

REOPENING REVIEWS

It is hard to believe we are still in the throes of another month of heightened awareness, time being suspended and church coming to you more on the internet than in person. I want to thank the reopening efforts and the many volunteers that make our weekends and week days what they are. Without them we would not be open. I realize we are in pandemic fatigue. It is tiresome following arrows in church, sitting at special places, being directed by a team of volunteers who only want to keep us all as safe as possible. Whenever we get fatigued with the process, we can begin to lose focus. It is my hope and prayer that will not happen here at St. Anne. Our well trained and efficient volunteers have done an excellent job at being as prepared as possible. We are blessed to have a full schedule of Masses. Some parishes are having only one Mass per weekend due to the lack of help and volunteers. Only because of the dedication of the team are we where we are. I am so grateful to all of them.

Just a few reminders:

- When you come in after being checked in, remember to sanitize your hands.
- Because the Diocese is concerned about people crossing over others in the pews, make sure everyone in your pew whether they are receiving the Eucharist or just a blessing comes out. This eliminates people having to climb over others.
- Making sure you arrive early is important. Once the doors are closed we cannot let anyone else in. Give yourself extra time since there might be a line and we would hate to lock you out. Please make sure everyone in your unit is there before you enter church.
- Wear a face mask at all times except when receiving Eucharist. Go to the designated blue spot on the floor where that private time with Jesus can be experienced.
- When returning down the center aisle, please remember to follow the green dots in the center of the aisle. This allows us to have more seating,
- Do not sit on the end of any pew. Aisles serving as walkways are to give parishioners six feet distance from all communion aisles and close to that on aisles where you return from receiving Eucharist.
- Follow the instructions of the reopening greeter and reopening ushers. They are there to assist you.
- If you have reserved a seat and something comes up, please call or email the office (630-554-3331; saveaseat@stanneparish.org). We can then open those reservations up for others. No matter what the reason or how soon before Mass, we realize things happen.
- If you do not feel well on the day of Mass, please stay home. You are not obligated to come and out of love for others, it is time to stay home.

We are thrilled to have open doors. We are thrilled to welcome everyone back who feels safe. We will continue to have Mass posted on YouTube each weekend. We will resume a transmitted Mass at the end of September where we will have the church empty, but will bring Eucharist to the vehicles at the appropriate time of the liturgy.

Know of my prayers are as we walk together by faith,



Fr. John

GREAT IS YOUR FAITH

Great is your faith. That is what we all would love to hear. How do we hear Jesus telling us that? What does it take to have great faith? I think we all want to have great faith; I think we all want to experience the affirmation of the Lord. So how does that happen? The journey of the Canaanite woman begins with acknowledging the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. This woman overcomes obstacles to seek out Jesus. She understands that He has the power to save her daughter. She knows that Jesus will respond to the love she has for her child.

To have great faith one has to know the need we must have to trust and rely on God totally. That is not easy. We must also have a focus to seek the Lord and overcome obstacles that might be placed before us. To be able to do this, faith must be practiced. The practice of faith, the living of faith is a journey of subtraction. The more I know, the more I realize God is beyond what I know and is not reliant on what I know. The great acts of faith in my life come when I am called to a scene or incident, not knowing what I am walking into and what will take place. That reliance on God comes from not relying on myself or my training. As important as that is, subtraction, getting out of the way, that is the most powerful place for me. When I am small, when I do not know what to do, I embrace a God of love in a different way. I am amazed at the awesomeness of God.

For me personally, a place of vulnerability comes with my eyes. I know every time I undergo a surgery, my eyesight might not only not come back better, but it also might not come back at all. In this place, I rely on the surgeon. I rely on his gifts and talents. Internally, before that can happen I have to be prepared for the outcome to be not what I expect. That subtraction, knowing I might come out with the eye not responding at all, is a place of powerlessness. When I can get there in other aspects of my life, my faith increases. I have to get to that place where reliance on God is all that is left.

Jesus gave us this way, this truth and this life by dying on the cross. He was powerless, could not move, feet and hands nailed. Still, the power of forgiveness and love conquered this experience and brought us new life. His physical pain and surrender to the will of the Father, brought us hope and new life.

We all want great faith, we all want to hear those words, but to do so we have to sacrifice, surrender and subtract our very sense of self.



Father John Ouper