what extent. What we are called to do is be a people of faith. Panic and fear will not help us. Hoarding supplies will not save us. On our part we are doing our best to keep our facilities clean and sanitized.

As a priest and as your pastor, I have taken this moment in time very seriously. As I have said often, we are a Resurrection people and in this moment we are preparing for Easter. To me presenting ourselves to the mystery of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus is paramount to our faith. My role as shepherd is to get to that place with you. In the next weeks as more is learned and more is shared, we must be proactive to not lose perspective. We are not to lose what the Lord offers us in the mystery of His dying and rising. We must die and rise to ourselves. We must take precautions before entering the assembly of the church. We must excuse ourselves when we are or a member of our family are not feeling well. God in His mercy will provide all we need to overcome any doubt about our clear and respectful decisions. From the use of the Baptismal Water to the reception of the Eucharist, our focus must be on Who we receive and not how we receive. What we need most is the Lord. The directives of the Diocese are a starting point. Now it is our time to show how we can live faith in a time of a pandemic. It begins with prayer for healing. It continues with healthy sanitizing, it involves removing ourselves from large gatherings that are not essential, it involves listening to the elderly and encouraging them to do the right thing when it comes to their health decisions.

We must fortify ourselves with the love that God has for us. This is a time for a new spirituality. We must build a new connection to what it means to die to ourselves and old practices and find new ways to connect to His Real Presence. Our faith will not be killed by this or any virus. For me it is about embracing a New Life and a new way of glorifying God. To be able to do this I must be willing to face a personal death knowing that there is always New Life.

As the journey continues, may it find us in prayer for one another,



Father John