

Pastor's Corner



My Brothers and Sisters:

In a recent issue of "The Priest" (yes, there actually is a magazine with that title), one author said this of the purpose of the Sunday homily: "While deepening the faith of the baptized, the liturgical homily recalibrates the congregation into the salvation history of the Paschal Mystery." Aside from the reminder of the grave importance of the task of preaching, I would like to spend the next several sentences focusing on that image of "recalibrating." That is what the Whole Mass is about. That is what our daily prayer is about; to recalibrate. Living in the world, we are constantly exposed to different standards, to an environment encouraging us to put our values in different priorities. Our daily and weekly job in reflecting on our faith and coming to God in worship is to let God get things in the right priorities again. It is to let God recalibrate, re-orient, readjust our heading. It is, to change the metaphor, to take the lenses we are given in our daily lives off, and let God put on the lenses of the Gospel, so that we can see with Our Lord's eyes.

Jesus uses every success and suffering in our life as an invitation to turn to Him. May we daily turn to Him more and more, in the good times and the bad.

This past week the Church has been scrubbed down and professionally sanitized. This has been done with our other buildings as well. When the suspension of public Masses is lifted, we can be all-the-more confident in our mutual health.

Thank you for your generous memorial gifts for Easter decorations in the Church. Easter ended up being celebrated in our homes this year. We have had some discussion on how to use the gifts. As the income/expense situation for Saint Lawrence is in flux right now, the plan is to use the funds raised to pay for electric and gas for the Church building. I will have an extra Mass in the near future with the main intention to be for the benefactors and those in whose memory or honor the gifts were given. If you would rather that the gift you gave be used for flowers when we open up, let me know.

Right before public Masses were suspended, we had a survey of parishioners on the Fall Festival. Sorry for the delay in following this up. The consensus was very positive of the Festival, with a general concern involving getting enough volunteers for the whole event. We gave a go-ahead for the Festival. Of course, we don't know what the future holds for events even out into September.

I write this on May 1. This afternoon at three o'clock the bishops of the United States and Canada are joining in Pope Francis' request to consecrate us to the protection of the Blessed Mother. She is a powerful intercessor. Let us give our hearts, or renew our hearts, to Mary, who always guides us closer to Her Son – Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Pope Francis has asked everyone to pray the Rosary daily at home during this month of May.

He wrote a short letter to us with this request. I encourage you to look it up. Its title is:

LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS TO THE FAITHFUL FOR THE MONTH OF MAY 2020

He then gives 2 prayers he asks us to pray at the end of the Rosary. The second prayer references our needs at this particular time. I will include those below this letter.

In Prayer,
In Christ Our Lord,

Jim Tom

First Prayer to Our Lady

O Mary,
You shine continuously on our journey
as a sign of salvation and hope.
We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick,
who, at the foot of the cross,
were united with Jesus' suffering,
and persevered in your faith.

“Protectress of the Roman people”,
you know our needs,
and we know that you will provide,
so that, as at Cana in Galilee,
joy and celebration may return
after this time of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love,
to conform ourselves to the will of the Father
and to do what Jesus tells us.
For he took upon himself our suffering,
and burdened himself with our sorrows
to bring us, through the cross,
to the joy of the Resurrection.
Amen.

*We fly to your protection,
O Holy Mother of God;
Do not despise our petitions
in our necessities,
but deliver us always
from every danger,
O Glorious and Blessed Virgin.*

The second Prayer

“We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God”.
In the present tragic situation, when the whole world
is prey to suffering and anxiety, we fly to you,
Mother of God and our Mother, and seek refuge
under your protection.

Virgin Mary, turn your merciful eyes towards us
amid this coronavirus pandemic. Comfort those who
are distraught and mourn their loved ones who have
died, and at times are buried in a way that grieves
them deeply. Be close to those who are concerned for
their loved ones who are sick and who, in order to
prevent the spread of the disease, cannot be close to
them. Fill with hope those who are troubled by the
uncertainty of the future and the consequences for the
economy and employment.

Mother of God and our Mother, pray for us to God,
the Father of mercies, that this great suffering may
end and that hope and peace may dawn anew. Plead
with your divine Son, as you did at Cana, so that the
families of the sick and the victims be comforted, and
their hearts be opened to confidence and trust.

Protect those doctors, nurses, health workers and
volunteers who are on the frontline of this
emergency, and are risking their lives to save others.
Support their heroic effort and grant them strength,
generosity and continued health.

Be close to those who assist the sick night and day,
and to priests who, in their pastoral concern and
fidelity to the Gospel, are trying to help and support
everyone.

Blessed Virgin, illumine the minds of men and
women engaged in scientific research, that they may
find effective solutions to overcome this virus.

Support national leaders, that with wisdom, solicitude
and generosity they may come to the aid of those
lacking the basic necessities of life and may devise
social and economic solutions inspired by
farsightedness and solidarity.

Mary Most Holy, stir our consciences, so that the
enormous funds invested in developing and
stockpiling arms will instead be spent on promoting
effective research on how to prevent similar tragedies
from occurring in the future.

Beloved Mother, help us realize that we are all
members of one great family and to recognize the
bond that unites us, so that, in a spirit of fraternity
and solidarity, we can help to alleviate countless
situations of poverty and need. Make us strong in
faith, persevering in service, constant in prayer.

Mary, Consolation of the afflicted, embrace all your
children in distress and pray that God will stretch out
his all-powerful hand and free us from this terrible
pandemic, so that life can serenely resume its normal
course.

To you, who shine on our journey as a sign of
salvation and hope, do we entrust ourselves, O
Clement, O Loving, O Sweet Virgin Mary.
Amen.